

# FARM NOTES

## Getting Into Hog-Raising.

There seem to be many reasons why the South should develop a large hog industry, but as a matter of fact hog-raising has proved neither attractive nor profitable to a large majority of the Southern farmers who have tried it.

There must be reason for the slow progress of the hog industry in the South which does not lie on the surface, for considering the facts that breeding stock can be obtained with a small investment, returns are reasonably quick, and the climate of the South offers opportunities for the cheap production of a large variety of excellent hog feeds, the industry should be easily increased and prove profitable.

The question why hog raising does not increase more rapidly is the one with which we are at present chiefly concerned.

The failure of the hog industry to develop rapidly in the South is probably chiefly due to difficulties in feeding and caring for hogs when kept in considerable numbers, and this, notwithstanding the great advantages of a mild climate and a great variety of grazing crops.

In the first place, hogs, like many other kinds of livestock, must have more personal attention and require more care in handling than the average Southern man is willing to give them. They increase rapidly, and in proportion to their size are large consumers of feed; hence, they soon develop problems of housing and feeding which require not only much thought but considerable effort to solve in a satisfactory manner.

The hog does not require expensive housing in the South, except that he must have dry sleeping quarters in winter and shade in summer; but unless given large range he soon produces disagreeable conditions about the places where he is confined. We have not yet fully appreciated these facts, and consequently have attempted to house and confine our hogs in too small quarters. A hog will live in a small lot if there is a mud hole and a little feed furnished him, but this is not the most pleasant nor the most profitable way to handle him.

First, then, we have failed to provide suitable houses, pastures and lots for conveniently caring for hogs, and second we do not like to give any animal the attention the hog requires, especially at farrowing time and until the pigs are four or five months old.

To avoid disappointment, we should start with a small number of sows, for the rapidity with which a herd of hogs increases and demands increased care and feed are truly astonishing. Especially should ample lots and pastures be provided. Land is cheap and there is no excuse for failure to provide ample area for growing prizing crops, except the cost of fencing. The cost of fencing is a really serious obstacle to the growing of hogs, here in the South, where we have been accustomed to doing little fencing and that of a nature insufficient for controlling hogs.

But undoubtedly the greatest obstacle to the raising of hogs in the South is that we grow no grain crop suitable for feeding hogs which is cheap enough to feed to hogs. Corn is the American hog feed, but so long as we grow 20 bushels or less per acre we cannot afford to feed corn to hogs. In fact, we simply will not do it.

Our long growing season and the variety of splendid grazing crops we may grow for hogs is an advantage, but we have not yet learned to overcome the disadvantage of high-priced corn in hog-raising. The hog has a small stomach and requires concentrates or grains for his best growth. He needs and can use to advantage grazing crops, but crops cannot be grazed all the year, and in most cases our best grazing crops require that some grain be fed to obtain the best returns from them. Until we solve this problem of reasonably cheap concentrates, which of themselves or in combination with grazing crops will form a fairly well balanced ration, we cannot make a success of hog raising.

If we are ever to have a large hog industry, producing large numbers of hogs for pork-making, we must build up a breeding industry. The breeder of pure-bred hogs to be sold for breeding purposes finds all his profits consumed by his feed bills. He must sell his breeders for less than the Northern breeders and pay a higher price for his feeds, because they are produced in the North and have to bear the extra cost of transportation. The hog industry in the South is therefore, a question of feeds, especially concentrates, for feeding suckling sows, young pigs and for wintering the breeding stock.

There are two crops which will supply these needs. Neither alone will do it, but the two together, along with grazing crops, will do it admirably. Both can be grown at a price at which we can afford to feed them. They are corn and soy beans. Our problem as relates to corn is to produce larger yields and lessen its cost, while the problem as relates to soy beans, which we need to supply the protein concentrate demanded, is to increase their acreage.

When peanuts and soy beans are grown largely enough to cause them

to be used for oil making and the yield of corn is doubled our problem of hog feeds will have been solved.

