

Hay!

Have you

Herd?



Agriculture in the Classroom NL

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"Good luck Abby, have a good day," mom said, "I'll pick you up here at 3:00 PM."

"Ok," Abby replied as mom drove away.



Abby looked at a huge red building straight ahead, and standing by the door entrance was a person waving for her to come over.



"Hi, I'm Yvette, the **veterinarian**" she said, "and you must be Abby?"

"Yes, that's correct, and I'm here to follow you for the day," answered Abby,
"It's a school project and I have to write a report about what I learned."

"Well, the farmer mentioned to me that she has a cow that's pretty close to having a calf, and there's a cow that seems to be not feeling well, and I have to check on a couple of newborn calves, so why don't we get started," Yvette the Vet said. "Let's wash up before we go inside because this is a biosecure farm."

As they entered the dairy barn, Abby's mouth opened wide with amazement. She couldn't believe how many cows were there. "There's so many!" she exclaimed. "How do you know which ones you have to see?" she asked.

Yvette the Vet laughed, "That's a good question Abby. If you look at the cow's ear, you will see a tag with a number on it. All these cows have a number which was given to them in the first week of their life. It's how they are identified the same way you are identified by your name."

"So we have to go see cow number 225 first," said Yvette the Vet. "Let's go down this way, she usually rests in a stall towards the end of the barn," she added.









As they walked, Yvette the Vet explained, "You know, Abby, all the milk that we drink comes from dairy farms like this, so it's very important that farmers follow animal health and food safety rules to keep our milk safe. All the milk that the cows give is collected in a large milk tank and only healthy cows give milk. If cow number 225 is sick, her milk will be thrown away until she is healthy again."

"Do you know what **biosecurity** means Abby?" Yvette the Vet asked.

"No," Abby replied.

"Well, no one is allowed in this barn without permission," Yvette the Vet explained. "You had to get special permission to join me here today," she added. "Also, any new cows that the farmer brings onto the farm are kept separated from the rest of the herd, or quarantined until they check their medical records and ensure they didn't get sick on their travels. Once their immune systems have adjusted to the new environment, they will get any extra **vaccines** that they require at the end of their quarantine. The farmer has their medical history stored on a computer in the office. They are very careful to make sure the herd stays healthy."



Hay! Have You Herd?

As Canadian Law states, milk produced by a cow receiving an antibiotic treatment is discarded. Canadian milk must test negative for any traces of the medicine before it is accepted. This means all our milk is antibiotic-free and healthy!

When they got to the end of the barn, cow 225 was laying down. After Yvette the Vet finished checking on the cow, she called the farmer right away and started the process of getting the cow into **quarantine** and getting her started on medicine called **antibiotics** so she would get better and back giving milk again.





They then walked over to another area and Yvette stated, "This is the pregnant cow, wait here until I examine her. She's looking great and will probably have the calf this week," Yvette added.

She then took Abby over to see the newborn calves.



"Abby, these calves are a little over a week old and as you see they have their ear tags, and they have their vaccines."

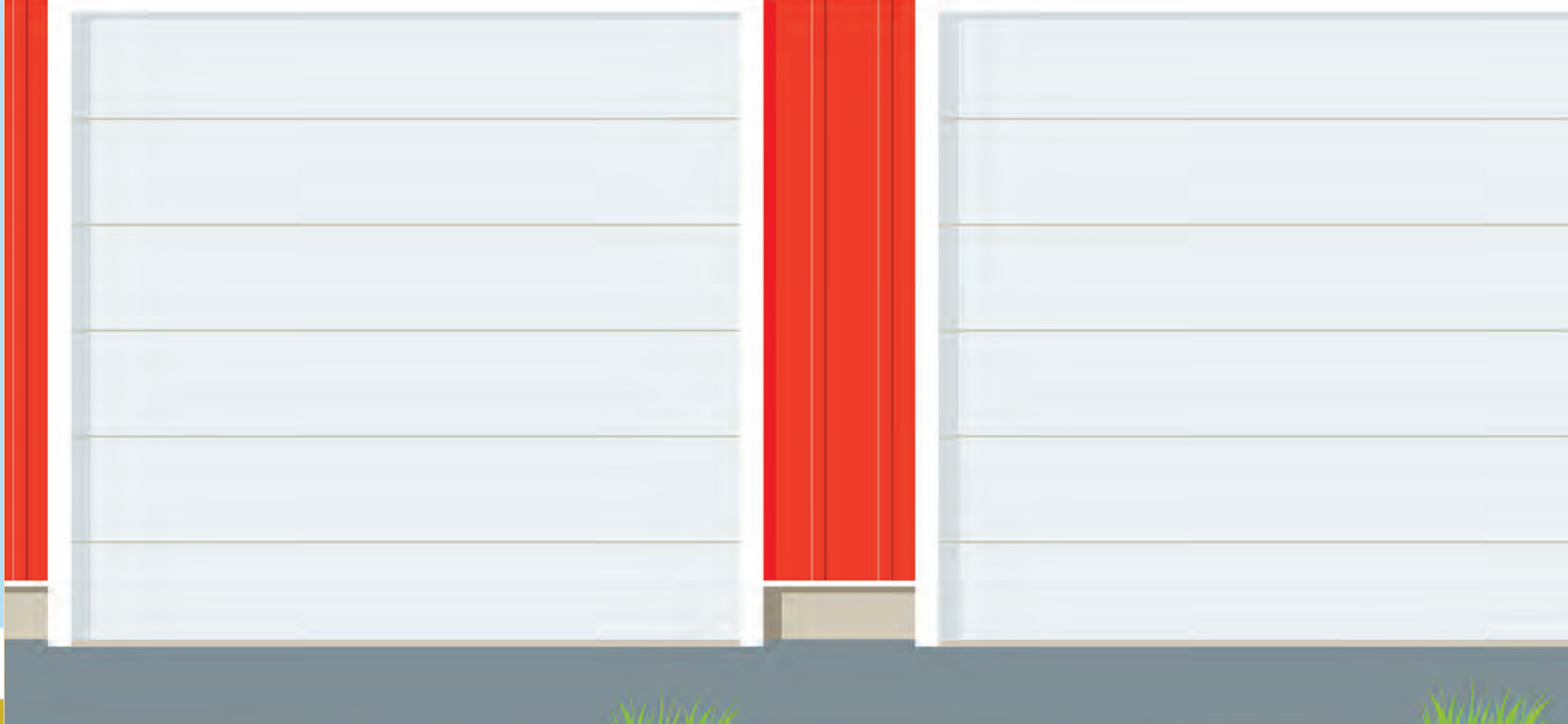
Yvette the Vet gave them a quick check over and then she asked Abby if she would like to feed them. "I'd love to!" Abby exclaimed. "Wow that was fun," said Abby. "What's next?"

"Well, we have to go across the road now to visit a broiler farm," answered Yvette the Vet.

"What's a broiler farm?" asked Abby.

