

Raising Pure Bred Swine Demands Apprenticeship

G. R. Samson Gives Some Pithy Advice to Would-Be Breeder on All Phases of the Industry.

There's no royal road to success in raising hogs in the Northwest. The breeder needs to be both breeder and fancier, points out the writer of the following article written especially for The Home and Farm Magazine Section.

BY G. R. SAMSON,
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IT IS questionable whether any one should engage in producing pure-bred swine who has not served a successful apprenticeship with grades. There are so many practical details with which to familiarize one's self that can be learned so much more economically with grades, that the foregoing statement seems reasonable and conservative. The purpose of the breeder of pure-bred swine is primarily to produce boars which by legitimate advertising and lots of eloquence he may sell to pork producers at a price which will permit him to continue his existence upon the earth and his business of producing boars.

Some sows will, like the girl-babies in India, enter the cots in which prayers have ascended for the advent of male children only; but most of these female swine could be permitted to continue their tax upon the forbearance of their owners until they are old enough to become food for men.

The time is not yet, but it very soon will be when plenty of breeders in Oregon shall raise pure-bred swine. Then those who should have stayed out of the business will most likely suffer more or less financial loss. Those who are not producing boars which are good enough to improve good grade herds, and even those who are not good advertisers, will find that their wares are a drug on the market.

Much Interest in Production.

Up to the present time conditions have been peculiarly favorable to producers of pure-bred swine. They have not been too numerous and there has been a tremendous interest in pork production. And most of these producers and would-be producers of pork have heeded the gospel of good sires. The result has been an active demand for boars. Too often the demand has exceeded the supply of good ones so that men have been induced to embark in the production of pure-breds without a proper conception of their work. Every day letters come to the office asking where sows of various breeds can be had and frequently some remark is dropped which indicates that they must be had cheap.

Too frequently these letters show an absolute lack of knowledge of the most commonplace details of hog raising. In answering these letters in as conscientious a manner as possible, we often wonder how long the money these men have will keep them going.

Occupation Ancient One.

Swine raising is an ancient occupation, even if not counted honorable by the none less ancient Jews, and because of the economy with which it can be produced, pork will likely be a staple grocery for a long time to come. But the production of pure-bred breeding stock is an exigency of modern conditions, to which those who have already made a success of raising market swine are best fitted. The wealthy man who has never raised grade swine and who takes a fancy to some pure-breed may win some prizes, but he is not likely to leave a permanent imprint on the swine in which he chances to place boars. Such a man often serves his community well by making available for breeding purposes animals which he brings in, but it is rare that he has the judgment or good fortune to mate wisely enough to produce pigs which are good enough to improve the breed.

Swine breeders, like breeders of other kinds of livestock, are usually to the manor born. Acuteness of observation, judgment to determine what will happen before it does happen (this judgment based on a well-grounded knowl-



Yorkshire Sows at Oregon Agricultural College Stock Farm.

edge of inheritance), infinite capacity for details with the courage to send to the feed lot good animals which are not quite good enough to use as breeders, liberality in feeding so as to develop all the possibilities innate in his young stock—these are some of the qualities which help to ward off failure for the breeder of pure-bred swine.

Way to Success Told.

Success and failure as here used refer to the achievement of the breeder as a breeder, not as a financier. A man may be successful either as a breeder or financier and not as the other or both, or he may succeed as both.

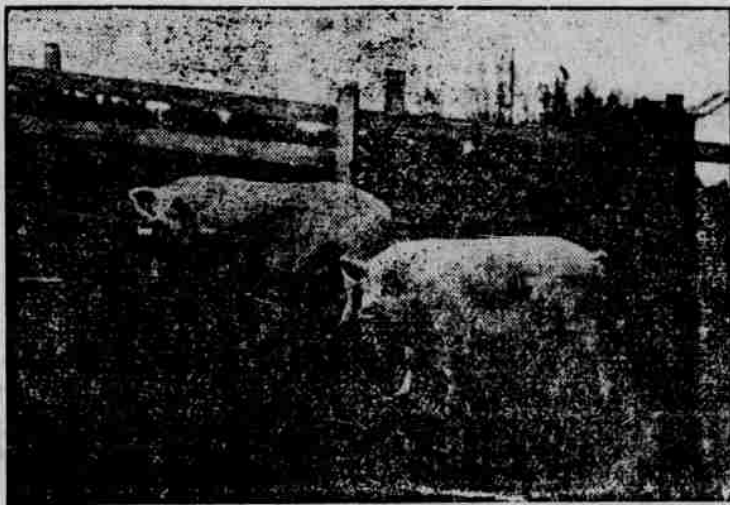
If none but those who have already familiarized themselves with some breed through grades of that breed, engaged in raising pure-breds, most of them would probably breed the kind which they know best. There is really little choice in the fat breeds other than that existing in the minds of the breeders, present and prospective. Good individuals as well as poor ones are found in all the breeds. It might be added

that the poor and mediocre are greatly in the majority as compared with the best representatives of the several sorts; but this is no more than could be said of all kinds of animals, including men.

