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K. C. Fouts

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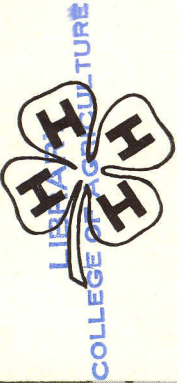


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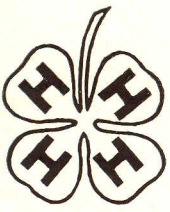
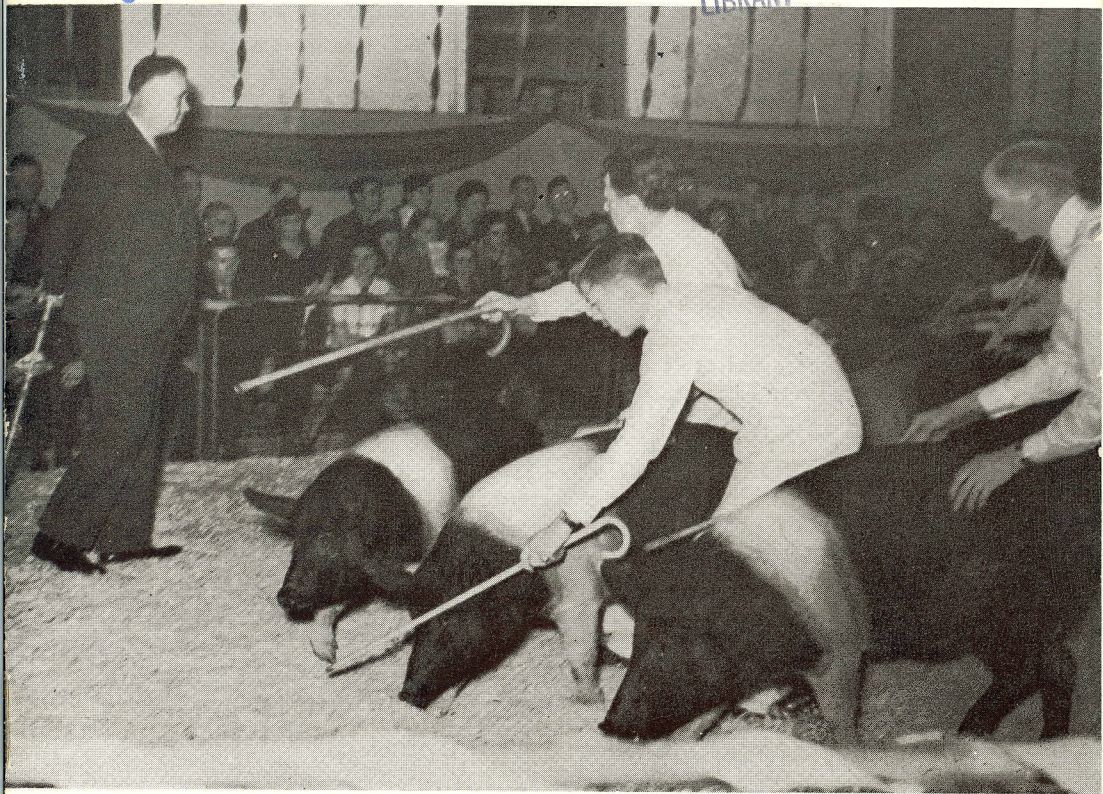
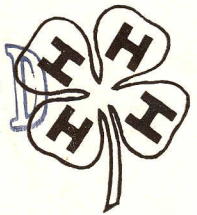
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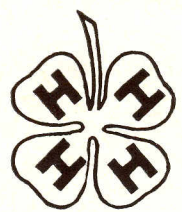
SHOWING MEAT ANIMALS

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The University of Nebraska
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W.H. Brokaw, Director
U. S. Department of
Agriculture Cooperating



FOREWORD

FOR a number of years there has been a distinct need felt both by local leaders and 4-H Club members for information on showmanship. We have been unable to locate anything of this kind in printed form. This text has been prepared by Mr. K. C. Fouts, County Extension Agent of Seward, Nebraska. He has consulted and obtained opinions of animal husbandmen, local leaders, county agents, and club members before preparing the circular.

Since this was the first publication of its kind we felt that it was important to have the approval of the many concerned and so the manuscript was presented to a number of those working with 4-H Club members, to herdsmen, and to breed association secretaries. All have given their approval and expressed appreciation for such a circular.

