

Naturally, there is no single breed class in which this number has been examined, and it is therefore impossible at present to make any statement about the merits or otherwise of any one breed or cross.

Even when pigs are grouped into wide general classes containing quite large numbers, the information from this small number of pigs is not dependable because of the variation between the smaller groups making up the class. One of the first general questions to answer, therefore, is whether purebred pigs, halfbreds, or mixed breeds make the best baconers. Purebreds score a total of 111 points, 69 for maturity, 20 for back fat, 12 for loin, and 10 for length; half and three-quarter breeds score 110 points (69, 19, 12, and 10), and mixed and grade score 109 (66, 20, 12, and 11). This would be one of the most useful contributions to our knowledge of pigs if it were dependable, but the purebred score is made up of Berkshires, 106 points, Large Blacks, 108 points; Large White, 116 points; and Tamworths, 112 points. None of these averages is dependable, as the biggest group, the Tamworths, is made up of only 154 pigs.

It will be a red-letter day for the industry when the measurements of a sufficiently large number of pigs make it possible to say definitely that purebreds, halfbreds, or mixed breeds make the best baconers. Most farmers believe in hybrid vigour, but few have sufficiently convincing proof to make the practice of producing baconers from mixed breeds generally accepted.

### Breed of Boar

A further grouping has been made of pigs by breed of boar used. Grouped in this way, there are 768 pigs from Tamworth boars by every kind of sow, 243 by Large Whites, 437 by Berkshires, and 97 by Large Black boars. Tamworth crosses score 112 (70, 20, 12, 10); Large Whites, 109 (68, 19, 12, 10); Berkshires, 107 (66, 20, 12, 9); and Large Blacks, 106 (65, 19, 12, 10) points respectively. If the differences were dependable—that is, if the results were obtained from very large numbers of pigs, they would be of considerable interest. The difference between Tamworth crosses (70 points for growth rate) and Berkshire crosses (66 points) means that Tamworth crosses reach 140 lb. at least two weeks sooner than

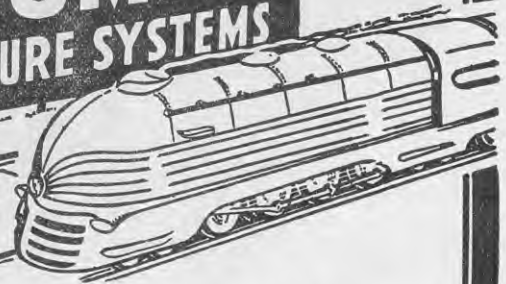
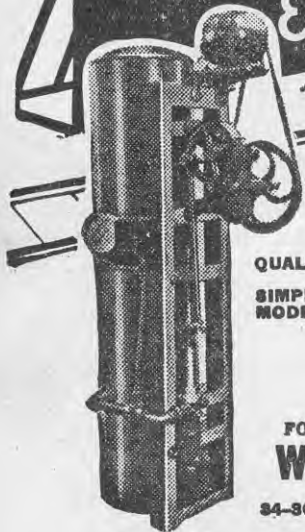
Berkshires. If this were true it would mean that the generally held opinions that Berkshires are hardy and that Tamworths are hungry would require reconsideration.

In general, all pigs so far examined leave little to be desired for back fat thicknesses. Loin fat is inclined to be too thin on all pigs of 101 to 120 lb., but especially on the Large White crosses. Shoulder fat is inclined to be too thick in all pigs in the weight range 161 to 180 lb. Length is uniformly mediocre, and all crosses and all weights score only half marks when judged by the standard set by the United Kingdom Bacon Development Board's scheme. At any weight one point for length corresponds to 3-16th of an inch, so that on their standards our pigs are uniformly just under 2 inches shorter than the perfect pig.

The great failing in all pigs is the rate of growth. Pigs of 118 lb. average carcass weight are 46 days older than schedule; pigs average 132 lb., 44 days; pigs of 150 lb., 32 days; and pigs of 168 lb., 29 days. The standard of growth adopted may be too fast (142 lb. of carcass in 28 weeks), but it is a

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