

### The Care and Management of Brood Sows.

Read by Francis Green Jr. before the Dominion Swine Breeder's Association, September 18th, 1890

For success in pig raising there is nothing so essential in order to render the undertaking profitable as a good brood sow. She is like the goose that lays the golden egg, but more than one at a time; hence in selecting a young brood sow it is of the utmost importance to see that she be possessed of the characteristics which are obviously adapted to that end. It must be understood that I am not referring to the fancy points of any particular breed but rather to those which are to a great extent applicable to all breeds and which are conducive to the greatest profit, viz., prolificness and maternal solicitude.

In the first place then, I should insist on great length as well as depth, and the teats should not number less than 12, or more if possible. Length gives more space for the young pigs to suckle, and they will not crowd and fight so much and it is besides usually a concomitant of a good number of teats; while depth I have found to be an indication of a propensity to large litters. In the next place temper is important although even quick-tempered sows can be made tractable by kindness. At farrowing time one is sometimes of necessity compelled to be working round the sow and nothing is so unpleasant as being compelled to be ready to leap out of the pen at a moment's notice. As an instance of the kind system, a young sow (one of our recent importations), which was naturally of a slightly quick-tempered disposition, but which had become quite docile under kind treatment, was giving birth to her first litter; after they were all come she permitted them under protest to suckle, but showed a disposition to snap at them when they approached her mouth, subsequently, she left the young pigs and appeared afraid of them, still keeping up the snapping. I felt some apprehension that she might kill them if left alone, so I resolved to stay with them, and by petting her, induced her in a little while again to lie down while I invited the youngsters to step up and take a drink at the bar, a treat which they at once took advantage of with avidity. After some little time the sow accepted her family cares, still under protest, and the following day she took completely to them. Now I have very little doubt that had she not been handled with kindness both before and at the time of farrowing she would have killed the whole lot; as it is she is raising us a nice litter.

Our practice in regard to the feeding

and management of brood sows is as follows. In summer, up to the time of farrowing, they are fed usually on a little bran and barley meal, mixed with kitchen swill and in default of swill with water on a grass run; in winter, we employ the same feed, pulped mangolds (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  peck; being allowed to each sow, three times a day), being substituted for grass. I am aware that mangolds are considered by many breeders, both in England and Canada as deleterious to brood sows; that it is said that when fed on these roots the young pigs come weak and often dead, but I wish emphatically to state that last winter we gave a more liberal allowance than usual, and we never had better or stronger litters, or had greater success in raising them. Possibly if mangolds were used as the sole food the results might not have been so good, but in the proportions and quantities fed by us, they were eminently satisfactory.

A week before the pigs are due we remove the sow to the breeding pen, which is surrounded by a fender composed of planks about nine inches to a foot above the ground. The food of the sow is now usually changed to bran and a little oat chops, particular care being taken at this time that their bowels are kept loose; if there is any appearance of constipation we administer sulphur and perhaps a little linseed oil in her food. Every day up to the day she is due she is turned out for exercise in the yard. When the young pigs begin to arrive we take them from her one by one, and when they are all come we return them to the sow, and if she takes to them we leave them alone for a time. For a few days we feed the sow very sparingly, gradually increasing the food until the pigs are three weeks old, when she should be on full feed.

There is one peculiarity which I have observed in sows that are in good condition, and especially these that are excellent mothers: they exhibit great reluctance in getting up and leaving their young, so much that they will neglect to fulfil the calls of nature. Our invariable practice now in such cases is to take a switch and turn out the sow the day after pigging, and compel her to take exercise in yard, when they will usually at once relieve themselves, and after this there is no further trouble.

Many have doubtless been annoyed by sows lying on their young. In some instances this is owing to carelessness in the mother, and may be counteracted in a great measure by a fender around the sides, sometimes, however, this practice arises from the irritation occasioned by

lice. This information I acquired unfortunately by experience, and soon remedied it by a dressing, after which the sacrifice of the innocents was abandoned. The moral of course is, see that your sows are free from lice farrowing time, if at no other.

Young pigs vary a good deal in the time at which they commence to eat; some will come to the trough at two weeks, others not till three or four weeks; I need not say that the earlier one can get them started the better; not only will the young pigs grow more rapidly, but the drain on the sow is also somewhat relieved. Our custom is to partition off a small portion of the pen with boards, nailed at such a height that the young pigs, but not the sow, can run under and feed out of a small trough, the capacity of the trough being its length not its depth. Six weeks after farrowing we wean our sows, which are relegated to their own quarters, their food consisting of a light ration at first, after which the method mentioned in the beginning of this paper is resumed de novo.

#### An Agricultural Criminal.

Prison Chaplain (to condemned)—  
"My poor man, you are about to die; are you ready for the reaper—Death—that sooner or later must gather us all in?"

Condemned—"I don't object to the reaper; it's the twine binder that bothers me."

Charles A. Dana, the famous editor of the New York Sun, has a brother who is a farmer in the town of Lubec. He moved there some years ago to take charge of a mining scheme. When the bottom dropped out of the mine he married him a wife, bought a farm and settled and has been there ever since. He is a very intelligent man and keeps up with the times and is happy as a clam.

Maine farmers who turn their attention to poultry-raising are likely to come out better than those who spend their time hunting for gold mines. And the birds may take the place of mining experts in the last named business, too. Two more ducks are reported—this time in Holdon, with gold in their crops. Their owner had never supposed he owned a gold mine but now he is hopeful.

A. C. Bell and H. J. Townsend, New Glasgow, publish a prospectus stating;—  
"It is proposed to form an association with a capital of \$10,000 in shares of \$25 each, to acquire the property of the Union Trotting Park company and of the New Glasgow Agricultural Society."