

SUITABLE BREEDS.

As already suggested, pigs most nearly conforming to these requirements are found in greatest numbers among Large Improved Yorkshires, Tamworths and Berkshires, and among their grades and cross breeds.

By 'grade' is meant an animal the product of a pure bred sire, that is a sire registered or eligible for registration in some generally recognized herd book, and from a dam not so registered nor eligible for registration, whether she have none or many crosses of pure bred blood. By 'cross bred' is meant an animal the product of a pure bred sire and from a pure bred dam, the dam being, however, of a different breed from the sire.

Some of the more striking peculiarities of these different breeds of pigs suitable for bacon production are given below. These statements are made after several years experience of a varied character with each sort.

LARGE IMPROVED YORKSHIRES, white pigs, have been found to be a prolific and fairly early maturing breed. In shape they come very nearly being ideal bacon pigs. They furnish a very large proportion of carcasses answering the requirements of the best bacon trade. The hams are well developed and the proportion of fat to lean is usually about right.

The sows are docile, good milkers and very prolific. The boars are very impressive, seldom if ever failing to leave a strong impress on their progeny. They are usually robust healthy animals, but are not quite as well suited for pasturing as are pigs from some of the other breeds.

BERKSHIRES, black pigs with more or less white in the face and white points, have shown themselves to be not so prolific as some other breeds but to be very early maturing animals. Their admirers claim for them such a superiority in this respect and in their apparently superior powers to assimilate food as to more than make up for the rather small litters which are not infrequently borne. In conformation they are not quite so well suited for the bacon trade as are some of the other breeds. They are very well suited for pasturing, having few if any equals in this respect and giving very satisfactory returns indeed while being fed in this way. They are quite free from the affections of the skin and other troubles which quite often cause loss with white and red skinned sorts while on pasture.

TAMWORTHS, red pigs, have here shown themselves a quite prolific and fairly early maturing breed. They are almost invariably deep sided and long bodied, but are not infrequently rather light in the ham. They are fairly rapid growers, but are somewhat slower to come to maturity than are some other breeds. They cross well with Berkshires and with the Large Yorkshire. As sires they are fairly impressive.

BREEDING.

To enter into a long discussion of the various considerations that demand the attention of the breeder in his operations would require too great an amount of space for the present publication. The few remarks submitted are intended as a help to the beginner rather than a guide to the initiated.

THE BOAR.

Only pure bred boars of one of the above mentioned breeds should be used where it is desired to produce good bacon pigs. Pure bred sires are more impressive than grades or crosses, on account of having been bred for generations with certain aims in view. That is, pure bred boars are likely to leave litters in which every individual will closely resemble the sire in conformation, while the litters from grade or cross bred boars are likely to vary greatly in conformation.