

## Hog Breeding Experiment

LENNOXVILLE, Que. — Scientists at the Canada Agriculture Research Station have come up with some results which should help hog farmers.

The experiment was conducted by Dr. C. S. Bernard, now director of the Station, assisted by Dr. M. H. Fahmy.

They bred and selected three lines of Yorkshire pigs for 10 generations, studying the direct effects of their selection and its side effects on other important traits.

One line was selected for improved feed efficiency, a second for improved carcass score and a third for both traits at the same time.

For example, in line one the researchers mated the pigs that had the best feed efficiency. This was repeated every year for 10 generations.

As the experiment progressed, they kept track of a large number of side effects — for example pre-birth mortality, litter size and weight at various

ages, carcass traits and the rate of inbreeding.

The experiment indicates what farmers can expect will happen in their herds if they breed for better feed conversion rates or better carcass scores.

One of the most interesting results indicated what happened to each line as they were bred for specific traits.

Line one, bred for better feed efficiency, showed a 2.5 per cent improvement.

Line two, bred for higher scores, showed a 9.5 per cent improvement.

Line three, bred for both traits at the same time, showed a 6.6 per cent improvement in feed efficiency and a 12 per cent improvement in carcass score.

There's another advantage to selecting for both carcass score and feed efficiency at the same time: in the Lennoxville experiment, this line had a lower mortality rate than the other two lines.

In line three (chosen for both traits) the survival rate was 82 per cent; in line one (chosen only for feed efficiency) the survival rate was 73 per cent, and in line two (chosen only for carcass score) the survival rate was 72 per cent.

Dr. Bernard says that when they bred only for improved carcass score (a longer, leaner carcass with a bigger loin area), the greatest improvement was in loin area — up by 9.1 per cent.

The scientists discovered many other relationships which could be important not only for farmers, but also for fellow research scientists.

For example, they have learned that it is more important to pick sows that will produce uniform litters

than it is to pick ones that give birth to either big piglets or large litters.

That is not to say, however, that large litters and big piglets are not important. It merely means that uniformity in the litter is even more important.

They also learned that the death rate is lower in these uniform litters. In other words, it is much better to have a litter of ten pigs all the same size than it is to have a litter of ten pigs in which five piglets are huge and five are smaller.

Another example of their data: as inbreeding

increases, the death rate goes up. For each 10 per cent increase in inbreeding, there is a 1.2 per cent increase in pre-birth mortality and a 1.7 per cent increase in pre-weaning mortality.

To keep death rates down, farmers should avoid matings between close relatives.

The research already indicates that farmers would be well advised to choose their breeding stock on the basis of combined feed efficiency and carcass score plus uniformity of litters.

## Children Are Vulnerable To Many Accidents

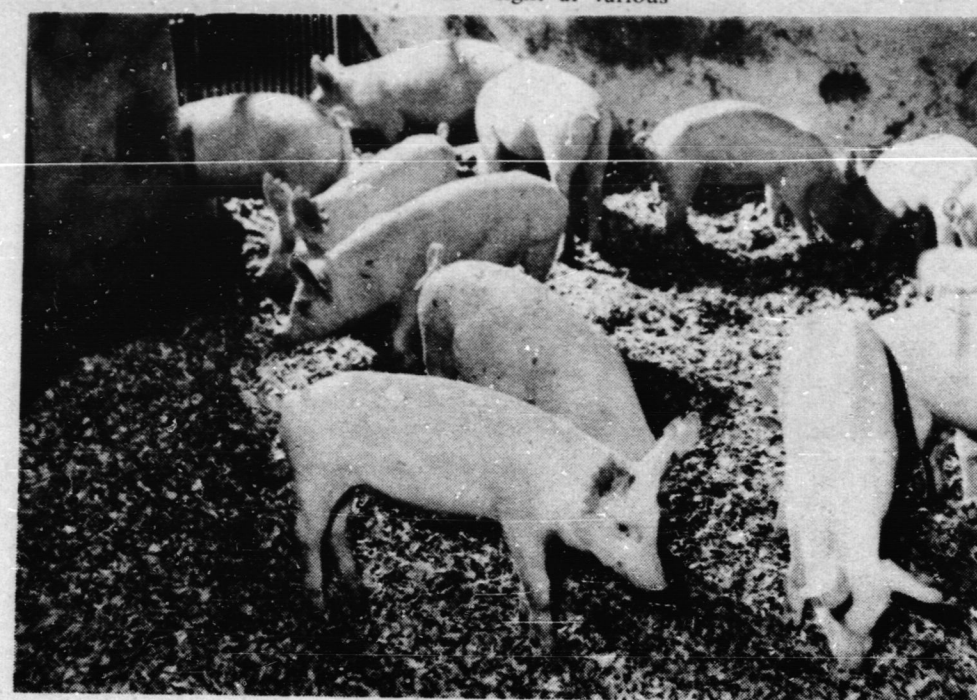
"Children are vulnerable: they must be protected from danger and taught how to live safely. Only adults can do this."