"It's a large building where chickens are raised," replied Yvette the Vet.






After washing up and leaving the dairy barn , the pair were walking toward the road when Abby noticed three beehives on the edge of a huge field.

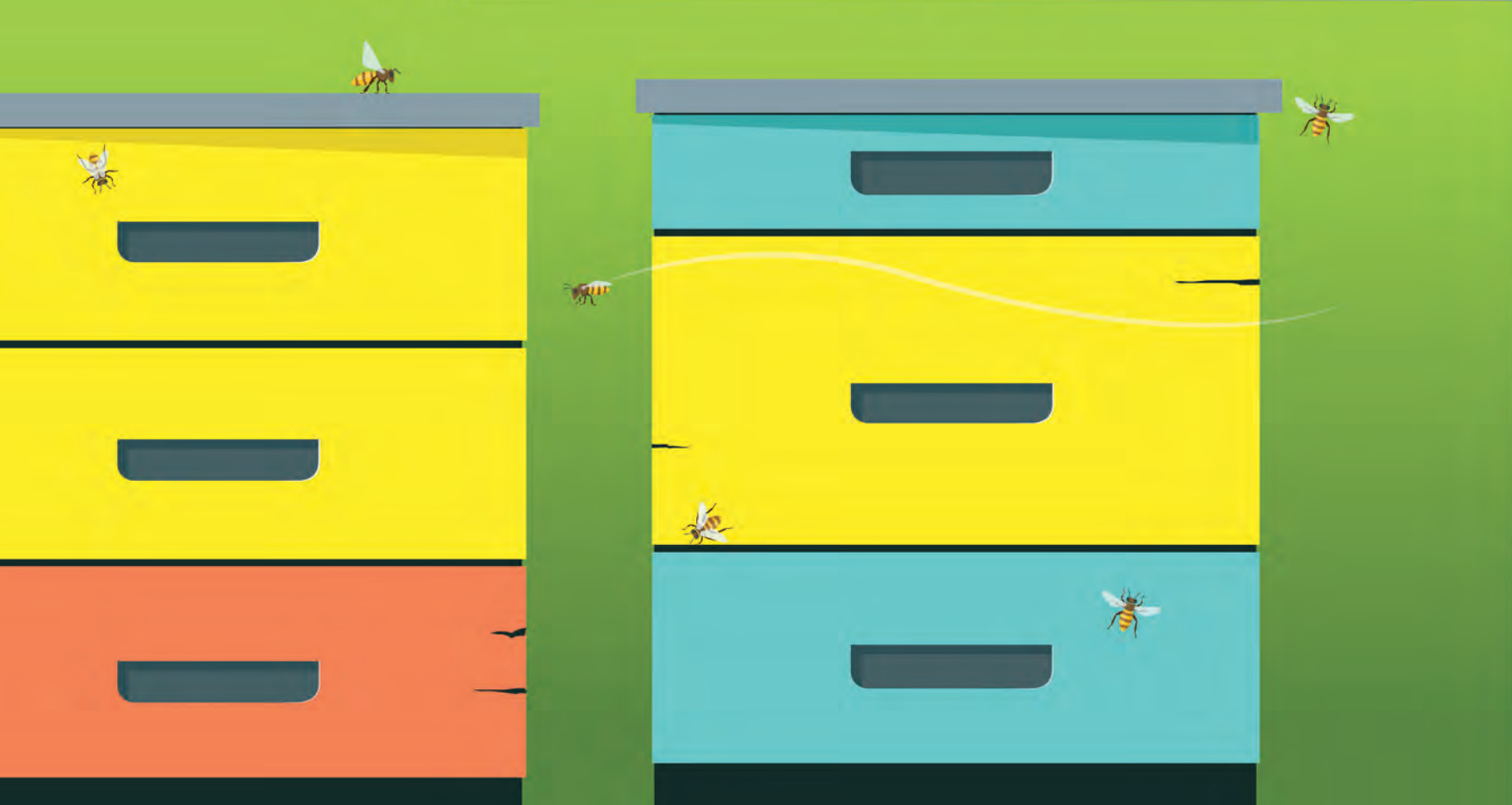
“Hey, I know what they are!” Abby exclaimed. “They’re beehives! I learned about those in school. Why are they there?” she asked.

Yvette pointed toward the large field, “The farmer also grows vegetables. Through an activity called pollination, honey bees help plants grow and multiply by carrying pollen from one plant to another. Farmers all over Canada use bees to help to grow their crops,” she explained. “It’s important to our producers to use safe and effective ways to protect our crops that don’t hurt bees so they can still pollinate the crops.”



UN-BEE-liveable:
Bees fly at a speed of around 25 kilometers per hour, and beat their wings 200 times per second!







"Where do they get the bees?" Abby asked.

"A person who raises honey bees is called an **Apiarist**," Yvette the Vet explained, "and we have several of them around the province. They raise the bees for their honey but they also place them on farms where they still produce honey while they pollinate the crops. Everybody wins. By the way Abby, Canada has some of the healthiest honey bees in the world!"

As they walked across the road to the broiler farm, Abby chuckled,
“I just thought of a joke; why did the chicken cross the road?”

“I don’t know,” answered Yvette, “why?”

“To get a glass of milk,” Abby laughed.

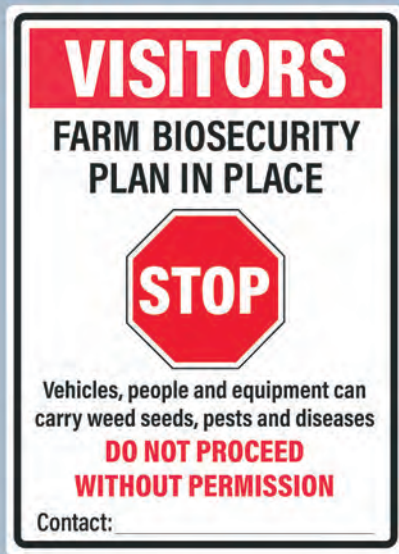
“Oh my,” groaned Yvette. “You’re dairy funny!”



Chick this out: Chicken Farmers of Canada follow the Raised by a Canadian Farmer On-Farm Food Safety Program that emphasizes animal health, cleanliness, and safety throughout each step of the production cycle, and follows strict biosecurity measures to protect animal health and prevent flock infections from outside sources.







