

Building St. George

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

Examine the sacrifices made by the settlers of Washington County to construct community buildings.

Decide whether to contribute to a community project during a role playing game.

Develop an itinerary for a friend who wants to learn about Washington County history.

Setting the Stage

1. Ask students: *Have you ever given up something you really wanted because you knew it would help someone else? Encourage several students to give examples. Ask students: Was it hard to do? Are you happy that you did? Why or why not?*

2. Explain: *When you give up something for the sake of someone else, it is called a “sacrifice.” The people who settled Washington County made many sacrifices to help their community. In fact, sacrifice is an important part of the story of Washington County. Some of the historic buildings in St. George help tell this story today.*

Student Instruction

1. Distribute a copy of the *Building St. George* sheets to each student. Assign students to take turns reading the information out loud. Take a few minutes to discuss the poem. Students should write down new vocabulary words.

2. Ask students: *Do you think you would be willing to make the same kind of sacrifices for your community as the settlers of Washington County did? Let’s find out. Play *To Give or Not to Give* according to the rules on the instruction sheet.*

3. After completing at least three rounds of the game, **ask students:** *Was it difficult to make sacrifices or get others to make sacrifices during the game? Why did you decide to donate or not donate to the town hall fund? Why do you think so many Washington County settlers decided to make sacrifices?*



Duration

Two to three
45-minute periods

Instructional Materials

Building St. George
(1 copy per student)

To Give or Not to Give
Teacher Instructions

Resource Cards
(see *To Give or Not to Give*
Teacher Instructions
to determine how many
cards to make)

Supplies

“Luxury Items” (e.g.
candy, cookies) to
distribute during
To Give or Not to Give

Core Curriculum Objectives

4th Grade

Social Studies
6040-0101
6040-0202
6040-0402

Language Arts
4040-0101
4040-0202
4040-0302

7th Grade

Social Studies
6100-0101
6100-0203
6100-0402

Language Arts
4070-0201
4070-0203
4070-0301



4. Tell students: *The settlers who made so many sacrifices for Washington County passed away long ago. But the buildings they constructed through their sacrifices are still here. These buildings help connect us to the settlers and an important part of Washington County's past.*

Student Activity

1. Write the following scenario on the board and assign students to work in pairs to develop an answer: *Imagine your friend from California is coming to visit. She is very interested in history and has asked you to help her learn more about Washington County's history during her trip. What could you do to help her understand the sacrifices made by Washington County settlers? Develop a schedule of activities for you and your friend during her visit and explain how these activities will help her understand the settlers' contributions to building Washington County.*
2. Ask students to share some of the activities from their itineraries. Ask students which of these activities they would most enjoy doing as a class. If possible, let the class choose and implement one of the activities.

In 1861, Brigham Young assigned 309 families to travel to Washington County and create a new town called St. George. Life in St. George was very difficult at first. The settlers were not used to living in a desert. The farming methods they brought with them did not work the dry climate of Washington County. They built many dams and irrigation ditches to bring water to their crops, but flash floods washed them away each year. Sometimes the floods washed away entire towns.

Because the settlers had a difficult time growing crops, food was scarce in St. George. When droughts struck, like in 1863, starvation was a real threat. Families sent whatever supplies they could to northern settlements to trade for flour and grain. Disease was another threat. Many settlers became sick with malaria and some died from it. The scorching summer heat and blowing sand added to the settlers' discomforts.

