

BACON PRODUCTION.

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PART I.—BUILDINGS.

The question of buildings for swine is such a complicated one that it seems a hopeless task to attempt a discussion of the subject. Almost every piggery that is built possesses certain features peculiar to itself, and rendered necessary by the circumstances which it is intended to meet. All that will be attempted here, therefore, is a brief discussion of the desirable features of a piggery, illustrated by drawings of a cheap and convenient building which may be modified to meet almost any requirements.

The most important requirements of a piggery are dryness, ventilation, light, freedom from draughts, reasonable warmth, and convenience.

Dryness. Dryness is closely associated with ventilation, but is also influenced by the material of which the building is constructed. Good results can not be obtained in a damp pen; and dripping walls are a pretty sure indication of impending disaster. Rheumatism and numerous forms of unthriftiness result from dampness. Stone and cement walls are very cold in winter, and chill the air of the pen, causing it to deposit its moisture upon their surface. In a short time the wall becomes quite wet, and trouble is stored up for the pigs. A hollow cement wall is much less objectionable than a solid one; but our experience leads us to prefer wooden walls, constructed in such a way as to form a complete dead air space in the centre.

Ventilation. Thorough ventilation is a great help in preserving dryness; but it is a difficult thing to secure in a piggery without unduly lowering the temperature. It is a great aid to ventilation to provide a large air space, or, in other words, to have a high ceiling. The tendency at present is to do away with the common loft over the piggery, and to have the space above the pigs extend to the roof. This gives more air space, and makes ventilation a simpler problem. The admission of fresh air can be provided for by constructing shafts in the walls at intervals of fifteen or twenty feet. These shafts open outside near the ground, and inside, at the ceiling. Provision should be made for the closing, or partial closing, of these intakes when cold air is admitted too rapidly. Windows in the roof, as described in the plan, are a very effective means of removing foul air.

Light. Light, especially sunlight, has a wonderful influence in promoting health. So far as possible, the windows should be on the south side of the building, as the south side gets most sun, and is least exposed to cold winds.

Draughts. While ventilation is necessary, draughts are extremely injurious, and their prevention should be kept in view when building.

Warmth. Warmth is a good thing; but it should not be secured at the expense of ventilation. A somewhat cold pen, well ventilated but free from draughts, is preferable to a warm pen where the air is damp and foul, and the pigs will suffer less discomfort in the former than in the latter.