The Hog and Its Products

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To Make Good Hams.

To make good bacon will require good hogs. By that is meant a medium weight hog which has been properly corn-fed, and watered with clean water. The choicest bacon is made from hogs from twelve to eighteen months old and weighing 125 to 200 pounds.

They are killed on the farms on a cold morning; well bled, well scalded and well cleaned. They should hang all day, be housed at night, not allowed to come in contact with each other, and cut and salted next morning.

Do **not** cut them up the day of killing.

Do **not** salt the meat before the animal heat has cooled out. More meat is spoiled by the salting and packing in bulk before it is thoroughly cooled than from any other cause.

Cut out the backbone and pull out the ribs. Trim the hams and shoulders close. Leave no surplus bumps or points and make the cuts as shapely as possible. The trimmings are worth more made into sausage and lard than if left to mar the appearance of the cured meat. The sides or middlings should also be carefully trimmed, and one or two four-inch strips cut lengthways from the thin part to be cured as breakfast bacon. This is important, as these cuts are much sought after, and bring 2½ cents more per pound than the whole sides, when properly cured.

When the meat has been properly trimmed then the curing begins; use about one pound of ground saltpetre to 400 pounds of meat. That is a heaping teaspoonful to the ham, more or less, according to size. This is rubbed in on the flesh sides and around the bones. Use fine salt, and rub it in well, heaping it up on the flesh sides to some extent. **Don't** cut a gash for salt in the ham. If desired, one pound of sugar may be added to each twenty pounds of salt. The meat should then be packed up in piles on plank flooring of some kind, and raised off of the ground; a plank frame, or large trough is better. The platform on which the meat is packed should be slanted so as to allow the melted salt to drip away. In about a week take down the pile, resalt and replace the pieces in the pile and let them cure for four or five weeks longer, according to size. When the meat is again taken up, brush off the salt and rub well with a tablespoonful of mixed ground pepper—red and black. If you prefer a body to hold this pepper, use a small quantity of good quality molasses, well rubbed on; then the mixed peppers. The joints are now ready to hang for smoking. With large wire needle or small knife, insert strong twine and hang in the upper part of the smoke-house, hook end down, and start a "smudge" or small fire made of green hickory (preferred), or red oak, beech wood or corn cobs. Smoke every day for about three weeks, or until the meat has taken on the rich brown color desired; and your hams are now ready for bagging; or if preferred, bagging may be done at time of first hanging.

To bag the hams, make bags of common unbleached sheeting; drop the hams into the bags, hock down, and sew or tie up tight at the top. Then saturate the sacked hams thoroughly in a thick solution of ashes and hot water; or as others prefer, into a lime bath, made up as for white-washing. These dips serve to exclude all insect pests and to preserve the color and flavor of the meat enclosed.

It is better to hang the hams in the darkest part of the smoke-house.

Shoulders and breakfast strips treated like hams will pay well for the trouble.

Butchering Time.

As the frosts begin to whiten the landscape in the early morning, housekeepers in the country begin to plan for the approaching butchering time. Visions of the most substantial additions to the family larder lend enthusiasm as the event approaches, and especially so among the younger members of the household. The good wife and mother views it in a different light, as it will entail much exacting labor upon her and her assistants.

The blazing fire for heating stones; the squealing porkers and the sizzling noise of the heated stones as they are thrown into the water makes the heart of the lads jubilant. Nearby are the tables and clean tubs where the housewife and her assistants await to do their part. The first and most disagreeable task is the ridding of the fat from the intestines; this is best done before they cool; care, cleanliness and patient dexterity are essential in this work; the fat thus removed should be allowed to stand awhile in cold water, when it will make pure, sweet lard.

In cutting the hams, shoulders, breakfast strips, and sides, do not spare the knife. The trimmings from these will go into both the lard fat and the sausage meat. Such trimmings improves the appearance of the larger cuts and the trimmings are worth just as much into lard or sausage.

The cuts and several approved methods of curing meats are described elsewhere in this Bulletin, but owing to the tasteless and generally unsatisfactory sausage products turned out by some of the butchers in the towns of this country, it is deemed advisable to add a few recipes for making sausage and souse.

Sausage.—1. Put the meat through the grinder twice (after the first time add the seasoning which will be well distributed when the meat goes through the grinder the second time); carefully remove all lumps and strings. To twenty-five pounds of meat add one gill black pepper, nearly a pint of fine salt, and two gills beaten or ground sage. A little ground ginger added, it is said, will aid in its digestion. This meat may be "cased" and smoked if desired; or it may be partially cooked and covered, in a jar, with melted lard and kept for several months, provided the air is kept from the meat. A little red pepper is demanded by some tastes.

Sausage.—2. Twelve pounds of lean and six pounds of fat pork; ten tablespoonfuls of powdered sage; six tablespoonfuls black pepper; same of fine salt; two tablespoonfuls powdered mace; same of cloves, and one grated nutmeg. Grind and mix as above. This is a rich, highly seasoned sausage, especially suited to family use. A teaspoonful of ground red pepper is added by some mixers in all sausage.

