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Timely Farm Suggestions

By TAIT BUTLER.

Selling Hogs Live Weight Versus Retailing.

A READER writes as follows: "I want to know how to butcher hogs and in what shape best to handle the fresh meat on a city retail market, so as to realize the most money out of them. I found out two years ago I could not afford to sell to the city butchers or stores and let them sell the meat at retail at just double the price they paid me for it. I do not know what to do with the skin cut from hams and shoulders in grinding the meat for sausage. I recently found that the skin and bones from the hams and shoulders of one hog weighed 24 pounds. It is said the packers use every part of the hog except the squeal. I cannot hope to do as well, but I would like to come as near to it as possible."

Now that so much is being said about the difference in the amounts received by the farmers for their products and what the consumers have to pay for them, it may be well to call attention to some of the points raised in this inquiry. When the hog raiser sells his live hogs for seven or eight cents a pound and then sees hams, bacon, etc., selling for two to three times as much per pound, he is apt to think he is not getting a fair share of the money paid by the consumer. In many cases he is not, but unless he is careful to consider the whole subject and count all the items of expense that enter into the final cost of a pound of ham, bacon or sausage, he is apt to fall into error as to what is a fair price for the live hog compared with that for the cured meats.

In the first place, there is a loss of from 20 to 25 per cent, or one-fifth to one-fourth, in dressing. Then the head, feet, legs, and many cheap cuts must be sold at a price little, if any above the price per pound live weight. This, of course, makes it necessary to sell the hams, shoulders and bacon at a much higher price in order to enable the local butcher to come out even. Our reader says he had 24 pounds of waste in the skin and bones in the shoulders and hams of one hog. It is probably impossible for the farmer who makes sausage or slaughters and retails his fresh pork to avoid such waste. The packer can utilize the bones, blood and other waste products, because he kills a sufficient number of hogs to justify the expense of machinery or equipment required to utilize these products profitably; but the farmer and the small butcher cannot do so. This is true to such an extent that some doubt the economy of the farmer trying to cure his own meat. In fact, this waste is probably responsible for the fact that so many hog raisers prefer to sell their hogs alive rather than attempt to slaughter, cure and market the products. When, however, a farmer wishes to take the trouble to dispose of his hog meat, either fresh or cured, and has market facilities for doing so, he can make the profit which the small retail butcher makes, altho he cannot utilize the waste products to the extent which is done by the large packer. It is the utilization of these products that enables the large packer to pay market prices for live hogs and then under-sell the small butcher and the farmer on the cured meats.

It is safe to state, however, that our inquirer probably makes a mistake in grinding hams and shoulders

into sausage, unless he has an unusual market for his sausage. Hams sell for a high price as such and only the cheaper parts should usually be made into sausage.

Let us take a 200-pound hog, live weight, that dresses 75 per cent and costs \$15. The dressed carcass will weigh 150 pounds, and at ten cents a pound will cost \$15. This would mean a live weight price of seven and a half cents, without allowing anything for cost of slaughtering. A good hog will dress 80 per cent, or one weighing 200 pounds will give a carcass weighing 160 pounds.

Matthews, "Retail Butcher," says the retail butcher should count on a profit of 25 cent, or \$3.75 on such a hog. This would make it necessary to sell the meat for \$18.75, and this same authority gives the following schedule of cuts and prices necessary to bring that amount:

28 pounds hams at 17c.....	\$4.76
24 pounds shoulders at 12½c.....	3.00
16 pounds bacon bellies at 17c.....	2.72
18 pounds loin at 14c.....	2.52
22 pounds back fat at 11c.....	2.42
6 pounds leaf lard at 12½c.....	.75
10 pounds head at 7c.....	.70
5 pounds feet at 5c.....	.25
12 pounds trimmings at 10c.....	1.20
4 pounds spare ribs at 12c.....	.48
3 pounds neck bones at 6c.....	.18
2 pounds waste.....	.20
Total.....	\$18.98

When one considers the shrinkage in weight in curing meat; the loss from spoilage which even the packers sometimes have, and the cost of the work, it is not difficult to see why hams and bacon sell for two to three and sometimes nearly four times the price per pound that is paid for the live hog.

We suggest that our reader secure the following bulletins on this subject if he can do so:

Farmers' Bulletin No. 183—"Meat on the Farm: Butchering, Curing and Keeping. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Circular No. 4—"Curing Meat on the Farm. North Carolina Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C.

Bulletin No. 166—"Curing Meat on the Farm. Alabama Experiment Station, Auburn, Ala.

"Hinnies": It is Not Advisable to Raise Them.

A READER asks: "Can mules be raised successfully from jennets?"

The term "mule" is generally used to designate the animal having a jackass as its sire and a mare as its dam. It is technically correct to call the animal produced by crossing the jennet and the stallion a "mule," because any animal produced by crossing animals of different species is a "mule," or hybrid; but the produce of a stallion and a jennet is generally called a "hinny."

The hinny is generally smaller than the mule, and lacks smoothness and finish. It is adapted to light work and will withstand hardships or abuse, but on the whole is less desirable in every way than the mule produced by the jack and the mare.

Since the hinny is generally smaller than the mule and it is more difficult to increase its size, it will become less desirable every year, compared with the mule; for the needs of the future will demand a larger and not a smaller draft animal. It is practicable to increase the size of the mule by using a jack and large or draft mares, but it is not practicable to use draft stallions on jennets to increase the size of the hinny, to the

same extent. It is doubtful if there is any place for the hinny in the South at present, and, as stated, there will be less need for it in the future, as heavier implements and machinery are used; but there are certain advantages in breeding the hinny, as compared with breeding the mule, that may appeal to some.