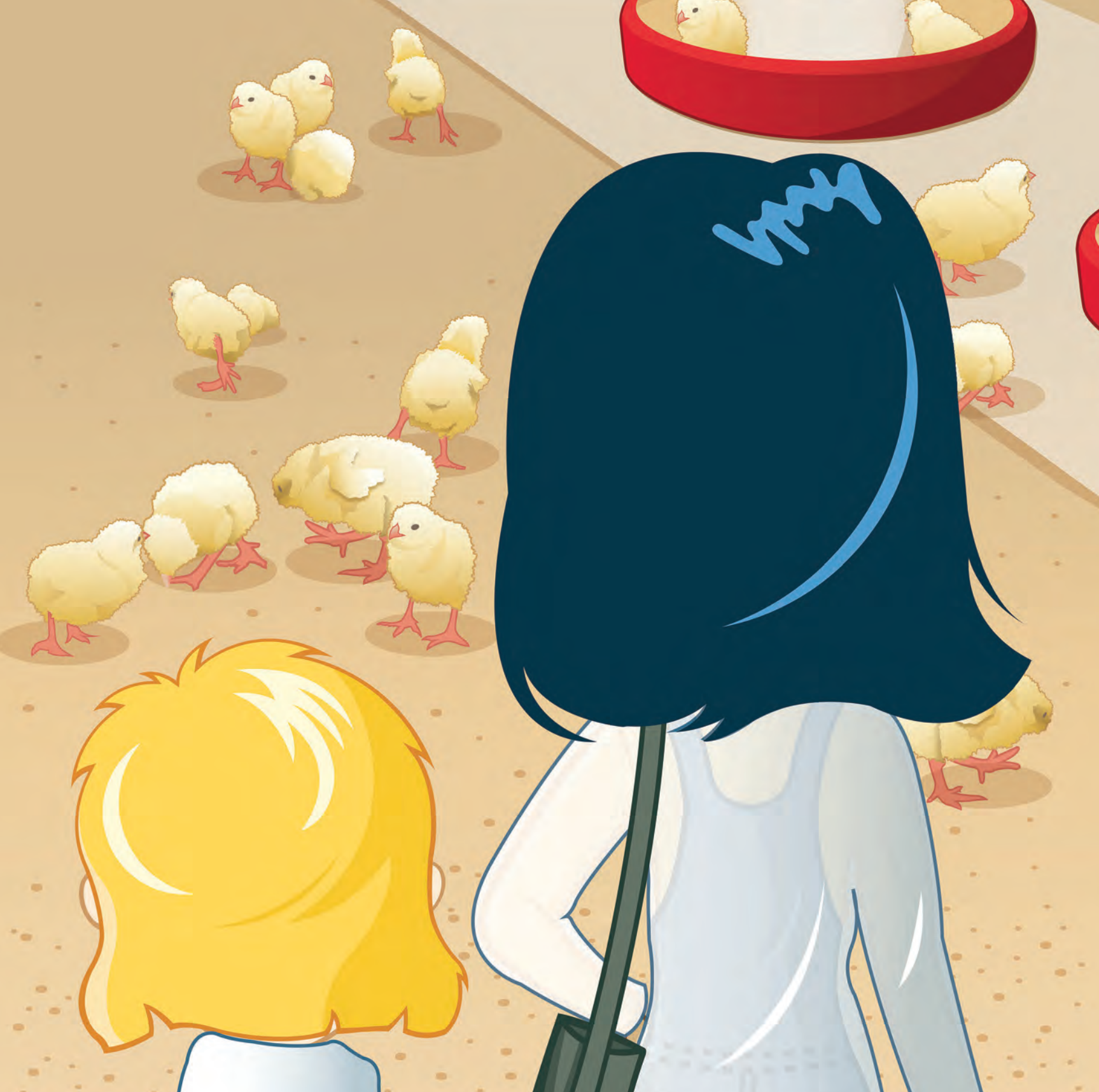
As they walked into the broiler barn they had to slip sterile booties over their footwear and wear clean coveralls.

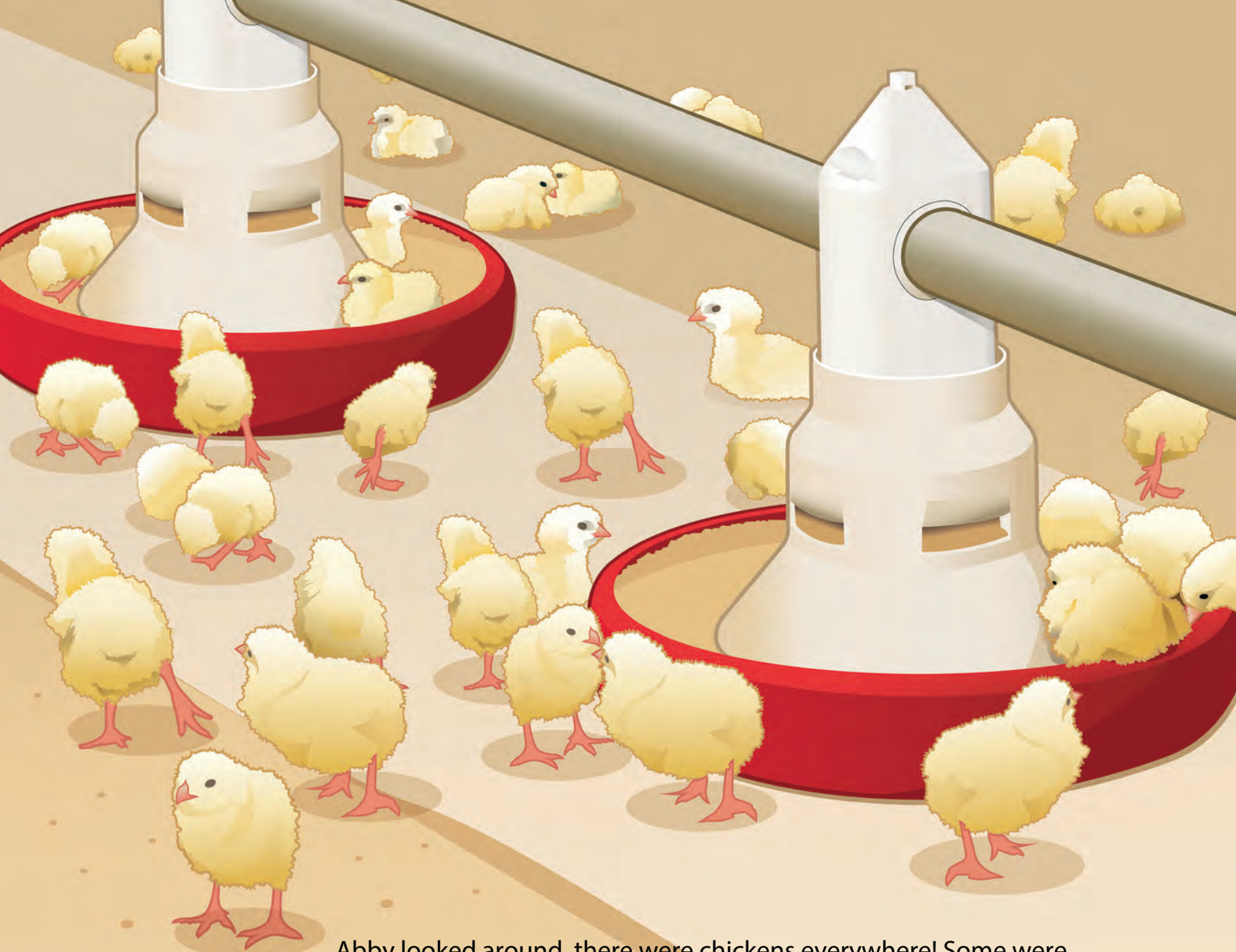
“We have to do this, so we don’t bring **contaminants** from our boots and clothes into the barn,” Yvette explained.

