Breeding and Feeding the Bacon Curer's Pig.

The journal of the British Dairy Farmers' Association contains an extensive paper on the above subject, by J. M. Harris, of Calne, Wiltshire, Eng., in which he favors the large white Yorkshire, either pure or crossed with the Berkshire, giving pigs which feed well, mature quickly, are very prolific, are not thick in the shoulder, are thin in the skin, not too thick in the back, and which yield a side thick in the streaky or belly part. Pure-bred sires—not crosses or mongrels—should be used, otherwise the farrows will not be so large and the individual pigs will often be dwarfed, there will be two or three small ones in every farrow, and all the offspring will be thin in the belly or flank. Is there any other animal used for the food of man so prolific, so easily housed, fed with so little labor and at so small a cost, and which is worth so much at the same age?

THOROUGHBRED STALLION, WYNDHAM.

First prize at Canadian Horse Show in class for stallions to improve the breed of Saddle Horses and Hunters.

OWNED BY S. B. FULLER, WOODSTOCK, ONT.

A pig for profit should at six or seven months of age weigh from 130 to 170 lbs. dressed weight, this being the size that obtains the price. If the feeder has a pig well bred, and feeds properly, he can easily bring him up to his weight within the stated time, and he should then be worth from £3 to £4.

Mr. Harris describes an extended series of experiments started three years ago in Calne under direction of a committee of farmers and others interested in the economical production of high-class bacon. Four styes were erected, and in their construction special attention was bestowed on ventilation and cleanliness, for it is a great fallacy to assume that pigs thrive well in filthy and unhealthy surroundings. Each of the styes accommodated ten pigs, and every experiment commenced with 40 pigs fed, as a rule, on four different diets. The animals received three meals per diem, as much as they could clean up each time. The dry food, meal, bran, etc., was soaked over night in water, in the proportion of one peck of the former to five gallons of the latter, except when milk was used, when it replaced its own volume of water in the mixture. The potatoes were boiled and the mangels sliced. Care should be taken not to make the food of pigs too sloppy.

Up to the present there were carried out 64 experiments, involving 24 diets, on a total of 640 pigs. The principal foods used so far are: Barley meal, corn meal, separated milk, bran, potatoes, pea meal, bean meal, crushed oats, wheat meal, and corn germs. The average weight of the pigs at the commencement of fattening varied from 83 lbs. in one experiment to 141 lbs. in another, and the duration of fattening varied from seven to fourteen weeks. The pigs fed were not especially selected for breed, etc., but were purchased in the same manner as a farmer usually employs. All the food supplied during the experiments was weighed, and the weight of each of the pens of pigs was, as a rule, taken weekly and recorded.

Careful observation of these records confirms the statement made some years ago by the great Rothamsted investigators that the quantity of food required to produce a given inorease in live weight becomes greater as the period of fattening progresses. It was also observed that after a pig attained a weight of about 170 lbs. the weekly increase was, as a rule, less than during the earlier stages of the fattening. These facts are of importance in view of the lighter weight of pigs now required for bacon than was formerly the case. To those who buy their store pigs it may be well to point out that these experiments go to show that, other conditions being similar, the younger pig may be reasonably expected to yield the greater weekly profit. This remark applies to pigs ranging between 83 lbs. and 141 lbs.

In these experiments the highest weekly gain in weight was obtained with a diet of barley meal, separated milk (one gallon), and potatoes (three pounds) per diem; the second in order of merit being barley meal and one gallon separated milk per diem; whilst the lowest two results were obtained with corn meal. Barley meal always gave a greater weekly increase than corn meal, both when used alone and when used in conjunction with other foods. The addition of separated milk to either corn meal or barley meal produced a considerable increase in the weekly gain, as did also the addition of either pea meal or bean meal. The addition of bean to either barley or corn lowered the weekly gain considerably.

