

# Sanctuary saves cow from slaughter

By **Jodi Schneider McNamee**  
Correspondent

Last March Harmony Farm Sanctuary (HFS) in Sisters rescued a baby calf.

When three-day-old “Norman” arrived at HFS, he developed scours and pneumonia, both of which are major causes of young calf death. Since he was a dairy calf, he was pulled from his mom at birth and did not get the colostrum essential for health and, often, survival.

“When a female dairy cow is born she is a future dairy cow but the male isn’t useful so they either go to veal crates, dog food companies or livestock auctions,” said Robine Bots, founder of HFS.

The calf was put up for auction and Harmony Farm purchased him and brought him to the sanctuary in Sisters, a safe place for rescued and adopted animals where rehabilitation is provided when needed.

Norman made it through and is now thriving!

Just last week Bots received the news that Joan Miller, a retired animal behaviorist from Terrebonne, needed a safe place for a 12-year-old dairy cow to live in peace.

“I went to buy hay for my

horses and stopped at a local farm by my house. I was looking at the owner’s cattle and their babies,” Miller told *The Nugget*. “The farmer told me that the 12-year-old dairy cow that just weaned her last baby was going to be slaughtered in a couple of days. He said she was old for a dairy cow and had been producing babies her whole life.”

Once dairy cows are so worn out that they have produced all the milk they can, they are sent to slaughter — yet the average natural lifespan for a cow could be as long as 25 years.

“I just needed to try for the rescue,” Miller said. “I couldn’t bring her home, so I contacted Harmony Farm Sanctuary.”

The “mama” cow is a black and white SimAngus weighing in at 1,300 pounds. The price to purchase a dairy cow is usually \$1 a pound. Miller got the price discounted down to 70 cents a pound. HFS needed to raise \$900 as quickly as possible!

“We raised the money in less than 24 hours between Facebook, Instagram, friends of the farm, and 3 Sisters Equine Refuge,” Bots said.

3 Sisters Equine Refuge is a charity founded in 2014 to provide rehabilitation,

retraining and placement for equines.

“Rescuing animals is a team effort. We have partnered with 3 Sisters Equine Refuge during a few other rescues and we support each other in our fundraising and other efforts,” Bots added.

The dairy cow’s usefulness may have been gone to the rancher, but luckily for her she has an opportunity to live out her useful life at Harmony Farm Sanctuary.

“I realize I can’t save the world, but I can make a world of difference in the life of this sentient being,” Bots said.

One of the goals of HFS is to raise consciousness about the treatment of animals that people use for food. And another goal is to spread compassion for all beings; human and animal.

Volunteers helped guide Miller’s trailer into the small pasture. Once the trailer door opened mama cow sauntered out.

Her udders still full of milk hung low to the ground.

“We don’t think she’s ever been handled and she’s only seen other cows or dogs before,” said Bots.



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Harmony Farm Sanctuary rescued a dairy cow from slaughter.

The other farm animals came as close as possible within their own areas to have a look see at the new kid on the block.

Norman, the calf who since his rescue has been befriended by two goats, Petra and Buck, walked cautiously up to his gate to see just who this new arrival was.

“To all of you who supported our cause to rescue Mama Cow, we thank you from the bottom of all our hearts. Here she is getting introduced to Norman the calf that volunteer Michele Lynn rescued for Harmony Farm Sanctuary at two days old from the auction,” said Lene Banke-Fornalski.

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