“It’s all part of the biosecurity that I told you about earlier,” she added.



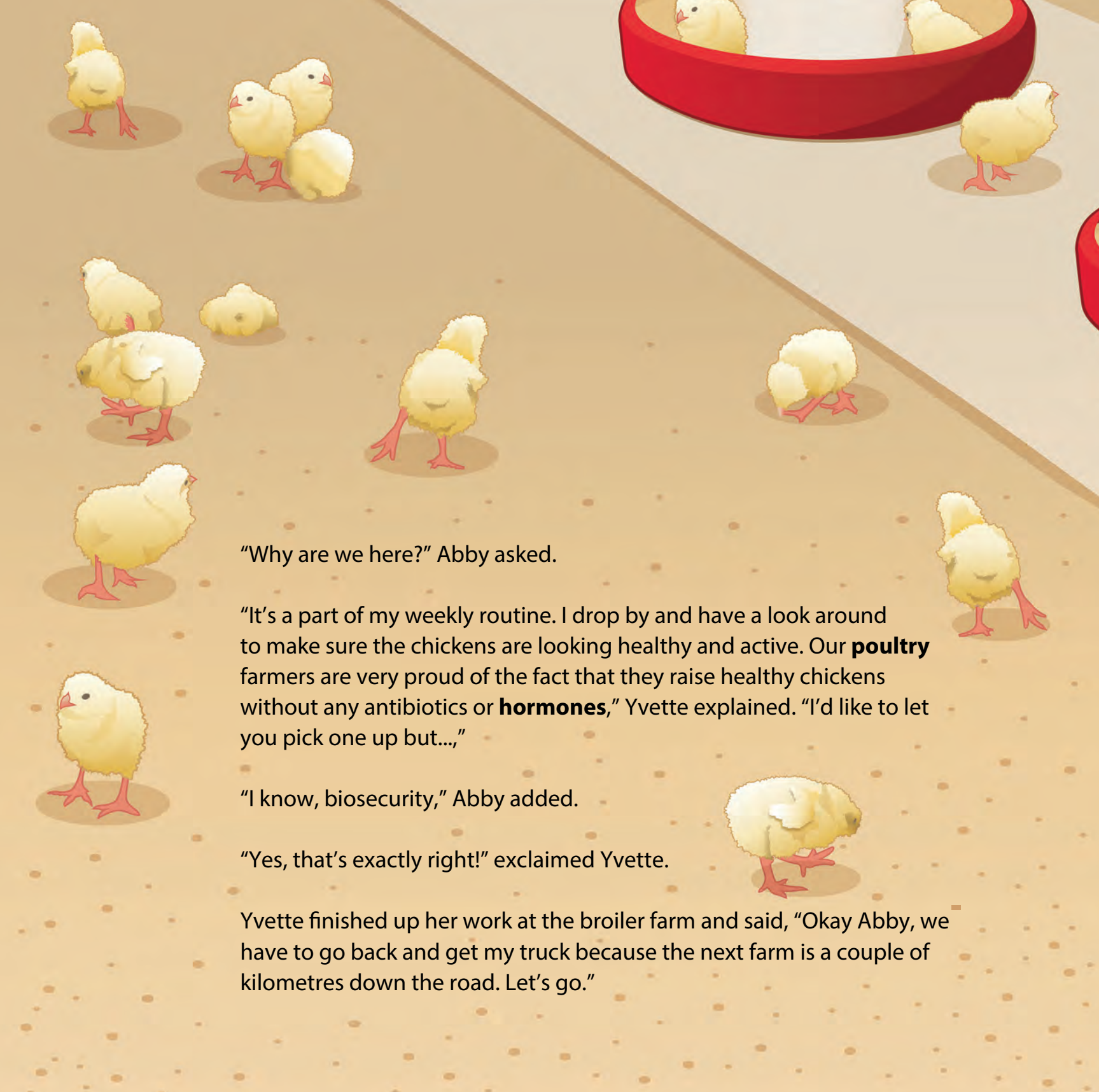
Farmers use biosecurity practices designed to reduce the introduction of disease and pests onto a farm and to minimize their spread within a farm.





Abby looked around, there were chickens everywhere! Some were running around. There were some eating and others were drinking water.

"We consider these to be free-run chickens," Yvette explained. "That means they are free to move around in the barn and eat and drink when they want."



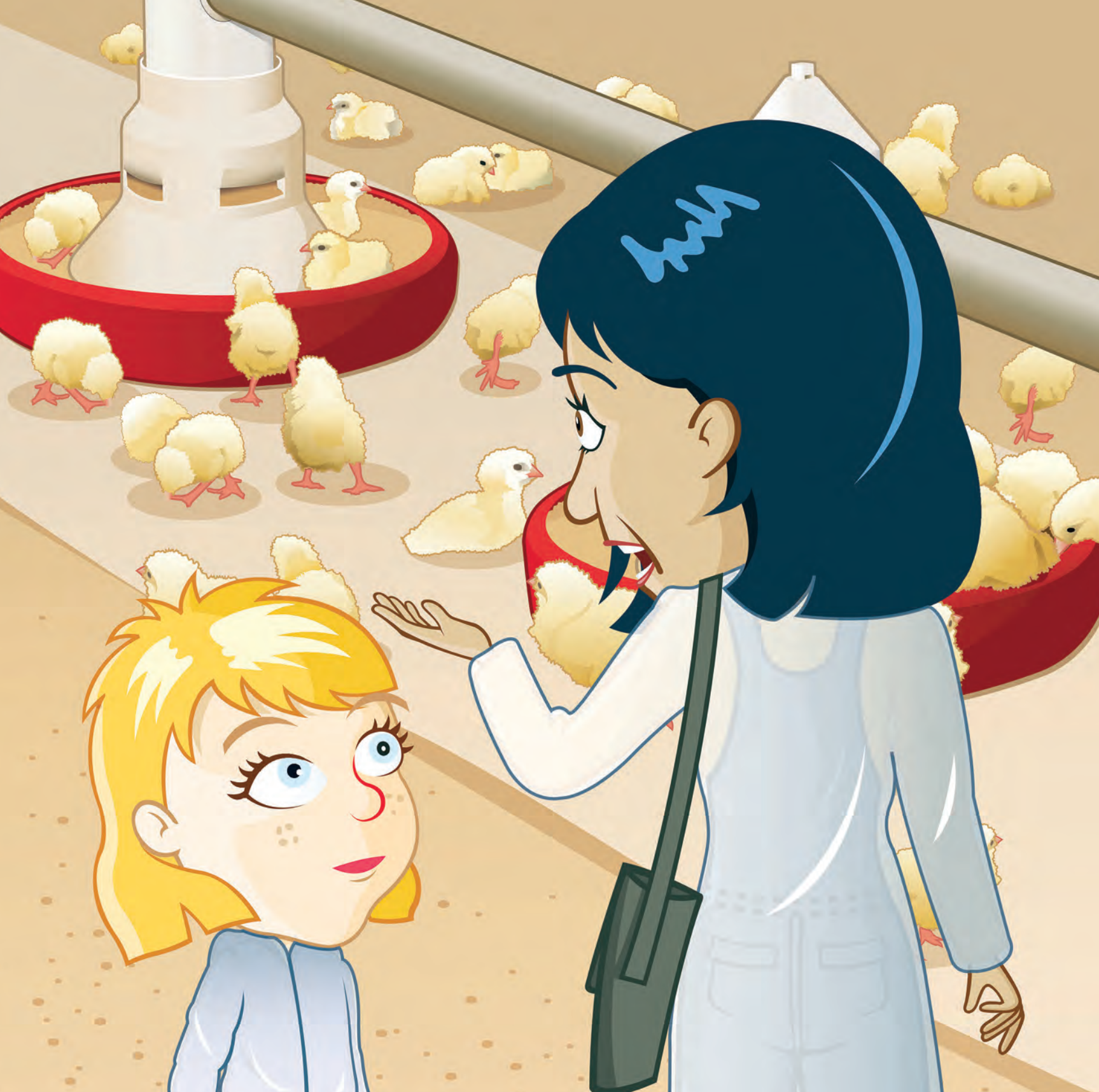
"Why are we here?" Abby asked.