Bologna Sausage (Cooked.)—Four pounds of lean beef; four of veal; four of pork; four of salt pork—not smoked; two of beef suet. Grind all the meat together. Before the second grinding add and well mix in the following: ten tablespoonfuls ground sage; two ounces each of marjoram, parsley, savory and thyme, a tablespoonful of cayenne pepper and two of black pepper; two grated nutmegs; a tablespoonful of ground cloves; two minced onions, and salt to taste. After the second grinding stuff into beef-skins; tie these up, puncture each in several places to allow escape of steam; put into hot water and gradually heat to boiling and cook for an hour. Take out the skins and lay on clean straw in the sun to drain and dry. Hang up in cool dark cellar; if to be kept longer than a week, rub melted butter on the outside and then rub with pepper or ground ginger. No further cooking is needed; serve in slices from which the skin has been removed.

Souse.—This is made of the head, ears, and feet. Clean them thoroughly. Boil in salted water until perfectly tender. Strip the meat from the bones and chop fine; season with salt, pepper, sage, sweet marjoram, a little cloves, and half a cup or more of strong apple vinegar. Mix all thoroughly together. and mould in bowls or shallow stone jars. To keep for several weeks take the meat from the moulds and immerse in strong vinegar.

Several of the above recipes are from Marion Harland's Common Sense in the Household.

Co-operative Killing and Curing.

The time-honored custom of neighbors assisting each other at the yearly slaughter of the hogs and the oft-time practice of employing some neighbor more skilled in the especial arts of the trade suggest the thought that a further co-operation may be not only desirable, but absolutely necessary in the preparation of pork products in such a condition that they may compete with the imported material prepared by professionals, many of whom have but a single motion to perform and all of whom are continually engaged.

Americans are not inclined to look with favor to Europeans as teachers in economic questions; but, in co-operative association, at least one nation of industrious people are far ahead of what we may expect to become in many years, partly on account of our surroundings, and partly on account of our conservatism and natural distrust of untried conditions.

About twenty years ago there was initiated in Denmark a system of creamery co-operation which has since spread until the bulk of milk supplied to its chief cities is supplied by it, and whose example has borne fruit in this country and is daily increasing. By its means, cream, butter and cheese are handled more cleanly, more cheaply and in a better condition in its finished products. These creameries are entirely controlled by the milk producers and as the name implies by all working together for the common end. Each small owner could not purchase all the improved apparatus for handling milk, nor perhaps could attend to all the manifold duties connected with its manufacture, but some could devote their time and all be sharers of the income derived.

The creamery associations soon stimulated the dairy industry on account of the increased profits, so that an outlet for the waste products became necessary and the fattening of swine began. At first there was no trouble in disposing of the live swine to Germany, but soon there was raised a prohibition against the importation of the swine by the German Government, and then another outlet was sought. The present system of co-operative abattoirs or slaughter houses, resulted. So remarkable had been the result of co-operation in creameries that this was the logical sequence of events.

The first abattoir was established in 1887 for the slaughter of hogs and the preparation of salted and smoked meats. In 1888 five others followed. By 1896, twenty-five had been established with a membership of 58,000 farmers. The least of these abattoirs slaughtered in 1896, 4,602 head; the largest, 53,951; all slaughtered 701,-041 head, or an average of 28,042 head for each.

The capital necessary to establish these was primarily borrowed upon the recognized credit of the members of the society. The loan was facilitated by bankers and tradesmen of neighboring villages, whose interests were increased by the creation of such important enterprises.

All were admitted as members, whatever the number, who raised swine and engaged to deliver at the abattoir all that they intended to sell, at a weight between 160 and 200 pounds.

The societies all work under fixed regulations as regards deliveries, payments, fees, withdrawal at the end of stated times and other necessary details of business.

Disputed points are submitted to the General Assembly, presided over by the President. Questions of dispute between the members and the abattoir are settled by a Board of Arbitration, composed of one judge named by the Assembly, one by the abattoir committee, and a third by the claimant.

In all other cases a committee named by the General Assembly represents the abattoir in all its acts, conforming to the rules and regulations of the society under the responsibility of the General Assembly. A commercial member, who can not otherwise belong to the society, is appointed.

Although ample provision has been made in the organic law of the society for its dissolution at any time, none of them have yet been obliged to avail themselves of it. On the contrary, their prosperity affords the most striking proof of the results that can be obtained by a well applied and seriously undertaken co-operative society.

The above notes have been taken from a recent report made to the French Minister of Agriculture on this important phase of work. While as before stated, it may be too early to undertake any business on the scale attained in Denmark, it is not too early to combine resources and plan for such a business as will meet the needs of our communities.

In 1895, there were about 1,200,-000 hogs of all conditions; as given in the tax list in North Carolina. This would make an average of about 12,-500 for each of the ninety-six counties. If it is admitted that but half of these are to be slaughtered annually there would be about 6,000 for each county. Until cold storage can be established the conditions of climate and farming are such that the killing must occur in the colder months of fall and winter.

If at this time those having surplus hogs would band together and take the hogs to some central point, preferably the farm of a member, and there employ men of experience and skill to cut up, cure and smoke the meat there could probably be enough savings made in the waste, sufficient improvements made in the products to profitably repay for the trouble taken in organizing and the expenses met in erecting killing sheds, scalding tanks, cutting and salting rooms, smoke-house and storage rooms. All products needed at home, or that could be made use of, could easily be returned in condition to be most easily handled. The products prepared for market could either be sold by the company or according to the arrangements made by the origi-

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