



Swine

Leon Cooper has been superintendent of the Swine Department since 1991, but he has been showing here for about 22 years. His kids were in 4-H, and the biggest pig Fryeburg Fair ever had belonged to him, weighing in at 1100 pounds.

He said that four breeds are shown right now, although there used to be as many as seven. When asked if that was by choice or by interest, he explained, "The hog business has taken quite a dip in what the farmer receives lately, so it is down in numbers. The people don't have the breeds that they used to." Big corporations have flooded the market, and it is hard for the small guy to compete.

However, the breeding of animals has improved over the last few years, and pigs are much leaner than they used to be and of better quality. The judges look for leanness and correctness of body. They shouldn't be over-fat."

"A lot of people think they've got to have a pig that weighs over 300 pounds, and the average market weight should be around 225, 235." (Leon Cooper)

Cooper acknowledges that there is a lot of 4-H interest in swine, but he would like to see a 4-H Market Hog Auction, along with the 4-H Baby Beef and Market Lamb. He said, "It gives the kids more interest in agriculture if they can make a profit on something, or come close to it."

When Henry Black first became Livestock Superintendent, the department consisted mostly of steers and oxen and draft horses. They didn't have the goats or the chickens or the rabbits. They couldn't show swine and poultry because of disease, but when that was cleared up, they took on the other animals.

