

November 2010.

## My first Dexter

It is March 2010 and I'm getting my first heifer. My heifer's name is Wicktorri (short form Torri). She has quite a personality. She can be a bit bossy and stubborn and often throws her weight around. Especially if you're walking with a grain bucket. She is often known for head butting me so I spill the grain, though she is very calm once you have her in the halter and working with the show stick. She is a great heifer and I'm glad to have shown her at the Rockton World's Fair for my 4-H project. This is the story of Torri and me.

Torri came to the farm while I was not around. So as I'm sure many kids would be; I was excited to truly meet and work with my heifer. At first my ambitions were to work with her everyday and get her ready to show at the fair. Though of course other events came in the way - getting home late from school, going to England, and out in the city with friends or family. After a while training got more difficult. Torri started understanding what was going to happen and stayed with the group. A bucket of grain would often make her think twice of what to do. After a few months things just got easier and easier Torri enjoyed walking and grooming and the washes on the hot summer days. All at the end she knew she would wind up with a bucket of grain. Slowly with the help of my 4-H leaders I learned what it takes to become a showman having all the sprays, halters, and blow drier. I knew I was prepared for the Fair in the upcoming months

It finally came time to show my heifer. I was so excited my alarm went off at five thirty in the morning and I bounced right out of bed. My dad and I went and caught Torri and tied her to the back of the trailer, gave her a bucket of grain and she was happy. We got all supplies, put Torri in the trailer, and off we went.

I got to the fair and had to wash Torri. She didn't look too appreciative as it was freezing cold in the morning and there was no warm water! I combed her down, gave her water, and hay and started to make her look nice. I used my combs, sprays, and blow drier to finish the job. While I'm waiting for my show with Torri looking nice and time to spare I took a look around. My heifer was so small compared to the others! But oh well showing is showing and what can I say?

It came time for my age group to show our heifers and I'm super nervous, and of course Torri is in heat!! I think to myself - this will be harder than it seems. There are three in the first group and we try to impress the judge for first place. I came 3<sup>rd</sup> because Torri was in heat and jumping around and missing our new bull Ualter. I still get a ribbon though! I feel great about my finishing knowing I did well and had friends and family saying words of encouragement. My next two finishes brought me no awards but it brought an end to my first year showing Dexter heifers.

With a long day ahead of us at the fair I gave Torri lots of hay and water for her great job in the judging area. After a while we loaded Torri into the trailer and headed home back to the farm after a great day at the fair.

Now Torri lives happily in our fields with her two step sisters - one a heifer, another cow and our bull. Also I should start to think of a name for the new calf coming as Torri has been bred. I think this has been a great experience and I cannot wait until I can train our newest member of the herd Xaviera for next year's fair and hopefully have as much fun as I did last year.

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## My First Yearling Dexter

I got my first Dexter - Wilo (which is short for Wilomena) just after March break, 2010. We had to drive three hours north to bring back our Dexters and I had to halter break her. They were scared of us at first but after a while; training them every other day they got used to us. Wilomena was never fond of being shown. In fact she didn't like it at all. Going into the show ring was a different challenge every time. Wilomena likes to sleep in. I know that because when I was showing her at the Rockton World's Fair I had to get her up at 5:45 and she was standing on her feet since then. It was later when I (everybody) saw the effects of that. At 1:30 I was showing her and all of a sudden she lies down in the middle of the show ring and goes to sleep. So the crowd is laughing, the judge is announcing the winners, and my cow is lying down in front of everybody. It took about 6 people and 5 minutes to get her back up again. From then on she was grumpier than she already was and mad at me because we got her up from her power nap. We thought after that she has had enough, so we bought her a bull. Since we are not allowed to show cows in 4-H my parents have bought another dexter heifer for me to train. This time I have a head start and more training skills. In two years I hope I will be training Wilo's calf for the fall fair.

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