



# FARM AND DAIRY & RURAL HOME



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The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham

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## Making the Most of the Spring Litter

Some Suggestions from A. E. MacLaurin, Macdonald College, Quebec

**I** WANT to raise some young pigs this spring, but don't know much about looking after the sow at farrowing time. Could you get some of your practical pig raisers to write on the care of the sow and the spring litter?"

This query was in the *Farm and Dairy* mail box last week. Just a few minutes later the editor, in glancing through the *Quebec Journal of Agriculture*, noticed an article from A. E. MacLaurin, of Macdonald College, so replete with just the information desired by our subscriber that it is reproduced herewith in full. Mr. MacLaurin's suggestions are as follows:

"With pork prices at an exceptionally high level, and with every assurance that no great decline will take place for a considerable time, every farmer should make an effort to prevent losses in the spring litters. Weak, sickly litters are very often the result of careless management of the sow before farrowing, and a few precautions attended to while the litter is on the sow may save the lives of what otherwise might have been healthy pigs. Each farmer should aim to rear the maximum number of thirty pigs from each litter.

The care of the litter should commence with the care of the sow during pregnancy. The breeder should try to have his sow in good, vigorous, healthy condition, not too fat nor yet too thin. A very fat sow is liable to have difficulty in parturition, and will probably farrow a number of dead pigs, while a very thin sow is not able to nurse a large litter to the best advantage. Provide a meal ration that is not too fattening, but which contains considerable bone and muscle forming material. A ration of equal parts of ground oats and middlings, or one of equal parts of ground corn, ground oats and middlings, might be suggested. The value of the use of roughage and succulent feeds cannot be over-estimated. Not only are feeds of this kind cheap, but they also have a very beneficial effect, producing thrift and good health. From the point of view of economy, bulky feeds are very important now, because of the high prices prevailing for meal of all kinds. Second cut alfalfa is the very best roughage, but clover hay may be used when alfalfa is not available. Roots form the best source of succulent feed, sugar beets or mangels being the most palatable and beneficial. It is important that the sow be housed so that she may take considerable exercise.

At Macdonald College a number of young sows carrying their second litters, and weighing between 375 and 400 pounds were each fed the fol-

lowing daily ration:—Meal, 1½ lbs.; cob corn, 1¼ lbs.; mangels, 3¼ lbs.; and alfalfa, 1½ lbs. The meal consisted of equal parts of shorts and mixed feed (barley and oats). This formed a very satisfactory ration, keeping the sows in good condition, and being very economical. Sows of the same weight and in poor condition would require a more liberal allowance to bring them up to good condition, but when in good shape a well balanced ration of this kind will maintain them very economically.

About a week before farrowing time the sow

sows,—for the little pigs often get entangled in the long straw and are crushed. Cut straw or chaff may be used; in any case give only a moderate amount of bedding. A guard rail of some kind should be placed around the wall near where the sow makes her bed.

### Attention at Farrowing Time.

An attendant should be on hand at farrowing time, but need not interfere unless it seems necessary. If farrowing is prolonged, or if the pigs are weak, remove them and put them in a warm place. Sometimes a pig born apparently dead may be

revived by slapping smartly on the side, or by opening its mouth and blowing into it. Chilled pigs may be helped by immersing all except the head in water at a temperature of about 98 degs. F., then rubbing dry and placing in a warm place. When farrowing is completed and the sow becomes quiet and the pigs should be returned and allowed to suck. The sow's meal should be fed in the form of a very thin slop for some time after farrowing, gradually bringing it back to a thicker condition. The feeding of roughage and roots should be continued. There is no need of being in a hurry to start feeding the sow after farrowing, but it is advisable to have available some warm water to which a little meal has been added.

In an unthrifty pig examination of the mouth will sometimes show black teeth. The points of these should be snipped off with a pair of small pliers. In the case of a small litter on a large, fat, heavy milking sow, thumps are liable to occur in the litter. The symptoms are a great accumulation of fat at first and later a sort of palpitation, the pig panting like a horse with heaves. The disease may be prevented by cutting down the sow's ration so that her milk will not be so abundant nor so rich, and by making the little pig take exercise. Another disease that may occur is scours. A tablespoonful of sulphate of iron in the sow's feed from time to time will help to prevent this trouble. In severe cases one to two teaspoonfuls of castor oil may be given to each pig affected.

### Teaching Pigs to Eat.

When the litter has reached the age of about three weeks it is time to commence teaching the pigs to eat. Arrange a small enclosure with a partition of slats so arranged that the young pigs can get through while the sow cannot. Place a low trough in this enclosure. Start the pigs on skim-milk. If skim-milk is scarce, oatmeal siftings may be used as a supplement. A little care

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### To the Dairy Cow

By W. E. VAPLON.

**T**HE dairy cow, long may she wave her fluffy tail her hide to save from gnats and fly and such like pest that seem to like to break her rest. It's she that brings the monthly check for cream she offers by the peck; it's she that often saves from wreck, or who to milk cows by heck! The farmer who's afraid to dig, or who to shoot and spit tobacco spit, the kind whom farming doesn't fit, will keep on going into debt, it's just as safe as spuds to bet, while neighbor Jones with twenty cows will chase hard times to the bow-wow. To farm these days of high-priced land, you've got to plan to beat the band. To meet the price of high-priced tools and self-adjusting milking stools is surely not the job of fools. The farmer who will crop his land each blooming year for all 'twill stand at last before the judgment bar and wake up with a jelling jar. You feed your horse hay and oats, you even feed your lambs and shoats and then you wonder why the land should make a fuss and grow a stand that's not enough to feed ten goats. Put back into the soil, my friends, some of the elements it lends. Remember 'tis the cow and hog that give your bank account a jog that fertilize your worn-out soil and help the mortgage men to foil.

should be placed in the farrow pen. This pen should be shut off from the main part of the pigery, or else be in a separate building so that it may be possible to supply good ventilation, light, fresh air, and dryness. The pen should be thoroughly cleaned, and it is advisable to scatter some air-slaked lime around. These precautions will help to prevent disease and unthriftiness in the litter.

As farrowing time approaches care must be taken to avoid constipation in the sow. This condition is very serious, and results usually in the loss of most of the litter and endangers the sow's life as well. To prevent constipation give the meal as a thinner slop and keep up the supply of roots. It is advisable not to use long straw for bedding, particularly in the case of large, clumsy