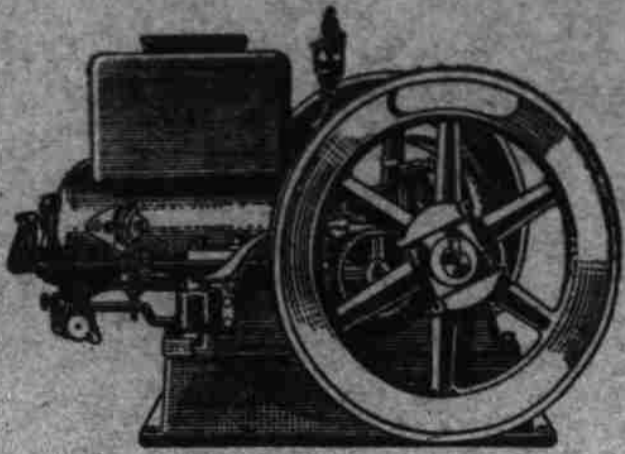


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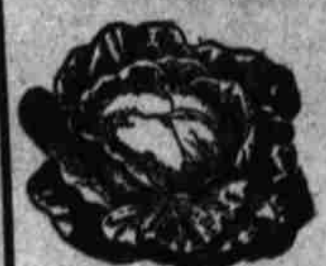
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The Progressive Farmer

HARVESTING THE HOG CROP

MAKING BREAKFAST BACON

Points on Killing, Salting and Smoking to Get Best Results—Brine Better Than Dry Salting

TO MAKE breakfast bacon one must assume that the hog has been bred right, fed right, slaughtered right and the strips of bacon trimmed properly. When these conditions are met the following directions will insure an excellent quality of country-cured bacon:

As soon as the hair is thoroughly removed the bodies should be hung up, washed with clean, cold water, and the internal organs removed. This should be done before gases develop in the intestinal tract. After the hogs are dressed the carcasses should be opened as wide as possible in front, washed again with clean, cold water and hung in the coolest possible place until the following morning. It is not meant by this, however, that the meat should be allowed to become frozen. Many good farmers cut the bodies into rough pieces very soon after the hog is dressed; if the day has been warm and the probability is that the night will also be warm, it is usually wise to do this, especially with large hogs. The writer has found it to be a good practice to cut up the carcass very early the morning following the day on which the hogs were killed and immerse the pieces in the brine before the warm part of the day. If the day following bids fair to be warm it becomes almost necessary to put the meat away early the first morning. If the weather, however, is unusually cold the day following the killing it is probably wise to rub the pieces of meat with salt and let them stand over one day before placing them in the brine or salt.

Immerse in Brine

THE process of common dry salting is well understood. Many farmers have never used any other method. Very excellent meat can be made by this method, but as a rule the meat becomes too dry, hard, and salty. Better meat can be made by other methods, and the danger of loss is reduced probably 50 per cent. Probably the best results—or at least the best results ever secured by the writer—are secured when the meat is immersed in the following brine solution.

To each 100 pounds of meat—

- 12 pounds of common salt,
- 3 pounds of brown sugar,
- 3 ounces of saltpetre,
- 6 gallons of water.

As the brine must be perfectly cool when the meat is immersed, it should be made the day before using. Ordinary syrup may be used in place of the sugar. The above articles should all be placed in a kettle and boiled gently for about one hour. Any kind of a clean vessel, as an earthen jar or wooden barrel, may be used for holding the brine and meat; clean syrup barrels are usually very easily obtained. Extreme care, however, should be exercised to obtain new and thoroughly clean barrels; old and tainted barrels should never be used.

After the pieces of meat are neatly trimmed into the proper shape and size they should be laid in the barrel with the meat side up, a heavy weight placed upon them, and the brine poured in to a depth not less than two inches above the top piece of meat. The brine should be examined every few days, as it sometimes becomes "ropy", especially during a long period of hot weather. If the brine shows signs of becoming "ropy" or tainted the trouble can usually be checked by removing the meat, dropping in a small amount of common soda, and stirring well. If this treatment does not immediately correct the trouble, the meat should be taken out, each piece thoroughly

washed, and put down again in new brine and barrels. The bacon strips should remain in the brine 24 to 36 days.

After the meat has been in the brine a sufficient length of time it should be taken out, hung in the smokehouse, allowed to drip two or three days, and the smoke applied. If the meat is to be smoked properly and kept pure and sweet a good, but not necessarily an expensive, smokehouse must be erected. A cement floor is almost an absolute necessity, as such a floor can be easily and completely cleaned, while it does not furnish places for the "skippers" to live during their resting periods. If the meat is to be smoked correctly and evenly, the house must be built high enough so the meat, after it is hung, is 7 or 8 feet above the floor. When the meat is hung low the fire underneath many times heats it too much and the first steps towards spoiling are thus begun. Furthermore, when the meat is hung close to the fire the smoke discolors and gives it a very unattractive appearance. While it is not absolutely necessary, it is far better to have the fire entirely outside the smokehouse and the smoke conducted by means of pipes. When this plan is followed the meat is never overheated by accidental flaring up of the fire, and the danger from accidental fires is almost eliminated. The house should be placed in a shady but dry place, and the windows should be protected with solid wooden shutters and screens so as to exclude both the light and the flies.

