Pork Producers: Breed Meatier Hogs

Here's some advice for hog producers who want to breed meatier hogs and achieve top profits.

* Charles Christians, extension livestock specialist at the University of Minnesota, says carcass traits—both good and bad—are highly heritable. So make sure you use hogs from breeding stock that will give you the new, "modern" carcass.

* Use all the records you can. Breed certification programs plus test station and carcass show results will help you locate the right hogs.

* Christians says most hog improvement comes through the boars, so demand only the best for your sow herd. Select a boar with a background that will strengthen your herd's weaknesses.

* Train your eye. Records and breeding are important, but you still need to use your own judgement to select the desirable characteristics you are looking for.

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Give Dairy Cows Special Care at Calving Time

Keeping accurate breeding records so you know when dairy cows and heifers are due to freshen can reduce calving problems. Joe Conlin, dairy specialist at the University of Minnesota, offers some additional management tips:

* Place the animal in a clean, well bedded and comfortable maternity stall a few days before she's expected to calve.

* Keep a close watch on the cow at calving time for any signs of difficulty. If the calf hasn't been born within 2 hours after the membranes rupture, call your local veterinarian.

* And remember that delaying calling for help when calving problems arise decreases the chance of saving the calf and increases the possibility of permanent damage to the cow.

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Thin Forest Stands

Removing some of the trees in an immature forest stand increases the growth rate of remaining trees and salvages trees that would otherwise be lost through overcrowding. Bill Miles, forestry specialist at the University of Minnesota, advises making thinnings during the winter months after the ground is frozen and before spring thaw.

Miles says thinnings are most important for pure and mixed stands of red -- or Norway -- pine, white pine, jack pine, Scotch pine, and upland white spruce-balsam fir stands. Thinnings are not recommended for pure or mixed black spruce, white cedar or tamarack stands. For additional information, contact your local forester.

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Are You Eligible for Income Averaging?

With stronger cattle and grain prices this year, your income may be substantially higher than previous years. Charles Cuykendall, economist at the University of Minnesota, says farmers in this category should check to see if they are eligible for income averaging. To be eligible for income averaging, your "averagable" income for 1969 must be over $3,000.

Get a copy of the 1970 Farmer’s Tax Guide from your county extension agent for more information.

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Keep Good Records

Farmers must keep good records to prepare accurate income tax return and insure that only their proper tax is paid. Charles Cuykendall, economist at the University of Minnesota, says items such as paid bills, canceled checks, and deposit slips listing the income sources should be filed in an orderly manner and stored in a safe place so they’ll be available when needed.

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Store Cookies Properly

Proper storage will go far toward preserving the good flavor and freshness of your Christmas cookies. Extension nutritionists at the University of Minnesota suggest that you store thin, crisp cookies in loosely covered cans. Keep soft cookies in air-tight containers. Slices of apple or orange in the jar will help to moisten cookies—but remove the fruit in a day or two, and then keep the soft cookies tightly covered. Be sure to let cookies cool before putting them into containers.

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Caring For Foam Rubber Pillows

You homemakers have frequently asked whether foam rubber pillows should be washed by hand or in the automatic washer. Mrs. Beverly Lundgren, assistant extension specialist in home economics at the University of Minnesota, says foam rubber pillows may be cleaned with the dusting attachment of your vacuum cleaner or with a soft cloth wrung out in mild suds. In cases of illness when you want to sanitize your pillows thoroughly, you may wish to soak them in soapy water. But always dry foam rubber pillows in the air—never in the dryer or in strong direct sunlight.

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Uses For Measuring Spoons

It's a good idea to keep a set of round-bowl measuring spoons in your kitchen. Mrs. Edna Jordahl, extension home management specialist at the University of Minnesota, says you'll find them useful in a number of ways, not just for measuring. For example, the one-teaspoon size may be used for making melon balls instead of a regular melon ball cutter. And the one-tablespoon size may be useful when you're making drop cookies.