There has been some difference of opinion about details in showmanship. We are glad to present this Extension circular which, for the time being at least, will be used as the basis of showmanship in 4-H Clubs in Nebraska.

We wish to express our appreciation to all who have carefully and critically read the publication and to K. C. Fouts, who has compiled the information and written the circular.

L. I. FRISBIE
State 4-H Club Leader

Showing Meat Animals

K. C. FOUTS

SHOWMANSHIP has become an interesting phase of events on the 4-H program at our fairs and livestock shows. It presents an opportunity for club members to display skill in an activity of project work with recognition being given to their own training and ability rather than the rating of their animals. It presents an opportunity for the judges to make an interesting event of a class through the efforts of individuals whose work exemplifies clearly, correctness in presentation of animals as well as observance of show-ring courtesy. The ring-side audience likes to follow the judge in his selections. General understanding by the showmen, the judges, and the audience as to what constitutes showmanship and show-ring courtesy is necessary if the most satisfaction is to be derived.

Showmanship

Showmanship consists in having one's animal make the best possible appearance. Showmanship is keenly felt because it affords suppressed excitement. For the participant who does well it means study, preparation, and training in the basic principles of salesmanship. A study of the animal shown brings recognition of the points of excellence and also recognition of lack of excellence. Grooming indicates showmanship, while breed or individual excellence of the animal shown does not. The ability of the showman in "selling" his animal to the judge is the measure of his skill. There are courtesies of the show ring to be observed as well as knowing what to do in showing—how easiest and best to secure response in handling an animal. In this respect there is a wide variation of practice and but little available information. In the absence of authority on the correctness of any practice or method, the following suggestions are made to assist club members in having a more nearly uniform conception of showmanship and show-ring courtesy. No attempt will be made to discuss the fitting of animals for show, except for a few incidental references to that subject.

The Showman

The showman himself should present a neat appearance. He should be clean. The clothing worn in caring for animals should be replaced by garments consistent with the aims of the management in striving to place attractive events before patrons. Increasingly popular is the uniform. This should be worn with good taste; properly put on, all fastenings made, and *clean*. If it is neatly pressed, so much the better. The shirt should be fastened and worn with a tie. Official 4-H caps are commonly used. Most 4-H caps are fashioned after the "overseas" cap worn during the World War. A cap of this type should be worn jauntily—that is, low in front and low on the right side.

In case civilian clothing is worn, cleanliness and neatness are still essential. Freakish garments have a tendency to attract attention away from the animal being shown and not without discredit to the showman.

An attitude of courtesy and respect for the rights of others in the ring is paramount. Occasionally the zeal of a contestant is construed as discourtesy. The master showman displays, noticeably, very little zeal. In overdoing the job the showman attracts to himself the attention he seeks for his animal. The able showman has his entry make the best possible appearance with the least apparent effort. His animal appears well, but it also appears that he is naturally that way. A well-trained animal may be as clay in the hands of his showman but that fact should not be apparent.

Procedure

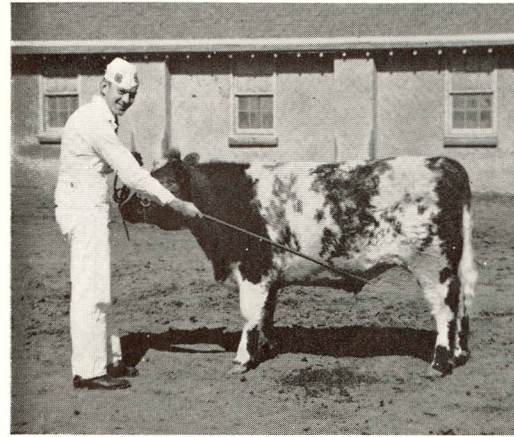
Entries should always be carefully made in detail and checked to be sure they have been properly recorded. When the time for the class draws near, a competitor should keep himself in readiness and be promptly on the way to the arena when the class is called. Upon entering the arena, the club member should be prepared to do all that is expected of him until he leaves the arena and to do it without assistance of any kind from others.

