

Concerning Prevalent Disease in Pigs As It Occurs During The Summer Months

ALTHOUGH the summer months are usually ideal for most classes of stock, particularly calves, lambs, dairy and fattening stock, it is rather remarkable that a considerable amount of disease is seen in pigs during this period. There must be a reason for this, and if one considers the conditions under which pigs are reared and fattened, with the conditions pertaining to other classes of stock, the explanation may probably be due to the following cause.

Whereas the former class are free at pasture and have access to a variety of food, the latter class are mainly confined to small sections and styes, the food supply being limited mainly to skim milk and whey and a limited amount of other food. During the warm summer months it is difficult to maintain the bulky milk by-products in the most wholesome condition for feeding to pigs owing to fermentation and bacterial changes. It is also more difficult to keep storage tanks, barrels, or other milk containers, feeding vessels and troughs in a clean condition owing to the prevalence of flies and the warmer temperatures.

Greater care is therefore necessary to see that conditions in regard to the food supply and the general hygiene of the styes and sections is maintained at the best possible level during these months.

General Considerations

The endeavour to maintain health in pigs by suggestions regarding feeding and management under the varying conditions met with from farm to farm is a most important aspect of disease control. The surest way to control disease in pigs is to pay attention to the following: overcrowding, over-feeding, regularity in feeding, avoiding constipation or scouring, variety in the diet (roughage or green feed if need be), sanitation and drainage, hygiene, oiling to prevent lice and mange, prevention of checks in young growing pigs, prevention of extremes of temperature during the summer (hot days followed by cold nights), shade and draught-proof housing, the general maintenance of growth and bloom in pigs. This aspect of the

fight against disease in pigs cannot be too strongly stressed under our farm conditions, as there is a tendency to mass production or intensive methods of pig raising with a very limited variety in the nature of the general food supply for all classes of pigs, irrespective of the varying requirements of the pigs at different stages of growth and development.

Another aspect of the fight against disease in pigs is careful observation and the immediate treatment of pigs that are off-colour.

Isolation of the sick pig in the early stages in order to prevent other in-contact healthy pigs in the same sty contracting the infection is the first thing to be done. Isolation is not an empty term; it requires to be applied and applied promptly, and with judgment in many cases. The separation of the healthy from the sick, the isola-

tion of newly-purchased animals until satisfied that disease is not being introduced, suitable nursing and special treatment of sick animals and the slaughter off of all chronically sick pigs are all valuable measures which can be put into operation without any specialised knowledge of the various diseases to which pigs are subject. On numerous farms these chronically sick pigs are seen. They are a direct menace and are frequently reservoirs of disease germs, having in many cases been affected with disease, partially recovering and remaining chronic carriers and spreaders of disease. They should be slaughtered.

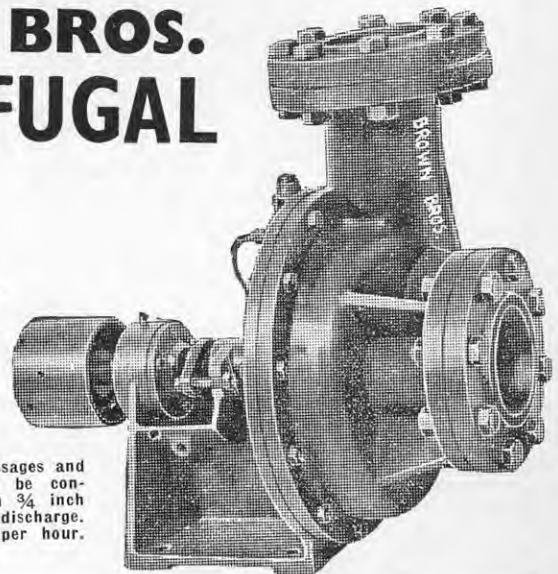
All pigs killed off on account of disease should be promptly disposed of by deep burial or burning. The intact disposal of a carcass without spilling blood, unless a special post-mortem examination is carefully carried

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