

Only and Pastures Alfa

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thfield Shows.

them becoming mixed up. They will always find their own dams.

As soon as the pigs are old enough to eat, provide them with a shallow trough in a place where the sow cannot get at it. Give them a little milk, and after a few days add some shorts. When the litter is about 8 weeks old, I would wean them and as soon as the sows are dried up, start feeding them for market. I believe in keeping a sow for one litter only. This plan may seem out of place with some people, but I do not think it pays to raise fall litters, and it does not pay to keep a sow for one litter a year.

After the pigs have been weaned it will be about the end of May. The sows will be rather thin at this time, but if fed well for two months, they should weigh at least 300 pounds each. The sows then would be 14 or 16 months of age and should make at least \$15.00 each. This may seem a little heavy, but I have had litters of ten average over 200 pounds at 6 months.

Then as to the management of the young pigs: I provide two hog pastures, one for the sows to run in for the two months they are feeding for market and the other one for the young pigs. I pull an empty granary into the pasture, where most pigs are, to put their feed in, and have barrels in the granary to soak the grain in. At the end of two months, the sows now being sold, I let the young pigs have the run of the two pastures. The feed of the pigs up to this time consists of shorts mixed with ground barley and oats. Now I drop out the shorts and feed barley and oats or feed wheat, feeding liberally. At the same time they will spend an hour or two each day in the alfalfa. I used to be amused last year at my pigs eating alfalfa. Just at sundown each day they would leave the pen and start for the alfalfa. They would keep at it until after dark.

As time goes on and the pigs are growing and the alfalfa getting short, we must supply something else. We must have a patch of sugar beets (hogs like sugar beets) growing right beside the pasture, the more hogs, the bigger the sugar beet patch, and we keep piling those beets over the fence twice a day up to about the middle of October.

The pigs are now 6½ or 7 months old and should weigh 180 to 200 pounds each. I then sell every pig, keeping only what I want myself for pork and enough of the best sows in the bunch for breeders. The same boar should not again be used. Buy a new one or trade off the old one for another.

Fall litters do not do well with the average farmer. They get stunted and crippled. I believe my plan, which I have tried to outline here, will, if followed out, enable a man to make money out of hogs.

Sask.

PHILIP LEECH.

Grain Farmer Should Keep out of Hog Business

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In reply to your question, "Would it pay the average farmer to go in more for hogs?" I should think the subject would have to be considered from two standpoints depending upon the nature of the district to which the farmer belonged. In a district like our own, where the land is eminently adapted to wheat growing I think the number of hogs the average farmer can profitably raise, above what are required for home use, is very limited indeed. To my mind one of the primary essentials to successful hog raising, is a plentiful supply of skim-milk or buttermilk. This, on a wheat farm, where usually not more cows are kept than are required for the house, is an impossibility. Lecturers and farm papers tell us that this is a mistake—that dairying is profitable, and that we should keep more cows and feed steers, to keep up the fertility of our land, but from personal experience I know something of the work involved and beef will have to be worth a good deal more than 3, or even 4, cents a pound before many of us do much along this line, not at least, while we can raise 25 to 40 bushels of No. 1 Northern to the acre.

As to dairying, on a great many of the wheat plains, ice and water, (those two great essentials to successful butter-making) are conspicuous by their absence, except in very limited quantities, and this alone would prove a very effectual deterrent to embarking in that line. Now in Ontario I was at one time very successful in raising hogs at from 3½ to 4 cents per pound while I had a good supply of milk from the dairy; but I afterwards went in for Shorthorns, pure-bred and grade, allowing the cows to suckle their calves, and selling the latter at 24 to 27 months as baby beef. From that time, I never could raise hogs at less than 5 cents per pound, even under better conditions as to housing, etc., than formerly, and with a plentiful supply of turnips, mangels and clover. Therefore, I say, for the man in the wheat district—let hogs alone, except it be two or three at a time just

to use the waste from the house or unsaleable grain, and supply pork for the family. If he is a stockman by choice, he will find an exceedingly profitable outlet for his taste in breeding good draft horses and he will benefit his farm by growing the hay and oats necessary for their keep, instead of relying entirely upon wheat.

