Vocabulary Practice

Read the post by a farmer in Vermont who writes a weekly blog for his customers. Try to understand the boldfaced words without looking them up in a dictionary.

Farm News

May 15, 2013

Wheat field

Hello everyone. Thomas O'Neill here again. It's a **difficult** year for farming. Last month, I wrote about the weather problems. Last week, I told you about the annoying **weeds** that grow everywhere. This week's problem starts with the **insects**. You name them, we have them. They eat the leaves and the fruit of many of my plants.

You all know that I grow wheat and other **grains**, right? Well, last year, insects ate half of my wheat. It's a big problem. This year, Wallace Simpson, one of my workers, wants to kill them with "Insect-Be-Gone." I am not going to **approve** "Insect-Be-Gone" to be used on my farm. I don't like to use any chemicals. I'm afraid that if the insects all die, the birds (that eat the insects) might not have enough food. If the bird **population** goes down, animals that eat the birds will have problems. Killing all the insects might break the **food chain**. One little change (killing all the wheat-eating insects) could create other larger changes down the chain.

Some of my neighbors are excited about a new GMO[1] wheat that scientists just created. It has extra vitamins, and insects won't eat it. It's a special kind of wheat that **resists** the insects. I understand the **benefits** of this wheat, but I'm worried about the problems it might cause. Nature is very **complex**. If you change something here, many things may change there. I am definitely not going to try the GMO wheat.

I know. I know. I won't use chemicals or GMO wheat. Simpson thinks I'm old-fashioned. But I tell him, "Simpson, farmers need to take care of the **environment**. If you use things that are not natural on the farm, there will be problems with the animals, plants, and water all around us."

I might just have to be OK with the insects getting half my wheat.

—Posted by O'Neill at 7:58 A.M.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right.

resist	not simple
weed	positive result
benefit	natural world; area around us
complex	to say it is OK; to allow people to do it
insect	group of plants and animals that rely on each other for food; for example, large birds eat snakes, snakes eat rabbits, rabbits eat grass
population	
environment	
approve	to fight against; to not get harmed by
food chain	wild plant that people don't want in their farms or gardens
grain	very small animal, for example an ant or a bee
	plant grown for food, for example, rice, wheat and barley
	the number of members of a group

LIVEWORKSHEETS