But until then what are we to do? Although it can be made very profitable, the hog industry will grow slowly until we cease to be a feed-buying section. Until that time, we must use a minimum or the smallest possible amount of grain feed or concentrates and a maximum of grazing crops. At present, even those who plant crops like soy beans, peanuts, corn, sweet potatoes or other crops to hog off usually provide entirely too small an acreage for the hogs to be grazed.

A yield of 40 bushels of oats per acre followed by 25 bushels of soy beans the same season will mean relatively cheap hog feed, as soon as we learn to grow these crops. At present we grow practically only one concentrate for feeding hogs—corn—and grow only 20 bushels or less of that per acre.

Let me repeat, the hog problem is one of feeds and hog-men. We must first produce feeds and then be willing and know how to feed and care for hogs before we become large producers of hogs.—Progressive Farmer.

## Poor Cow, Medium Cow, Good Cow.

"Pulling tents" is a wearisome job, unless you are getting good money for it. There are thousands of farmers all over the corn belt today who look on milking as a grinding chore, simply because they don't make much money at it.

The surest way to make more money milking is to buy better cows, if you have to pay two or three times as much for them. Most farmers have never taken time to figure out just how much more a good cow will do for them than a poor cow. Let's consider the case of the poor milk cow, costing at the present time about \$60 as a five-year-old, and giving when fresh about two and a half gallons a day. She is a type of the ordinary Short-horn milk cow which you see in every barnyard. What will a cow of this sort do for you in a year, if you sell the cream to a creamery, and keep the skim-milk at home for the calves and the pigs? She will produce about 4,250 pounds of skim-milk, worth about \$17; a calf worth about \$5, manure worth about \$10, and cream worth about \$70, or a gross amount of \$102. What does she cost you? Worst of all is the cost of grain, hay, silage and pasture, worth about \$60 at present feed prices. Next comes about \$25 worth of labor, and, considering the everlasting grind of it, this price is certainly low enough. And there are miscellaneous items, such as possible doctor bills, service fees, the cost of barn shelter, depreciation, etc., making a grand total of expense of about \$99.60, or a net profit of \$2.40. I have called such a cow a poor cow, but as a matter of fact, she is really the average cow. She is the type which makes so many thousands of farmers and farmers' boys hate milking time.

The medium cow, which costs you about \$100 at the present time, will give right around four gallons a day when fresh. She will produce for you in a year about \$27.20 worth of skim-milk, a calf worth from \$5 to \$10, depending on whether a heifer or a bull, \$11 worth of manure, and cream worth \$112, or a total of about \$158. She costs about \$10 more to feed than the poor cow; it takes longer to milk her, and in the course of a year you have to spend about \$5 more time on her. She is more likely to have doctor bills. You have to charge off more every year to cover interest on the investment and depreciation as she gets older. There is considerably greater risk of such a cow losing a quarter of her udder. But, all these things considered, the total expense is only about \$130, leaving a net profit of \$28 for the medium cow.

Take now the case of the ordinarily good cow, costing \$150, and giving five or six gallons of milk when fresh. Such a cow will give you in a year about \$30 worth of skim-milk, a heifer calf worth \$15 or a bull calf worth \$5, \$12 worth of manure, and \$154 worth of cream, making a grand total of \$213. To feed such a cow requires about \$30 worth more of grain than for the poor cow. She takes longer to milk, and has to be watched much more carefully if you are to avoid udder trouble. After such a cow passes eight years of age, she depreciates very rapidly in value until, by the time she is fourteen, she is worth but little except as a canner cow on the beef market; and yet, taking all these things into consideration, the total expense of such a cow is only around \$157, leaving a net profit of \$56.

