



Yearling Simmental heifer has two normal-looking horns and a third "unicorn" horn. "The bigger the horns grow, the more amazing she looks!" says Kathy Galliford.

How To Grow Your Own Unicorn

As early as 1906, man was tampering with nature to convince people that unicorns do exist. According to various sources on modern unicorn history, the country of Nepal in Asia presented two male sheep with unicorn horns, along with an assortment of other animals, as a gift to the Prince of Wales. They were displayed at a London zoo, and it was eventually discovered that they had two horn buds (bits of horn producing tissue) instead of one under the horn sheath, thus revealing that the single horn was not a natural occurrence... they had been created artificially.

People have been creating unicorns for hundreds of years by transplanting horn buds to the front of sheep and goats.

In 1933, Dr. W. Franklin Dove at the University of Maine set out to prove it. He performed an operation on an Ayrshire bull calf. Both of its horn buds were transplanted to the center of its skull so that they lay side by side over the frontal division of the skull. By trimming the normally round in horn buds so that they were flat along the sides where they touched, Dove's experiment was successful.

He later reported that when the bull was 2 1/2 years old, he used his single horn as a forward thrusting bayonet in his attacks. "While a two-horned animal must make side cuts and slashes, the unicorn can put its full body weight behind its one horn. It becomes almost invincible."

Dr. Dove's unicorn bull became the leader of its herd and was very rarely challenged by other males. When bulls charge each other the main aim is to crack skulls until one or other can take no more. Charging toward an



For years people have been creating unicorns by grafting a "third horn" onto an animal's skull.

enemy who has a spike aimed right between your eyes is a different game altogether.

In the early 1980's, a California couple patented a "third horn" method and then licensed the procedure to Ringling Bros. Circus. He said the goats appeared to have undergone a simple graft in which their own natural horn was made to grow in an unnatural part of their heads.

"If you use anesthesia and it's done by a competent person, it's basically a simple tissue graft," he says.

Surprise Third Horn Extremely Rare

If it weren't for her two other perfectly normal-looking horns, Allan and Kathy Galliford's yearling Simmental heifer could truly be called a "unicorn calf." This strange young animal is getting a lot of media attention, thanks to the fact she has three horns instead of two.

The Gallifords are cow-calf producers from Onoway, Alberta, and say they weren't expecting anything usual to develop at the time this calf was born in the spring of 2002.

"She looked completely normal, except that there was a puffy circular area on her forehead between her eyes that caused the hair to form a "cowlick" in that spot," Kathy says.

To the couple, the puffy spot has always felt more like muscle mass than a fluid pocket, due to its firmness. As the heifer grew, the lump remained unchanged and proportionate to the rest of her head, but of course the three horns became more and more visible.

"We noticed the third horn by the time she was two months old and had a hard time believing our eyes. The bigger the horns grew, the more amazing she looked," Kathy added.

Galliford says the third horn is bigger than her other two normal horns. Now, at 15 months of age, the nameless heifer's two ordinary horns are just starting to show the first signs of the characteristic forward curve found in bovine horns. The "unicorn" horn,

however, is still straight.

The calf has grown at the same rate as Gallifords' other calves and does not seem to be bothered in any way by the lump or extra horn.

The couple normally dehorn their calves at two months of age but, of course, this heifer was excluded from that procedure for obvious reasons.

Once the "unicalf" story was published in a weekly Canadian farm newspaper, the Gallifords were bombarded with requests for interviews and pictures from various radio and television stations, along with daily newspapers. In response to the story, one member of the public who had read about it, told them that the calf's third horn was surely a sign that the end of the world was near.

The couple doesn't plan to sell their peculiar calf. In fact, she is joining their replacement heifer herd and they're looking forward to seeing what type of calves she will produce.

"If someone showed interest, we would consider renting her out so she could be taken around as an oddity display at fairs and exhibitions. People might pay a dollar or two for the chance to see something this rare," Kathy says.

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Mechanical Bull Helps Train Cutting Horses

Training a cutting horse takes a lot of cattle, according to Curt Storbakken, Bow, Washington.

Storbakken trains cutting horses and competes in cutting horse contests around the U.S. and Canada.

He says it takes a minimum of 15 fresh cattle a month (cattle that haven't been worked by a cutting horse) over a period of several months, in order to adequately train a horse to follow and cut an animal out of a herd.

"Cattle numbers are down and it's getting harder and harder to find enough animals," he says.

Horse trainers have used everything from poultry to people on bicycles to try to simulate cattle and keep horses working, but the results just aren't the same as with cattle.

In a fit of frustration with the lack of fresh cattle a few years ago, Storbakken put together a motorized substitute. He calls his invention the Hydrabull. It features a well-muffled 18 hp Honda 2-cyl. engine, with

two hydraulic pumps. The two pumps drive motors on each rear wheel.

"We mounted a crazy wheel up front," Storbakken says. "It has a fiberglass body that looks like a steer. A rider controls the speed and steers it with two levers, just like you'd steer a skid steer loader. With the caster wheel up front, it can move as much like a cow as possible."

Storbakken now uses his Hydrabull for the routine and repetitive procedures necessary to properly train a working cow horse. "After the horse has learned what it needs to do to cut a cow out of a herd using Hydrabull, we'll bring in cattle to put it to the test," he says.

Storbakken went through several prototypes before arriving at the current version of Hydrabull. He made a few of them for other trainers, who found them to be better replacements for cattle than other training tools. "One of them told me the Hydrabull is so real it even fools the flies," he says.

Selling price, excluding delivery, is



Mechanical bull has a fiberglass body that looks like a steer. Rider uses a pair of levers to control speed and steering.

\$16,500.

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