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Feeding and Management of Sows

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How much the young porkers, with which the sow is preparing to present us, are to cost at birth, depends almost entirely upon the way she is fed and handled. A sow that produces and raises eight to 10 pigs is worth a great deal more than one which gives us only three or four. If a brood sow costs \$10 a year for feed and keep, and she produces but four pigs, each pig will cost \$2.50. On the other hand, if she produces eight pigs, they will have cost but \$1.25 each at birth. When one is growing 100 pigs, the difference between the litters of two groups of sows, respectively averaging as above, would amount to \$125 at the start.

Sows are not kept for the purpose of eating feed, merely. Their business is to farrow pigs and to nurse them to a point where they can be fed for market. With this in view, the sow should be so fed and managed as to enable her to do her work to the best advantage. She must be kept in good condition, but without fattening, and should not be permitted to lie around without exercising properly every day. If she is properly handled, and fails to fulfil her duties, the sow has no business on the farm, and the quicker she is found out and disposed of the better.

FEEDING THE SOWS

In feeding a sow, economy in the ration, a supply of the proper nutrients, and each in the proper amount, should be kept constantly in mind. Advantage should be taken of such frequent happenings as that milk can be had at a small price from creameries, or that ground rye is cheaper than shorts, or that corn and oil cake is cheaper than shorts, or that pasture is cheaper than grain. The cost of the ration should always be dealt with most carefully.

The nutrients found in feed containing the mineral elements, proteins, carbohydrates and their equivalents, in varied proportion—should be so fed as to supply a fairly definite proportion of each. The proteins and carbohydrates are usually fed in the proportion of one of the former to seven or seven and a half of the latter. Milk, oil-cake, tankage, soy beans and clover are protein feeds. Shorts stand midway between a protein and a carbonaceous feed; while barley and corn are carbonaceous in character.

KINDS OF FEED

Usually, as many of the farm grains as possible should be fed. Frequently, however, it is much cheaper to use others rather than exclusively farm-produced feeds. Since over-feeding makes brood sows undesirably fat, and since their voracious appetite inclines them to unmusical squealing when they are not full, it has been an approved plan to provide them, when they are not caring for a litter, with feed only moderately nutritious, but as lumpy as possible—such, for instance, as contains considerable water. This class includes pasture crops of different kinds, roots, clover or alfalfa hay and milk. By the use of these and other bulky feeds, the sow's stomach is distended and she is satisfied, and yet does not fatten up as when concentrated feed like

grain is given. The great advantage, therefore, of having pasture for brood sows, both during farrowing and after, is clearly seen.

Good supplementary rations, in addition to pastures and roots, are as follows: Four parts of milk, by weight, and one part of corn; shorts alone; corn and shorts, equal parts; six parts corn and one of oil-cake; seven parts corn and one of tankage.

AMOUNTS TO FEED

Dry sows that are in good condition and on good pasture need little else. If they are confined to pens—a condition that never should exist on a well-managed farm—such sows will probably do well on .85 lbs. of grain a day, a cwt. of sow. When the sow is thin, this amount should be increased to one pound a cwt. a day. The larger



Accomplishing Two Objects At Once

Where the manure is not hauled directly to the fields a few hogs in the manure shed will do good work in keeping the manure tramped solid. At the same time the hogs will be making the usual gains in weight.

—Photo furnished by J. H. Grisdale.

allowances ordinarily recommended are practically wasted.

As farrowing time approaches, the bulk of feed should be cut down, less water should be given, and more protein and oily feeds should be fed, so as to keep the sow in a laxative condition. If she is in good condition, light feeding will help keep her so. Exercise in the fresh air, together with the care noted in feeding, should bring her up to farrowing time in fine shape.

MANAGEMENT AT FARROWING

Attention to the brood sow at the farrowing time should be especially emphasized. This is an important crisis in the pork-producing business, which is to determine the result of many months of feeding and watchfulness. No business man would think of going away and neglecting his affairs at a time when his presence was so imperatively necessary; neither should the pork-producer. The brood sow should always be housed in a warm, comfortable place, if the out-door temperature is not such as to permit her to farrow in the pasture. She should be disturbed as little as possible.

What we ask is a more widespread recognition of the dignity of housekeeping. It has not yet been recognized to any extent as a profession. This is partly our own fault.—Mrs. J. Muldrew, Macdonald College, Que.

About Rearing Fall Calves

J. R. Westlake, Carleton Co., Ont.

I believe in the maxim of the Dutch herdsmen, who say that the calf should be removed from out of sight of the cow before it has had an opportunity to suck. We find that it is much easier to teach the calf to drink from a pail if it has never received milk in any other manner. As soon as the calf is strong and nicely on its feet, we offer it some of its mother's warm milk. We dip two fingers into the pail and then allow the calf to suck the fingers. In just about three minutes if we handle the calf gently and do not lose our temper we have it drinking quite nicely.

When we first started in dairying one of the biggest mistakes that we made was in keeping the calves thin. We had an idea that a fat calf would never make a dairy cow. We have since decided that while it is not desirable to overload a calf with fat, nevertheless a calf should be in good condition, and the one that has the ability to put on flesh easily will usually have the ability to make lots of milk provided its breeding is right. Our rule is to keep the calf in vigorous growing condition and even if the heifer is fleshy when it freshens it will be in that much better position to give us a good milk flow.

A GOOD MARKET FOR MILK

We consider that the milk we feed to the calves returns us more than that which we sell to the city trade. For two weeks they are fed whole milk. At the end of the first week a little ground oats, with the coarse hulls sifted out, is put in the bottom of the pail as soon as they have drunk the milk. They will soon learn to lick at the grain.

The third week of the calf's life is a gradual change from whole milk to skim milk. By the time that the calf is on skim milk it should be eating a fair amount of grain to make up for what is taken from the milk. Oatmeal with a little cornmeal added makes an excellent substitute for the butter fat of the whole milk. We like to have our calves getting skim milk for at least the first five months, but when selling milk at a good price we sometimes cut them off at three months and substitute calf meal.

DEVELOP DIGESTIVE CAPACITY

We get our calves eating roughage such as roots, ensilage and good clover hay at as early an age as possible. We consider this very important, as it extends and develops the digestive tract and gives the animal good digestive capacity which will stand it in good stead when it comes to converting our rough feed into milk. Good clover hay is an ideal roughage. A little roots are a good regulator. We would not advocate feeding too much ensilage to calves, as it is apt to scour them.

Calves fed in this manner will make a splendid growth if stabled for their first winter in a clean, dry and fairly warm box stall. We do not raise the spring calves, of which there are not many, as we consider the hot weather of summer a very poor time for rearing calves. We get much better results from our fall calves.