Referring to loss on killing and dressing, the least loss was on pigs fed on corn meal alone (22.9 per cent.), and on corn meal and separated milk (23.2 per cent.); whilst the greatest was with pigs fed on barley meal and bran (27.9 per cent.), and barley meal alone (25.6 per cent.). Corn-fed pigs lost less on killing and dressing than barley-fed ones. The addition of separated milk to either barley or corn caused the loss on killing and dressing to be slightly less. The addition of bran, peas or beans to either corn or barley caused a much greater loss on killing. Referring to the suitability of the flesh obtained for the production of the best bacon, the following table gives the foods, in order of merit, commencing with the best. The best quality is taken as 1,000 points:

	Maximum Points.
(1) Barley meal and bran	990
(2) Barley meal and separated milk	988
(3) Barley meal	974
(4) Barley meal, separated milk and potatoes	967
(5) Corn meal and bran	964
(6) Corn meal and bean meal	951
(7) Corn meal and separated milk	945
(8) Corn meal	939
(9) Corn meal and pea meal	908

The comparatively low value assigned to pigs fed on corn meal and pea meal is due to a large proportion of the pigs so fed increasing very slowly and being sold when too small to come within the scales shown above. The quality of those which did well—i. e., gave a good increase—was about equal to those which had been fed on corn meal and bran. The addition of either bean meal or pea meal to maize gave far better results in cold than in hot weather, and both kinds of pulse varied very much in efficiency with different individual pigs. Some pigs did very poorly with these diets, whilst others did exceptionally well, so that special care is necessary in their use. Excess of fat was the general failing of corn-fed pigs, but was less pronounced in pigs which had been fed on a mixture of corn with either separated milk, bran, bean meal or pea meal. A larger proportion of best pigs for bacon was obtained with barley than with corn feeding. The addition of either milk or bran, but especially the latter, to either barley or corn raised the best proportion of pigs.

Docking and Castrating Lambs.

In our last issue appeared a paragraph calling attention to the necessity and importance of attending to the matter of tailing and castrating lambs in the spring while they are yet young. Heavy loss is occasioned to owners of lambs and to dealers every year by the neglect of these operations, as ram lambs come upon the markets in October and November in large numbers, and are sold at very much lower prices than wether or ewe lambs, for the reason that their flesh is strong in the breeding season, and that they fail to put on flesh by worrying themselves and the other sheep they are with, and are for this reason a great nuisance. By all means let all lambs intended for the butcher be docked, as it improves their appearance and tends to cleanliness, and let the ram lambs be castrated early. The ideal time for both operations is at two weeks old, but if it has not been attended to at that age, let it be done at any time up to 6 or 8 weeks. At this age a little more care and attention is required, as they are more liable to bleed unduly; but if they seem to be bleeding too freely or continuing to drop blood for more than an hour, a piece of binder twine or other soft cord tied moderately tight around the stump will stop it. This should be cut away in a few hours after. We have docked lambs safely at six months old, and by cording in this way there is very little risk. Of course, if done in fly time, some carbolized oil or sheep dip should be applied to prevent maggots. Docking young lambs is done simply by placing the knife at the second or third joint of the tail and cutting upward against the thumb. There is little or no danger of cutting the thumb, but if one is nervous, a glove may be worn, or a rag wound round the thumb. Some shepherds have the attendant hold the lamb between the knees, back down, while the operator cuts downward and thus details the lamb at one cut. When the two operations are performed at the same time, as they generally are, castration should be first attended to, as the spurting of blood from the docking would be unpleasant to the operator.

Inexperienced operators are liable to be nervous in performing castration, but with a little practice and confidence there is very little risk in it. Mr. Henry Arkell, of Teeswater, Ont., an old and experienced sheep-breeder, in an article in this paper nearly a year ago (June 15th issue, 1899, page 355), stated that he had operated on thousands without a single loss, and gave very plain instructions for performing this operation, which in a few words may be summarized thus: Cut off the end of the scrotum, or sack, place the thumb and forefinger of the left hand close to the body of the lamb, and force the testicles forward, seize them one at a time with the teeth or a pair of forceps and gently draw them out, casings and all, keeping the thumb and finger moderately tight together close to the body of the lamb. That is really all there is to it. Many American shepherds write that it is entirely safe when the lambs are a week or ten days old to clip the scrotum with its contents clean off with the shears, not too close to the body. We have not seen this done, and therefore do not vouch for it, but it has been so often repeated in American stock papers without refutation that one is led to consider it worth a trial on a limited scale, as it is so simple; but if the former plan is as safe, the lamb will sell a little better, as a rule, for having some show of scrotum.