When the exhibitor enters the show ring, the ringmaster or superintendent will direct him to his proper place. This official should be recognized promptly. The clerk should be contacted so that it is known whether or not he has checked the entry on his books. The officials are the only persons with whom a showman has time to talk. From the time he is directed to go to work the exhibitor should watch the judge. Any directions given or requests made by the judge should be met with a ready response. When the judge is looking over the animal being shown, avoid working with him. Animals should not be permitted to come in contact with those of competitors nor should exhibitors encroach upon space rightfully in the possession of another.

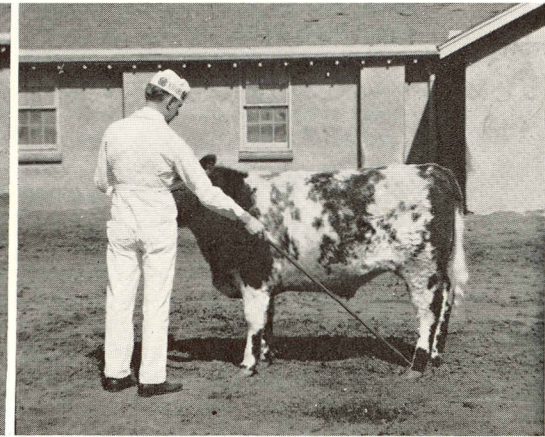
Showing the Beef Calf

A showman about to enter the ring with a beef calf supposedly has his calf groomed for the ring. Without going into the subject of fitting, some comment may be in place. The calf is clean. He was prepared the day before so that now he may be led into the ring with a dry coat. A dry coat of hair is much easier kept up in the ring in a show lasting forty-five minutes than a wet coat of hair which becomes disarranged upon each contact with man or beast. No judge enjoys the feeling experienced in handling a wet hide. A coat that appears natural is preferable. Horns, of course, have been trained to proper shape for the breed and polished. The feet have been kept trimmed short and blunt in shape. Also, since early morning, the "fill" from feed and drink has been watched. The lines of the middle should give the impression of straightness and the fullness should be the same on each side. Undue filling will cause the middle to appear "wasty."

The halter is preferably one with a chain under the jaw. It should be clean. The nose piece should be halfway between the nostril and the corner of the eye. No loose ends should be left outside of loops. Be



Keeping the top line straight.

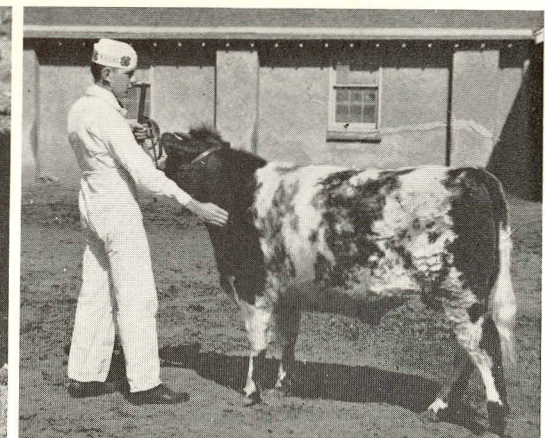
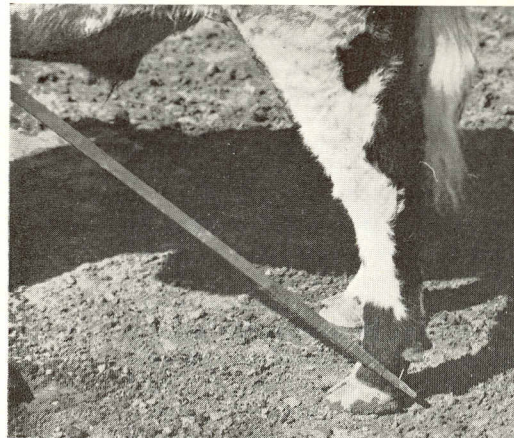


Placing the feet.

sure the over-strap is behind the ears. A calf is led from the left side, with the lead strap held about one foot from the head and the hand at the height of the top of the calf's head. A Scotch comb or long, hard rubber comb should be kept in the pocket ready when needed. Most beef showmen use a show stick. This should be about 4½ feet in length, or long enough for the showman to stand at the head of his calf and enable him to reach the hind feet. A light hickory or bamboo piece is suitable. About a half inch from the lower end a nail is put through, protruding about a half inch. Friction tape may be wrapped about the

Note nail in the show stick.