Many farmers smoke meat at irregular intervals for 20 to 40 days, but there is probably nothing gained by prolonging the period, especially if the smokehouse is well made and the smoke is applied continuously for a short period. If the smokehouse will not hold the smoke, then it is necessary to prolong the smoking period. When the house is tight and the fire is kept burning continuously there seems to be no reason why the meat should be smoked more than three or four days. Corn cobs, hickory chips, and various other woods are used for producing the smoke; no special or secret virtue accompanies the smoke made by any one particular kind of wood.

Wrap Each Piece of Meat

AS SOON as the meat has been sufficiently smoked the ventilators and windows should be opened and the warm air permitted to escape. The majority of farmers permit the cured meat to hang in the smokehouse, unprotected from flies and other insects, during the spring and summer months. This is an unwise thing to do, unless the house has a cement floor, is dark, and all openings are thoroughly protected by wire screening. Meat which hangs unprotected in the average smokehouse is almost sure to become infested with "skippers."

The individual pieces of meat should be first wrapped closely with old newspapers or wrapping paper. They should then be placed in strong sacks (flour sacks will do) and each bag tightly tied at the top. The sacks should then be hung exactly where they are to stay until taken down to be eaten or sold, and painted on the outside with a solution so as to exclude all flies and "skippers." A thick paste of ordinary lime, glue, and water will answer the purpose very well. A better paste, but one somewhat tedious to make, may be made of the following materials:

For 100 pounds of bacon:

- 3.0 pounds of barytes (barium sulphate),
- .06 pounds of glue,
- .08 pounds of chrome yellow (lead chromate),
- .40 pounds of flour.

Fill a three or four-gallon bucket one-half full of water and mix in the flour. Dissolve the lead chromate in

a quart of water in a separate vessel and add this solution and the glue to the flour water. Bring this to a boil and while boiling add the barium sulphate slowly, stirring constantly. The solution should be applied on the outside of the sack with an ordinary paint brush.

DAN T. GRAY,

West Raleigh, N. C.

A COLD STORAGE HOUSE FOR CURING MEAT

Farmers Who Have Trouble in Saving Meat Should Study This Plan of an Inexpensive Cold Storage Plant

FARMERS in the South frequently have trouble in curing their home supply of meat. When the hogs are fat and ready for slaughtering they frequently have to be kept several weeks before there is seasonable weather for curing the meat. With a simple cold storage plant on the farm, that can be built at a cost of \$75, the farmer may be entirely independent of the weather conditions so far as the curing of his meat is concerned.

The following is a plan of a cold storage house that has been used for the past 15 years by Mr. J. E. McIntosh, of Luraville, Florida, with perfect success:

Plan of Cold Storage

Size house, 8x10 feet.
Corner Studding 4x4 inches by 8 feet long
Intermediate studding 2x4 in. 8 feet long

Joints are nailed on side of studding (at top) so that when ceiling and weatherboarding is nailed on, it will have a continuous air space all around. Ceiling one inch thick is nailed on horizontally, then on this a layer of insulating paper, and on this another like ceiling perpendicularly. On other or outer side of studding a like wall is put on. A beveled door made like walls and edges lined with felt of convenient size. Two layers of floor with felt between, the floor slanting backward and to center with gutter in center to drain room to back end into a U pipe through the wall.

The walls on both sides, ends and overhead, inside and out, are same, viz: Two wooden walls with paper between.

An ice rack should be made as near the top as possible, to admit 200 pound blocks of ice. It requires about 800 pounds of ice per week. The house will hold about 5,000 pounds of meat placed in racks on sides.

Cost, about \$75.

Cost of running is the cost of the ice and the wages of one man.

This house can be built by any good carpenter. Care should be exercised to see that the doors are properly constructed so as to give a perfect fit. The size of the house, of course, can be made larger or smaller than the above plan, to suit the farmer's needs.

It is frequently the custom to pack shavings, sawdust or some other material in the open air space between the walls. Experience, however, has shown that it is much better to leave the air space between the walls open, without putting in sawdust or other packing material. A dead air space is one of the best non-conductors of heat.

The meat should be cut up (without unjointing hams and shoulders) as soon as possible after killing; salted thoroughly and bulked together, skin side down, in piles. Spread at night; salt again next morning and place in cold storage. Put not over 200 or 300 pounds in each rack. Cross the pieces, leaving ventilating spaces through it.

The temperature should be kept 40 to 48 degrees. All meats weighing less than 15 pounds to the piece will cure in 30 days. Pieces weighing from 15 to 25 pounds will take 45 days, and 40 pounds will take 60 days.

If temperature is above 50 degrees the ice should be put in storage four or five days before the meat is put in, in order to bring it down to 45 degrees. If temperature is 40 degrees or less, the ice and meat can be put in together. The temperature of the meat when put in governs to a great extent the amount of ice required.

One feature that is important is to have a ventilated door to be used to give the meat fresh air when the outside temperature is 40 degrees or lower

H. E. SAVELY.