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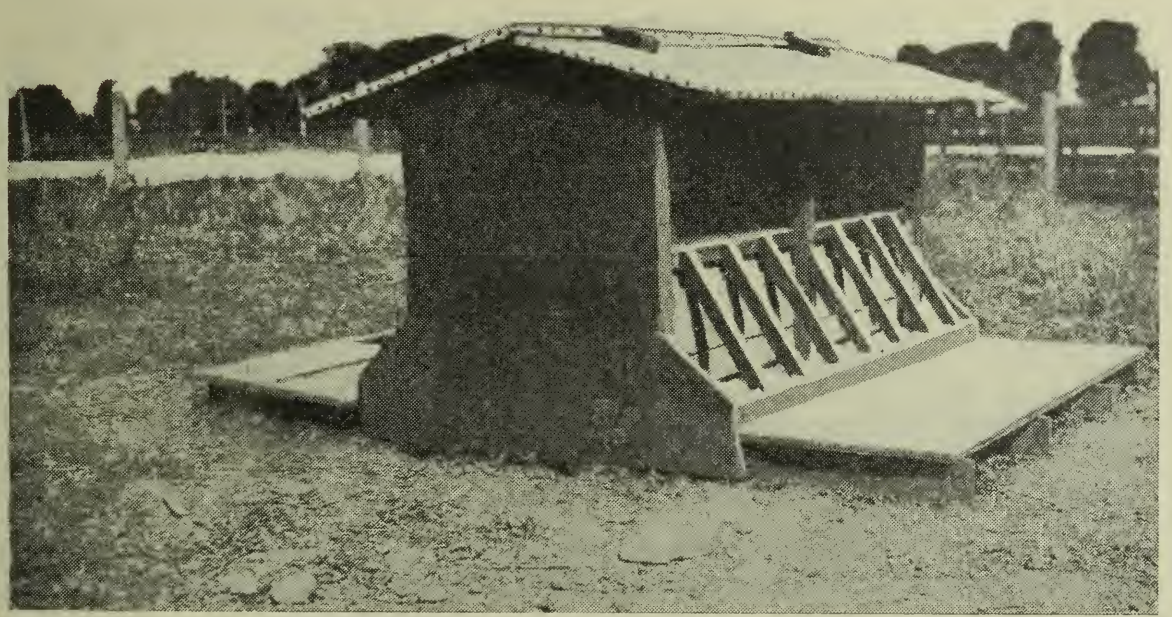
The Self Feeder for Hogs

Feeding More Hogs Usually Means More Labour

The Self-Feeding System Allows for Increased Production with Decreased Effort



Frequent Change in Attendants may cause Trouble with Hand-Feeding

Over-Feeding is Wasteful and Dangerous

The Regularity and Uniformity of the Self-Feeding System are Desirable Features

IMPORTANT:—The Self-Feeder does not Remove *ALL* the Work from Swine Feeding

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The Self-Feeder for Hogs

A self-feeder for hogs consists of a box or hopper, so constructed that when filled with meal it will automatically deliver, or keep continually before the pigs, in troughs, a certain amount of dry feed.

Where Automatic Feeding May Prove an Economy

A self-feeder will hardly prove economical where two or three pigs are kept. Obviously, it will be useless where garbage or refuse is the main food item. Further, where large quantities of dairy by-products are available and comparatively few pigs fed, the use of a self-feeder would not be indicated.

Where more than ten pigs are kept, however, the labour-saving feature of the feeder warrants consideration. To the swine raiser who is desirous of increasing his output without adding to his labour costs, the self-feeder is to be recommended.

Advantages of the Self-Feeder over Hand-Feeding Methods

1. Saves over 60 per cent of the labour. 2. Reduces waste of feed to the minimum. 3. Prevents digestive troubles—the pigs having full access to the meal at all times, and therefore eating in small quantities frequently instead of suddenly overloading the stomach two or three times in the day. 4. Many pigs may be fed from small trough space; they do not all feed at the same time. 5. All individuals have an equal chance, the weak pig benefits accordingly. Where facilities permit, however, it is strongly recommended that pigs of a size be fed together in order that meal mixtures suited to the various stages of development can be supplied.