"It's a part of my weekly routine. I drop by and have a look around to make sure the chickens are looking healthy and active. Our **poultry** farmers are very proud of the fact that they raise healthy chickens without any antibiotics or **hormones**," Yvette explained. "I'd like to let you pick one up but...,"

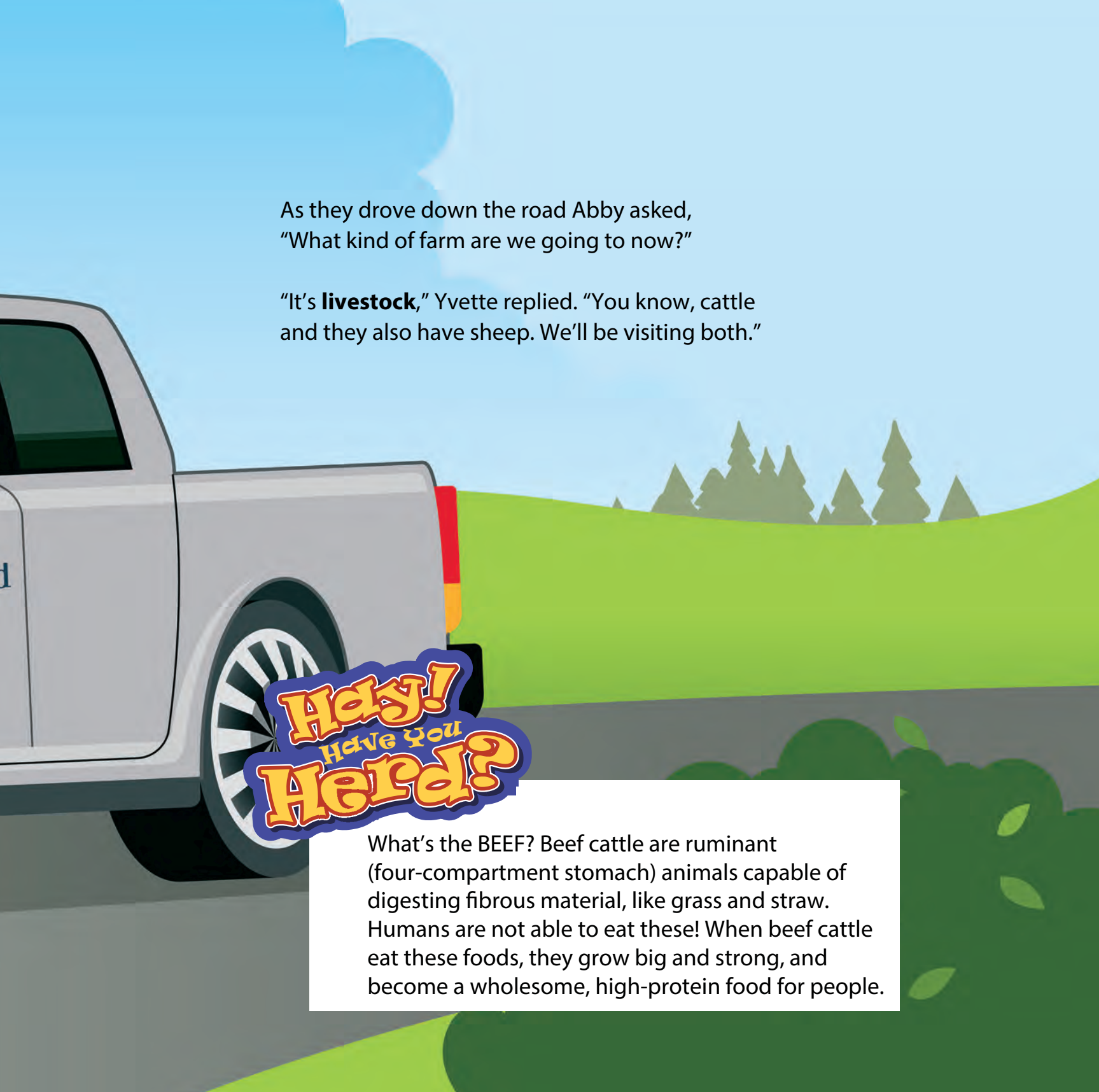
"I know, biosecurity," Abby added.

"Yes, that's exactly right!" exclaimed Yvette.

Yvette finished up her work at the broiler farm and said, "Okay Abby, we have to go back and get my truck because the next farm is a couple of kilometres down the road. Let's go."





