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Article Summary: Club members sang the praises of modern hog farming practices.

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Photographs / Images: Grover, a champion hog, circa 1900



The Clay County Pig Club Song, 1922

By the early twentieth century Nebraska farmers and stock-raisers were employing scientific methods to increase yields and profits. Encouraging these methods were periodicals such as the *Nebraska Farmer*, the agricultural extension program and experiment stations operated by the by the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture, and even special educational trains such as the “Purebred Dairy Sires” special hosted by the Burlington Railroad.

With the creation of the agricultural extension program in 1914, county agents were a key to helping farmers keep abreast of the latest techniques and technology. Organizations ranging from 4-H clubs to statewide crop and livestock associations were thriving. One local group was the Clay County Pig Club, which was devoted to better swine-raising methods. The club even had its own song to inspire its members, sung to the tune of “Turkey in the Straw”:

If you keep your pigs in an old dirty pen,
Your pigs’ll be wormy, they’ll have rough skins,
They’ll be covered with lice to the tips of their toes,
And they’ll grow big lumps on the sides of their nose.
They’ll grow big middles and they’ll grow big heads,
They’ll get all skinny and some will go dead,
When you’ll say “What can this be?”
You had better call the agent of your county.

The agent will say “Oh, this will never do,
You can’t raise hogs and parasites too,
Build you a number of ‘A’ shaped cots,
Open both doors if the weather’s hot,
Spread these panels all around,
And keep your pigs on clean fresh ground,
Haul them water in a tank on trucks,
Do these things, it will change your luck.”

Now don’t say it can never be done,
Your neighbors are doing it one by one,
Come with me on our Farm Bureau tours,
And I’ll show you the pigs that are better than yours.
When you come to the sanitary way,
Then your hogs will begin to pay,
Then you’ll smile to see them grow,
Don’t forget to thank the Farm Bureau. 🍷



Grover, a champion hog raised by a Holt County farmer named Dorsey, circa 1900. The hog may have been named for the portly former President Grover Cleveland.
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