

Swine Report

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The United States Department of Agriculture reports show that swine producers in the United States plan to increase their spring farrowings by six per cent. If this is true, a change in the hog cycle numbers will take place this spring. For the past year and a half the swine numbers in this country have decreased and at the same time prices of market hogs have been going higher. USDA figures recently released on the numbers of hogs on farms in the United States on January 1, show that although the total number of hogs is about the same as they were a year ago, the number of sows and gilts kept for breeding purposes is somewhat higher than it was a year ago. The figures show an increase of five per cent. The number of sows and gilts on farms in Klamath County as of January 1 have decreased from 1,500 in 1945 to 500 in 1956. If the number of pigs farrowed is increased as indicated, prices of market hogs could be expected to drop considerably in November and December with a somewhat further decrease in April and May. If this trend should develop it would be advisable for swine producers in the Klamath Basin to feed and handle the spring pig crop in such a way that they will reach the market at the earliest possible time. The market is likely to be the highest during June and July. Pigs farrowed during February and March could be made to reach the market in July or early August. It appears there is a place for more hogs on farms in Klamath County. The West is a hog deficient area and prices in this part

of the United States usually run from two to three cents a pound higher than is obtained in the corn belt states.

Home grown feeds including grains, alfalfa hay and pasture should be used to a maximum. Some animal protein is essential in hog ration therefore, it will be necessary to secure this feed from a commercial source. Bred sows should be fed so they will be in good smooth condition at the time of farrowing. Young sows will require proportionally more feed than mature ones. A gilt should be fed so that she will gain around a 100 pounds during the gestation period. Rations for sows may contain 20 or 25 per cent good leafy ground alfalfa hay. Greater quantities than this can be given if the entire ration is self fed. Fattening rations may contain 10 per cent good quality alfalfa hay and they should also contain around eight to ten per cent of a good quality meat meal. Pelleted feeds containing greater quantities of alfalfa are being fed in the county and are proving to be satisfactory for hog rations. More experiments are needed to determine just how much alfalfa may be used in the pelleted swine ration. Pasture is an excellent feed for hogs and should be used to a maximum extent. Both breed sows and market hogs can utilize pasture and the cost of producing a pound of pork reduced by this method. Both breeding stock and market hogs will require some grain and market hogs will do better if given a liberal allowance of cereal grains while on the pasture.

Gilts raised for brood sows should be grown out well. They should be developed separate from market hogs. It is preferable to feed them less grain concentrates and more pasture, alfalfa hay, and more animal protein supplement. A gilt should weigh around 250 pounds and be around eight months of age by the time she is bred. Sows can easily farrow two litters

of pigs a year. The best time to have pigs farrowed for the highest market is to have them farrowed in March and April for spring litters and late August and early September for fall litters. There is a trend toward having hogs farrow at more times during the year. This is especially true where a number of hogs produced on one unit is being increased to a maximum. Scattering the farrowing will require less equipment and the job of handling pigs at farrowing time will be spread out more and one man can handle a greater number of brood sows. One of the best places to increase the efficiency of a swine enterprise is to save the maximum number of pigs per litter. It will not cost a great deal more to raise a sow with 10 than it will to raise a sow that may only have five or six pigs. The farrowing house may be either an individual movable hog house or where large numbers of hogs are kept, a central farrowing house may be preferable. Which ever method is used it is necessary to have individual farrowing pens. The usual size is around eight feet square. A farrowing pen should have a good strong guard rail on all sides placed eight to 10 inches above the floor and eight to 10 inches away from the wall. Some heat should be provided in the farrowing pen during cold weather. Brooders may be built in one corner of the farrowing pen. Heat may be provided by ordinary light bulbs or by infrared heat lamps placed about three feet from the floor. Heat is not generally required after the pigs are around two to three weeks of age. At about this time feed should be provided for the pigs in a creep. Anemia is a common problem in pigs that are kept on wooden or concrete floors and where pigs do not have access to soil. There are three ways to prevent anemia. One is by providing clean soil in one corner of the pen so that pigs can eat it. Another way to prevent anemia is to give each

pig a drench of about one teaspoon full of a .5 per cent solution of iron sulphate or iron ammonium citrate. The treatment should be made within 24 hours of birth and the single treatment will last for about three weeks. More recently an iron compound called armidexan can be given as an injection. Two c.c. of the material are injected into the ham of each pig within 24 hours of birth and this material will provide sufficient iron for about three weeks.

With the consumers demand for leaner cuts of pork and with the decrease in the value of lard, over finished hogs or hogs with an excessive proportion of fat to lean are becoming more difficult for the butcher to sell. This has increased the demand the price for hogs with a minimum of fat. With this change, has come about a change in the type of hog that yields the greatest proportion of lean cuts. This type of hog are those that have considerable length and depth and grow rapidly and reach the desired weights without an excess of finish. Several new breeds of hogs have been developed for the purpose of providing a hog of the proper market type. In addition to this there has been an effort to select hogs from the old standard breeds that have length and gain rapidly to reach market weight of around 200 to 225 pounds without an excess of finish. The committee feels that there is a need for more purebred breeders in the county so that breeding stock of the proper type and quality of hog can be secured. Purebred breeders feel that a boar testing station located in the west would be a great deal to improve the type of hog produced in this country. The committee strongly urges that Oregon State College establish such a station so that boars can be production tested in this area. At present it is necessary to secure tested boars from mid-west states and such a practice adds a great deal to the cost of the breeding stock secured. Production testing standards for boars

calls for a minimum amount of back fat, a fast rate of gain, and high feed efficiency of the individual animal.

Swine are subject to internal parasites and normally must be treated to prevent serious losses from this parasite. The round worm is the most common internal parasite and can be held in check to a great extent by sanitary practices. Care should be taken to be sure that the sow is thoroughly clean and when placed on pasture, there should be sufficient forage to prevent too close grazing and rooting. Sodium fluoride administered through the feed is one of the most successful treatments for internal parasites. There are other drugs coming on the market that are also effective.

Lice and mange cause a great deal of loss in hogs where it is not properly controlled. Benzene Hexachloride, Lindane, or Chlordane will control both lice and mange in hogs. In treating with these materials, it is necessary that treatment be made at least 90 days before slaughter. Although not generally found in Oregon but common in some parts of the United States, hog cholera is a very serious disease and swine growers should be thoroughly familiar with the disease. If hogs from off the farm are being brought to the premises, it is advisable to immunize all hogs regularly. This can be done by the use of an attenuated hog virus and the anti-hog cholera serum at the same time. Where only a short time protection is needed for hogs, a single injection of the anti-hog cholera serum will be sufficient. Swine erysipelas may also find its way into a swine herd. This disease may cause heavy losses and whenever hogs become sick and the cause is not recognized immediately by the owner, it is advisable to secure the services of the veterinarian so the more serious diseases might be diagnosed. Erysipelas can be prevented from spread-

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