Teaching to back up is easily done.



lower end for strengthening the stick. Keep the end of the stick down—never point it up.

When the class is called, the showman leads out for the arena. The ringmaster, superintendent, judge, or clerk will usually indicate one end of the arena for the head of the line. All calves should be led in and lined up on the same side of the first calf in. While it is not necessary to begin showing before the judge starts work, the animal should not be permitted to assume any position that may leave a poor impression at any time.

In a large class, where there is not room for the showman to remain at the left side of his calf, the exhibitor will be required to stand directly in front of him. In either case he desires an apparently natural position for his calf—one that is pleasing to the eye. This means back level, head up, with eyes and ears indicating alertness and a foot “under each corner.”

Now to get this is something else. The calf must have been studied and his defects and good points recognized as such. The best position for each calf must be learned by trial and the calf should be trained to yield easily to handling in assuming it. This comes readily once a calf learns that his showman is his master and is to be trusted. This calls for consistency in treatment. A calf may be somewhat mean at home, but away among strangers and with his showman the only familiar object in his surroundings, he usually responds readily.

Before getting a calf into show position the slope of the ground must be watched. Always seek level ground, or preferably slightly higher ground on which to stand the fore feet. Head the calf up hill. Never allow the calf to be placed with the hind feet on higher ground than the fore feet. An alert appearance may be secured sometimes by moving the calf a trifle, and, only upon occasion, playing the lead chain back and forth through the halter ring. In placing the feet, first consider the back. If the back is high the calf may be “stretched,” that is, place the fore and hind feet farther apart. This does not mean that a calf low in the back can be placed in position by the opposite tactics, however. Having learned the distance to place the hind feet from the fore feet, teach the calf by experience that when his back goes lower than level, his belly encounters the nail in the show stick. With some calves it will be necessary to keep the nail against the belly and pull on the stick. There is nothing cruel about this practice when one considers that the calf requires such stimulation in order to have him assume a less slovenly position.

The muscles of the calf should be tense when in position and not relaxed. The hind feet particularly should be far enough apart to avoid the appearance of narrowness. To get a calf to lift a foot, press just above the cleft with the end of the show stick. Place the stick inside against the foot as it is replaced, should the feet be spread. To bring a foot forward, hook the nail in the stick under the dewclaw and pull gently. Calves soon can be taught to leave the feet where they are placed with the stick. Sometimes a tired calf may be brought back into position by moving him out of line and bringing him back. Wait until the judge

is down the line to do it, however. These movements are done with the idea of training and serve as a guide for the calf in fulfilling the showman's desires. Response through fear is very uncertain.

The judge will usually look the class over from some distance first and then come along to feel the hide and note the covering. When he feels over the ribs, draw the head of the calf to that side gently. This loosens the hide somewhat to make handling easier. When the judge comes to look the calf in the face, the showman steps aside to permit a good view of the head and then steps back as the judge moves on. When the judge sends a calf up near the top, number one calf always stands fast and all the rest move over to make room. Courtesy demands ready response. Since calves usually face the wall of the arena closely, individuals are backed out. Calves should be taught to back when the extended finger tips are pressed against the shoulder vein. Teaching them to respond to this is easier when other calves stand close on each side.

Parading calves requires proper training in leading. Fat calves are not speed animals. A walk somewhat like a strut is desired. If the calf lags, a few short gentle pulls (not jerks) on the lead strap will usually bring him along. Lead from the left side of the calf, strap in the right hand, when parading. Should the judge ask a showman to parade his calf alone or with one or two others, in order to make careful observations, it may be permissible to hold the strap in the left hand, walk backwards, and with show stick in the right hand pay close attention to business. In backing the calf out, back him far enough that he may be led off without crowding the line. The judge usually will direct the showman to lead away from him. The showman should never allow his body to get between the judge and the calf in this case.

After the judge has made his placings the showman's attitude should reflect his good sportsmanship regardless of the placing, whether it be high, medium, or low. In any case he should remain in line until records are made and he or the class is dismissed. And then retire in order, never leading out ahead of a calf placing higher in the class.

The group exhibit encourages club and county interest in 4-H Club classes. An entry of three, five, or ten calves usually constitutes a group. In making up the group, animals should be selected for excellence of individuals and uniformity of type. In order to achieve uniformity an occasional high-placing individual may not be the best available for the group.