Requirements of a Good Self-Feeder for Swine

The self-feeder to be successful must be cheap, strong, capacious, portable, easy to construct, weather-tight, easy of regulation for different textured meals, and most important of all, so arranged that the contents will feed into the troughs with minimum stoppage caused by the blocking of the meal in the hopper. Further, the troughs must be constructed to ensure the minimum amount of waste such as might be caused by the animals nosing the meal over the sides or soiling it by standing in the troughs. While several plans of feeders may be recommended, the one herein illustrated and described has been found to include nearly all of the desirable features mentioned.

Correct Conditions for Using the Self-Feeder

Place the feeder on a platform or floor that will remain clean during wet weather and prove accessible to the pigs at all times. Individual platforms placed on each side of the feeder, three feet wide, the length of the trough, and made of two-inch plank, will be found useful. If desired, these may become an integral part of the outfit, feeder and platforms being built on the same pieces. The latter arrangement tends to unwieldiness. Provide shade of some sort, either trees or a rough shed. While this system of feeding will prove relatively economical in dry lot feeding where green food, skim-milk, or water are supplied daily, the maximum efficiency will be reached where the feeder is placed in a good clover, alfalfa, rape, or grass pasture. It may also be adapted to yard feeding in winter provided it is placed where snow and ice will not interfere with the troughs. In any case, dry lot or pasture, with or without milk products, fresh water should always be supplied, preferably running, or from some self-watering device, regularly and frequently filled.

The Self-Feeder for Bacon Production

In bacon production it is the aim to produce hogs of select bacon grade which will be suitable for export as Wiltshire sides. Leanness and trimness are important, any excess of fat covering being discounted in the grading of the product with consequent lower returns to the producer. Although bacon hogs have been produced mainly under a system of hand-feeding, recent investigations would indicate that high-quality bacon can likewise be produced on the self-feeder, provided suitable feeds are used to supply the necessary food nutrients in the correct proportions.

Starting Pigs on the Self-Feeder

It is during the growing and fattening stages when large quantities of feed are being consumed that the self-feeder proves of greatest practical worth in hog feeding. However, young pigs can be started on the self-feeder shortly after weaning or even while on the sow, if care is taken to start them gradually.

Where plenty of skim-milk or other milk by-product is at hand, wean young pigs in the regular way to trough feeding. When they are nine or ten weeks old, introduce the self-feeder. Continue hand feeding twice a day, gradually reducing the slop until at three months the pig obtains all his meal dry. An abrupt change in feed will show a correspondingly abrupt and undesirable change in the condition of the pig.

Where little or no milk by-product is available, surprisingly good results may be obtained with the self-feeder. Delay weaning as long as possible. For two or three weeks before weaning, place a small self-feeder (an old box may be improvised) in a corner of the pen or paddock. Arrange a creep which admits the little ones only. Feed oatmeal, ground oats, middlings, shorts, etc., and if possible try to procure a little skim-milk, when the sow is finally removed. Failing this, a little dry tankage may be fed separately.

CAUTION IN THE USE OF THE SELF-FEEDER

With all classes of finishing hogs, the advocated use of the self-feeder needs no qualification. *Breeding animals,* however, are seldom fed to the limit of their appetite, except brood sows during the nursing period, and even here the self-feeder has certain disadvantages. *In general, avoid self-feeding with mature breeding stock* unless bulky feeds such as alfalfa meal or oats are used to lighten the meal mixture.

The self-feeder is sometimes used for young breeding sows during their first fall and winter. Use bone- and muscle-forming feeds and discontinue using the feeder at the first sign of over-fatness.

Frequently, young self-fed pigs on pasture neglect the green feed for the more easily obtained meal. Prevent this by arranging hinged covers which may be dropped over the troughs. By occasional use of these, for short periods, the pigs are forced to forage.

