

# Introducing... Katie Normet

Recipient of the 2011 Women of Excellence in Agriculture Award, presented by FWIO



Katie Normet has been visiting the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair since she was six years old. Riding the Go Train from Oakville was always an exciting event. The memory of walking in the chilly night air, past the steamy pretzel and peanut vendors, in through the doors to the warmth and the smell of horses is

and looked after the farm so the owners could leave and take part in showing their animals.

Katie volunteered at the Royal as a student while at the University of Guelph. She had a great time playing with the tractors and farm equipment while educating the “city kids” about farming and agriculture. Through this experience, Katie realized the importance of teaching children about agriculture.

Katie fulfilled her dream of moving from the city to the country in 1999 after completing her studies at the University of Guelph. She now milks goats and makes cheese on her farm in Arthur. Every year she volunteers her time at several local fairs to educate children about agriculture. She speaks to as many as 1,000 children each year, teaching them about her goats and the products they produce.

a very fond memory for Katie. She always hoped there would be tickets available for the horse show which was always magical and exciting. Travelling home late at night, tired, with the smell of horses and cattle on her clothes, dreaming of one day showing at the Royal always put a big smile on Katie’s face. That was how Katie’s love for the Royal started and her passion and excitement for the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has continued ever since.

Katie’s volunteer experience at the Royal also includes working at booths that represent her community and industry. Over the years, Katie has stood in many booths speaking to the public and answering questions. Her reward is raising public awareness about rural Ontario, agriculture and our locally produced food.

It was a struggle for Katie to experience farming while living in the city, so it was a dream come true when Katie, 14, had the opportunity to volunteer and groom Canadian Sport Horses that were competing at the Royal Winter Fair. Katie would spend several memorable days at the Fairgrounds looking after the horses, hardly ever taking a break. It was an experience she loved. Being a part of the sights, smells, and sounds of the Royal was heaven for her.

Katie has never been in the spotlight at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair until recently. She had always dreamed of one day showing her own horses or livestock at the Royal, but it was her cheese that won her the ribbons she always dreamed of winning. In 2009, Katie won three second place ribbons for three of her goat cheeses. In 2010, Katie was very pleased to have the champion cheese of the soft ripened goat cheese class.

In the years that followed, Katie volunteered for many farms. Horses, beef cattle, dairy cattle, it really didn’t matter as long as she could spend time at the Royal. Katie was never paid for her time, she was simply happy to take part in such a wonderful event and to help the exhibitors who needed it. Katie even gave up her time at the Royal

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has always been an event Katie cherishes. She believes it was her childhood love of the Fair that created her passion for agriculture and inspired her to make farming her lifestyle.

