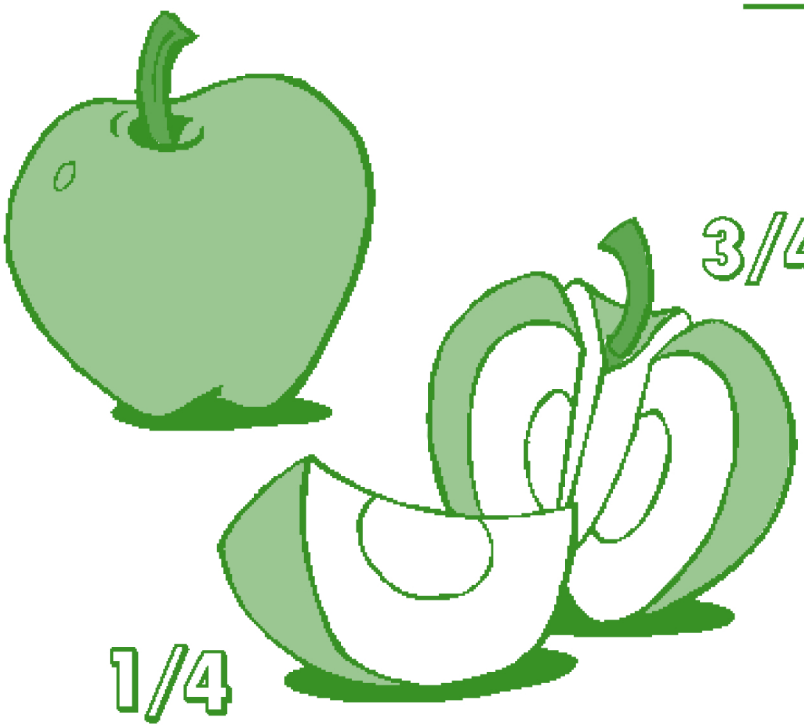
How can biotechnology help us grow more food?

Today the world's population is growing, but the amount of land we have for farming is not! This means that it will become harder to grow food for everyone on Earth.

Imagine this apple represents the Earth.



If you cut the apple into four equal pieces, three of those pieces are covered by water. Only one of the pieces is land, or 1/4 of the Earth!

If you slice this piece in half, you get two pieces that are each 1/8 of the whole apple. One of these pieces represents the land that people can live on. The other piece represents deserts, mountains and forests where people do not live.

If you cut this piece of apple into four equal pieces, you would find that three of those pieces are for cities, neighborhoods, homes, schools and stores — places where we can live, but can't grow food.

All that is left is this tiny piece — this is 1/32 of the whole earth.

Take this last piece of apple and carefully peel off the skin. This tiny piece of skin represents the farmable land or topsoil layer where we grow our food.

Our land is a precious resource. Scientists and farmers are looking closer to find ways of growing more food. Biotechnology is one method being used to help farmers grow more food. Someday, farmers also could grow food on land that before was not good for farming. For example, a crop could be grown on very dry land or very rocky land.