

3rd Grade State Winner

Farmers Are Out of This World

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One hot August day, a boy named Cal was out in his family's field picking sweet corn for dinner. It was early in the morning, and he was trying to beat the heat.



Cal heard a loud, weird noise coming from the middle of the field. He began to run through the corn toward the sound to see what happened.

Cal could hardly believe his eyes.

He was looking at a spaceship in the middle of the corn field!



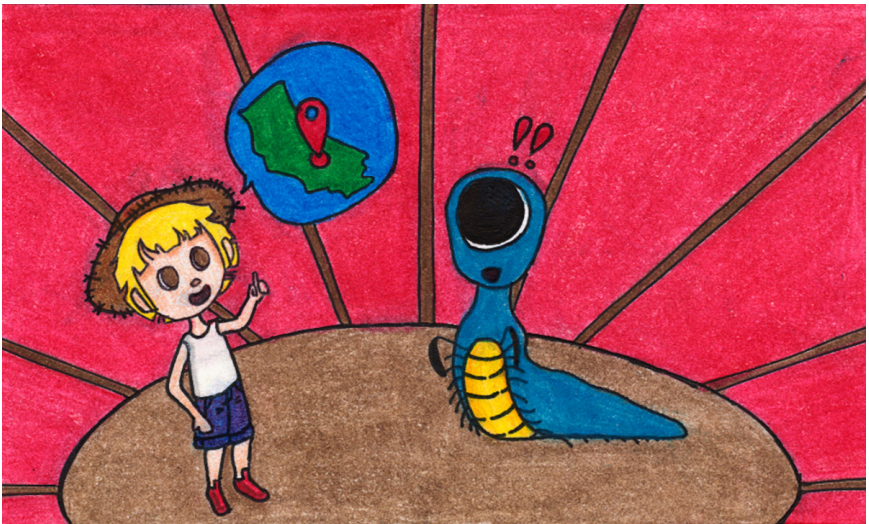
As he went closer, something came out of the ship. At first, he didn't know what it was, but as the thing came closer, Cal realized it was an alien! The alien had one eye, a body like a snake, and arms and legs like a centipede.



Cal started to run away, but at that moment the alien grabbed his arm and in English said, "Wait! I am a friend! Please help me. Where am I?"



Cal stared at the alien in disbelief. He finally responded, "You are on planet Earth, in Visalia, California, in the United States of America. I am Cal and this is my home and my family's farm. Who are you?"



"Thank you. I am from the planet Zlyborg, my name is Jac. What is a farm? And what are these things I landed in?" Jac was pointing at the tall, green corn stalks that surrounded them.



Cal grabbed a piece of corn and said to Jac, "This is called sweet corn. We grow it every summer on our farm and sell it for humans to eat. Here, try a bite, it's sweet." Cal peeled back the husk on the corn ear and handed it to Jac who took a bite.

"Yum, this is good! Do you grow other food on your farm?" asked Jac.



"Yes," said Cal. He continued, "We grow oranges, plums, and almonds, and our neighbor has a dairy farm." Cal was excited to show Jac around his farm.

They walked to the different parts of their farm. Jac tasted juicy and tangy oranges, sweet and crisp plums, and crunchy almonds. "How do you grow these crops?" asked Jac.



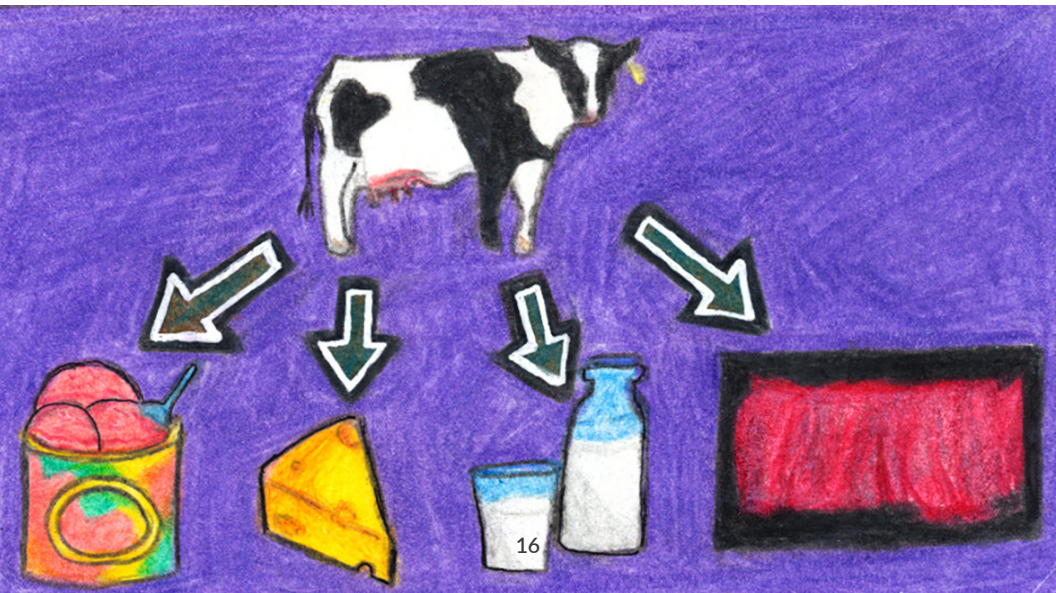
Cal explained that the farmers must plant the seeds and young trees in good soil. Cal told Jac that farmers take care of the plants and trees by giving them sunshine, water, and fertilizing them with the nutrients they need.





Cal then took Jac to the neighbor's dairy farm and Jac noticed a horrible stench in the air. Jac asked, "What are these smelly, black and white things and what do they do?"

Cal said, "These are dairy cows and they make milk that we drink. Milk is used to make a lot of different foods like ice cream, cheese, yogurt, and other nutritious things. Some cows are raised for beef, which is two of my favorite foods: hamburgers and steak."



Jac asked Cal, "Do the cows grow out of the soil too?"

"No," laughed Cal. "Cows are mammals so the female cows grow a baby in their body and they give birth to their calf, which is a baby cow. After the baby is born, the mom is able to make the milk, and the dairyman must take care of the calf to make sure it is healthy. They feed it and give it water to help it grow."



"It seems like water is important to growing things," said Jac.

"Yes, water is very important! All living things on Earth need water to survive. Farmers try their best to use water wisely so they can grow enough food to feed the world," said Cal.

On their way back to the spaceship, Jac said, "Farmers are really important on earth. I wish I could be a farmer on my planet."



Cal smiled and said, "Here, take this bag of seeds. If you have soil, sunlight and most importantly water, maybe you can be a farmer on your planet."

Jac said, "Thank you for teaching me about farming. I do have those things on my planet and will try to grow these seeds. Will I get to see you again?"



"I sure hope so. You know where to find me," said Cal.

Cal and Jac said goodbye.

Cal watched and waved as Jac went back to his spaceship. The ship lifted off and hovered above the farm for a couple of seconds before it flew away heading back to Jac's planet, Zlyborg.

