

others, any one of which is sufficient to prove her undoing at this critical stage. As a rule the older the sow, and higher she is in condition the longer should be the period allowed for settling down.

If the sow is not too fat, and is happy in her surroundings she has every opportunity of finishing up with a maximum number of the offspring that are born. Every progressive farmer makes the utmost use of labour-saving devices. From the condition and circumstances of the sow, one could almost predict the outcome of farrowing, wherever the sow farrowed. English practice recommends placing the little pigs out of harm's way in a hay box as soon as they are born. This

entails the attendance of the owner during farrowing, but if such attendance meant the saving of two to three pigs per litter, the time spent would be well repaid. If, however, attention is paid to all the other details, the sow may safely be left to herself at farrowing time.

Nutrition

Feed the sow. Pigs are made before they are born. Size, condition, vitality of piglets, all depend on feeding, as also does the milking quality of the sow.

Special care must be taken in feeding the brood sow if she is to do her best. As has already been pointed out many of the disasters which take

place before and after farrowing may be traced to improper feeding.

Just before and after farrowing special attention must be paid to the condition of the sow's bowels. If necessary reduce the feed just before the litter is due (particularly maiden sows) as a precaution against milk fever or swollen udder.

If possible do not let the sow have any feed immediately before farrowing. So long as she is not hungry, she will be the better without food; plenty of water is, however, a necessity. Much harm can be done both to the sow and the litter by overfeeding at this critical period. A bran mash and a little molasses will be all that is required for the first day.

Don't give the sow full rations until her pigs are a week old. The appearance of the sow's udder, the size of her litter, and the condition of the whole family should be one's guide. As the pigs grow the sow must be given all the food she will clean up readily, for with a big litter the strain on her is heavy, and she must be able to make plenty of milk. Avoid sudden changes of food, as this upsets her pigs, if not the sow herself.

Sows Eating Litter

This is often a source of loss, again attributed to a variety of causes. Some say that it occurs where the mineral or protein content of the sow's ration has been low, and that it can be prevented by attention to those matters, or by smearing the young with kerosene or other offensive smelling material. Others attribute it to the sow being irritated by the sharp canine teeth of some of the piglets.

While these may all be causes of this perversion, the considered viewpoint of McLinden is that the sow ate her litter in self-defence. Where sows have experienced unkind treatment at the hands of their attendant, or where they are upset by surroundings to which they are unaccustomed, they exercise their deeply ingrained maternal instinct, and consume their litter knowing that the piglets are incapable of protecting themselves, and fearing that they may be the victim of a direr fate. Wild sows exhibit this characteristic to a greater extent than the domestic animal.

Cobalt Deficiency in Sheep and Cattle

As the result of investigations into the prevention of bush sickness by the use of cobalt, it is now possible to recommend to farmers in the districts concerned, methods by which they can economically prevent the incidence of the disease. These recommendations are made jointly by the Department of Agriculture and the Cawthron Institute, and are available in a bulletin issued free by the Department.



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