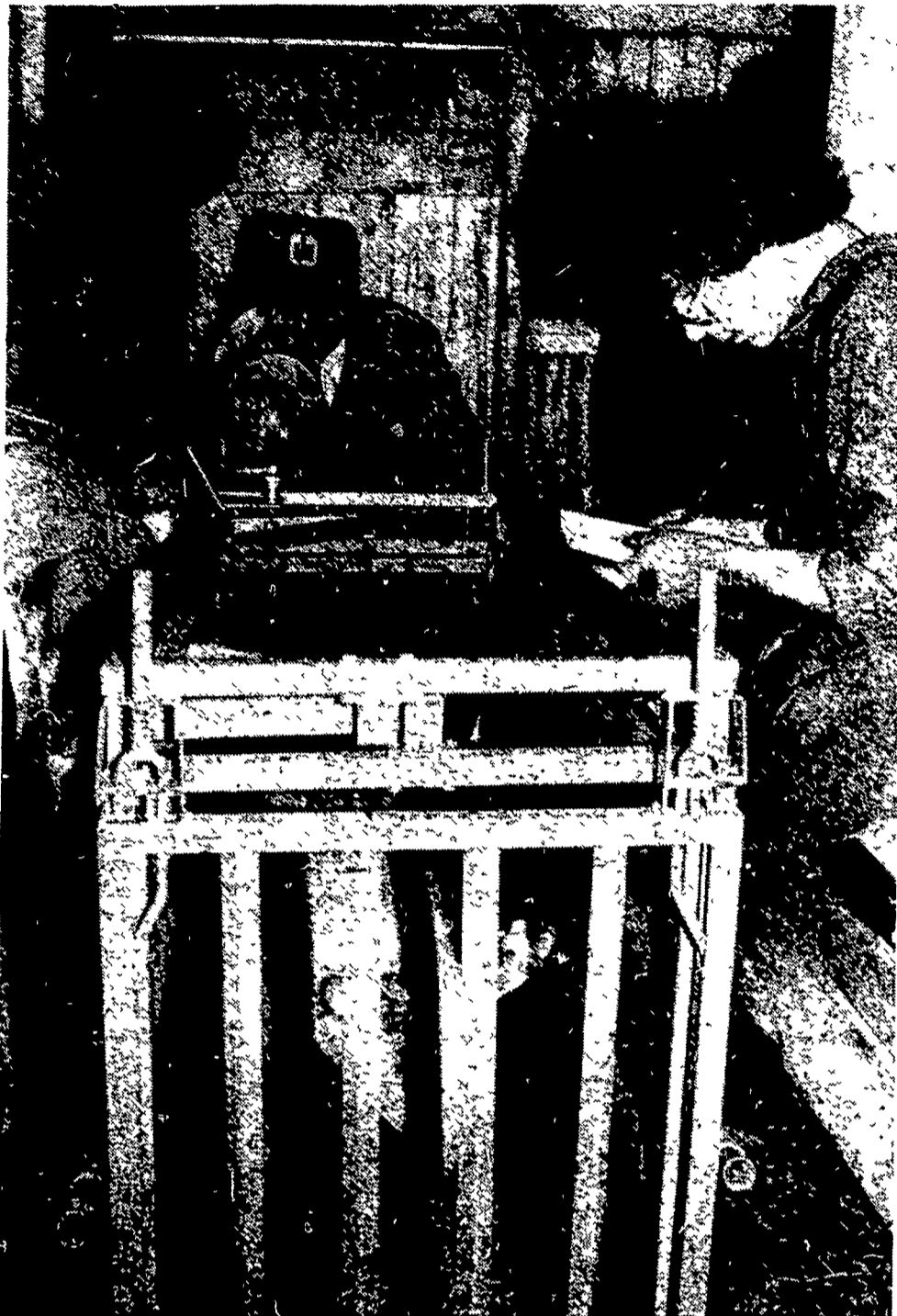


Garden Spot seniors running hog experiment



The Garden Spot seniors and Robert Woods check the weights of their hogs after 40 days.

By JOANNE SPAHR
EAST EARL — When it comes to hog management, financial records, and borrowing and lending, six senior members of the Grassland Future Farmers of America chapter are getting down to brass tacks. Along with Garden Spot High School vocational agriculture instructor Robert Woods, Dan Witwer, East Earl, Terry Schaffer, Morgantown R1, Dave Stahl, Denver R1, Joe Hoover, New Holland, Michael Martin, Bowmansville, and Michael Witwer, East Earl R1, began an experiment on February 27. In this experiment the seniors purchased 16 head of swine and divided them into two groups. One pen is currently being fed a commercial mix and the other a ration formulated by the senior vocational agriculture class.

The objectives of this experiment are many, with the main purpose of the feeding experiment a practical one. According to Woods, the class would like to determine if farmers in the area can formulate feed rations using their own grains and still compete economically with commercial mixed produced by local feed mills. Also, they would like to find out if there is any advantage to feeding commercial feeds over home formulated feed rations in the areas of average daily gain and feed efficiency.

While these goals, alone, provide a learning experience for the students involved, the practical experience of taking part in the project will offer side advantages, as well.

One of the major lessons to be learned is financial management. The seven

members involved in the project sat down and made up a budget for swine which included feed to be used, building rental, the cost of the feeder pigs, medication, marketing, hauling, and 10 per cent interest on the investment. Then they approached the Blue Ball National Bank who loaned them \$1400 interest free to cover the cost of expenses incurred during the feeding period. The group also took out a checking account in their names and were given checks, also donated by the Blue Ball National Bank. Each member has a record book provided by Production Credit of Lancaster.

Supplying the feed for the program is Gehman's Feed Mill, Inc., of Denver, who has assured the members that the class will be able to

divide up the profits from the project, and that the mill will be responsible for covering any losses, should they occur.

The pigs the members purchased are Yorkshire/Hampshire crossbreeds from Stauffer Homestead, East Earl, sold at a good price in support of the project.

All fed on the same medicated ration for the first few days to "get them going," the hogs were then divided into two pens with each animal having an average of approximately 20 square feet.

Pen one is being fed according to Gehman's commercial feeding program which involves pig starter ASP pellets until the

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