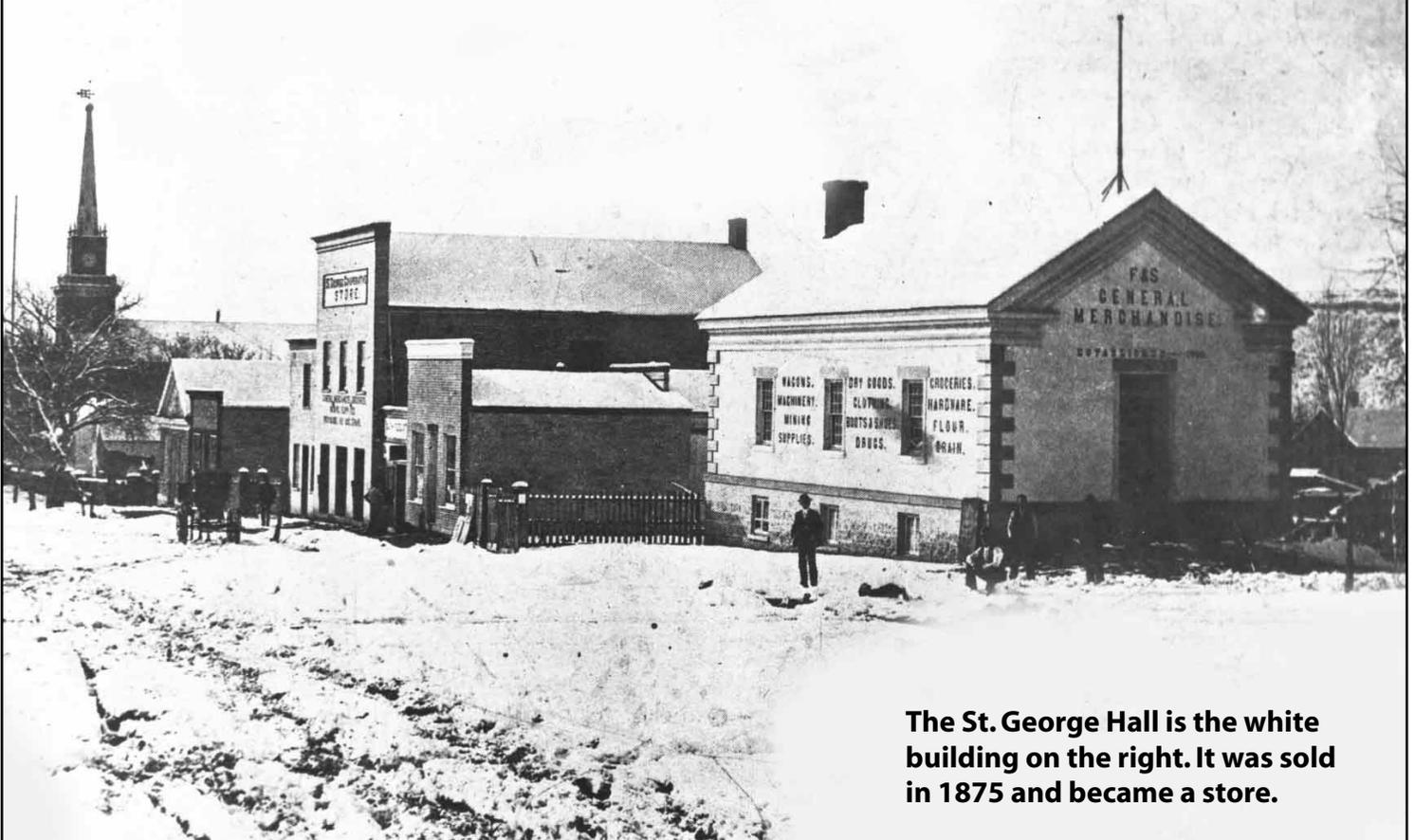
A St. George settler named George Hicks wrote a song about the hardships of life in "Dixie:"

*I feel so weak and hungry now, I think I'm nearly dead;
'Tis seven weeks next Sunday since I have tasted bread.
Of carrot tops and lucern greens we have enough to eat—
But I'd like to change that diet off for buckwheat cakes and meat.*

*I brought this old coat with me, about two years ago,
And how I'll get another one, I'm sure I do not know.
May providence protect me against the cold and wet,
I think myself and Betsy, these times will not forget.*

*The hot winds whirl around me, and take away my breath;
I've had the chills and fever, till I'm nearly shook to death.
"All earthly tribulations are but a moment here;
And oh, if I prove faithful, a righteous crown I'll wear."*

*My wagon's sold for sorghum seed, to make a little bread;
And poor old Jim and Bolly long ago are dead.
There's only me and Betsy left, to hoe the cotton-tree;
May Heaven help the Dixie-ite wherever he may be!*



The St. George Hall is the white building on the right. It was sold in 1875 and became a store.

