

Hogs As a Cash Crop on Sand Mountain*

The **cash income** of the Sand Mountain farmer can be substantially increased by the use of hogs as a cash crop to supplement cotton.

This can be done by following three simple rules:

- 1. Increase the yield of corn on the land now being planted to corn.**
- 2. Sow 3 acres of lespedeza and white clover for each 25 acres of cultivatable land on the farm.**
- 3. Raise enough pigs on each farm to consume the surplus corn.**

The corn yield can be increased 20 to 25 bushels per acre above present average yields by planting vetch after all the cotton for part of the corn next year and fertilizing the remainder of the corn with commercial nitrogen according to the recommendations of the Alabama Experiment Station.

If you are interested in this simple and easy way to increase your income, you will find instructions in the following pages which will help you turn corn into money through hogs.

RAISING PIGS ON YOUR FARM

Several thousand dollars of good cotton money are sent off Sand Mountain every year for pigs to fatten for meat hogs. You should stop this practice as soon as possible. If you have 25 acres of cultivatable land and will farm it as outlined above, you should have a brood sow and raise two litters of pigs each year. You will have better pigs at less cost and will not have the risk of getting diseased hogs which you now have. The only man who can afford to buy pigs, is the one who has only surplus corn enough to fatten his meat hogs. This man should be able to buy pigs from his neighbor instead of buying pigs trucked-in from other areas.

*Although this leaflet was prepared especially for the Sand Mountain area, it is also applicable to other areas in the State where the average yields of corn can be increased 20 to 25 bushels per acre by proper fertilization, crop rotation and the use of winter legumes.

**AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
OF THE
ALABAMA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
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GETTING A BROOD SOW

Brood sows are very scarce in the Mountain area. You probably cannot buy one. You can buy a sow pig, however, and raise a brood sow. This requires time and you should get started **at once**. It is **very important** that you get healthy, thrifty pigs to start with. If possible buy these from your neighbor and select pigs from sows that are raising 6 to 8 good pigs per litter. If your neighbors do not have hogs, a group of you should get together and consult your county agent or Smith-Hughes teacher about buying some sow pigs for you. You will want good grade pigs that will grow into mature sows weighing 200 to 250 pounds when in good living condition.

RAISING THE SOW PIG

Keep the sow pigs on lespedeza-white clover pasture and feed 3 to 4 good sized ears of corn a day for a 50-pound shote or 5 to 7 ears a day for a 100-pound shote. In addition to this, feed each shote about one-fourth pound of a mixture of tankage and cottonseed meal daily. This mixture is composed of equal parts of tankage and cottonseed meal. Use 60 per cent (protein) tankage and 8 or 9 per cent (ammonia) cottonseed meal in making this supplement.

If buttermilk is available it may be used instead of the tankage-cottonseed meal supplement. Keep a mineral mixture composed of equal parts of salt, wood ashes, and ground limestone (or air-slaked lime) before **all hogs at all times**.

If the sow pigs are fed as recommended above, they should be well grown out at 7 or 8 months of age. They should weigh 175 to 200 pounds and have good frames, well fleshed but not fat. They are then ready for breeding.

THE BOAR

Select a boar pig for each 12 to 25 sow pigs. Feed same as for sow pigs. He will be ready for service at 6 months of age. Keep boar on good pasture and feed a few ears of corn if necessary to keep in good condition.

FEEDING GILTS AFTER BREEDING

After gilts are bred keep on good pasture and feed 4 or 5 ears of corn and one-fourth to one-half pound of tankage-cottonseed meal supplement per day for each gilt. Regulate amount of corn to keep gilt in thrifty living condition but not fat.

CARE OF SOW AT FARROWING TIME

A gilt or sow will farrow 112 to 115 days after breeding. She should have a cheap individual house to farrow in and some

leaves, hay or straw for bedding. See the hog houses at the Sand Mountain Substation. It will pay to watch each sow after she begins to build her bed. Pigs frequently crawl out of the house and may chill to death if the weather is cool or rainy. The most successful hog men stay with the brood sow after she begins to farrow until she is through. Remember! **The year's profits from hogs depend on getting large litters of pigs raised.**

FEEDING THE SOW AND PIGS

Feed sow lightly on corn for a few days after farrowing, gradually increasing to 10 to 14 good sized ears of corn (5 to 7 pounds of shelled corn) per day for each sow by the second week after farrowing. Sows that are extra good sucklers and have large litters (8 or more pigs) may require 16 or 18 ears of corn a day. The suckling sow will lose flesh but should never be allowed to become "skin and bones".

In addition to the corn, feed each sow one-half pound of the tankage-cottonseed meal supplement per day the second week after farrowing and increase to one pound per day the third week. A half gallon to a gallon of buttermilk per day for each sow can be used instead of the tankage-cottonseed meal supplement. It is preferable to give the milk to the pigs and use the tankage-cottonseed meal supplement for the sow.