The price of a good mare for producing mules is two to three times the price of a jennet, and the jennet can be kept for one-half the feed cost of keeping a mare. It is also true that stallions are more numerous than jacks, and those suitable for producing hinnies probably cost less than good jacks. But, on the other hand, the mare may be made to earn her keep by doing farm work, while it is not practicable to obtain such service from the jennet.

The hinny is, at best, a low-priced or cheap animal, and profits seldom come from producing such. The best profits usually come from producing high-priced animals and, while it costs more to produce a mule from a 1,400-pound mare and a jack, than it does from a stallion and a jennet, the value of the former is so much greater that it is doubtful if the raising of hinnies should be advised.

Feeding Value of Corn-and-Cob Meal

A READER writes as follows: "Can I feed corn, ground, cob and all, or corn-and-cob meal, as it is called, safely and economically in conjunction with bran to horses? I am told that if I feed cob meal I can do away with a portion of the hay. I have fed cob meal for years to cows, but have always supposed that it would cause digestive disturbances in horses. Can I feed cob meal profitably as against corn meal and bran, and if so, what amount should be fed?"

There are two distinct problems involved in this inquiry. First, will it pay to grind the cob and corn together for horse feeding; and second, will the cob meal take the place of wheat bran? As to whether it will pay to grind the cob and corn together will depend on how cheap the power is and how fine the cobs are ground. If the power is cheap and the cobs, which are difficult to grind, are ground fine, there is probably sufficient nutriment in the cobs to make it advisable to grind them; but ordinarily we do not believe it will be found profitable to grind corn and cob for horses, unless the grinding enables us to feed some other feed-stuff to better advantage. For instance, if by grinding the corn a man is induced to balance the corn ration with cottonseed meal it may pay.

When corn-and-cob meal is fed, it may very probably be safe to slightly reduce the hay ration, but since the cobs only constitute one-fifth of the weight of corn and cob together, the amount fed will not justify much reduction in the hay. For instance, if 15 pounds of cob-and-corn meal is fed, there will be three pounds of cobs and possibly the hay ration might be reduced two or three pounds, altho the hay must be very poor indeed or a reduction in the nutritive value of the ration will result from substituting three pounds of ground corn cobs for three pounds of hay.

If the cobs are ground fairly fine, there is no danger of digestive troubles in feeding the small quantity of cobs in corn-and-cob meal.

To the second question, we can safely state that corn cob meal will not take the place of wheat bran. If wheat bran were fed for the sole purpose of making a more bulky ration, then the cobs would serve this purpose, but the horse does not require any more bulkiness in his ration than is possessed by corn and hay and, therefore, the only excuse for feeding

a horse wheat bran must be to furnish more protein to balance the corn and add greater variety to the ration.

Corn and corn cobs are low in protein, while wheat bran is moderately rich in this nutrient. To remove the wheat bran from a ration and add ground corn cobs, simply throws it more "out of balance," and unless something is added to supply protein, the wheat bran or some legume hay should be fed.

In the experience of the writer, wheat bran is not a highly satisfactory feed for a horse when a fair allowance of hay is used. It is bulky and hard for the horse to digest. We prefer cottonseed meal, up to two pounds a day, for a thousand-pound horse doing hard work, for supplying the protein necessary to balance the corn ration. We believe two pounds of cottonseed meal added to ten pounds of corn as good as four pounds of wheat bran added to the same amount of corn. Wheat bran is usually too high-priced in view of its feeding value, while cottonseed meal is cheap, if judged by the same correct standard.

Neither wheat bran nor cottonseed meal are especially needed if the horse receives some legume hay as at least half his roughage, but with timothy or other grass hay, more protein is needed and for the hard working horse we prefer cottonseed meal to wheat bran for this purpose. With timothy or any other grass hay we would not advise substituting cob meal for wheat bran and, therefore, cannot give the amount that should be fed.

Of a mixture of corn meal or corn-and-cob meal with wheat bran, we would advise feeding from one and a quarter pounds to one and a half pounds daily for every 100 pounds weight, if the ration is made up of five parts of corn to one part of cottonseed meal, by weight, which we think a cheaper and just as good a ration, a slightly smaller quantity of this mixture should do as well.

Plant Food in a Mixture of Meal, Acid and Kainit.

A READER wishes to know the per cent of the different plant foods in a fertilizer made by mixing one ton each of cottonseed meal, 16 per cent acid phosphate, and kainit.

The following will give this information:

Materials Used	Nitrogen	Phos. Acid	Potash
1 ton of cottonseed meal—6.2 per cent nitrogen, 2.5 per cent Phos. Acid and 1.5 per cent Potash.....	124 lbs.	50 lbs.	30 lbs.
1 ton—16 per cent Phosphoric Acid.....		320 lbs.	
1 ton Kainit—12 per cent Potash.....			240 lbs.
3 tons—6000 lbs. Totals.....	124 lbs.	370 lbs.	270 lbs.

Since we have 60 hundredweight of materials, and per cent means so much in a hundred, if we divide these amounts of plant foods by 60, we have the percent of each in a mixture, as follows:

124 ÷ 60 = 2.06 per cent of nitrogen.
370 ÷ 60 = 6.16 per cent of phosphoric acid.
270 ÷ 60 = 4.5 per cent of potash.

As this is generally written, it would be a 2.06—6.16—4.5 fertilizer. Or sometimes the phosphoric acid is written first and the nitrogen second, and in that case it would be written 6.16—2.06—4.5.

The North Carolina Experiment Station, at West Raleigh, N. C., has recently issued a circular on beef cattle and sheep farms. This circular contains a number of plans for beef cattle and sheep farms and brief specifications for constructing same. Parties desiring copies of these circulars can secure same by writing the Beef Cattle and Sheep Division of the North Carolina Experiment Station, West Raleigh, N. C.