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Today more than ever, agriculture and the food industry have a huge social responsibility. With future population growth, limited natural resources, and increasing standards of living in the developing parts of the world, food production must be the world's new high-tech industry. It is estimated that over 70% of the future increases in food production capacity need to come from new and improved agricultural technologies.

Use the password – ivy – to watch
[*The Ivy League Farmer* movie trailer](#)

Unfortunately, as the use of modern agricultural technologies has increased, the food industry – our industry – has not done a good job of communicating and engaging consumers on the evolution of food production.

The proportion of the U.S. population directly involved in food production has fallen to 2%, compared to 40% 100 years ago. This huge demographic shift has created a knowledge gap between consumers and farmers, resulting in misunderstandings and misinformation about food production. Also, terms like antibiotic-free, hormone-free, GMO-free, all-natural, etc. have lacked accurate or reliable definitions, which has contributed to misguided consumer perceptions. "Big Ag" has become the villain and modern food production has become unjustly characterized in unfavorable terms.

President's Update

Social responsibility: Sharing the story of modern agriculture



By Jeff Cannon
President & CEO
Diamond V

In response, our industry has become defensive, responding with facts, figures, research papers, and demands for common sense and fairness. Unfortunately, such responses have not done much to reduce the knowledge gap or improve the quality of communication. Instead, there often are increased feelings of mistrust between consumers and food producers.

At stake in the debate over the use of modern agriculture technology and practices is the availability of safe, sustainable, affordable food worldwide. Today, somewhere in the world a person dies of hunger every 3.6 seconds, including 7 million children annually. In addition, another 870 million people suffer from malnutrition. Although the USA has one of the safest and most affordable food supplies the world, we have significant food security issues as well with 15% of Americans suffering from food insecurity.

The drive to utilize the most modern technologies available to increase food supplies creates both more responsibility and more opportunity for Diamond V. Our proprietary technologies help animals produce more with less, while supporting animal health and keeping our food supply safe. In short, we **Help Animals Perform Better**. We have the responsibility to make sure that the food industry has access to our proven technologies to meet growing global needs.

In addition to providing access to our technologies, Diamond V also has a social responsibility to participate in the discussion regarding modern agriculture and to support efforts to improve the quality of public information, education, and communication. Consumers need to know more about modern food production and food security topics.



To fulfill this social responsibility, Diamond V recently became a founding member of a non-profit organization dedicated to providing education and information directly to consumers about modern agriculture and food security issues. The non-profit's first consumer communication project was the creation of a feature length film entitled *The Ivy League Farmer*.

This 138-minute movie tells the story of a father and son in conflict over the use of modern technologies on the family dairy farm. It's also a love story that explores a rural community's concern about local kids not getting enough to eat.

Even in Iowa, one of the top agricultural states, there are communities where 1 in 4 school-age children get their only meal of the day at school. In eastern Iowa, volunteers organized Operation Backpack to provide kids in need a backpack that contains food for the weekend.

That's where Diamond V's own local non-profit project comes in. Our Operation Backpack Initiative is going to use *The Ivy League Farmer* to raise funds to help support Operation Backpack in more than 60 local schools.

We expect to share the movie with our partners and customers soon. Plans are for *The Ivy League Farmer* to be released on a major TV network this fall.

Use the password – ivy – to watch [the movie trailer](#).

Through this type of popular media, we hope to connect in a more meaningful way with consumers and help provide better insight into the challenges and opportunities we all face to improve food security for everyone.

Please stay tuned for Lights...Camera...Action!



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