

STOCK

Age at Which to Breed Heifers.

In Cattle Notes and Jottings the following appears: "The age at which heifers intended for dairying should be bred is a subject that has created a good deal of discussion at various times, and is frequently cropping up. There is no doubt in the minds of those who have had experience in this matter that the earlier in reason that the animal can be bred from the better. There are two or three reasons why this is so. In the first place, they are found to milk better as they grow on. In the second place, if mated early, say at 15 months, they must be well kept from birth (not extravagantly) and this ensures the laying a good foundation for future productions; and, thirdly, a year is gained and a calf over those who do not mate their stock until two years old or a little over.

It is not wise to mate too early unless the heifers are in good condition, the calf begins to drain the system about 4½ months after service, and unless the heifer is in good condition to commence with she has little opportunity of making amends. Young heifers that calve early, and are out of flesh from any cause whatever, can be very materially helped later on by being allowed an extra six weeks' rest before the second calf is born; they will repay this expense. If allowed to run too long before being served there is often difficulty experienced in getting them to hold, whether intended for dairy purposes or not; and if for the dairy, too much flesh, the outcome of going too long before mating, has seldom proved beneficial."

This while good advice is not applicable to heifers that have been poorly fed from two months old up. Many such have been irretrievably spoiled by sour milk and many heifers stunted by a semi-starvation diet on spare pastures and poor straw previous to calving. It does not necessarily follow that a 'maintenance' diet is a profitable one for the farmer to use for livestock.

Possible Rivals to Canada for British Bacon Trade.

Mark Lane Express states that upwards of 350 large white boars and gets, ages ranging from seven to twelve months, were exported in one week to the order of the representatives of the Hungarian Board of Agriculture, Messrs. Paul von Tolneg and Oswald Pick; they were despatched by special trains and sailed from the ports of Goole, Hull, and London for Ghent (Belgium); from thence they will travel through Germany and Buda Pesth. Considering the large number, it is doubtful whether a finer consignment of pigs were ever exported from England.

The continued effort to lower prices for hogs to unreasonable figures by Canadian packers is a short-sighted policy by which they will eventually lose the British bacon trade to themselves and the Canadian farmers. The Ontario packers have been pilloried for their unpatriotic and selfish stand at the Guelph Fat Stock Show, and their poor relations in Western Canada need similar attention, as they have been willing imitators of the eastern packer right along. Hog raising is not a common industry among Western farmers, as is wheat raising, and consequently very little manipulation of prices with a downward trend tends to discourage pork production. It has been stated time and again that farmers will not endeavor to produce hogs for less than five cents a pound live weight, how much less than that figure it really costs to produce the hog under western conditions, either average or ideal, we believe has not yet been satisfactorily shown, it is to be hoped that some reliable data will be available for the winter meetings. In a bulletin issued by Agriculturist Grisdale, C.E.F. Ottawa, some data is submitted of experiments conducted at the Brandon and Indian Head farms on the values of grains, wheat being compared with mixed grains (one-half wheat, one-quarter barley, one-quarter oats) for fattening swine. The superintendent at Brandon says: "If the value of the manure be considered as an equivalent for the labour and attendance, pork at 4c. per pound live weight would make the wheat worth 88 cents per hundred pounds, and the mixed grain would be worth 72 cents per hundred pounds."

Even at 5 cents a pound, the returns would only be \$18 a ton for the mixed grains, which is

is not enough, the market price for mixed chop (barley and oats) in Winnipeg \$21 a ton, barley \$18 a ton, oats \$25, shorts \$15 (lower than usual) and for live hogs (selects) off cars Winnipeg 6c. A test at Indian Head was made with soaked wheat, and wheat and barley mixed and soaked but the results are not figured out. In 1893 with two pigs (grade Berkshires) Mr. Bedford demonstrated that bought at 5c. a lb. live weight, and sold at the same rate, barley selling on the market at 25c. a bushel was worth 50c. a bushel. The two pigs were fed four months; another test with speltz and mixed grain (one-fifth oats, two-fifths wheat screenings, two-fifths barley; under the Noxious Weeds Acts, Manitoba farmers are not allowed to use screenings) the pigs were purchased at five and one-quarter cents live weight and sold at the same figure per pound, the gain in weight being figured out to give a profit of from \$2.24 to \$2.43 per pig for the feed consumed in the eighty-one days, feed used being figured at 81c. per ton. It appears that these experiments were carried on in winter time when feeding is most expensive due to lack of growing feeds of a succulent nature such as rape or growing peas, and to the extra feed necessary to maintain animal heat. The data then available from Western experiments is very limited and not illuminating enough, bacon producers need figures from experiments conducted with pigs—from the farrowing pen to the market scales.

