

Marion Is the Leading Hog County of Western Oregon, and Salem Is Fast Becoming a Big Swine Breeding and Pork Packing Center

BEST PASTURES FOR HOGS, BY THE OAC SPECIALISTS IN THE INDUSTRY

Alfalfa Comes First, and the Acreage in This Is Being Increased in Willamette Valley Counties—Different Opinions on Grain Feeding to Pasturing Hogs—Mineral Mixture and Shade and Water Are Essentials

(By H. A. Lingren, extension specialist in animal husbandry at the Oregon Agricultural college.) In discussing pastures for hogs, I find, on consulting several publications, that the management of pastures is pretty much the same all over the country, so that information coming from other sources will also apply here in Oregon.

Pastures for hogs are valuable, and should be utilized to as great an extent as possible. The best use of pastures, however, does not mean that hogs fatten or make satisfactory growth on pasture alone. Pasture of any kind, regardless of quality, must be supplemented with grain if the most satisfactory results are to be obtained.

The hog grower should never attempt to supply only just enough pasture. Pastures will not produce best results if they are grazed too closely. Only as many hogs as can be provided with an abundance of feed, should be placed in any lot or pasture. It is impossible to say how many animals may be grazed on an acre, since so much depends upon the crop used, the quality of the soil, and climatic conditions, etc.

Ordinarily an acre will furnish pasture for from 5 to 15 pigs, averaging 100 pounds. It is a good plan to have two pastures for each lot of hogs. By alternating them from one pasture to another, it may be grazed fairly close and still provide succulent feed. Pasture crops that are allowed to mature do not furnish good food for hogs. The fertilizer value of the manure which is left on the land is an indirect and generally unnoticed value that should be taken into account when hog pastures are being considered.

Hogs on pasture range all over the enclosure. Consequently, the distribution of manure is quite uniform. Furthermore, very little of it is lost. The value to be derived from hog pasture does not apply to any particular locality or section of the country. The only difference in different sections is owing to the pasture season.

The value of good pasture to breeding animals cannot be overestimated. To give a maximum of efficiency, the breeding sow and her litter must have exercise and a variety of feeds. There is no other way by which exercise and variety of feeds can be supplied as well as by giving the animals free range on good pasture.

The foregoing taken from Farmers' Bulletin on Swine Production, gives one a fairly good general idea of the importance of pasture on farms.

Alfalfa Comes First
Under Oregon conditions we have a good many pastures that are suitable. When we think of hog pastures we of course think of alfalfa first, as that is the most important one that we have. As alfalfa is not applicable for every region of the state, we have to look for other crops that will fill the bill. Most any green feed has its value for pasture with hogs. In the Willamette valley a good many of our farmers are using rape. Rape is considered almost as valuable as clover, or a mixture of clover and some of the grasses, is likewise very satisfactory. Under certain conditions I have seen oats and wheat sown in the fall and used for early spring pasture with very good results. It all helps in furnishing succulents and cutting down on the amount of grain used. Pasture crops are capable of saving from one-third to one-fourth of the grain that would otherwise be necessary in putting on 100 pounds of pork. In regard to the variety of pasture crop to use, would say this, that it is largely up to the individual farmer himself as to what crop he can grow to the best advantage under his particular conditions.

POTATO DISEASE SPREAD ALARMING
With virus diseases of potatoes on the increase in spite of the work of certification of seed, plant disease specialists of the entire northwest are watching with interest the cooperative work being done by the Montana, Utah and Oregon experiment stations, aided by the federal bureau of plant industry. Examination of the central trail plots at the Oregon station made this last week end show conclusively the advantage of tuber-unit roguing as opposed to mass roguing. Some fields have been a total loss just from mosaic diseases.

Though the advance of certification has checked the spread of mosaic diseases and is far superior to simple selection, the seriousness of the disease situation is forcing attention to even more positive methods of control of which the tuber-unit plan is the most promising for seed plots.

Under this method of roguing the potatoes are planted with all prices from a single tuber placed consecutively in the row, with a perceptible space left between the grounds. A machine has been developed now which cuts the potatoes and plants them in this manner at one operation.