Meals and Mixtures for the Self-Feeder

In the feeding of any class of live stock it is important that the feed be suited to the needs of the animal. This is particularly desirable in feeding pigs on the self-feeder. In general, it seems advisable to include slightly more of the bulky feeds such as ground oats or alfalfa meal than would be similarly fed under hand-feeding practice. The following mixtures are suggested for pigs at various stages of growth on the self-feeder:—

Weaning Mixtures (Pigs from weaning to 80 pounds)

(All quantities given in pounds)

Shorts or middlings, 100; ground oats, 200; ground barley, 200; tankage, 50; minerals, 10;

or

Ground oats, 100; ground barley, 100; tankage, 20; minerals, 4.

If skim-milk or buttermilk is available it may replace the tankage in the above mixtures. At this stage of growth approximately three pounds of milk should be supplied for each pound of meal consumed. If tankage is used it should be *thoroughly mixed* with the meal.

Growing Mixtures (Pigs from 80 to 150 pounds)

Shorts, 100; ground oats, 100; ground barley, 200; tankage, 32; minerals, 8;

or

Ground oats, 100; ground barley, 300; tankage, 32; minerals, 8.
Milk by-products may replace the tankage in these mixtures.

Supply two pounds milk to each pound of meal consumed.

Finishing Mixtures (Pigs from 150 pounds to market weight)

Ground oats, 50; ground wheat, 150; ground barley, 300; tankage, 25; minerals, 10;

or

Ground oats, 100; ground barley, 400; minerals, 10.

Milk by-products may be fed at the rate of one pound for each pound of meal consumed.

Mineral Mixture

Under heavy feeding practice such as occurs with the self-feeder, *minerals are important* and should not be overlooked. The following mixture is recommended to be fed at the rate of two pounds with each 100 pounds of meal:—

Ground limestone, 50; bone meal, 25; salt, 25.

Substitution of Feeds

Ground corn or ground wheat may be used to replace a portion of the barley in the above mixtures.

Fishmeal may be used instead of the tankage or skim-milk recommended, or to replace a part of these if the supply is limited.

As a source of nutrients and to lighten the mixtures, alfalfa meal will be found useful. Add five pounds to each hundred of meal mixture.

The Construction of a Self-Feeder

(See Cross Section)

Skids.—The feeder should rest upon two pieces 4 inches by 4 inches running lengthwise. These will act as runners. On these lay pieces of 2 inches by 4 inches, placed flat three feet apart, to carry the structure.

Structure.—Make the sides, ends, floor and roof of $\frac{7}{8}$-inch tongued and grooved dressed lumber with 2-inch by 3-inch studs at corners.