Animals are usually lined up within the group according to size, with the largest at the left. However, by trial, the arrangement enabling the group to present the most uniformity as a unit may be found.

Each animal within the group should have a showman. An additional showman should be in charge of each group. He is commonly called the “heeler.” The heeler is the contact man for the group with judges, clerks, and ring superintendents. Showmen of animals take their instructions from the heeler. He assists showmen to place the hind feet of calves as nearly as possible in a line and to help keep animals standing close together

and in proper position. The heeler has an unusual opportunity to display skill but his responsibility is commensurate with the opportunity.

In the Ring with a Pig

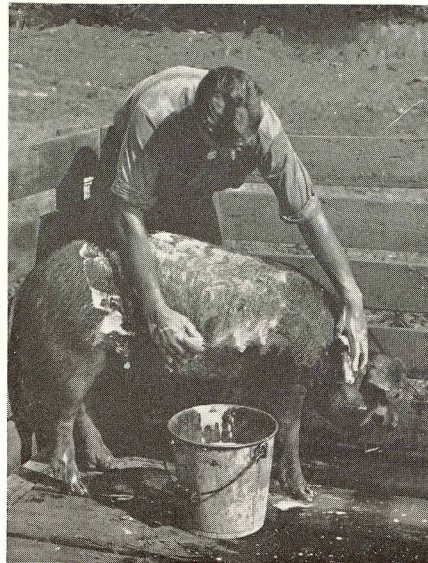
Training a pig is interesting if the pig is studied. Self-fed pigs do not show much interest in herdsmen while hand-fed pigs become pets to the point of being a nuisance. Do not abuse pigs. We have all seen men drive livestock through the exercise of fear. The individual who communicates his wishes to his animals and receives their response through the result of training, is altogether too rare. Yet this is what is sought. Begin by driving pigs slowly, or rather by herding them, in morning or evening before feeding. When a single pig is taken out to train, that pig should be familiar with the herdsman and have no fear of him so far as abuse is concerned. Work with the pig before feeding time. A hungry pig expects some reward for yielding—a satisfied pig none. Turn him out on strange ground with the herdsman the only familiar object. It helps.

In showing pigs in the six-months class some showmen use a whip, some a hurdle, some a cane or stick, while some use just the hands. Those who hold pigs in little pens don't show—they just exhibit. The whip isn't very satisfactory as an instrument with which to communicate; its use is rather to stimulate. The hurdle isn't of much use in training; it is simply a small section of fence and used as such. The cane fits in very well and the hands are used in much the same way. A pig is easily taught that when lying down a few gentle taps on the middle of the back mean for him to get up or when standing, to go forward. A slight pressure against the side of the jaw turns the pig away, while resting the cane across the snout means to stop.

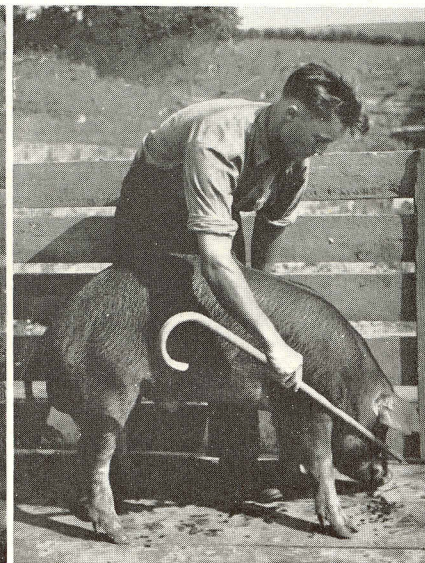
Usually, pigs with backs carried well up and without big middles are desired. Watching the amount of feed takes care of this. A hungry pig has straight sides and underline, he's looking for feed on the ground and with his head down his back is up. Study the individual to avoid hind legs standing too far under the body. Height of head and placing of fore feet influence the smoothness of the shoulders on top. The pig should be kept out of twists in showing. Allow him freedom straight ahead. Avoid sharp turns. In using the hands, slapping the hams usually causes the tail to hang down and the hind legs to be placed with hocks together, while with a gentle slap on the back the tail snaps into a tight curl and the legs straighten out under the hams.

Study the judge. Study the ground and light in the show ring. Seek the high ground and the good light. Avoid "hounding" the judge. If he's the kind that looks for the exhibitor, get a spot and keep it. If he must be hunted, get into his view, but do not overdo it. By all means the showman should keep from getting between the judge and the pig.