When the plants come up, any doubtful cases are more easily detected where all the plants from one tuber are together, find the scientists, and are thus eliminated earlier. Furthermore where one plant shows disease earlier than others, all of that group are rogued out at once, thus eliminating future sources of infection.

By using this plan any grower of certified seed may maintain a farm seed plot in which he can effectively reduce disease from year to year instead of merely checking its spread. Consequently the specialists while here expressed the belief that such a seed plot should be made a prerequisite to entering the fields for certification.

M. B. McKay, plant pathologist of the Oregon station is in charge of the central station work while Dr. B. L. Richards of Utah and Dr. P. A. Young and H. E. Morris of Montana are handling the work at those stations. Much benefit from the cooperative work is apparent, they say.

A Positive Proof
Here is a positive proof that a half a cent a pound in Salem under the Portland price is at least a quarter of a cent a pound better than the Portland price for our swine breeders, as the Statesman has claimed: Just before the 4th of July 1924 the local plant was overstocked, and some of their people were on vacations, etc., so they sent a car of hogs to Portland. They lost \$50 on the car. They had to pay freight, yardage, feed, insurance, fees, and commissions—six items, which no shipper could avoid. It would be the same with the farmer. He would lose money. That was the only shipment of hogs ever made by the Valley Packing company. They have always shipped in, or bought locally, never shipped out, excepting in the case of this one car of hogs.

Our People Proud
Salem people are proud of their local packing house, owned and operated by the Valley Packing company, with its plant and offices on the Portland road at the northern edge of the city—fronting the Pacific highway.

There are a number of things in this connection of which they are proud—and four things especially. These are the four: First—It is a very complete and thoroughly equipped plant, and it is owned entirely by local people; so owned and managed.

Second—Its Cascade brand of hams, bacon and lard are as good in quality as the best put up in the United States.

Third—This plant enables us to truthfully and proudly say that Salem is the best hog market in the United States. The prices paid here are all the time the highest in this country.

Fourth—It is a growing business; keeps ahead of the local supply.

cent phosphate, 25 pounds of common salt. Very often wood ashes are available, which may be incorporated in the mineral mixture to advantage. The mineral mixture should be supplied the hogs in boxes or self-feeders, where it will be dry and available at all times. Charcoal is often used in mixtures, and is superior to soft coal. Neither charcoal nor coal have much food value, but both appear to be highly palatable to pigs. These minerals help keep them in good condition, aid them in warding off diseases, and in other words, put "pep" into your pigs.

Shade and Water
It would not be wise to leave this discussion of pastures without saying something about the importance of shade and plenty of water while the pigs are on pasture. If your hog lot is not supplied with a shade, a very inexpensive one can be made by setting up a framework and making the roof out of straw or fir boughs.

In certain localities the farmer may have some difficulty in finding a crop that he can grow for early spring pasture. Rye seems to have quite a wide application to the state, and where it will grow it makes a very satisfactory pasture crop. If it is pastured lightly in the spring, and the pigs are not allowed to remain on it too late, it will also yield a normal harvest in grain. There are many sections in eastern Oregon, and also in certain parts of western Oregon, where quite a little rye is grown in small patches as a pasture crop.

Alfalfa in Valley
Farmers in Washington county have been growing a great deal of alfalfa during the last few years. They are becoming interested at this time in using alfalfa as a pasture crop. Last summer I spent some little time with County Agent McWhorter, in visiting some of these men who are using this crop for pig pasture. All that we talked of was getting to be very enthusiastic over the prospects for hog production under such conditions.

There are other counties in western Oregon that are also starting to grow some alfalfa on their farms. As stated before, where it will grow, it is the most satisfactory pasture crop that we know of for hogs.

The operations of the Valley Packing company have made and are making a large contribution to the growth and prosperity of the whole Salem district and of this city. When this institution opened for business, the Salem section could supply only about a third of the hogs needed for the local pack; the balance of the supply coming from east of the Cascades, in some cases as far away as Nebraska. Now all the hogs come from the trade territory of Salem, and there is a large contribution left for packing houses in cities at a distance.