Lynne Clark Collection—donor Andy Winsor

Despite all these problems, the settlers were determined to stay in St. George. They made donations from what little they had to construct buildings that would benefit their community. For example, the settlers' leader, Erastus Snow, suggested building a public hall where people could gather together just a few days after they arrived in St. George. The only way to pay for the building was through donations. Many settlers donated to the project before they even had homes! The building, named the **St. George Hall**, was finished three years later. Many plays, dances, school classes, meetings, and celebrations were held there.



The St. George Tabernacle

In 1863, Brigham Young directed the people of St. George to build a large meeting house called a tabernacle. The project could not succeed without more donations from the settlers. Erastus Snow urged the settlers to pay their tithing, or contributions to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Since the settlers did not have much money, they usually contributed crops or animals they had raised. Snow used these donations to pay the workers who built the **St. George Tabernacle**. The building took eight years to finish. Each year Snow asked the settlers for more contributions. The settlers kept giving because they believed the St. George Tabernacle was important to their community.



The Washington County Courthouse

In 1867, Judge James D. McCulloch asked the people of Washington County to build a **courthouse**. The building would house many services important for a growing city, such as government offices, a courtroom, a police office, and a jail. However, a new tax was needed to pay for the courthouse. The people of Washington County were still struggling to survive, build homes, and contribute to the construction of the tabernacle. Would they vote to pay a new tax? A large majority of the people voted for the tax and soon construction of the courthouse was underway.



The St. George Temple

In 1871, Brigham Young announced that a temple for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would be built in St. George. The settlers' tithing donations were crucial to the building the temple, just as they were with the tabernacle. Most of the construction work was done by men assigned to the job by church leaders. They were paid with food from tithing donations instead of money. Since the construction workers were away from their farms, their families had to work even harder. They sometimes relied on help from neighbors or the tithing office to survive.

All these beautiful buildings were finished just 15 years after the first settlers arrived in St. George. The St. George Tabernacle, Washington County Courthouse, and **St. George Temple** still stand today. (The St. George Hall was torn down in the early 1930s. A copy of it was built next to the St. George Opera House.) They remind us of the willingness of those early settlers to make sacrifices for their community even during the most difficult times.



Summary: In this game, students must make choices that balance the good of the individual with the good of the community. Students will simulate settlers exchanging goods in a barter economy. While they are bartering for the supplies they need to survive, donation collectors will ask them to contribute to the town hall fund. Students must decide how much they can sacrifice.

The amount they decide to sacrifice will have real consequences. At the end of each round of bartering, students who have all the supplies they need will receive a “luxury item,” like a piece of candy. Those who sacrificed for the town hall fund will not. In addition, the success of the town hall project will have consequences for the entire class. If the class donates enough for the project to succeed, all students will receive a reward, like 10 minutes of free time. If the class doesn’t meet the donation goals, no students receive the reward.

Before You Begin

1. Copy and cut out the Resource Cards for the game. Use the following formula to determine how many cards you need:

Divide the class into five equal groups of settlers: cotton growers, fruit growers, cattle ranchers, wheat farmers, and lumber millers. Students not assigned to one of the groups will be donation collectors. For example, in a class with 22 students each settler group will have four students and two students will be donation collectors. If the number of students in your class is evenly divisible by five, remove one student from each settler group and assign him/her to the donation collectors group. For example, a class of 25 will have five settler groups with four students each and five donation collectors.

2. Make 21 cards for each student in a settler group representing the resource they produce (e.g., each member of the cotton growers group will get 21 cotton cards).

Preparing Students to Play

1. Divide the class into the settler and donation collector groups and distribute resource cards.

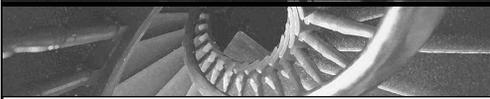
2. Explain that the settlers must trade with each other for the supplies they need to survive in Washington County. Each settler must have four cards from each of the five resources at the end of each round of trading for a total of 20 cards (e.g. four cotton, four fruit, four cattle, four wheat, and four lumber). All the cards are of equivalent value (e.g. 1 cotton = 1 fruit = 1 cattle, etc).

3. Explain that as the settlers are trading for the supplies they need, the donation collectors will be asking them to make a donation to the town hall fund.