Stall Fed vs. Feeding Loose.

To the Editor FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

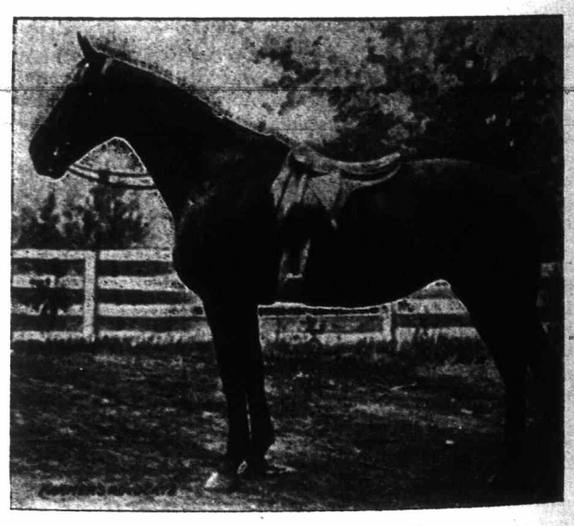
SIR,—In reply to "Stall Fed," in May 1st issue, page 256, *re* "Enquiries on Loose Feeding," I would say regarding the statement made in "Successful Farming," pages 229 and 230, that "steers dehorned and fed loose will gain more in five months than those tied will gain in six, and on the same feed." The above is based on two experiments made at the Ontario Agricultural College, first in the winter of 1897-98 (see Annual Report of 1898, pages 188 and 189). Fifteen steers tied made an average gain of 291½ in six months, while six steers loose made an average gain of 339 in five months. The second experiment was made in winter of 1898-99. Eleven steers tied made an average gain of 288 in five months, while nine steers loose made an average gain of 311 in four months. As the writer left the College before the Report for 1899 was compiled, this second experiment was not published. Ordinary box stalls were used for the loose feeding, 14x15 feet, three steers in each, which was more space than necessary.

For feeding and watering cattle I would refer to "Successful Farming," pages 194-196 and 197. The cattle stand in rows three feet apart, without stalls, tail to tail. All animals are better loose, except when eating and drinking. By using the stanchions illustrated on page 196, all can be opened or closed by one operation at feeding time. Each animal puts its head in one of the openings. When all commence feeding, the stanchions are closed for about one and a half hours until all are through, when the rod is drawn and the animals are again allowed their freedom. The feed troughs and water basins are in the front passage, as illustrated; the passage is raised 12 inches to form back of trough. Temporary partitions may be put across so that there will not be more than eight or ten animals in each compartment when loose, and those should be as near equal in size as possible. The gutters behind the cattle (when tied) should be two feet wide and fifteen inches deep; the passage between the gutters should be eleven feet wide, so that a waggon or cart can be backed in and loaded out of the gutters; the floor should slope to the gutters. Very little bedding is necessary, if the droppings are thrown into the gutters say twice each day when the cattle are feeding; the gutters should be cleaned out as soon as filled.

Toronto, May 9, 1900. WM. RENNIE, SR.

Barley Meal as a Pig Food.

As a food for pigs, more especially where the aim is, as it always should be, the production of the very best quality of bacon, barley meal has no superior, and many of our most successful pig breeders doubt if it has any equal. One of the great points in its favor is that it may be given with safety to pigs of the most tender age. Scalded with warm water, and then worked into a sloppy mash with skim milk, it forms one of the best of all foods for pigs just after being weaned. It "goes" very well with potatoes, and is very largely used in this way in different parts of Ireland where hundreds of pigs are reared every year upon a mixture consisting of barley meal, maize meal, and cooked potatoes, all worked into a common mash. Where the production of bacon of the highest quality is being aimed at, the allowance of potatoes and Indian meal should not be overdone on account of the tendency both have to produce over-fat bacon. Bacon obtained from pigs largely fed on Indian meal possess comparatively poor keeping qualities.



JOY BELL, 16 HANDS.

First prize at Canadian Horse Show as combination Saddle and Harness Horse.

OWNED BY LLEWELLYN MEREDITH, LONDON, ONT.