Salem is the best hog market in the United States, or in the world, and has been since the Valley Packing company commenced operations here January 1, 1920. The plant of this company is thoroughly up to date; is equipped to handle 1,000 hogs a week, besides 100 to 200 cattle, and as many or more sheep.

The fact is, it is very much ahead of present average requirements, and its managers plan to keep it that way, as they have done since opening business. The plant was three years ago provided with new curing room, new hog coolers and new hog killing floor, and a new pork cutting room. Has a commodious new office, has a most modern and up to date lard and compound refining plant. Some of the machinery in this is the first to be brought to this coast. Gives open kettle rendering. Takes the moisture out; makes a better product.

Big and Growing Fast
The Valley Packing company uses on an average each week about: 500 hogs, 200 sheep, 100 cattle. The number of sheep used each week has about doubled in a year. The quality of the mutton turned out is high. We have a great sheep country.

The Valley Packing company people now get all of their hogs locally, and their sheep, too. They have helped to make Salem a swine breeding center, and they will make it decidedly more so, when their enlarged plant is worked up to capacity. They are getting part of their beef supply through the Portland stock yards, from eastern Oregon points.

There are 60 acres in the holdings. The managers keep adding on yard room as needed. The yards are all paved and connected with the sewer and are flushed down often, to keep them sanitary and free from flies. There is ample cold storage, and the plant and all its appliances are modern and first class in every way.

The Markets
Fresh meat has been for some time going from this plant as far south as Ashland and Klamath Falls, and to Portland and the north, and lately they have been going into Washington and California. The company delivers meat in its own trucks, all over the local territory, and to Portland.

The company employs in and about the plant about 50 people, and the weekly payroll is above \$1500.

The Cascade brand of hams, bacon and lard are as good in quality as the best put up in the United States.

So the reader may see that the producers of hogs in the Salem district are favored in price far above the swine breeders of the Mississippi valley states—the so-called great corn states.

