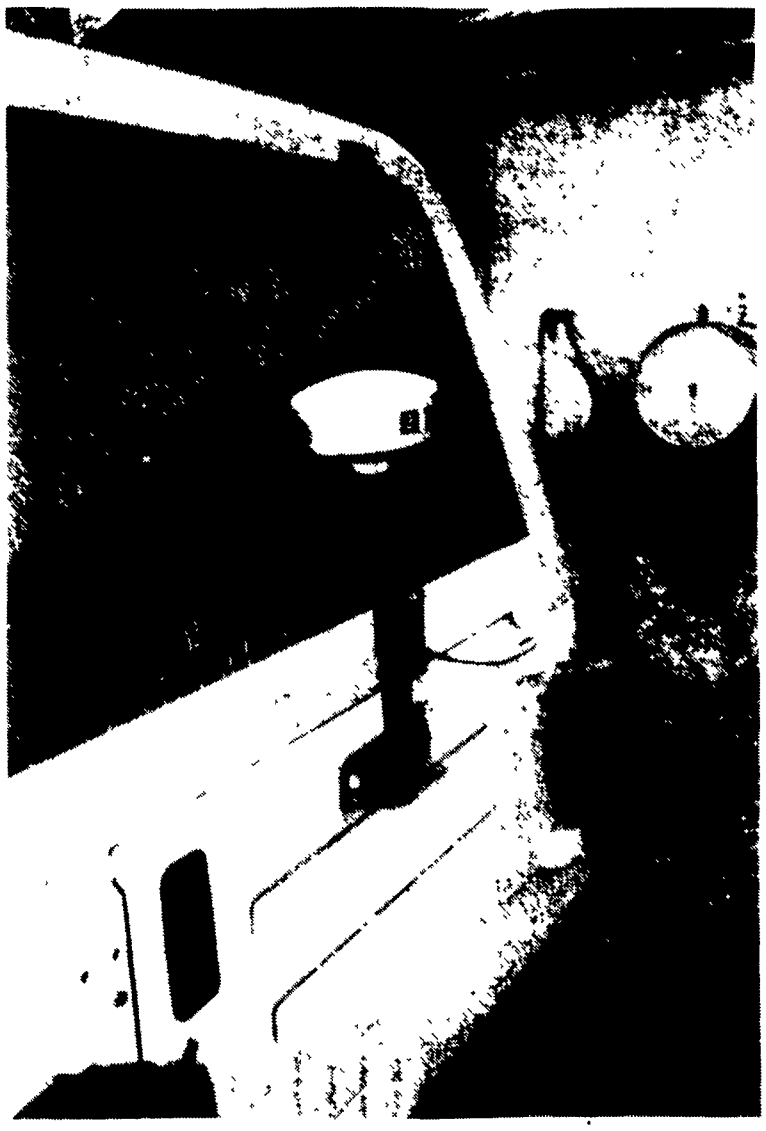

Adams, who has mapped and gridded 1,800 acres for various farms, drove a small jeep containing receiver and storage equipment. Using the global positioning satellite (GPS) system put in place by the government, Adams uses a special receiver/storage system operated on a laptop computer to map, grid, take samples, and use the information to apply variable rates of lime and fertilizer where necessary on fields. The antenna is mounted to the back of the jeep.

The cost of having GPS technology continues to decline, too, according to Tom Adams III, in center, holding antenna. Years ago, a GPS system cost many thousands of dollars. Today receiver prices range from $2,000-$5,000. Software is about $500. The laptop computer can cost a little more than $1,000, in addition to 100 manhours of programming.

Mapping Technology

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A "package" which is assembled and ready to use can cost about $10,000, if a producer wants to invest the money. But with a little learning and time to assemble, a producer can invest as little as $3,500 in a workable system.

Producers can use the technology today, in increments.

"I tell them to try it a little bit," said Adams. "I'm not asking them to do the whole farm and all the acres on it."

Producers should move slowly and check out the technology to see if it helps them improve crop yields.