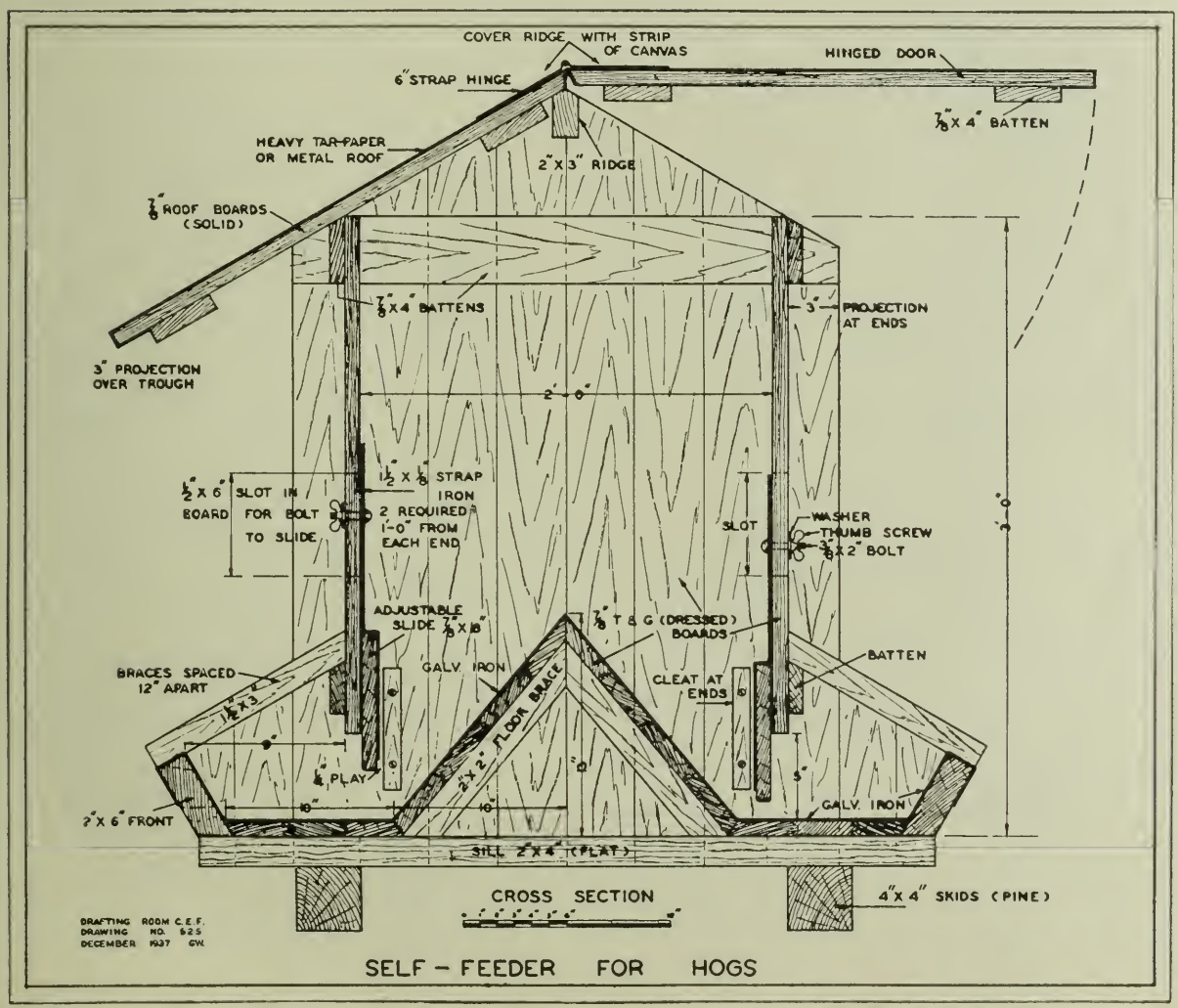
Adjustable Slide.—To ensure the constant feeding of the meal, some means of agitation is necessary. Otherwise, the contents will block close to the bottom. *The adjustable slide is an important part of the feeder.*

Make the iron bands (two on each side) connecting the control slide at the bottom with the thumb screw at the top, of light strap iron, $\frac{1}{6}$ thick by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. When the meal ceases to flow, the pigs naturally root or nose toward the source of supply, and being able to move this flexible slide, which in turn presses upon and breaks the meal blockade, they are rarely left with a "dead" self-feeder. To prevent the pigs forcing the slide too far in, it is, of course, necessary to place a cleat inside at either end of each slide. Allow about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch play between the slide and the cleat. Galvanized iron sheeting on the V-shaped floor will allow the meal to slide readily and thus lessen the chances of a stoppage.

Feed Troughs.—The front of the feed trough consists of one piece 2 inches by 6 inches set at a suitable angle for the feeding pigs. For general use, a trough width of not more than 9 inches is recommended. The trough is divided into sections by braces of $1\frac{1}{2}$-inch by 3-inch pieces spaced one foot apart.

Roof.—The roof is made of $\frac{7}{8}$-inch boards held together by $\frac{7}{8}$-inch by 4-inch battens and covered with ready-roofing, tar-paper, or galvanized iron. The hinging arrangement shown is simple, and to prevent leaking at the peak a strip of canvas or tire tubing can be nailed the full length of the ridge. Only one side of the roof is made to open, and a prop should be supplied to hold up the door, or roof when filling. For outdoor feeding the overhang of the roof should be sufficient to prevent rain dripping into the trough in wet weather.

Side.—The width is shown in the drawing. The length will depend on the number and size of the pigs to be fed. A 6-foot feeder (12 feet of trough) is a commonly used size, and will feed up to 25 young pigs. Use dressed lumber preferably in building the feeder, and give the exterior a coat of paint.



SELF – FEEDER FOR HOGS

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