

PREVENTION OF PIG LOSSES

Mastitis

Mastitis may occur at farrowing time or at any time during the lactation. It may take the acute or chronic form in the same manner as it occurs in the dairy herd. In the acute form opening medicine should be given and fomentations, followed by thorough drying and massaging with camphorated oil, applied to affected udders. Although the sow's teat has not a single milk canal, penicillin infusion into the gland is practicable with care, and this is the best treatment available.

Acidosis

A nutritional disorder resulting in an acid condition of the blood, acidosis usually occurs in heavy milking sows which are fit at farrowing time and quickly "milk off" the fat. Incidence is highest in winter or early spring, and exposure to cold is an important predisposing factor. Symptoms may easily be confused with those of chronic indigestion. The sow may do her litter well for a time and then, after dullness and diminished appetite, lose condition rapidly and develop marked sluggishness and constipation. She may dry off, develop abnormal milk fever or paralysis, and even die unless treatment is given.

If given in time and the food supply is adequate to meet the drain on the sow, 2lb. per day of molasses in the feed for 10 days, followed by 1lb. per day, will prevent the trouble. In advanced cases a course of glucose may have to be given, both through the mouth and by injection, in the same manner as described in the section about milk fever.

Paralysis

Acidosis, as well as milk fever and tuberculosis of, or injury to, the spine, may cause paralysis in sows. Lack of assimilation of calcium to replace the heavy drain of this mineral in the sow's milk may be a cause. If the sow has had access to good grass or other greenfeed, or if some milk by-products have been included in the diet, the calcium supply should be assured. Two tablespoons of cod-liver oil may be given daily if greenfeed is scarce.

Paralysis is a condition to be prevented by good husbandry; cure is unsatisfactory.

If this treatment does not give relief and injuries are not the cause, it is probable that the sow has a tubercular or other infection of the spine and she should be destroyed.

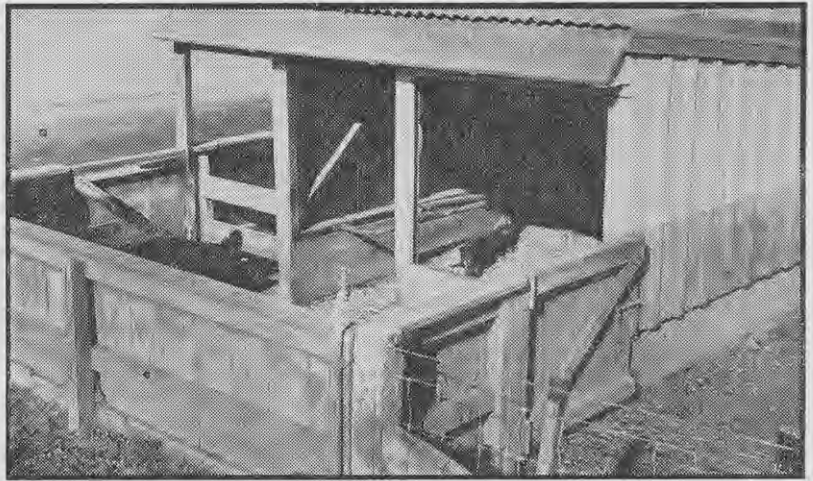
Troubles in Sucking Pigs

Navel-ill (Joint-ill)

Though the visible symptoms of navel-ill do not show up until the pig is a week or more old, the cause is the entry of germs through the navel and possibly also through the mouth at birth. Joints swell and become very painful, resulting in the affected piglet doing badly. It may even result in the death of the piglet. Farrowing quarters should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before each sow farrows, and the navel cords of piglets may be dipped in tincture of iodine at birth. If the cord is heavy a ligature may be applied 2in. from the navel and the cord severed below this.

White Scours

The frothy white scour resulting from a germ infection can be very



A well-designed farrowing unit to which the sow is accustomed before farrowing will assist in reduction of losses at farrowing.

serious, and when established in a piggery may be difficult to eradicate. Preventive measures only are of any use. Thorough disinfection of the farrowing quarters and care of the sow to ensure that strong piglets with high disease resistance are born offer the best means of avoiding this trouble. An internal disinfectant may give good results in some cases.

Digestive Scours

Digestive scours are of dietetic origin and, if they occur before the piglets are taking food on their own account, must obviously be due to improper feeding or health upset of the sow, which must be found and rectified as early as possible. Deficiency of gastric secretion may occasionally be the cause of scours in piglets. This can be cured by two doses of 1 teaspoon of lactic acid. Chills should be avoided, as they may cause the onset of scours.

If the scours occur after the piglets have started consuming food from the creep or other trough, the cause probably lies in unsuitable or unwholesome food. Creep troughs should be cleaned out daily and the meals used should be low in fibre and easily digestible. Skimmed milk or whey should always have roughly the same degree of acidity and should not be left in the trough for longer than the time between feeds. If any is left when feeding is repeated, this should be emptied out before the new feed is put in the trough.

Anaemia

Often the first sign of anaemia is a scour in plump, fast-growing pigs of 10 days to a fortnight old, with heavy, jerky breathing, followed by general weakness and refusal to suck. Soon the lining membranes of the eyes and mouth show a bleached appearance, the coat becomes harsh and "starey," and, unless treatment is given, death may occur in a few hours or in a week or two.

The trouble seldom occurs in litters that are born and run outside, and is caused by lack of iron, and possibly other minerals, in the sow's milk.

Where pigs are farrowed indoors and the weather prevents their being allowed access to outside runs a sod should be dug and placed in the farrowing house or yard. Piglets rooting in this will secure the minute amounts of iron and other minerals they require. The turf should be changed as necessary.

Some means must be found of dosing each affected piglet. Probably the best method is to paint on to the sow's udder several times a day the following mixture: 3oz. of sulphate of iron, 1 drachm of copper sulphate, 1 pint of molasses, and 1 pint of warm water.

Worms

Piglets infested with worms may scour, but this condition will not respond to any of the treatments given in the preceding sections. It will be dealt with in the concluding section of this article in the next issue of the "Journal."

General Ailments of Piglets

Other troubles in piglets include pigs born with very little or no hair and too weak to live. Iodine deficiency is the cause in these cases, and dosing of the pregnant sow during the latter half of pregnancy is necessary. Two tablespoons weekly of a mixture of 1 drachm of potassium iodide and a quart of water given in the feed is all that is required.

Piglets born with sharp eye-teeth injure one another in fighting, particularly round the mouth, and a condition known as "scabby mouth" may result. Some pig keepers favour snipping off the offending teeth, but unless these are actually causing injury to the sow's udder, it is probably better to treat the wounds on small pigs with tincture of iodine or other antiseptic, such as acriflavine. Damage is frequently caused in snipping off the eye-teeth which is worse than that resulting from injuries to other piglets in fighting.

Chorea, "shivers," or "trembles" may vary from very slight spasmodic shivering to such incessant and violent trembling that the piglets cannot hold on to a teat to suckle, but the cause