Swill-feeding of pigs

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Suggested types of swill boilers.
THE feeding of food refuse (commonly known as "swill") to pigs is governed by regulations under the Stock Diseases Act and any owner of pigs employing this method of feeding must be in possession of a license issued by the Chief Inspector of Stock. To obtain such a license, he must have installed an approved type of heat treatment plant.

The term "swill" includes food refuse from shops, houses, hotels, boarding-houses, camps, etc., and also such materials as slaughter-house offals and bones and scraps from butchers' shops.

The Act requires that such substances must be effectively sterilised by heat treatment before being fed to pigs.

Contrary to some popular beliefs on the subject, these regulations were not devised merely to make life more difficult for the pig-raisers. Their primary purpose is to guard our pig herds against outbreaks of diseases such as swine fever which could lead to tremendous financial losses.

The virus of swine fever can live for several weeks in the bone marrow of bacon and hams cured by normal processes and remains viable for years in meats held under normal cold storage conditions.

The outbreak which led to the slaughter, and destruction by burning, of thousands of pigs in this State in 1942 was caused by imported pig meats from an American servicemen's camp. Rejected portions of these meats were thrown into a swill-tub and were later fed to pigs in a commercial piggery.

Swine fever exists as a permanent scourge in many pig-raising countries and it is inevitable that many animals in the early or incubation stages of the disease are slaughtered. Such animals appear healthy but are harbouring the virus in their tissues.

Uncooked or insufficiently-cooked meat scraps from such animals, if fed to other pigs, could cause a raging epidemic. In the case of the 1942 outbreak, thorough boiling of the waste food would have prevented losses amounting to many thousands of pounds.

**SUITABLE PLANT**

To assist pig-raisers in erecting approved types or sterilising plants, the accompanying diagrams have been prepared.

Type A is designed to suit the small operator and has a boiler with a capacity of 100 gallons which is the minimum size allowed under the regulations. A larger tank could be used if desired. A brick or stone base with firebox is constructed and a square iron tank with an open top is placed on this. A brick or metal flue is fitted opposite the opening of the firebox. A cover for the tank is not insisted upon, but effects economies in fuel as it helps to retain the heat.

A rectangular iron tank is used in Type B and this is a suitable plant for the man who wishes to sterilise 400 to 600 gallons of food wastes in one operation.

A suitable tank is first fitted with a central flue, made by cutting a circular hole in the bottom of the tank and welding in a length of steel bore-casing six inches or more in diameter and long enough to project above the tank. To give increased draught, a length of light piping could be placed on top of the bore-casing.

The tank is placed on two walls built up to a suitable height, say 15 to 18 inches, leaving the ends open for firing. Long wood can be fed into the firebox from either end and the central flue, being in contact with the food wastes, gives rapid heating.

For large-scale operations, the quadruple boiler (Type C) will give good service. Two cylindrical tanks may be cut lengthwise to give the four troughs, or specially-made vessels may be used.

They are built in with brickwork to a convenient height from the ground, and four separate fireboxes are used, with one flue serving each pair.

One or more of the sections may be used as desired and a plant of this type could handle up to 1,000 gallons of swill at a time according to the size of boilers used.

Lids and firebox doors are shown on some of the plants. Neither is essential to obtain official approval, but these, together with other refinements such as drain-cocks may be worthy of inclusion.

**A REMINDER**

HAVE you registered your orchard? One fruit tree or a single vine is an orchard for the purposes of the Plant Diseases Act and must be registered accordingly. The registration fee for less than one acre of trees or vines is 1s. Apply Department of Agriculture, Perth.
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