Tell students: The construction of a town hall is an important project that will benefit the whole community for many years to come. It will provide a place for community meetings, school classes, church services, and even dances and plays. Building a town hall, however, will not be easy. All the resources to pay the workers and buy building supplies must come from the settlers. And it will take several years to finish the project.

4. To keep the town hall project moving forward, the donation collectors need to gather two times the number of students in each settler group of each of the five kinds of cards. For example, if there are four students in each settler group, the donation collectors need to gather eight (2 x 4) cotton cards, eight fruits card, eight cattle cards, etc. Help your donation collectors calculate the number of each kind of card they need to collect. Donation collectors should coordinate with each other to make sure they are collecting the required number of each kind of card and keep a record of who makes each donation.

5. Explain that settlers can choose whether or not to donate to the town hall fund. Their choices will have consequences for both themselves and the community. Settlers who end the round with all 20 resource cards they need for a comfortable life will receive one “luxury item” (e.g., piece of candy, cookie, or other small



reward). Settlers who have 21 cards will receive two luxury items. Settlers with 18 or 19 cards lose something small but valuable (e.g., two minutes of recess). Settlers with 17 cards or less won't be able to survive and must sit out future rounds. If the donation collectors group meets its goal, each member of this group will receive one luxury item. If the group doesn't meet the goal, the donation collectors receive no luxury item.

Draw a chart on the board like the one below listing the resources needed and rewards to remind students as they play.

For a Comfortable Life in Washington County you need: 4 cotton, 4 cattle, 4 lumber, 4 fruit, 4 wheat

If you have:	You will receive:
21 cards	2 luxury items
20 cards	1 luxury item
18-19 cards	lose something of value
17 cards or less	can't survive

6. Explain that the class will play at least three rounds of the game. Each round represents one year. (You can decide how many rounds based on how long the students remain interested.) To successfully complete the town hall, the settlers must donate enough to keep the project on track every round but one. If the settlers miss the donation goal more than once, the town hall project will fail. **If the class completes the town hall they will receive a reward that benefits all the members of the class.**

For a reward, select something desirable but not immediate to simulate the long wait settlers experienced between making their sacrifice and the completion of the buildings (e.g. ten minutes of free time next week).

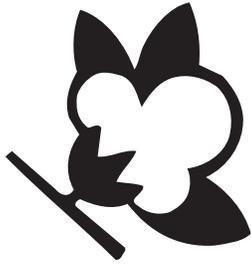
Playing the Game

1. Once students understand the procedures of the game, allow trading to begin. When trading is finished, ask the donation collectors to report on whether they met the goal for the town hall fund. Donation collectors should also thank particularly generous settlers.

2. Distribute luxury items to those students who met the requirements for them and make a list of students who must give up something on the board.

3. Ask students to sort their resource cards and return them to the appropriate pile. Redistribute resource cards to the groups and begin another round of trading. To reflect cycles of drought, pests, and other difficulties, select one or two groups to receive only 20 cards to begin with instead of 21. For example, explain that this year insects attacked the cotton crop so the harvest was down or that the lumber mill broke and a new part could not be obtained for weeks so lumber production was reduced.