Many ideas are followed in preparing a pig for the ring. The most essential is cleanliness. Mineral oils turn white hair yellow. But with red and black pigs a good oiling with mineral oil about three or four days before the show is good. Then the day before, or show day, wash



A good bath does the job.

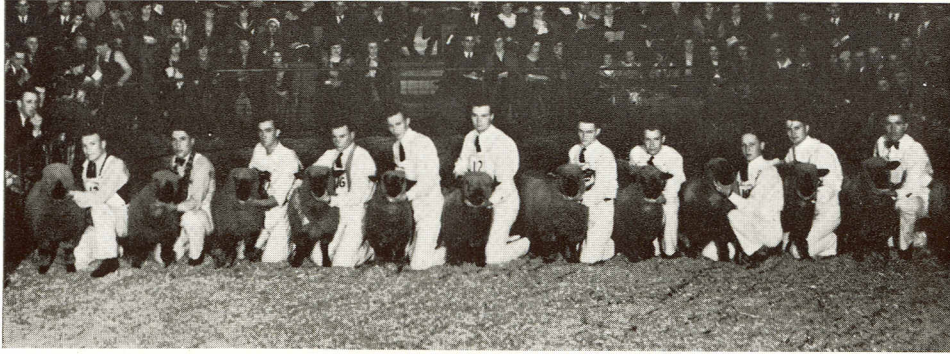


Turning the pig with side pressure.

A tap on the back is a signal for the pig to rise or move forward.

Stopping the pig.





Junior Ak-Sar-Ben

thoroughly with soap. Dry the pig and put him on clean bedding. This leaves the skin a dull, natural finish. Then before going into the show ring take a woolen rag with olive oil on it—moist but not dripping—and rub with the hair. This gives the hair a gloss which with a dull, natural skin is hard to beat. Too much oil will cause hairs to stick together. If the weather is hot, water is all that is needed. It's cooling and provides the best gloss possible.

White pigs should be washed well and shown clean. A little talcum powder may be used if put on lightly and evenly.

Pigs presented as groups should be restrained by hurdles or placed in pens. Within the enclosure, the pigs should be headed in one direction and the alignment should be such as will give the appearance of uniformity between individuals and for the group as a whole.

Sheep Respond Well

Preparing sheep for the show ring is a task that often tries the courage of the 4-H Club member. There is something wholesome about a few tell-tale nicks in the fleece of the lamb in the hands of a 4-H showman of tender years. The club member blocks his own lamb for a showman's contest as he should for other classes. The sheep or lamb should be brought into the ring with the fleece free from chaff and dirt. Tags should be off the underline and legs. The feet should be trimmed to be short and symmetrical. And the fleece over the head and body should be trimmed—"blocked"—to give the idea of type and symmetry one would like to see in an ideal animal.

The sheep's feet should be placed with one squarely "under each corner," with the nose in line with his top. The showman crouches or kneels at the animal's left with his left hand under the sheep's jaw. Sheep soon learn to push against the hand and in doing this their bodies are drawn into a tenseness desirable when the judge does his handling. Some showmen change sides in order to keep the sheep between themselves and the judge. Others simply draw away at arm length to enable

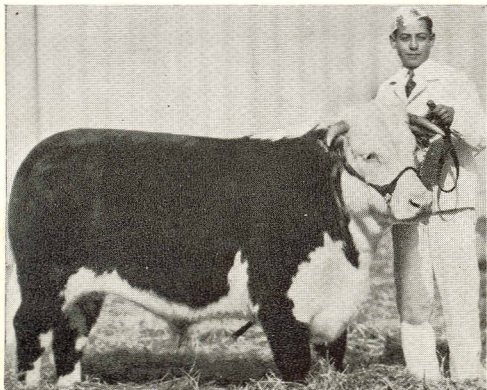
the judge to see. In moving sheep, one hand is kept under the jaw while the other is placed back of the rump. Care is taken never to permit the fingers to grasp into the fleece.

Lambs shown in groups should be chosen for excellence of individuals and uniformity. There should be a showman for each lamb. Lambs should be lined up close together and within the group the order should be that showing the least disparity between individuals in order to achieve the appearance of uniformity.

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4 H
Showmen



**Present
Their
Animals**

