

Farm Experiences

TO ENSURE HEALTHY COLTS

Nothing is more disappointing to the lover of horses than losing a mare or foal at foaling time. While some fatalities are the result of conditions over which we have no control, the greater part are caused by lack of attention to the little things necessary to successful parturition and later treatment of mare and colt. The following method has proved very successful with me.

First, the mare must be adequately nourished on complete rations during pregnancy and when nursing. Oats and bran, about one-quarter bran by weight, with timothy, upland hay or green oats, and a few roots or oil meal form my ideal ration. Whatever feed is used must be absolutely free from dust or mold, as feeding such material is the chief cause of abortion. Mares are fed regularly, watered three times a day, and if not working are given abundance of exercise. It is aimed to keep the mare in ordinary condition only. Over-fatness is even more fatal than a thin condition. If there is work to be done the mare works right up to foaling time, and no harm can result if handled by an intelligent man. She should not be strained with heavy loads in soft ground, used on tongued implements, on icy roads, or in backing a load.

A box stall and deep bed of dry straw is provided, and on nearing parturition the stall is well cleaned and disinfected with formalin or creolin solution and kept scrupulously clean. When wax forms on the end of the teats, I watch the mare closely at least at intervals of two hours, day and night. Some may think this too much bother. I have had some mares foal eight years in succession and never need any attention, while another would always deliver her foal with the sack unbroken and the foal was almost sure to smother if the attendant were not present. After foaling the navel cord is treated with iodine and sprinkled with powder made of equal parts of powdered alum, gum camphor and corn starch. It will turn black and soon dry up, lessening danger of infection. The stall is cleaned thoroughly and sprinkled with slacked lime until danger of infection is past. I give the mare slightly warmed water for two days or longer if not doing well, and feed scalded bran, gradually getting her back to her usual feed in two weeks. If a mare has not cleaned in six hours, I give a pint of raw linseed oil and weight the afterbirth which treatment is generally successful in removing it. If complications appear expert advice should be obtained without delay.

When a mare has been worked regularly she may be put back to light work in two weeks, leaving the foal at home in a roomy box stall with water, hay, oats and bran, and company if possible. I work the mares about three hours each half day at first. The mares are always fed and watered before turning in with the colt, and if much heated considerable milk is drawn by hand. A gorging with heated milk will almost invariably set up indigestion or scours in the colt and it is necessary to watch this very closely when the mare is doing her full share of team work in the hot weather. For either constipation or scours in the colt nothing is much better than castor oil, but prevention is better than cure. I put the mare and colt on grass as soon as possible, keeping them in when the weather is stormy. I feed about the same grain ration on grass twice a day as they receive indoors and either feed in a box out in the pasture or the mare is brought up morning and evening. I find thoughtful and intelligent handling and feeding of the mare and close attention to the little things is what makes for complete success in raising colts from working mares.—T.W.W., Man.

THRESHING FLAX

I have threshed flax in snow and ice and found the best way to take the ice out of all small grain such as flax and grass seeds is to run your machine as follows: Level the ground under the machine and spread a canvas directly under the weed screen slot. Use the wheat seed screen, open the slot and the flax or grass seed will come right through the screen onto the canvas. Practically all of the ice and snow will go over the screen into the bigger elevator up and away, leaving the grain free of ice.—J. McG., Man.

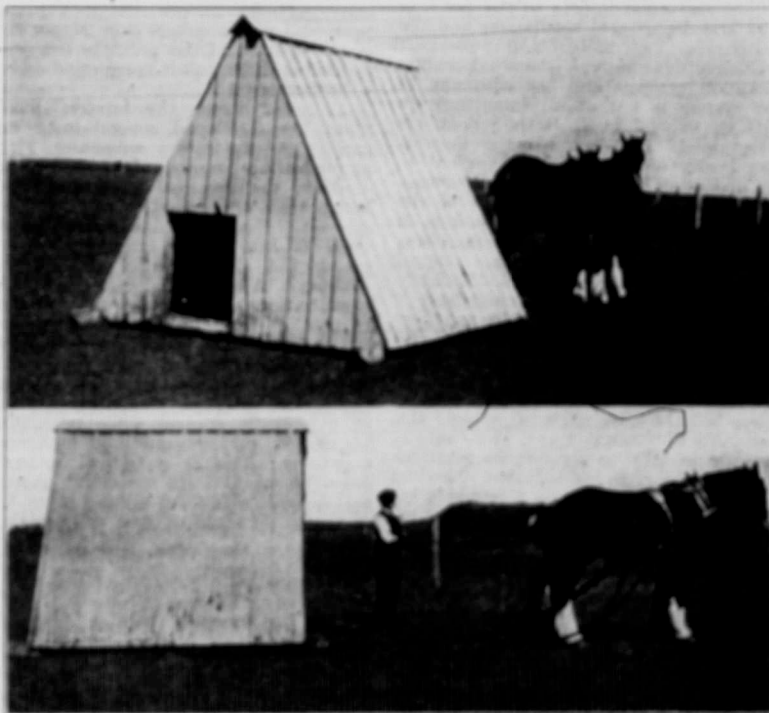
We invite our readers to contribute their experiences to this page. Letters suggesting new ideas along any line of farm work will be welcomed and all that we can use will be paid for at our regular rate of 25 cents per hundred words. Write on one side of the paper only and send your ideas on each subject on a separate sheet. Favorable and unfavorable experiences are alike acceptable and by exchanging ideas on this page our readers will be able to obtain a great deal of very valuable information from each other.

