

Prestige at last for lowly pig

By A.A. Wall, Agricultural Representative for York Region.

YORK REGION - If prestige means anything in the world of farm animals, pigs are probably holding their heads higher these days, than they have for a long time. For one thing, pork prices hit respectable levels after a long disaster period. With prices around 36 dollars, pork producers at last have a chance to do some catching up.

A second point is that the very latest in sophisticated electronic equipment is now being used to precisely measure a pig's real worth for breeding. The method, up to now, hasn't been anything to brag about. After all, getting a scalpel jabbed in your back and then a ruler inserted to measure the depth of fat, is hardly the ultimate in scientific method.

The big change now is that ultrasonic equipment for measuring backfat and the loin eye area, is here and available to

any swine breeder in York. It is fast, easy, and the pigs like it better. Our Department will provide this service to any purebred or commercial breeder, on request.

Getting the right breeding stock picked makes a big difference in profits, and the old eyeballing method just isn't good enough.

Performance tests of some kind, are practical and will pick out individual animals that have genetic ability to produce well and make a profit.

Performance tests for dairy cattle are fairly well used, but those for beef, swine and sheep are just coming on. A limited number of breeders here in York are using them.

In beef, for example, we are weighing cattle on and off test regularly, to determine rates of gain at Almira Hereford Farms, Elmlea Farms, Bill Ball's, G.B. Beatty's, Angus Glen Farm, Ellanvanin Farm and Westonway Farms. A bull finishing the test at Almira last month

will illustrate. Born in December, 1970, this bull had a gain per day of exactly 3 lbs., weight per day of age of 2.8 lbs., and a yearling weight of 1004 lbs.

In swine, the test combines growth rate and proportion of lean meat. S.A. Stouffer at Stouffville for example, has his herd on test and last month had a boar finishing with back fat of .84



Every parent knows the problem when it's time to persuade Junior to take his medicine. Consider then the hog producer who has even more reluctant patients. This little fellow is

receiving a dose of oral iron which will help to keep him in the pink. (Photo by the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food).

inches, weighing 200 lbs. at 155 days, combining for an index of 103. Sinclair Stevens in King Township had his sheep on test last year and again just to illustrate, he had a Suffolk ram that had a daily gain of .61 lbs., and weighed 109 lbs., at 120 days.

These tests are all under government supervision and are a big help in picking the right stock.

receiving a dose of oral iron which will help to keep him in the pink. (Photo by the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food).

Poultry vaccination a means of control

YORK REGION - Recent outbreaks of Newcastle disease in some southwestern Ontario poultry flocks have underlined the importance of vaccination and other control measures.

The warning comes from officers of Canada Agriculture's Health of Animals Branch.

They point out that evidence indicates that the virus strain in these outbreaks is virulent and that many poultrymen have not had their flocks vaccinated.

Newcastle disease is highly contagious to poultry but is not a threat to human health. The disease affects the respiratory and nervous systems in poultry. Severity of infection and consequent losses of birds varies with the strain of virus.

Under the Animal Contagious Diseases Act, suspected outbreaks of Newcastle disease must be reported to the nearest Health of Animals Branch veterinarian.

A report is followed by fast action by the branch. It includes an immediate examination of the flock, collection of specimens for submission to the branch's Animal Pathology Laboratory, and imposition of a quarantine on the farm.

The flock may be ordered slaughtered with compensation to the owner. In addition, poultry premises

within a five-mile radius of the quarantined farm are placed under surveillance. But Health of Animals Branch officers point out that eradication of the disease is not likely to be achieved solely by quarantine and slaughter of infected flocks.

Other control measures are needed. Accordingly, the Health of Animals Branch has been urging the vaccination of poultry flocks.

There are two approved vaccines available in Canada - B-1 strain and Lasota strain. They are available from most veterinary biological firms. It is essential that either one be used only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Sanitary precautions by flock owners are important and federal veterinarians recommend the following:

- restrict off-farm visitors. If it is necessary for persons to enter the poultry house, make sure they are provided with clean boots, outer clothing and a cap;
- do not permit a truck containing birds from other farms to enter your premises and make sure an empty truck has been cleaned and disinfected before being allowed entry;
- when shipping some birds for slaughter, transfer them to crates or

Safety hints for dead elm removal

Farmers removing dead and dying elm trees should take special safety precautions, says farm safety specialist Hal Wright, of the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food. He offers several hints to prevent injury or death.