When the pigs are 2 to 3 weeks old feed them shelled corn in a trough placed in a creep out of reach of the sow.

About the middle of the eighth week reduce the sow's ration to 3 or 4 ears of corn per day, and at the end of this week remove her from pigs and place in separate pasture.

REBREEDING AND FEEDING OF SOWS

Breed the sow as soon as she will take the boar; this is usually about three days after the pigs are weaned, if sow is not too thin in flesh. If sow is thin, feed liberally on corn until she comes into heat.

If pasture is good (lespedeza or white clover), the sow will get along for 8 weeks after breeding with 4 to 6 good sized ears of corn per day. During the next 8 weeks (the last 8 weeks of gestation period), feed one-half pound of the tankage-cottonseed meal mixture per day in addition to the ear corn. The amount of corn should be governed by the condition of the sow; she should gain back the flesh lost while suckling the previous litter of pigs. Try to feed enough corn to keep in good living order — neither skinny nor fat. **Good pasture is very important during this period.**

FEEDING THE PIGS AFTER WEANING

After the pigs have been weaned at the age of 8 weeks, either one of two methods of feeding may be followed. With either

method the pigs should be on good tender pasture, consisting of lespedeza and white clover in the spring and summer, and crimson clover, or green oats and crimson clover in the winter. If oats or crimson clover are to furnish any winter grazing they must be sowed early — by September 1, if possible. Lespedeza pasture for hogs must be kept short and tender by grazing or mowing; it is not palatable when it is coarse and stemmy.

Method 1. Limited Feeding on Pasture. — In this method pigs are fed a limited ration of corn to keep them growing until they reach 75 to 100 pounds in weight. They are then full-fed on corn and supplement until ready for market. This method may be used for the spring litter when a limited amount of old corn is available. The pigs can be carried along on a small amount of corn until the new crop is ready to feed in the fall. It is best to feed shelled corn in troughs until the pigs weigh 50 to 60 pounds; then ear corn may be fed. The amount to feed should be governed by the amount of old corn available. For best results at least two pounds of shelled corn or 4 to 5 good sized ears of corn per day for each 100 pounds of pigs should be fed. Although pigs may be kept on pasture without any corn, this generally is not a profitable practice.

When the pigs reach 75 to 100 pounds in weight or when new corn is available, they should be gradually increased to a full feed. This means as much ear corn as the pigs will clean up and about one-half pound of tankage-cottonseed meal mixture per shote daily. Ear corn should be fed on good firm ground in a fresh place each time. If the ground is wet and soft a feeding platform should be used and cleaned off before each feeding. Some people prefer to shell the corn and feed it and the tankage-cottonseed meal supplement from self-feeders or large troughs. This is more sanitary and reduces waste of feed but it necessitates extra labor in shelling the corn. If this can be done in off-season or on rainy days, it is not a serious item.

If self-feeders are used the pigs should be accustomed to the tankage-cottonseed meal mixture by hand feeding for a few days before they are given access to the mixture in self-feeders. Also the self-feeders should be checked each day to see that they are feeding properly and that the corn feeder is not empty. If the corn feeder gets empty the pigs will overeat the tankage-cottonseed meal and increase the costs of gains.

When Method 1 is followed the hogs will not be ready for market when the next crop of pigs is farrowed. It will be necessary, therefore, to divide the pasture into two fields. The division of the pasture is a good practice, however, regardless of the method of feeding used.

Method 2. Full Feeding on Pasture. — When there is enough old corn on the farm to feed the pigs to market size, full feeding from weaning to market will generally prove to be the most sat-

isfactory method. It is particularly adapted to the Sand Mountain area where land is limited in relation to labor and good corn yields are obtainable. Less pasture is required than when the limited method of feeding is followed because the pigs eat less forage and are ready for market sooner. As a result of earlier marketing, the full fed pigs usually bring higher prices than pigs which are carried through the pasture season on limited rations.

In the full feeding method you may feed shelled corn in troughs or self-feeders or you may feed ear corn. If self-feeders are used, feed the shelled corn and the tankage-cottonseed meal mixture from separate compartments, following the precautions mentioned above.

If you prefer to feed by hand, feed shelled corn in troughs until the pigs weigh 50 to 60 pounds, then change to ear corn. Feed all the corn the pigs will clean up. Hand feed the tankage-cottonseed meal mixture in troughs at the rate of one-fourth to one-half pound per pig daily. One-fourth pound per pig daily should be sufficient until the pigs average around 75 pounds each; then increase to one-half pound. Keep mineral mixture before the pigs at all times.