4. Play at least three rounds of the game. Keep track of the class's progress toward building the town hall.



One **Cotton**



One **Cotton**



One **Cotton**



One **Cotton**



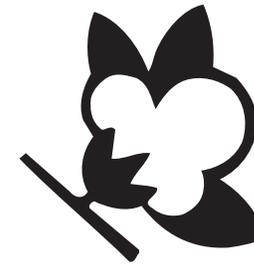
One **Cotton**



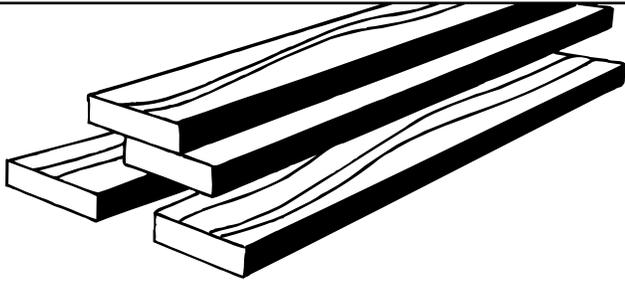
One **Cotton**



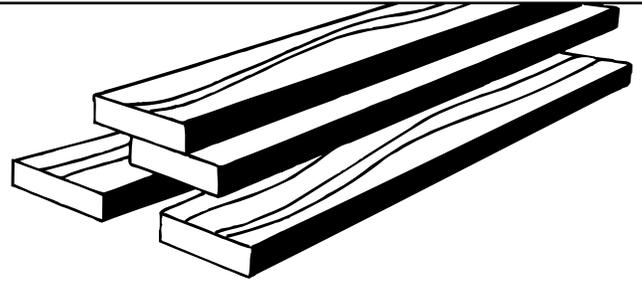
One **Cotton**



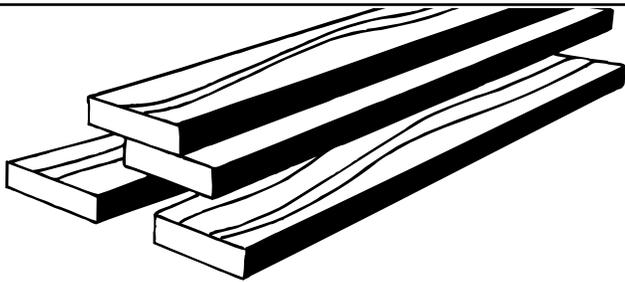
One **Cotton**



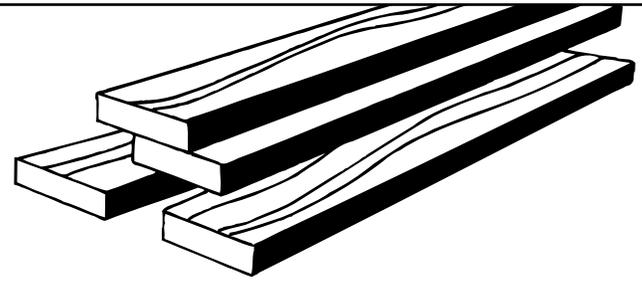
One **Lumber**



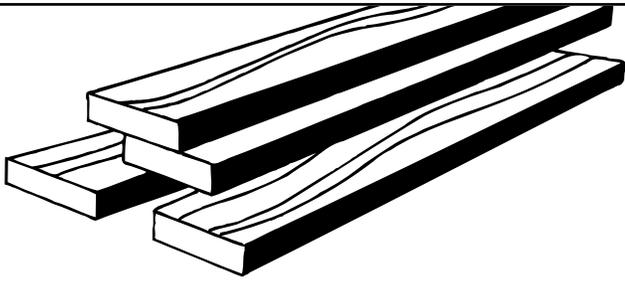
One **Lumber**



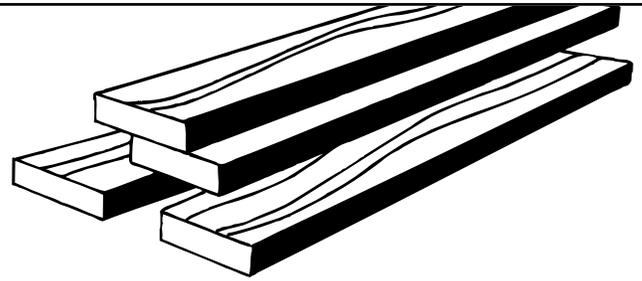
One **Lumber**



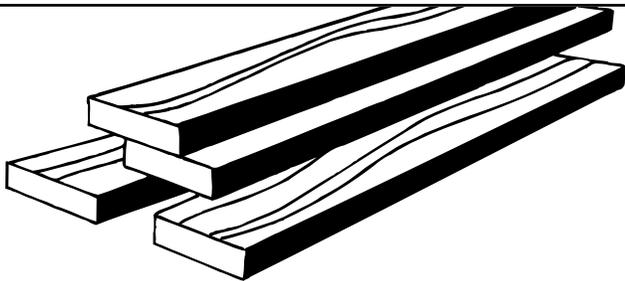
One **Lumber**



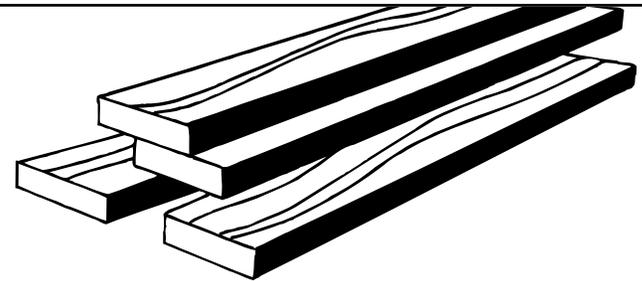
One **Lumber**



One **Lumber**



One **Lumber**