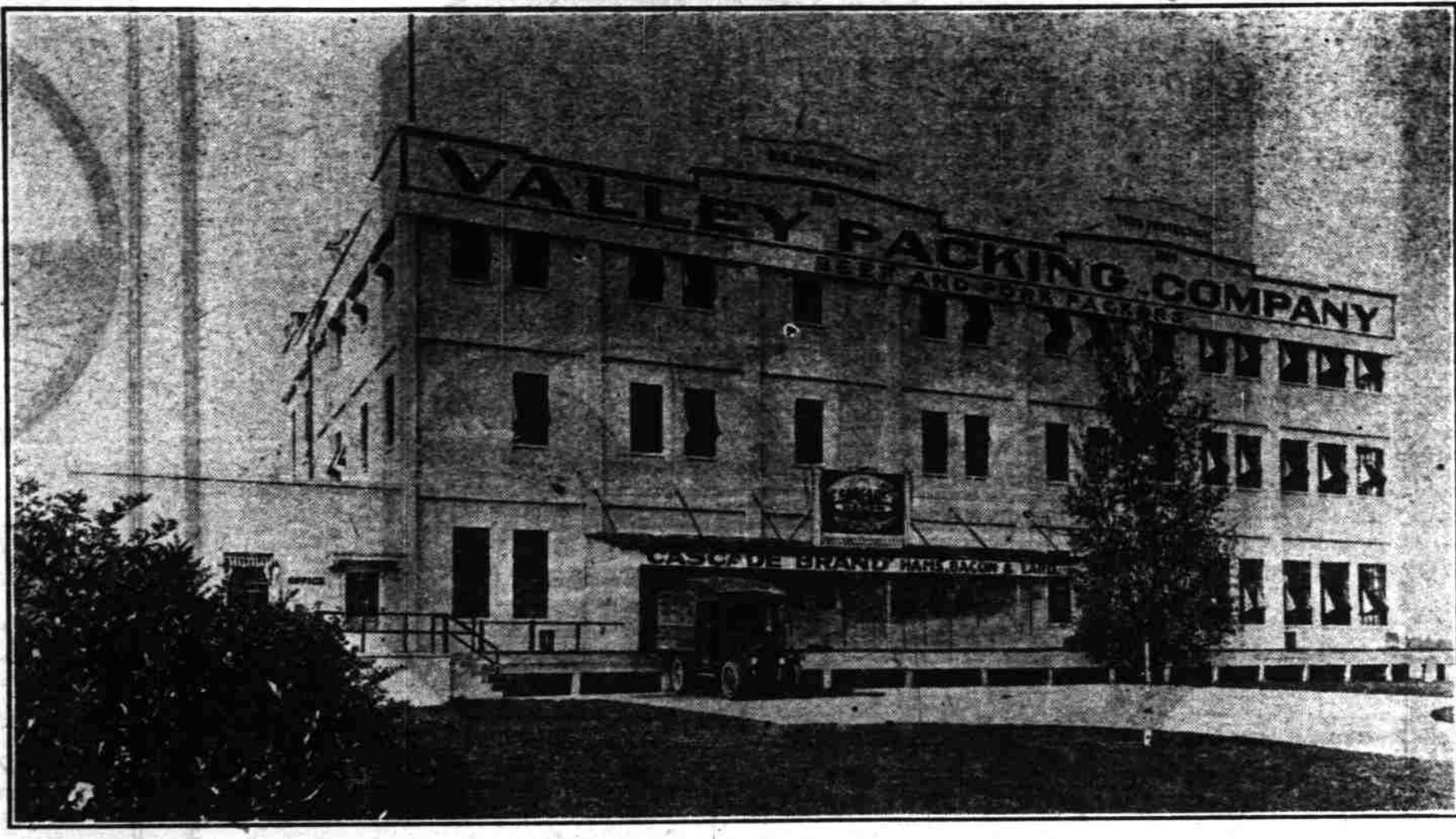
It should be remarked in passing that the Salem district is becoming a great corn district. Marion has taken her place as the leading corn country in the Pacific Northwest, and Polk county is not far behind; neither is Yamhill, Linn or Clackamas. Our growing swine industry is helping to boost corn growing here.

And it's helping the dairying and poultry industries, too, and directly and indirectly aiding in the growth and business prosperity of the city and country in many ways.

Our people can show their appreciation of this great and growing plant by always boosting the Cascade brand—and by helping in putting over the slogan, "Patrolize home industry."

Still Better Showing
The difference in favor of the prices paid by the Valley Packing company over Omaha prices is greater now than at this time in 1926 or last year. It was about 50 cents a hundred pounds in favor of Salem in 1926; it was \$1.10 to \$1.45 a hundred pounds in favor of Salem last year, and it is \$1 to \$2.40 a hundred pounds in favor of Salem now. That is certainly something worth thinking about. It should create here a

A Front View of the Valley Packing Company Plant, from a Cut Made from a Recent Photograph



SALEM DISTRICT HAS CAUGHT UP WITH THE SUPPLY OF HOGS FOR THE VALLEY PACKING COMPANY, AFTER EIGHT YEARS

Salem Is the Best Hog Market in the United States, and Has Been Since the Valley Packing Company Started Operating—One of the Most Complete Plants in the Country—Buys Hogs from the Local Territory as Offered the Year Through and Turns Out Products Competing With Those of the Large Packing Concerns in the Big Cities—Owned and Operated by Local People.

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And it's helping the dairying and poultry industries, too, and directly and indirectly aiding in the growth and business prosperity of the city and country in many ways.

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con and lard, put out by the Valley Packing company is sold in the markets everywhere right along with the leading brands produced by the large packing houses throughout the country. The local concern takes no back seat on quality.

Guaranteed by Government
The Valley Packing company is government inspected. It is operated under the supervision of the bureau of industries of the United States department of agriculture. There has all along been maintained at the plant a veterinary inspector who has been provided with an office there and who inspects all animals as they come in and all meats as they go out, and also supervises the whole plant as to sanitation, etc. So the whole output is guaranteed as to quality by the United States government. Lately a second government inspector has been added. The two inspectors now are Dr. J. H. Julien and O. A. Welch.