Judgment must be exercised in selecting a foundation of whatever breed is decided upon, and good individuals with good ancestry for several generations back are to be preferred. Good individuality is of more importance than the ancestry or than any one individual in the ancestry. For pedigreed scrubs exist and occur in all breeds, and while these often breed better than themselves, they should not be chosen; for what they contribute directly to their offspring drags downward rather than upward from the average of the breed.

The average of no breed is good enough for foundation stock.

The foundation purchased should be better than the average of the breed, and as much better than the pocketbook will afford. If it will not afford as good as the average, keep on raising grades until it will afford it.



On the Road to Success.

Raising Fine Hogs in the Northwest

Some Ideas on the Best Way to Breed and Produce the Farmers' Mortgage Lifters.

This is the third of a series of articles by two men well informed upon what the hog can do for the Northwest.

By JAMES E. WITHYCOME and E. L. POTTER.

OF ALMOST equal importance with good rations is plenty of exercise. The sows must not be allowed to lie around in their pens day in and day out if good strong litters are expected. They must be made to take exercise. In the west-

ern Northwest this is often quite difficult, but in the eastern part the ground is more frequently frozen and deep mud is less common. In this case feeding at a distance from the sleeping sheds is quite an advantage when the sows do not get out enough of their own accord.

When farrowing time approaches the sow should be separated from the remainder of the herd, and given a nice, well-sheltered pen, such as one of the pens in the hog houses shown, connected if possible with a small lot on the outside. A fender should be made around the sides of the pen by arranging a piece of lumber along the sides about seven or eight inches from the wall and

an equal distance from the floor. This will prevent the sows from lying down close to the wall and thus crushing the pigs. Such fenders should be put in temporarily, as they are only in the way and take up a great deal of room after the pigs have attained some size. A good dry floor with light bedding should be provided. Where there is too much bedding the pigs are apt to get tangled in it and crushed by the sow. This is especially true of long, fresh straw. It is often recommended to cut the straw, but this is unnecessary if it is put in a few days prior to farrowing so that the sow will have time to wear it down a little.

Dangers Are Told.

If the sow has been fed a proper ration and is in comfortable quarters little or no trouble may be expected; if she has been fed on an unbalanced ration, or is excessively poor or excessively fat, or if she is unduly exposed to the cold and wet, various troubles may be expected.

Among these may be mentioned: difficulty in farrowing; weak or dead pigs; pigs chilled to death; refusing to own pigs; eating pigs, or crushing pigs by lying on them.

If the simple rules above outlined are followed these troubles will be largely obviated. However, if in addition record of the date of farrowing be kept and the attendant will be on hand when the pigs are born, a large number of pigs may be saved.

When it is quite cold and there is danger of the first pigs farrowed chilling to death before the others are delivered, the first may be put in a tub or keg containing a jug filled with hot water, and with a blanket over it. This will keep them warm, and when all have come they may be put back and allowed to suck.

Sometimes it is necessary to place them in the tub a few times before meals. In ordinary cases such precautions are not necessary. Quite often the seum and mucus covering the pig at birth will close up the nostrils and smother the pig, but wiping the nose at once with a wisp of straw will prevent this.

Where the sow is extremely restless and there is much danger that the pigs will be trampled or crushed, in spite of the fenders, they may be removed one at a time as fast as they come and put into a warmed tub, as previously described.

Prevent From Eating Young.

Often by keeping them there for a few hours, except when with the sow for suckling, the sow will quiet down and there will be no further danger. There are many remedies proposed for sows eating their pigs, but about the only real remedies are preventives.

Sows usually start eating their pigs because of a feverish condition of the system. Sometimes this is due to having been fed on feeds that were excessively heat-producing, and lacking in mineral matter and protein; sometimes it is due to a lack of exercise; often it is due to cold, wet and general discomfort at farrowing time.

After a sow has once learned to eat her pigs she will very likely do the same thing the next time, though the condition which caused her to begin the practice be no longer present. In other cases the sow is apparently naturally vicious and restless. After the habit is once formed the chances for its cure are small. The sow should be sent to the butcher and the pigs put with other sows if possible. Feeding the sow raw meat, salt pork and various other remedies have been suggested, but they are not reliable.

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