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BOYS' AND GIRLS' INDUSTRIAL CLUBS.

PIG FEEDING.

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OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

EXTENSION SERVICE.

RALPH D. HETZEL, Director.

FEEDING FOR PORK AND FOR SHOW.

by

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WHY IS A PIG?

A pig's chief business in life is to make a hog of himself. His owner is also anxious that in doing so the pig should make a profit, over and above enough to pay for his keep. Some of the items of expense with which the pig is charged will be spoken of in a later story.

The Pig as a Meat Producer. Pigs are the most economical meat producers we have. They will make more meat from a given quantity of grain than any other class of farm stock. To produce a pound of gain when on full feed, a pig requires $4\frac{1}{4}$ pounds of feed. Sheep require 6 pounds and cattle 10 pounds.

Pasture. When your pig is weaned, if there are any pastures which he can be turned on, put him on pasture and give him plenty of feed. Just what kind of feed is best, will depend upon the kind of pasture. Clover or alfalfa is first choice among pasture plants, and rape, oats and vetch and Canada Field Peas are all good in about the order named. A pound of grain for a fifty pound pig or two pounds of grain for a hundred pound pig on any of the above pastures, together with about four pounds of skim milk per day will keep the pig growing and keep him from growing thin and raw boned.

The idea to be kept in mind during the growing period of a pig is to get him to a hundred pounds weight in such a condition that he will then put on his gains rapidly and cheaply up to 200 pounds, at which age he will dress as high a percentage of meat and meat of as good quality as can be secured. If skim milk cannot be had, tankage is a good substitute for it. About one part of tankage to eight or nine of grain will be suitable for pigs on rape pasture while one of

tankage to ten or eleven of grain will be suitable for pigs on vetch, clover, alfalfa, or peas.

Think Ahead. The time when the pigs are to be shown or sold may best be considered during the growing period if it has not been considered before. Try to get the pigs to a hundred pounds about two months before they are to be shown or sold, for it is easier to hold them back before they are on full feed than after they are finished. For practical pig feeding there should be no holding back, but if pigs are to be shown at a particular date, plan to have them at their best at that time; this can be done only by bringing them to their best condition a very short time before they are to be shown.

Fattening. When the pigs reach 100 pounds they may be removed from pasture and their grain mixture increased. If

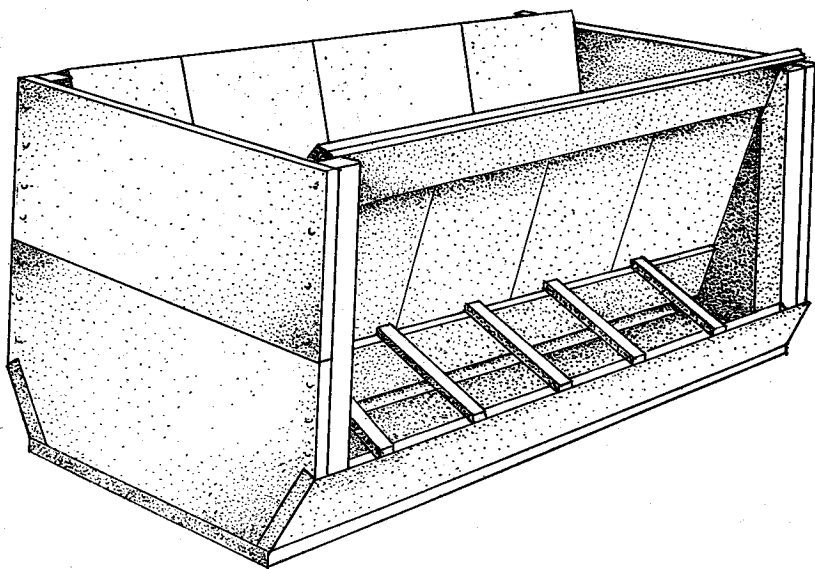


Plate I. Self feeder.

they have been getting two pounds of grain mixture, increase it to three and a half pounds and after two days increase it to four pounds. After three days more increase it to four and a half, and so on until at the end of two weeks the pigs are eating six pounds daily. If at any time during the increase in feed, the pigs do not clean up the feed in half an hour after it is given them, cut down the feed a little the next feed and if their appetite is good again, a gradual increase may be continued as before.