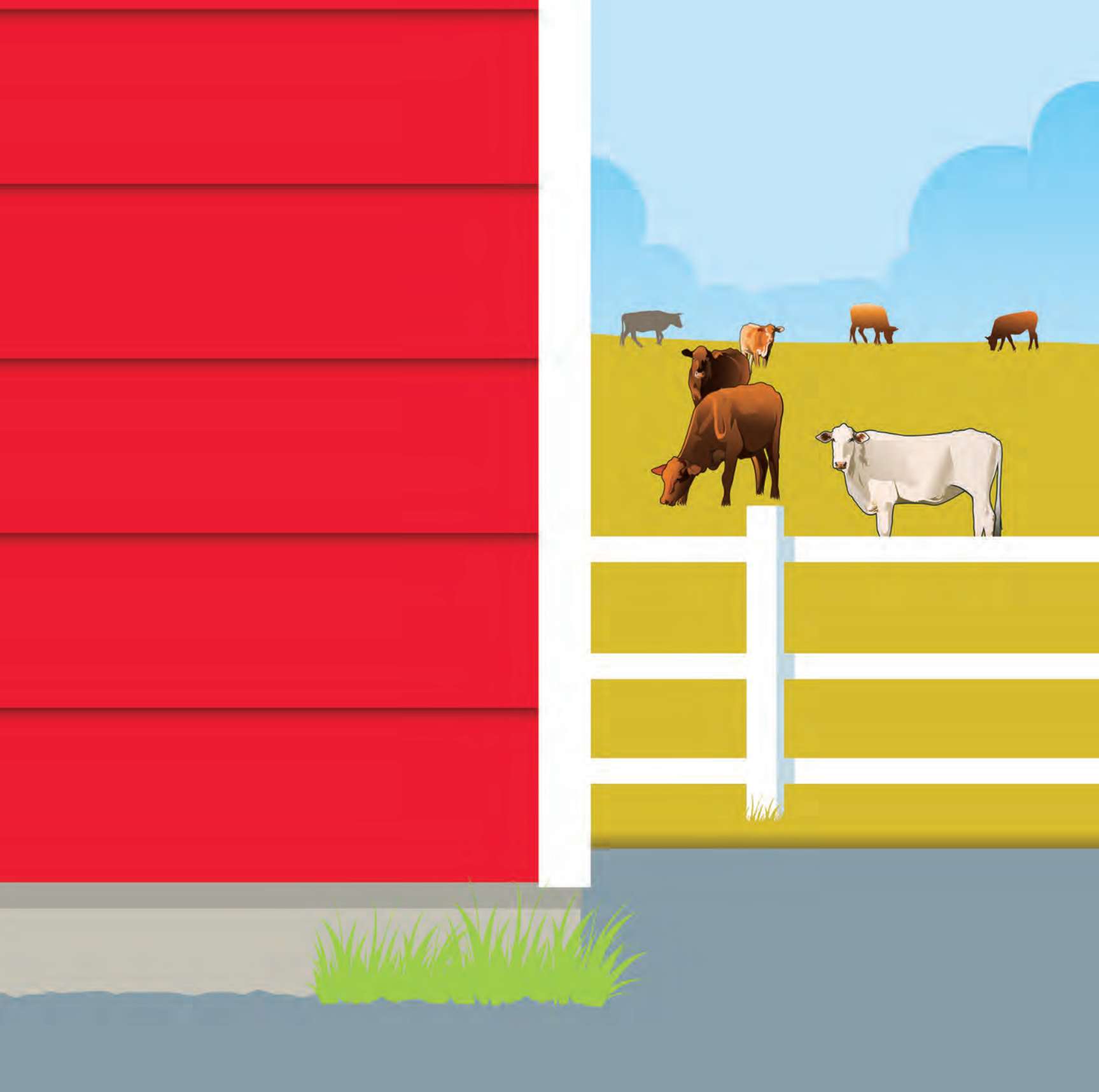


As they drove down the road Abby asked,
“What kind of farm are we going to now?”

“It’s **livestock**,” Yvette replied. “You know, cattle
and they also have sheep. We’ll be visiting both.”

Hay!
Have you
Heard?

What’s the BEEF? Beef cattle are ruminant (four-compartment stomach) animals capable of digesting fibrous material, like grass and straw. Humans are not able to eat these! When beef cattle eat these foods, they grow big and strong, and become a wholesome, high-protein food for people.



When they arrived at the farm, Abby could see large animals in a field behind the barn. "Oh look," she said, "more cows." "Those are not cows," Yvette corrected her, "Those are bulls. Cows are female but these are male. Males cannot produce milk."

"Oh, I didn't know that," said Abby. "So is there a sick animal here that you have to see?" she asked.





"There is a bull that was sick and taking antibiotics to feel better. I need to take a look at him, Yvette answered. "That bull should be better by now, but we have to make sure before he is allowed back with the other animals. The farmers with livestock are very proactive," she added.

"What does proactive mean?" asked Abby.

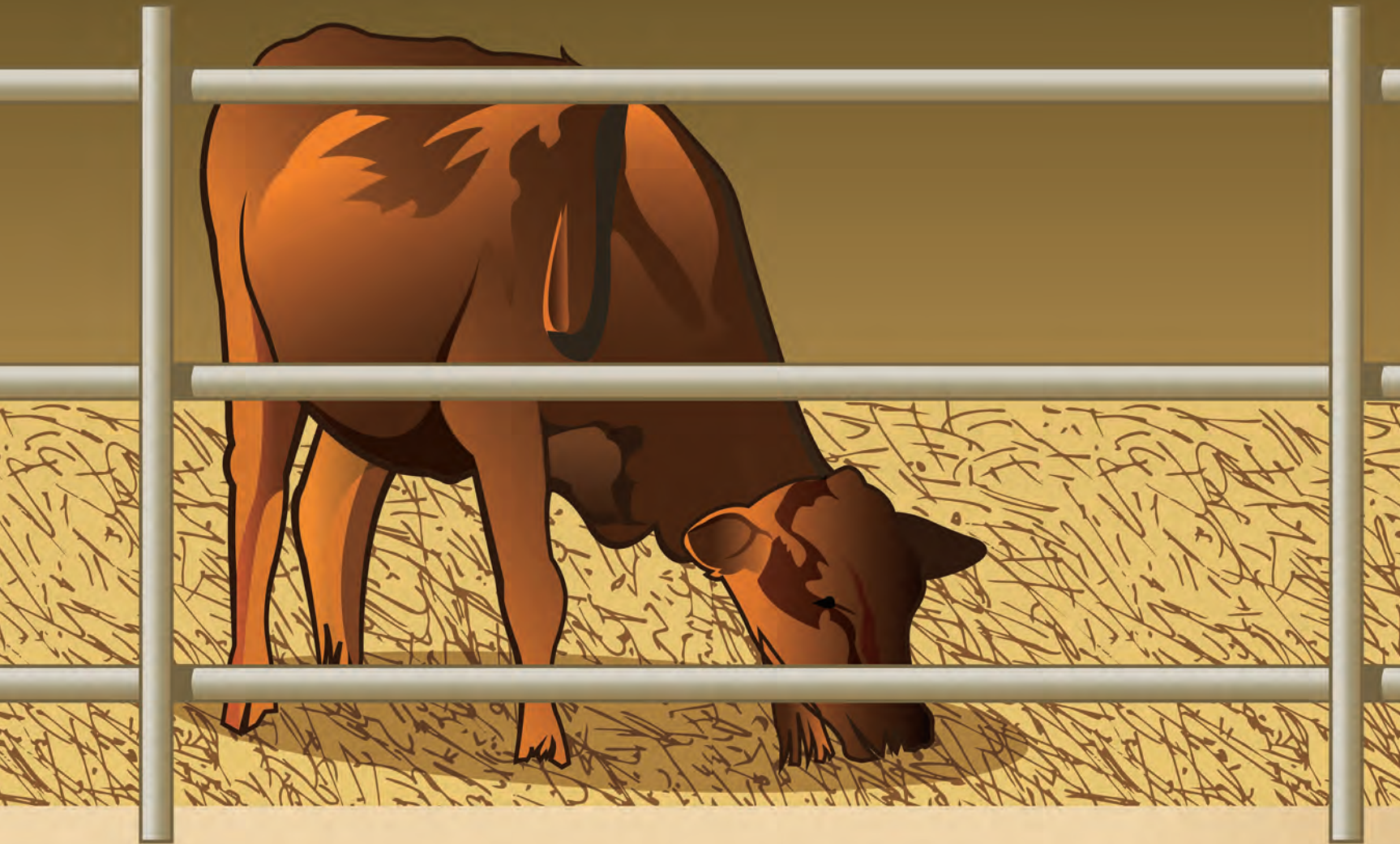
"Well, I come out here on a regular basis to make sure the animals are doing well and to make sure they continue to do well. That's much better than me coming out after an animal gets sick. If we worked that way, there could be a number of animals sick before I get a chance to see them. That's being proactive."