Always wear a safety hat. Never cut trees alone. A second operator nearby will

trucks at a point well removed from the remaining birds.

market eggs only in clean containers and do not bring to the farm crates that have been used elsewhere.

ensure help should an emergency arise. At the same time, make sure no one is in the vicinity of falling trees.

Watch out for "widow makers" - dead limbs which may break off during cutting. If the limbs appear likely to break off, use a cable and tractor to shake them off, making sure the cable is longer than the height of the tree. Fasten the cable as high as possible on the tree.

Use wedges as little as possible. The shock of driving them in could cause the dangerous top limbs to break off.

Watch out for partially concealed staples or fence wire if the tree is in a fence-row. Diseased elm wood

has lost its flexibility and strength. Be on guard for trees that snap off prematurely during cutting.

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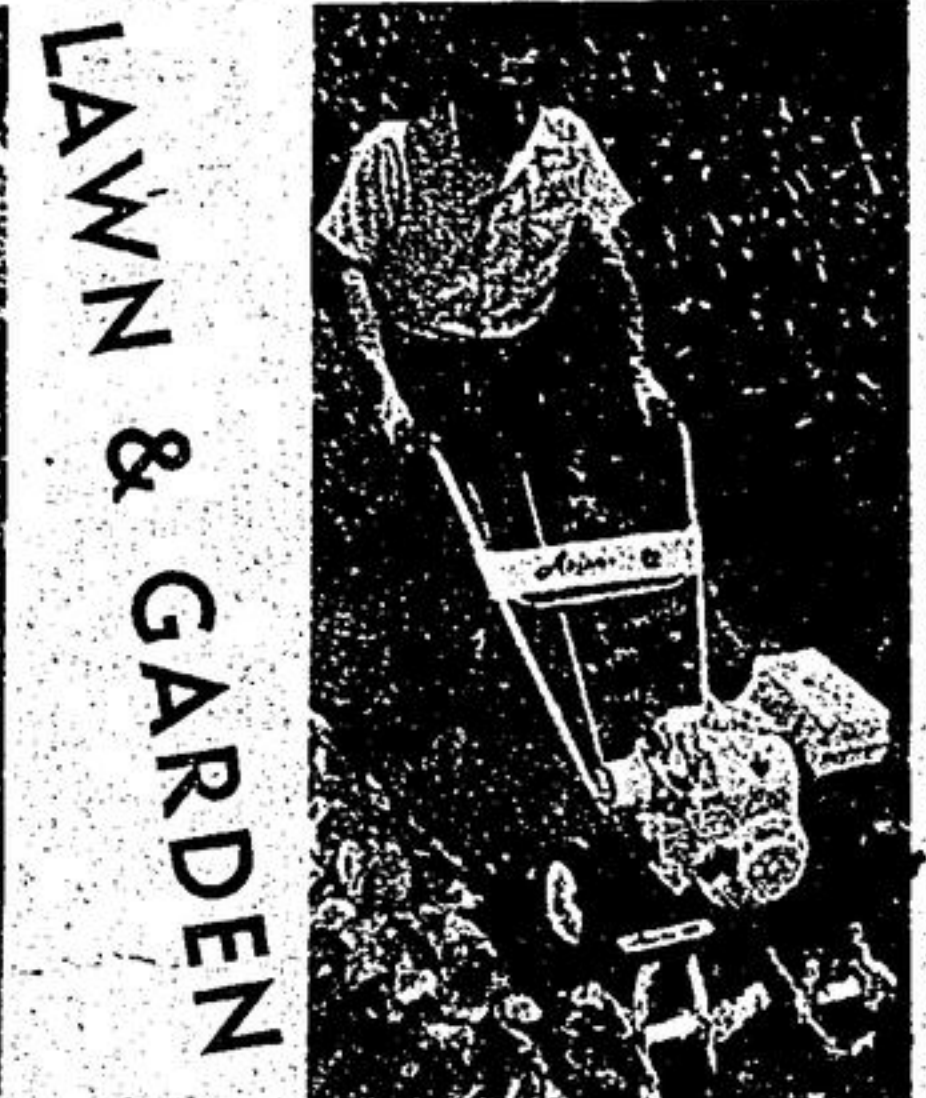
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