MARKETING THE HOGS

Sell the hogs when they average 200 to 225 pounds in weight. Due to market preferences and more expensive gains it is generally unprofitable to feed to heavier weights.

Cooperative shipments or local sales can be initiated where satisfactory local markets are not available.

In hauling hogs to market in trucks, do not have them full of feed.

SICK HOGS

If your hogs or your neighbors hogs get sick notify your **county agent** at once. **It may be cholera.**

Do not buy hogs unless you know their past history and are sure they are free from worms and disease. **Hog trucks often spread cholera.**

Do not waste money on patent medicines, tonics, complex mineral mixtures or expensive supplements. The best medicines are a good pasture and a balanced ration. Keep your hogs on clean pasture, feed them well, raise all your hogs on your own farm and you should have little trouble with parasites and diseases.

Hogs become overheated easily and often die as a result. Provide shade of some kind for all hogs in summer. Also provide plenty of clean drinking water, close to the feeding place especially for fattening hogs. **Water is the cheapest hog feed you have.**

If your hog pasture becomes infested with worms, you should make a new pasture and transfer the hogs to it. Then plow-up the old pasture and plant it to corn.

Cottonseed meal is dangerous if fed to hogs in excessive quantities. It is a good feed when used right. Be sure to follow instructions for its use as given in this leaflet.

CASTRATION OF BOAR PIGS

Boar pigs should be castrated when six or seven weeks old. This gives them time to recover before weaning.

Select a clear day and castrate the pigs early in the morning while it is cool. Do not feed the pigs the night before and have them in a pen in the shade so they will not have to be chased around and overheated.

Wash the sack with creolin or liquor cresolis compositus in water. Make the cut to the bottom of the sack to provide drainage.

The following outlines show how typical Sand Mountain farms may be planned for the efficient production of cotton and hogs as the main cash crops together with adequate feed for the livestock, food for the family and a surplus of eggs to sell.

Farm 1. — 25 Acres Cultivable Land

Crop	Acres	Fertilizer per Acre	Livestock
Cotton* _____	6	600 lbs. 6-8-4	1 Mule
Corn _____	6	Following vetch	1 Milk Cow
Corn _____	6	Equivalent to 225 lbs. soda	1 Calf
Lespedeza sericea _____	2	1 Ton basic slag	1 Brood sow (10 pigs per year)
Pasture (lespedeza- white clover) _____	3	1 Ton basic slag	50 Hens, (150 chickens per year)
Garden and patches _____	2	Get recommendations	

Farm 2. — 50 Acres Cultivable Land

Crop	Acres	Fertilizer per Acre	Livestock
Cotton* _____	12	600 lbs. 6-8-4	2 Mules
Corn _____	12	Following vetch	2 Milk cows
Corn _____	14	Equivalent to 225 lbs. soda	2 Calves
Lespedeza sericea _____	4	1 Ton basic slag	4 Brood sows (40 pigs per year)
Pasture (lespedeza- white clover) _____	6	1 Ton basic slag	50 Hens, (150 chickens per year)
Garden and patches _____	2	Get recommendations	

*Follow entire cotton acreage with vetch fertilized with 400 pounds basic slag per acre. Rotate cotton so that each field will have vetch every third year.

Farm 3. — 70 Acres Cultivable Land

Crop	Acres	Fertilizer per Acre	Livestock
Cotton* _____	17	600 lbs. 6-8-4	2 Mules
Corn _____	17	Following vetch	2 Milk cows
Corn _____	20	Equivalent to 225 lbs. soda	2 Calves
Lespedeza sericea ___	4	1 Ton basic slag	6 Brood sows (60 pigs per year)
Pasture (lespedeza- white clover) ___	8	1 Ton basic slag	100 Hens (300 chickens per year)
Garden and patches.	4	Get recommendations	

*Follow entire cotton acreage with vetch fertilized with 400 pounds basic slag per acre. Rotate cotton so that each field will have vetch every third year.

The following amounts of feed should be fed to the livestock:

	Corn	Cottonseed meal	Tankage	Poultry supplement	Hay
	Bushels	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Tons
Each mule _____	70	300	—	—	2
Each cow _____	30	500	—	—	1
Each calf _____	5	100	—	—	—
Each brood sow _____	25	75	75	—	—
Each 225 lb. hog _____	12	50	50	—	—
Each 50 hens _____	50	—	—	1,000	—
Each 60 pullets raised for replace- ments of hens _____	32	—	—	500	—

In addition allow the following average amounts of food for each person on the farm (excluding children under 1 year of age): milk 365 quarts, butter 15 pounds, eggs 20 dozen, hogs for meat and lard 150 pounds live weight, corn meal 2 bushels; also allow 2 acres garden and patches for each family.

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