"Oh, I see," said Abby.

"Another way the farmers are very proactive is by making sure their herd is getting good quality food that's full of vitamins and **nutrients**. They have a full history of each animal, which includes health, where the animal came from or if they were born on the farm they are raised on. They also follow... come on Abby you know what the word of the day is."

"Biosecurity," answered Abby.

"Correct, it's important to keep our herds among the healthiest and most productive in the world!" exclaimed Yvette. "You just won an exclusive trip to the next barn!"



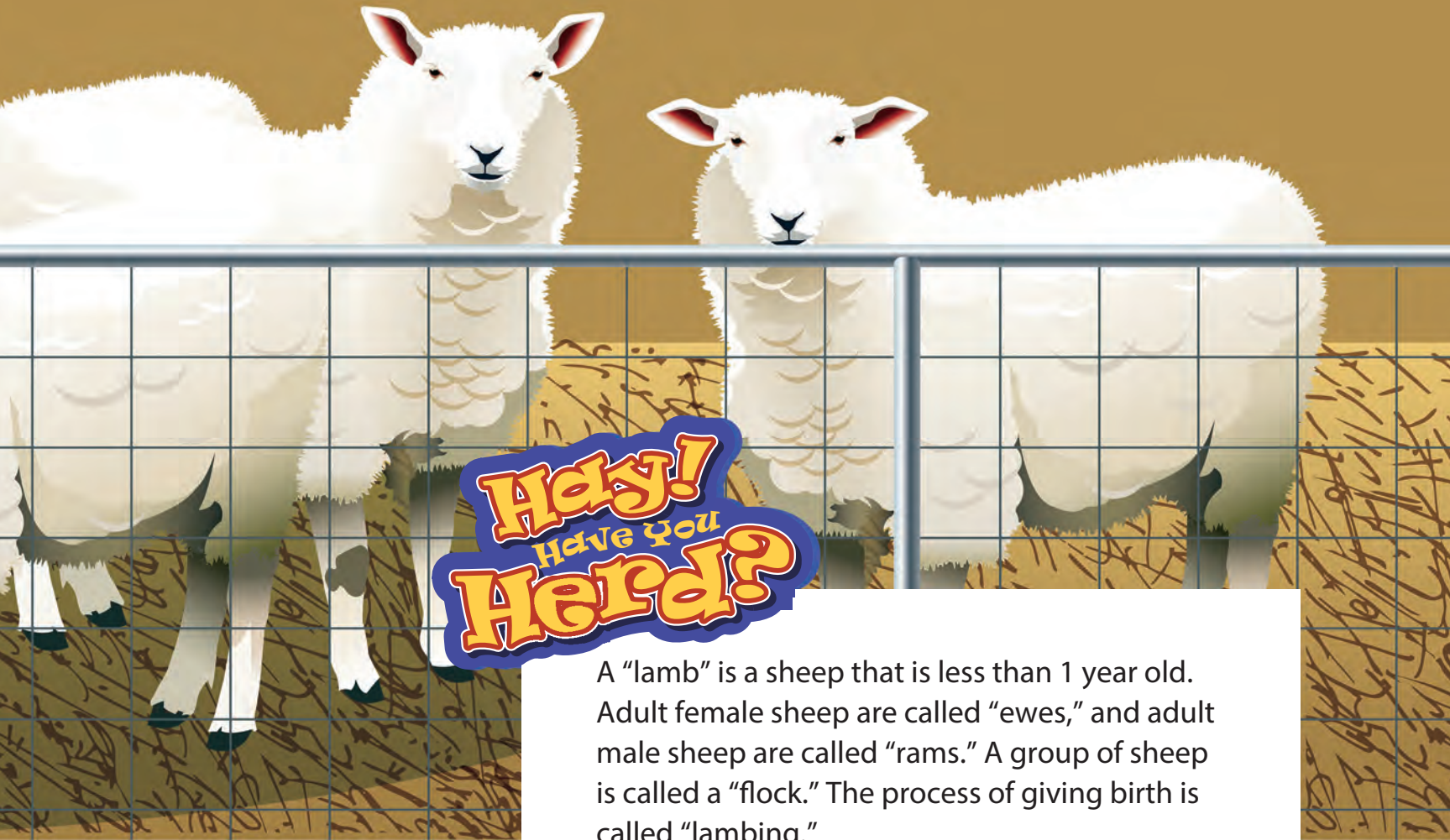
They then went into a barn to check on the bull that was sick. Yvette made her way over to where the bull was eating. "That's a good sign," she said to Abby, "I did bloodwork last week when I was here and that all came back fine, so I think he can go back with the herd." The bull made a loud moo.

"I think he 'HERD' what you said," Abby joked and they both laughed.

"Everything looks good here, so let's go have a look at the sheep," Yvette said.