For the man in a mixed farming district, however, it is quite a different story. He usually has a herd of cows, therefore, a supply of milk and buttermilk. He has the time to grow roots for winter feed and rape for summer. He usually has plenty of good water and his land is adapted to that best of all single grains for hogs—barley. I think any man in such a district who has 8 or 10 cows could profitably keep 30 to 40 hogs all the year round. To do this, he should have at least 3 good sows which should have unlimited exercise and not too warm winter quarters, except at farrowing. The bottom of a straw stack on the south side of the barn is first class. After farrowing, the sow should have a liberal allowance of slop, of which bran and milk should be the chief ingredients for the first two weeks or so, with heavier grain added gradually, till at about six weeks, the young pigs should be ready to wean. They should, by this time, have been taught to eat well for themselves—at first milk, then scalded shorts and milk, with later, some finely ground oats added. Barley, or other heavy grain, should not form the principal part of the ration till the pig is over 100 lbs. in weight, when, if he is getting plenty of milk and rape or roots, he may safely be allowed all the barley meal he will eat up clean three times a day. At 8 months, the hogs should weigh about 220 pounds each and are ready for market. If of a thrifty growing strain, they should be produced at a fair profit at anything over 5 cents per pound.

Sask.

WM. WRENSHALL.

An Alberta Feeder's Experience

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Yes, I think it will pay the average farmer in this province to raise more hogs for the following reasons:

First. Because this is particularly a mixed farming country, and in order to keep up proper crop rotation, we must grow a fair amount of barley, which is especially valuable for hog feed.

Second. Because pork-packing plants are being installed throughout our country. This will be a great help to the hog-raising industry, by creating competition, saving the old expense of marketing and thus assuring better prices for the farmer.

My experience in breeding pigs leads me to favor cross-breeds for feeding. I would take a pure-bred Yorkshire sow and mate her with a pure-bred Berkshire boar. The Yorkshire sow makes a better mother than the Berkshire. She has larger litters and, as a rule, experiences less trouble in farrowing. The fact that she is a larger and more open pig gives her a great advantage in breeding qualities. She is a good milker, because she is a good feeder. By this I mean she has a very large food capacity, which gives her greater milk-producing power. The importance of these facts will become more clear when I deal with the handling of the litter. I do not recommend any one going further than the one cross. To reverse this cross, that is, to use the Berkshire sow and Yorkshire boar, would not serve the same purpose. You would be very likely to have serious trouble with your sows at farrowing time, for the simple reason that it would be very difficult for the Berkshire sow to give birth to the large-boned offspring of the Yorkshire boar.

Let us now look at this matter a little more closely. I would first carefully select the sow, and I think she ought to be from 12 to 15 months old, quiet, long bodied, and with full rows of teats; always the best that can be secured. The boar should be symmetrical in his build, and should have a pronounced masculine appearance. Any rheumatic affection should, in my judgment, disqualify a pig for breeding purposes. I am inclined, if any sow proves to be a good mother, to keep her for breeding purposes for, say, an average of four years. There is no reason why such a sow should not raise two litters during the season, by which I mean the time between the 1st of April and middle of August; for the balance of the year, after her second litter is weaned, she should be allowed to rest, being given the opportunity of much exercise during which time she will pick up the bulk of her living.

The following plan should be adopted in preparing and providing for the first litter, which should arrive not later than the 1st of April: A warm pen admitting lots of sunshine, with a dry, well-drained floor. Great care should be taken in providing bedding which should not be too plentiful and always short and chaffy. A good safeguard against the mother lying on her young is a 2x4 board nailed around the inside of the pen about 6 inches from the floor. When about two weeks of age, provide the litter with a good run, of course indoors. At four weeks, fix a little trough in their pen, so that the mother cannot reach it, and provide them at each meal with a little milk so that it will always be fresh. When they take this freely, a little shorts or middlings might be added. They may now be castrated at any time. The common course is to wean at this age, but this I consider a great mistake. The litter thrives much better when left with the mother for six weeks and the smaller ones should remain eight weeks. This serves the double purpose of assuring the drying

of the mother and the building up of the smaller pigs. Barley, chopped very fine, and soaked in swill or water, should now be fed and some of this fed all the time the pigs are on pasture to keep them growing their best.