Be careful not to get the pigs off feed if possible, because

it is easier to keep them going well if they are never overfed than it is to get them back after they have once gotten too much. When they are getting all the feed they will clean up in 30 minutes, if a considerable number of pigs are being fed together, it may be best to use the self feeder, an illustration of which is here given. The purpose of the self feeder is to keep the feed before the pigs at all times, but without allowing them to waste very much of it.

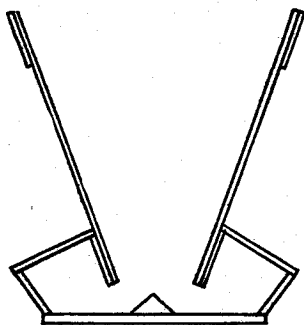


Plate II. Cross section of self feeder.

The Self Feeder. The illustration is that of a self feeder which is suitable for feeding 10 pigs, and has been used with satisfactory results at the Experiment Station. The advantage which the self feeder has over the hand feeding is that the pigs get feed when they are hungry, while if they are fed by hand only twice a day they are hungry a considerable part of the time, because their stomachs will not hold enough to last them from one meal to the next. They are like boys and girls who get hungry between meals, and are better off for having something to eat oftener than they are if compelled to eat so much at a time.

The self feeder will enable the pigs to put on their gains more economically, because their stomachs are working all the time, and at the same time it will save work, because the feeder may be filled up once a week and the pigs will require very little attention after this until the feeder needs refilling again. If only one or two pigs are to be fed, hand feeding will be more economical; the pigs may be fed three or four times a day without much bother, and more rapid gains will be secured. However, the advisability of this will depend upon the length of time you have in which to get your pigs ready for show.

Pigs fed by hand twice a day can be expected to gain about a pound and three-fourths a day, if they have all the feed they want; while if fed oftener than this, if they are good pigs, a gain of two pounds or better per day may be secured. We suggest these different methods of handling pigs because some of you may have pigs of a certain size which do not exactly fit in with the requirements of the show; that is, if you kept them growing rapidly from now until they weigh 200 pounds they would reach that weight before the time for them to be shown, so the

suggestions which have been made should be kept in mind.

Grinding Feed. You will all want to know whether it will pay best to grind the pig's feed or whether he should have it whole. In this regard grinding will ordinarily be found more profitable at the present prices of grain. However, where corn is fed even at present prices grinding it will hardly pay except during the last few weeks of the fattening period, but wheat and barley and oats, where used, had best be ground and ground pretty fine, rather than simply chopped or rolled.

Soaking and Cooking Feed. Soaking and cooking are also processes which add very little, if any, to the value of feed. Potatoes are the one exception as regards cooking. It has been found that cooking potatoes will pay, provided the potatoes are so cheap that one can afford to use them for hog feed. The grains, the roots, and any other feeds which are used for pigs are liked better and do more good when fed raw than when cooked. Very hard wheat or barley if it is impossible to get it ground, may be soaked for 12 hours before it is fed and some advantage secured by so doing; but if it is possible to get it ground, it will not pay to soak the ground feed, and unless the whole grains are hard or have unusually thick husks, like barley, it will not pay to soak, even then.

As for feeding the grain mixtures mixed with skim milk, where skim milk is available, little advantage is to be gained by this process. Apparently the same results are secured whether the skim milk is fed separately or mixed with the feed. In general it is more desirable to feed them separately, because the pigs are not forced to take more liquid than is good for them, as would be the case if they were watered and then given sloppy feed. They might take more liquid than is good for them in order to get the feed.

Feed for Pigs. Some good mixtures for fattening pigs would be as follows: Ground barley, 9 parts, tankage 1 part; ground wheat 10 parts, tankage 1 part; ground wheat 6 parts, shorts 6 parts, tankage 1 part; corn on the ear 9 parts, tankage 1 part; or corn meal 9 parts, tankage 1 part. If skim milk is available for pig feeding, about 1 pound of skim milk may be fed with 1 pound of the grain, the tankage being omitted. And if two or more kinds of grain are available they may best be mixed in about equal parts, or if one kind of grain is decidedly cheaper than the others a little larger proportion of it may be used. A mixture of the grains seems to be more profitable than any one of the grains by itself.