Which will you take—poor cow, medium cow, good cow? I know men who would make a very serious mistake in selecting the good cow. They are really "poor cow" men. I mean to say that they do not know how to take care of cows; that, while it really pays them to fill up their spare time by milking a few poor cows, that they do not like cows well enough to give them the care necessary to make a success with good cows. There are thousands of such "poor cow" men who would find it impossible to make

the profits I have indicated on medium or good cows, for the simple reason that no one has ever taught them how to take care of anything else but poor cows. I have known such men to have really good cows in their herds, but they produced very little more than the poor cows, under the "poor cow" conditions. "Good cow" men have rescued such cows from their poor conditions, and have occasionally made extraordinary records with cows which everyone supposed didn't amount to much.

If you are prepared to give "good cow" conditions, by all means buy good cows, to make a profit for you out of those conditions. If you know anything at all about dairying, the chances are that one four-gallon cow will make more clear profit for you than ten two-and-a-half-gallon cows. And one five or six-gallon cow may make more money for you than twenty two-and-a-half-gallon cows.

I hope that thousands of the boy readers of this paper will come to know and like good cows, and, what is more important, that they will learn how to feed and care for good cows. Remember that the poor cow is worth while only for the man who takes no real interest in milking. She is good mainly to take up the extra time of the men folks in the early morning and late evenings.—Wallace's Farmer.

## Save the Manure.

In good seasons and in bad, on rich soils and on poor soils, on well drained and on undrained soils; in fact, on all soils, all seasons and on all crops stable manure has proved itself valuable. No matter what fertilizers are used or what crops are grown, the more stable manure made this winter and the better it is handled the larger will be the next year's crops.

Rich soils, those well supplied with stable manure, and good farming methods make the farmer almost independent of the seasons. Under the most favorable soil and weather conditions almost anyone can make good crops, but good soils and good farming show their value when the seasons are unfavorable. A soil well filled with decaying stable manure will stand any drought likely to occur in the South; and yet, there are few crops, soils or seasons in which a lack of moisture at some time does not lessen the yields. The best insurance against drought is a deep, well-tilled soil, filled with decaying organic matter.

It is not easy to say too much about the value of stable manure, but nevertheless there will be thousands of tons of its wasted this winter in every Southern State.

These remarks are for the purpose of stressing the importance of giving more attention to saving all the manure possible this winter.

Most of the fertilizer value of the liquid manure is lost. The urine contains more than half the fertilizer value of the manure from horses, cattle and sheep. Two-thirds of the nitrogen and four-fifths of the potash are in the urine. This shows how important it is to supply the stables with an abundance of bedding or litter, sufficient to absorb the urine, and it also shows the importance of protecting the manure from rains that will leach out the soluble plant foods. One-half the dry matter and from 80 to 90 per cent of the fertilizer value of the feeds used are found in the manure and when sufficient bedding is used the manure may actually contain more plant food than the feeds used. This is particularly true with manure fattening animals.

Now is the time to provide sheds and beddings, so as to save the manure made. And remember that the place to rot manure is in the ground and not in a compost heap. A ton of fresh manure will give as great increase in crops as a ton of well rotted manure and it takes two tons of the fresh to make one ton of the rotted manure. Also, the best place for the manure is in the soil not on it, but if the land is fairly level or if there is a growing crop on it, little will be lost by spreading the manure on the surface. There will be practically no loss into the air. The only material loss will be when the manure is actually washed away and off the land.—Progressive Farmer.

## Average Cows Do Not Pay.

Estimates on the value of the average dairy cow's production in New York State, made by the College of Agriculture, give a yearly total of \$66.09. Costs of maintaining her are estimated at \$61.85, not including the cost of labor. The difference, amounting to only \$4.25 per cow, would give the man who cared for twenty cows a yearly wage of \$85, which is less than the lowest wage paid to ordinary farm labor.

Scrub cows are largely responsible, it is said, for this poor showing and they must be weeded out if dairymen. Herds may be improved by "grading up" with a pure-bred bull or by the purchase of pure-bred animals. Grade cows may be obtained that will give high yields, though they are to be profitable to their offspring are not always as valuable in the market as those from pure-bred animals.—Cornell University.

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