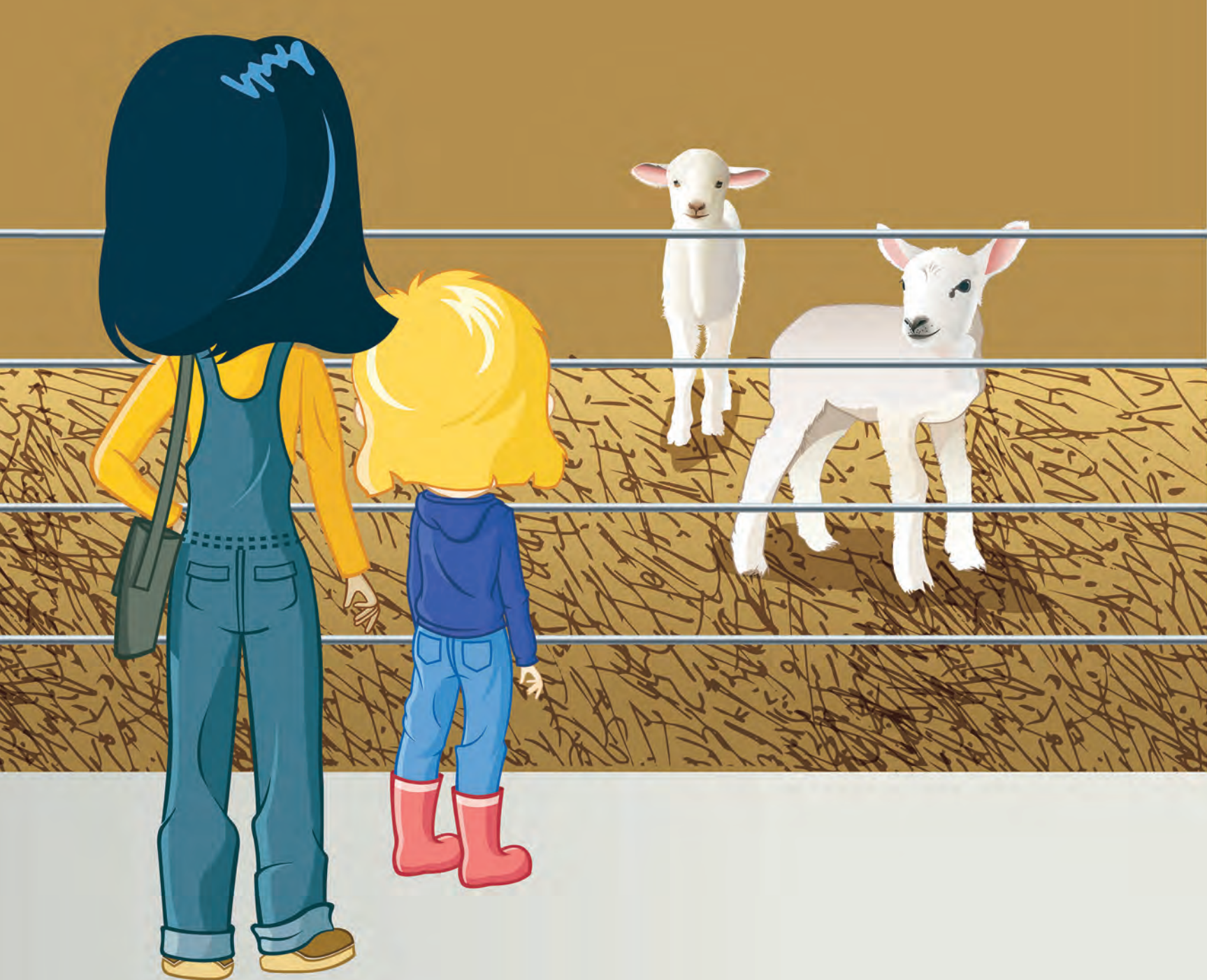






A "lamb" is a sheep that is less than 1 year old. Adult female sheep are called "ewes," and adult male sheep are called "rams." A group of sheep is called a "flock." The process of giving birth is called "lambing."

They walked across the lane to the sheep barn. The sheep looked nervously at Abby. "They are a little curious about you," said Yvette. "They know me, but they haven't seen you before. We have to go down in the back area to check on a couple of ewes and their lambs," added Yvette.



"Oh my, these are beautiful!" exclaimed Abby when she saw the little lambs.

"They were born a few days ago," stated Yvette.

"So are you being proactive here?" asked Abby.

"Yes, definitely," answered Yvette. "But the ewe has gotten a head start on us. Right after the lamb is born, it naturally nurses from the ewe, having its first milk which is called **colostrum**. This first milk is full of nutrients and **antibodies** which protect lambs from infection and disease. Once the lamb and ewe bond, the lamb receives a number of shots to protect them from certain diseases and bacteria. The same as you getting vaccines for mumps and measles."

"When do the lambs start eating?" asked Abby.

"After a few weeks. They may even nibble a little in the first week," answered Yvette.



EWE should know that Sheep Producers take care of their animals by using good management practices and working with regional veterinarians to develop a health and **breeding program** that includes annual vaccination and **parasite prevention**.



"That lamb seems to like you," Yvette added, "she's following you."

"Where do sheep watch videos?" Abby asked.

"I don't know, where?" answered Yvette.

"EWETube!" Abby exclaimed.

"That was a baaaaad one," Yvette joked.

My Report on
My Day with Yvette the Vet
By Abby



The following week, Abby was back at school presenting her report to the rest of the class. Abby told them about the animals, **food security**, biosecurity, and how farms are being proactive. Just as Abby finished, the teacher said, "Excuse me, Abby, but we have a special guest that wanted to drop by. They're waiting for us outside."



The class herded themselves outside and there was Yvette the Vet with the little lamb that followed Abby when she was in the barn. All the kids came up to see the little lamb and to ask Yvette questions.



"Well," said Abby, "I guess the nursery rhyme has to change to, Abby had a little lamb, that followed her to school one day."

Yvette, the teacher, and all the kids started laughing, and the little lamb let out a little baaaa.

HAY have you HERD

Definitions

Veterinarian: a doctor licensed to provide medical care to animals.

Contaminant: a polluting substance that makes something impure.

Forage: bulky food such as grass or hay for livestock.

Pesticide: a substance used for destroying insects or other organisms harmful to cultivated plants or to animals.

Quarantine: a state, period, or place of isolation in which people or animals that may have been exposed to infectious disease are placed.

Biosecurity: those practices that prevent or mitigate disease from entering, spreading within, or being released from operations that may contain livestock.

Antibiotics: a medicine used to treat infections caused by bacteria and other microorganisms.

Apiarist: a person who keeps bees, especially to produce honey. The term is also used to describe someone who studies bees.

Vaccine: a substance used to stimulate immunity to a particular infectious disease.

Colostrum: the first milk from the mammary glands after giving birth, rich in antibodies.

Livestock: domesticated animals raised in an agricultural setting in order to produce diversified products for consumption such as meat, eggs, milk, fur, leather, and wool.

Disease: a broadly applied term encompassing the introduction, transmission, spread and/or existence of a range of pests, and other disease-causing agents, including toxins.

Hormones: chemicals that coordinate different functions in your body by carrying messages through your blood to your organs, skin, muscles and other tissues.

Poultry: Poultry are domesticated birds, like chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese, that people raise for their eggs and meat.

Nutrients: important substances you get from food that help your body survive and grow. Nutrients include carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals.

Antibodies: a protein in blood that reacts to particular toxic substances by neutralizing or destroying them. Antibodies provide immunity against these toxic substances.

Breeding program: breeding animals to produce more of certain kinds that they want or to produce animals that are stronger or have certain characteristics.

Parasite prevention: the actions taken to prevent a host organism (like a human or animal) from becoming infected with or infested by parasites. Parasites are organisms that live on or within another organism (the host) and obtain nutrients at the host's expense.

Food security: food security means having reliable access to enough safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and support their physical and mental growth and development.



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