AT LAMBING TIME

I do not know how many readers of The Guide are keeping sheep, but those who have not would be better with some, and those who have ought to make some special attempt to look after them properly at this time of the year. This is one of the critical times in the flock and on the care given during the next few weeks will depend very largely the percentage of the lamb crop this spring.

This is a season when drafts and changes are apt to give sheep a cold, and coughing, running at nose and lung diseases are often due to drafts sweeping thru the barn or shed. Too many farmers either provide no shelter for sheep or too cramped close quarters. Last spring I saw two of my neighbors lose several lambs, and in one case a fine ewe, from having ewes run back and forth thru a narrow doorway where they were jammed and crushed constantly.

I usually try to provide two or three separate pens where I can keep ewes at and immediately after lambing. Lambing time is the time of greatest trouble. It is right here most money is made or lost in keeping sheep. With separate pens, ewes with twins or triplets can be separated and the danger of ewes downing lambs largely got over. A ewe recognizes her lamb by smell and voice only and when a lamb wanders away among a bunch of



SHIFTING AN A-SHAPED HOG PEN

inquisitive sheep while the mother is probably delivering a second or third lamb, she is often not able to recognize it again, and consequently downs it. In a couple of days the ewe will get to know her lambs and save further trouble. Then, too, if a newly lambing ewe is kept in a corner she can be fed specially, as she should be.

I try to keep my ewes in fair condition all winter and I find it pays, for some of my neighbors who give their ewes nothing at all but what they can pick up around a stack, have a good deal of trouble about lambing time. I always feed a little ground oats and bran, about three pounds of oats to two of bran, giving each ewe about half a pound a day or a little more for about a month or six weeks before lambing. Timothy and marsh hay I never found worth a cent for sheep and the timothy always spoiled the wool and made the sheep itchy, thru the heads forcing themselves thru the wool down to the sheep's back. I usually feed oat hay or fine oat straw. This year I had some

peas and oats cut fairly green and they seem to be the best feed I have ever used.—J.T.B., Penhold, Alta.

STOPPING HOG LOSSES

There seems to be more variation among men in their ability to keep hogs with profit than any other class of farm animal, with the possible exception of the dairy cow. At least that has been the conclusion reached from my observations among my neighbors both here and where I lived formerly. I suppose this is because hogs cannot consume such a large amount of roughage or cheap feed and must have much more concentrated feed to be put on the market at anything like a profit.

The saying "dirty as a pig" seems also to have given some people the idea that this is the natural state of a pig and he would not be contented unless he were wallowing in filth of some kind. Pigs are just as clean as any other class of farm animal if they have a chance, but under the conditions so many people keep them they have no alternative. Older hogs can stand more or less of this, chiefly more in many people's minds, but little pigs seem to be very readily poisoned. Their noses are never very far from the floor, and hence the necessity of not only scraping up the thickest of the dirt, but also of thoroughly cleaning the floor pretty frequently. Where farrowing sows are shut up in closed houses, the pens should be made scrupulously clean before the new litter arrives. Lack of cleanliness was always a big bugbear to pork plungers. About 90 per cent. of pig troubles, barring cholera, are due to unsanitary conditions during the early part of a pig's life. There is no sentiment attached to this; it means cold dollars and cents.

One great advantage of the separate A-shaped or colony house for farrowing sows is that it can be moved about from place to place occasionally, and as long as it is kept bedded down fairly well it can very readily be kept clean. In case the ground should become wet and unfit thru rain, the house can simply be moved on to another place and fresh straw put in. The bedding on the old place can be scattered and the grass will be better than ever. In addition this house is cheap, seclusive, quiet and comfortable. In the larger house quicklime sprinkled thinly and evenly over the floor combines the virtues of disinfectant and drier. Spraying with a good disinfectant dip is also good practice. Dryness and freedom from drafts as well as good ventilation I have always found essential to the health of little pigs. Many poultry men keep straw above their birds, and I found in one hog pen where I was able to use it that this was excellent for absorbing dampness and bad odors. Some sows, if they are big and slow, wallow about in too much bedding and frequently kill little pigs, whereas more active ones would do little or no harm under similar conditions. With the former I try to get short chaffy bedding that the pigs can't get lost in. One thing that will save many little pigs is a plank or guard projecting some six or eight inches from the side of the wall and placed about eight inches above the floor. When the sow lies against this little pigs run no danger of getting squeezed.

Changes of feed before or after farrowing are often disastrous and should be carefully avoided. Constipation is one of the greatest dangers, and the sow that becomes constipated before she farrows is very apt to lose her pigs, and possibly not survive herself. Too strong feeds, such as a lot of barley, rye, tankage or even corn are dangerous. Sloppy, cooling, loosening food is most important. Skim milk with bran and oat chop, or middlings mixed, is excellent, or even a little linseed meal can be used to good advantage. This feed needs little change after farrowing, the more middlings can be added and bran cut down, as its value is mainly in its bulk.

Some run with swill or slop to a sow immediately after farrowing, but she ought to be her own guide largely in this matter. Twelve or fifteen hours quietness, without food, is best, and at first a thin drink of middlings and water is good enough. Over feeding in the first three days ought to be guarded against. After that she can be brought up to full feed, and then ought to be fed as liberally as possible if the litter is a good one.

Sows need attention at farrowing time like any other animal, but they don't need a lot of inter-

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