By this time, there should be in readiness a small pasture of about an acre. This, divided in two, one-half sown to fall wheat or rye and the other half to rape, will provide good grazing for three months, when the first litter should be shut up for fattening purposes. They should be penned in a small yard with an indoor pen. Feed liberally with dry barley or wheat chops and provide with plenty of swill or water for drinking. If this is carefully carried on for a month the pigs should be ready for market, and should weigh at least 225 lbs. each, live weight. The second litter should be treated in the same manner, the second growth of green feed will provide ample pasture, and cullings from the garden will take the place of rape. The working of this method will involve a very small cash outlay.

Alta.

T. A. McMAHON.

Pastures Hogs on Brome Grass

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Regarding this question of hog-raising, I would say that I believe it would pay the average farmer to go in more for hog-raising, at least, up to the limit of keeping two brood sows and raising the progeny from them. That number, would, I believe, be about as many as the average farmer could care for and manage profitably.

I like to have the sows drop their litters early in March, so that the young pigs will be in a good state of growth by the first of May and ready to go into pasture for the summer. Two sows ought to raise from fifteen to twenty pigs. Brome grass for pasture, ground oats as grain feed and skim-milk make about the cheapest feed I know of, and with the addition of plenty of clean drinking water at all times will make as healthy a lot of pigs as it is possible to have. When they are about five months old, they are put on a mixed ration of grain and roots, turnips, mangolds or carrots, and so fed, easily dress 200 or 250 pounds by October.

The sows can be bred the fourth day after farrowing and will drop another litter in July. These can be wintered over and sold the following spring when prices are usually high. During winter the pigs may be fed on coarse grain and roots and housed under a straw stack built close to the yard. A pen can be made by setting posts in the ground and running a few stringers across them to keep the straw from falling through. Then, by threshing a good stack of wheat and blowing the straw on top, one has good, comfortable winter quarters for the hogs, there is no labor required cleaning it out and the pen will always be dry, which is an essential thing for pigs in winter.

In starting into the hog business, a man should never commence with grade stock, as poor stock is not only hog in name, but exceedingly hoggish in nature. Poor stock never pays for the feed it consumes, to say nothing of the labor of caring for them. Purchase pure breeding stock, either Berks or Yorks, as I consider they are the most profitable breeds we have for early maturity. I breed only the pure-bred Yorks, as they are my fancy, but the first cross between the Berks and Yorks makes the quickest gaining hog. But a man should never breed from the crosses. If he does, his stock will deteriorate in quality. I do not think that any class of stock will go back more quickly than hogs so bred. Do not imagine that because they are from pure-breeds of different breeds that they are pure-bred, as a gentleman did whom I once knew. He had a grade heifer he had brought from Ontario, the dam of which was Ayrshire and the sire Shorthorn. He always insisted she was pure-bred and could not be convinced he was in error. So do not be led astray by such faking, but stick to the breed you start with. Always use a pure-bred sire. But do not think that simply because an animal has a pedigree that he is all that could be desired. There are runts among the pure-breeds, so get them from some reliable breeder, who will guarantee his stock. I once purchased a boar from the Government farm, thinking I was getting the best, but he was a runt and I had to make pork of him at once. It required a year, too, to make him 200 pounds. Start slowly in the hog business; raise what you can with profit; don't be hoggish, but be a hog to raise all you can profitably.

Sask.

C. MOULDING.

A Saskatchewan Feeder's Method

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

With regard to this question of keeping hogs, I do not think there is any class of stock that will increase so rapidly with as small an outlay. If a man goes into hog-raising and conducts his business properly, gives as much thought to the feeding, sheltering and pasturing of his hogs as he does to other stock, he is almost certain to make a success.

Two or three brood sows, bred so as to farrow two litters a year, will produce enough stock for the average farm. An acre of fall rye would furnish pasturage for quite a number of pigs and sheats during the forepart of the summer. The latter part of the summer could be provided for by sowing a mixture of peas, oats, clovers, giant spinach and rape. An