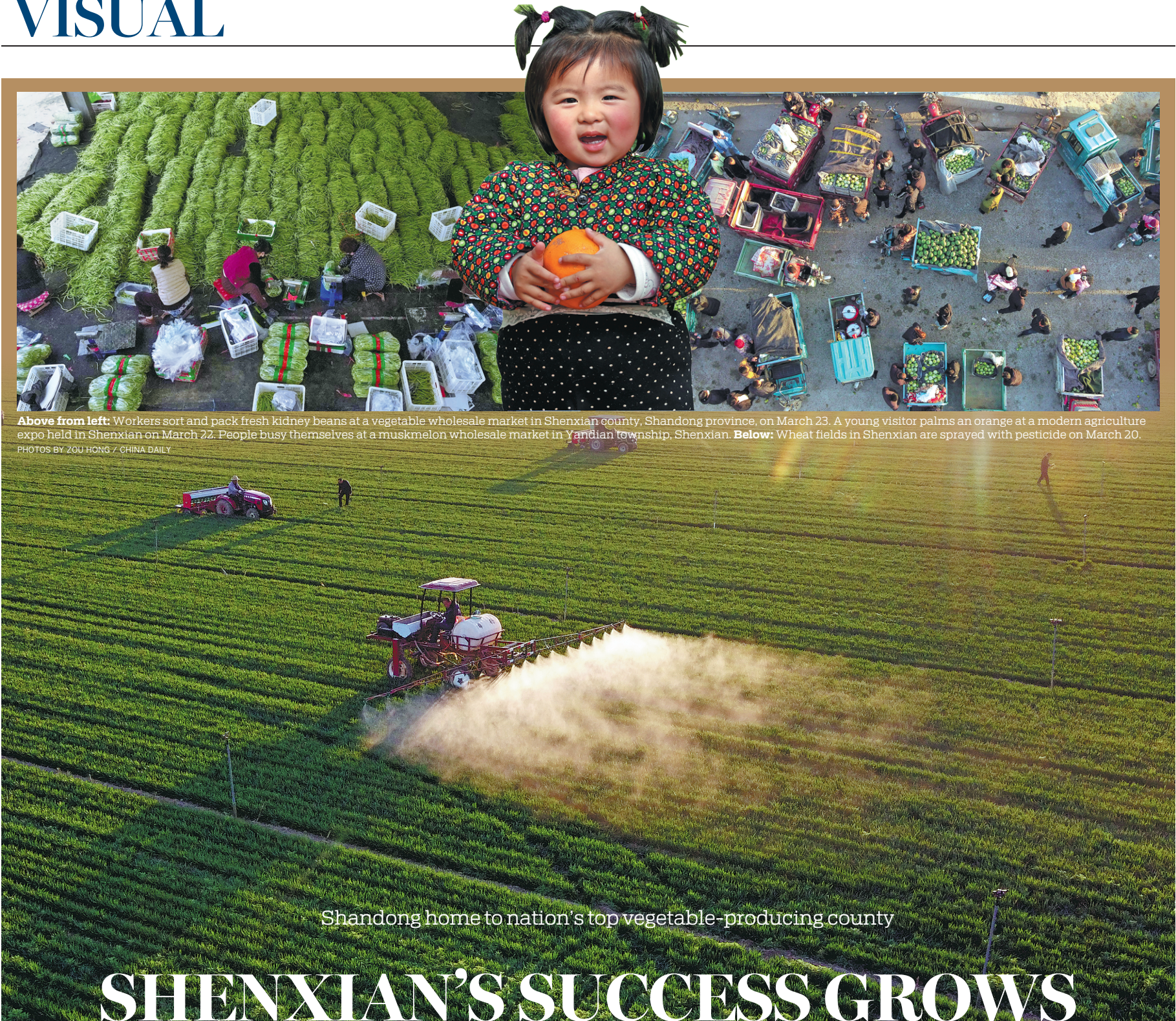


VISUAL



Above from left: Workers sort and pack fresh kidney beans at a vegetable wholesale market in Shenxian county, Shandong province, on March 23. A young visitor palms an orange at a modern agriculture expo held in Shenxian on March 22. People busy themselves at a muskmelon wholesale market in Yandian township, Shenxian. **Below:** Wheat fields in Shenxian are sprayed with pesticide on March 20. PHOTOS BY ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

Shandong home to nation's top vegetable-producing county

SHENXIAN'S SUCCESS GROWS

By ZOU HONG and CHEN LIANG

In December last year, President Xi Jinping delivered important instructions on work related to agriculture, rural areas and farmers at the Central Rural Work Conference.

The conference emphasized the importance of advancing agricultural scientific and technological capabilities, accelerating the widespread application of technological achievements, and promoting the development of new agricultural productive forces tailored to local conditions.

China has emerged as a global leader in agricultural scientific and technological innovation. Over 96

percent of the nation's farmland is used for improved crop varieties, and the comprehensive mechanization rate of crop cultivation and harvesting surpasses 75 percent.

Earlier this month, a China Daily photographer traveled to Shenxian county in Shandong province, the top vegetable-producing county in China, to document its farming in action. Shenxian boasts 66,700 hectares of land dedicated to the mixed growth of melons, vegetables and mushrooms, achieving a yield of 5.2 million metric tons annually. Its planting area and output rank top among counties nationwide.

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From left: Farmer Huang Qiaoxian, 54, harvests cucumbers at her family's vegetable plot on March 23. A worker picks strawberries at a smart greenhouse in Shenxian on March 22.



From left: Workers load cases of muskmelons onto a truck at a wholesale market in Shenxian on March 22. Xia Xiangli, founder of a mushroom planting cooperative in Dawangzhai township, feeds geese at his farm on March 22. Livestreamers sell muskmelons online at the wholesale market in Yandian township on March 22.

