



## Our farmlands are a precious resource...

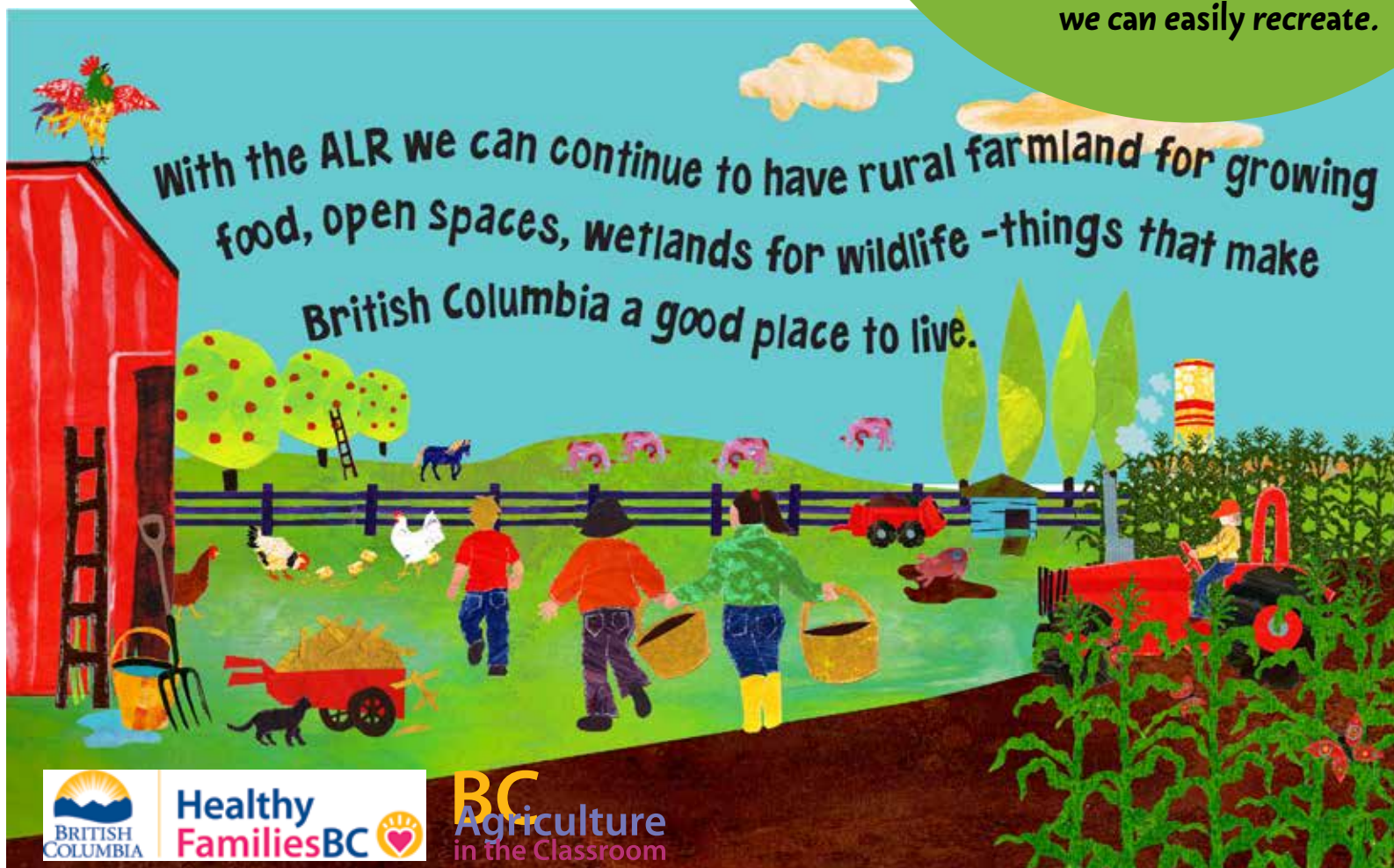
Imagine visiting the countryside and not seeing cornfields, pumpkin patches, cows grazing, fresh cut hay or rows of fruit trees? Imagine no wetlands or green space for birds and other wild animals to feed and make their nests. There might be buildings, houses, shopping malls and roads there instead. Can we grow our food on parking lots?

*What is agricultural land? Wherever we work on agriculture – on the farm and at the ranch, even in the forest, is agricultural land. What makes good agricultural land? Good soil. Once soil is paved over it cannot easily be turned back into farmland again.*

As cities and towns grow, buildings and roads spread into neighbouring farmlands. Wouldn't it be great if we could draw a line around all the farms and nothing could cross that line? That's just what the province of BC did in 1973 when it created the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). We mapped out all of the lands being used for farming. Within these zones, farms of all types and sizes are recognized as the priority use of that land. Now, crucial farmland is preserved and urban growth is controlled.

### Why do we need the ALR?

**BC has spectacular landscape, but there is limited space for agriculture. Only 5% of BC's land is suitable for farming. Fertile soil takes thousands of years to develop requiring the right combination of climate, geology and biology. It is not something we can easily recreate.**



Healthy FamiliesBC

BC Agriculture in the Classroom

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