What it Cost One Farmer to Raise Hogs.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In your issue of Jan. 10th on page 53 you ask: "Does any person really know that hogs cannot be produced for less than 5 cents per pound?" The following is my two year's experience if, I can make it plain enough to your readers.

In 1904 I sold 4990 lbs. for the sum of \$290.35. The cost to produce the pork was \$273.85, so it took nearly 5½ cents per lb. In 1905 I sold 9350 lbs. for \$476.65 at a cost for feed of \$335.65, about 3½ cents per lb. The two years taken together make receipts \$767.00, feed \$609.50 or 4½ cents per lb., but in above there is nothing allowed for labor nor yet for marketing. Say one hour per day at 25 cents per hour that would add another \$182.00 on the expenses, making about 5½ cents. I give the amount of feed used in 1905, also allowing 6 per cent on buildings, fencing, etc.

Barley 630 bus. at 30 cents	\$189.00
Oats 100 bus. at 30 cents	30.00
Damaged wheat, 70 bus.	18.00
Rape and pasture	10.00
Shorts, 7800 lbs.	66.15
Bran 830 lbs.	6.00
Chopping	26250
Interest on \$400.00	24.00

Total \$369.65

Skim milk in feeding has not been counted, nor yet has the manure, but added to the above should be a loss in capital of \$30.00, the value of the pigs being on Jan. 1st 1904, \$235.00 on Jan. 1st, 1906, \$205.00. I have come to the conclusion there is not much in raising pigs when, as shown above, the net returns are \$767.00 and expenses \$791.50 or \$821.50 with the \$30.00 added, making the cost of production 5½ cents.

The price received by me was from 4 cents to 6½ cents per lb. an average of a trifle over 5½ cents. I might say I built a piggery and have everything handy, but I found it is not the success I anticipated. I had better success with a log building and no floor. This place is either damp and cold or else damp and hot, so it caused a lot of my pigs to go off their feet in the spring, thereby adding to the expense of feed. I also think there is more in spring litters than to winter fall litters. I can get 175 to 200 lbs. in seven months with spring pigs, but not with the fall pigs. The tests undertaken at the Experimental Farms, in my opinion, throw little light on the subject (I have the latest bulletin), and none of the experiments give the cost from birth, feed of sows etc. They give several valuable tables on different ways and feeding stuffs but no data, from birth to butcher, nor yet the cost to get the pigs to the weight when the experiment starts.

PIG FEEDER.

The Hog Question in Alberta.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In recent issues of the Ontario papers I notice there is a keen discussion on the question of hog raising and bacon production. The claim is made that the packers, by means of a trust, a combine, or agreement, or something which performs the functions of such organizations without the offensive name, are making a successful effort to keep down the price of live hogs and take for themselves the major portion of the profits. What is claimed in Ontario is actually taking place in Alberta to-day. The farmers are urged to raise more hogs; the packers are anxious that they should, so that the packers and not the farmer may reap the harvest. Hogs have sold at Alberta points as low as four cents per pound, when in Winnipeg they were bringing six and seven. Does any one claim for one moment, that the difference is due to the freight rates on the product from these points to the old country. The fact is, a great portion of the western bacon finds its market in the lumber camps and mining centers to the west and a splendid paying market it is—for the packers.

Meanwhile, where does the consumer come in? The price of hams and bacon remains practically the same, while the price of live hogs is tumbling, and to the packer and to him only belongs the fat of the land.

What is the remedy? We must adopt here the same system that has done so much for the farmers of Denmark. Pork packing establishments should be built by the farmers themselves, though possibly some assistance might be given by the Alberta Government. We shall not have to fight a monopoly of the strength of Standard Oil, but with the pork packing business and the live stock industry of the country, practically in the hands of one man, the farmers should wake up and rustle.

In opposition to this we are told that we do not produce a high class product and that we also fail to produce a sufficient quantity of hogs to supply any more packing houses. There is no doubt that the quality could be improved, but what inducement was ever held out to us for improvement either in quantity or quality.

We have the cheap grain; we have every facility for raising first class hogs, but so long as we are ground out of our share in the profits by unscrupulous packers, so long will Alberta fall below the level as a bacon producing province.

The farmers of Alberta demand fair play; they insist that in their efforts they want an equal chance and that the dice should not be loaded against them.

ANTI-HOG.



A BUNCH OF WINNERS FROM JAS. WILSON'S GRAND VIEW HERD, INNISPAUL, ALTA.