On the Ninth Year
The Valley Packing company commenced operations on January 1, 1920. It has been going and growing for over eight and a half years. The president is Curtis B. Cross; vice president W. H. Steusloff; secretary, E. M. McKee; treasurer, Wm. Walton.

The Valley Packing company will never stop growing and building. It is a growing field.

Highest Price for Hogs
There is a cost connected with the delivery of hogs to the Portland market from Willamette valley points of about 75 cents a hundred pounds, as stated above.

So the Salem price is really always above the Portland price; and the Portland price is nearly always the highest in the United States. The Salem price, as was stated, is always within 50 cents a hundred pounds of the Portland price.

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THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE HOG INDUSTRY IS DISCUSSED

Hog Prices Should Improve Through the Later Part of the Year, if Indications of Reduction of Breeding Stock in Europe Are All Reliable—Marion the Heaviest Hog Producing County of Western Oregon, and Marion, Linn and Polk Produce Over a Third of All the Hogs Produced in Seventeen Western Oregon Counties

(By Robert E. Shinn, agriculturist for the United States National bank, of Salem, Oregon.) It has been often times pointed out that hogs are a means by which certain agricultural crops may be harvested and marketed to a better advantage from a dollars and cents standpoint than any other way.

This statement is undoubtedly true provided the ratio between the cost of feed and the price of pork is properly balanced.

In sections of the country where corn is produced to the best advantage from the standpoint of cost and yield, we find hogs brought to the market most profitably.

These sections lie in the great corn producing states of the middle west, and there we find much attention being paid to the so-called "corn-hog ratio." By that is meant the yield and price of corn on the open market as compared with the market price of pork.

Under the present transportation rates between Nebraska points and Portland, the Willamette valley producer cannot hope to benefit by a greater differential over and above the Omaha market than one dollar and a half per hundred weight.

This being a fact, it is imperative that the Willamette valley hog producer become a close student of the middle western "corn-hog ratio" and the hog cycle.

The corn-hog ratio measures the number of bushels of corn a hundredweight of live hogs will buy. The feeding ratio is favorable to producers when hogs will purchase a maximum of corn. During all of 1926 and the first four months of 1927 the ratio was favorable, but it dropped rapidly during the spring and early summer in line with the apparent prospect for a short corn crop. The rise in the ratio during the last five months of 1927 was, of course, seasonal, but the degree of rise was greater than normal, due to the final maturing of the corn crop.

The last hog cycle ran from a peak in 1922 to another in 1926 with a decline following in 1927 and the first half of 1928. The indications now point to a slow rise to another peak in late 1929 or in 1930. According to past experience, the size of the 1928 corn crop will be a vital factor in timing the arrival of the peak, but for the coming cycle the European situation will prove more than ordinarily influential.

During the past two years the hog cycles of both England and Germany have closely paralleled our own. Both of these countries had an over supply of hogs and high priced feed, which resulted in an abnormally large slaughter in those countries. This condition resulted in the forcing of normal

Using "The Beefsteak Sire" as the topic for his address, Mr. Sheets explained the difficulty growers have in determining the value of bulls of the beef breeds, and especially in knowing what characteristics a beef sire will transmit to his offspring. The present public demand for beef, he explained, is principally for a few choice cuts representing about 18 per cent of the entire carcass.

"The best results for the least expenditure of money in the improvement of beef cattle," he said, "are obtained by the use of carefully selected, purebred bulls. The problem, moreover, is not so much that of obtaining animals superior to any which we have today as of learning to appraise accurately the most valuable among those we already have."

"To learn how to produce and recognize beef sires whose offspring will yield uniformly high-quality steaks and roasts is a task for the Government, cooperating with State's experiment stations and forward-looking institutions like Sni-a-Bar Farms."

Mr. Sheets' address was supplemented by a new motion picture film, "The Beefsteak Bequest," made by the United States department of Agriculture, which shows some of the principal results of the Sni-a-Bar Farms demonstration.

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