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*Life Sci*

# Lancaster Farming

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## *Farmers Reaping The Harvest, Each In Their Own Way, To Make America The Best Fed Nation In The World*

Since the 1940s, wheat has been harvested with a combine as the general practice of farmers across America. Starting with pull-type machines that were rather primitive compared to today's huge, modern self-propelled monsters, farmers abandoned the binder and threshing rigs of earlier days.

For those who are old enough to remember, there was some farm family trauma in those first days of the combine. The older generation opposed the change based on the theory that the modern method failed to capture the chaff with the straw, and thus reduced the value of the straw to bed the steers. The next generation wanted to go modern and save the back-breaking work of shocking and loading the sheaves, and working the loose straw around in the barn mows in the heat of July's summer humidity.

It's hard to believe, isn't it, that more than half a century has passed since this drama played on the advancing farm scene? This was all happening as tractors were replacing horses as the preferred mode of power. There is some recollection that a tractor was used to pull the binder for a year or two before the com-



bine finally took its accepted place in the records of history.

But in Amish communities in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Maryland, and other states, time stands still. On local farms, neighbors can be seen in adjoining fields, each in their own way, bringing in the harvest. The older generation would be elated to know that at least some farmers have kept their common sense and

still harvest wheat in the old-fashioned way.

In the photo above, the modern way can be seen on the farm of Chris Garman, located just east of Ephrata, close to the intersection of Routes 322 and 222 near the proposed new Wal-Mart center. Below, the Amish farmer and his family located north of Intercourse, along Scenic Road, use real horse power to get the job done. The boy on the horse yells in "Dutch"

to keep all the horses in line to pull their share of the load, and the little tots in back get a free ride in the express wagon attached to the binder. What a joyous time a photographer can have on a Monday afternoon in the middle of harvest, recording the scenes of farmers as they again reap the bounties of the fields that make America the best-fed nation in the world. Photos by Everett Newswanger, managing editor.