One **Lumber**





 <p>One Wheat</p>	 <p>One Wheat</p>
 <p>One Wheat</p>	 <p>One Wheat</p>
 <p>One Wheat</p>	 <p>One Wheat</p>
 <p>One Wheat</p>	 <p>One Wheat</p>



One **Fruit**



One **Fruit**



One **Fruit**



One **Fruit**



One **Fruit**



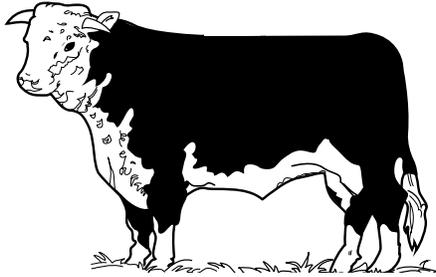
One **Fruit**



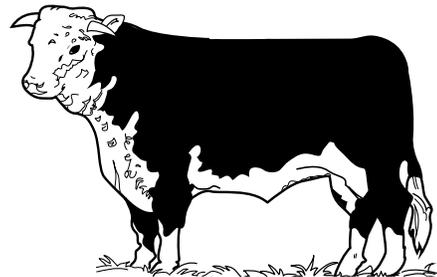
One **Fruit**



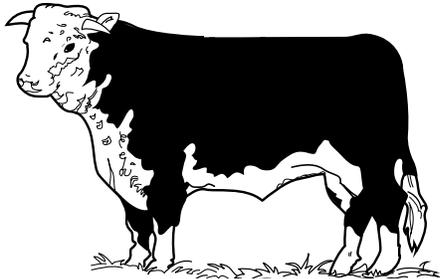
One **Fruit**



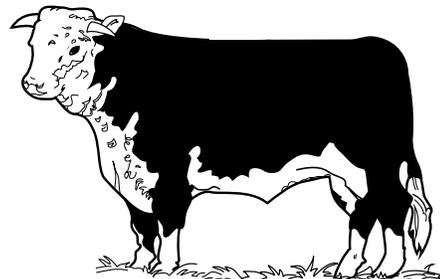
One **Cattle**



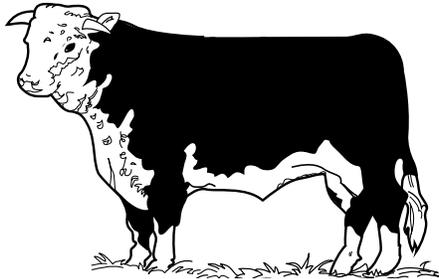
One **Cattle**



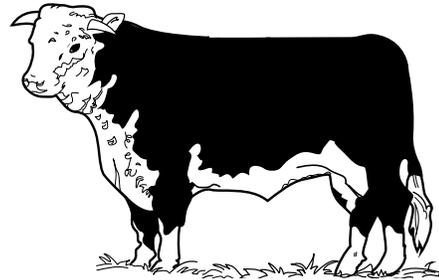
One **Cattle**



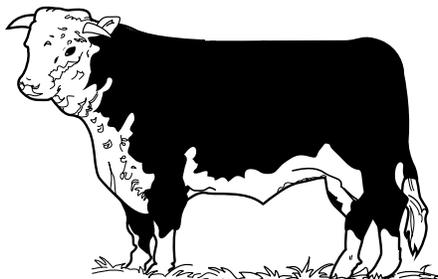
One **Cattle**



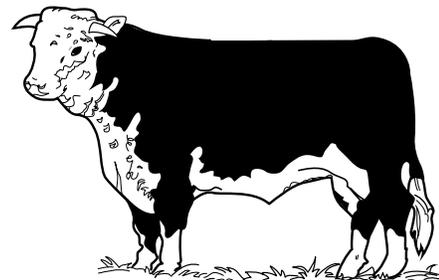
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