John Munro, Canada's Minister of National Health and Welfare, has summarized in these simple terms the basic principle behind the forthcoming campaign for the safety of Canadian children.

Child Safety Week will take place from May 3-9 this year. John Munro thinks this campaign

"requires the attention and participation of every man and woman in the nation." He stated: "Canada's future lies in its children."

Parents and all those responsible for the welfare of children are urged to guide and protect them through their early years from major hazards that surround them day by day, such as burns, cuts, drownings, falls, suffocation and traffic.



Scientists at the Canada Agriculture Research Station at Lennoxville, Que., have found that it is important that the pigs in a litter be of uniform size. They conducted their experiments with Yorkshire pigs, similar to those shown here.

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## Ontario Forestry Fire Facts

The Ontario Forestry Association believes forest fire prevention is important to the public interest. There are many reasons to protect forests. They provide scenic beauty, oxygen for the air we breathe, clean water, wildlife, recreation sites and wood. Forest fires can destroy all these. Pay cheques, taxes and economic development come from forest resources.

Eight out of ten forest fires are caused by people who are careless or wilfully negligent.

In a Province with a growing population, greater leisure, better roads, higher incomes, forests are more important to more people than ever before.

The number of forest fires in 1969 was one of the lowest on record — 901. That was the best we have done in Ontario since 1952 when there were 881 fires. However, that year over fifty thousand acres burned up while in 1969 the acreage burned was only 6,134. That's a pretty good

record. We did better in 1959 but not much. That year we only burned 5,281 acres.

There is no room for complacency of course. These fires burned valuable timber and young growth affected wildlife habitat, added pollution to the air, water and land, spoiled scenic and recreational areas, and could have set the wheels of erosion in motion. Though human life was not lost due to forest fire, it could have been.

Recreation seekers were responsible for 29.4 per cent of the fires but only 3.8 per cent of the area burned. Lightning was a major culprit in that the 22.4 per cent of the fires attributable to it burned 69.7 per cent of the total area burned. Cottage owners and settlers started 14.2 per cent of the fires while forest industry started only 0.8 per cent of them. Railways started 3.7 per cent of the fires. Miscellaneous causes were accountable for 21.2 per cent of the fires started and 7.7 per cent of the area burned. All together 77.6

per cent of the forest fires of 1969 were caused by people.

There were 34 prosecutions and 29 convictions for infractions of the Forest Fires Prevention Act.

Though serious forest fires occur in the fall months some years, the worst in 1969 were in April and May. April saw 128 fires burn 946.3 acres while 219 fires burned 4,726.8 acres in May. Thus over 90 per cent of the total area burned all year had been affected in the first two months of the fire season but only 38 per cent of the total number of fires occurred in that period. There were 227 fires in August (highest single month) but only 170 acres were burned.

It is difficult to assess the loss. Over a hundred thousand dollars worth of timber burned but the cost of maintaining a forest fire suppression department and of actually fighting fires was in the millions of dollars. It is an expensive business but

## Safe Driving Seminar

A special seminar to discuss the relationship between medical and psychiatric impairment and the safe operation of a motor vehicle will be held in Toronto on May 1 and 2 under the sponsorship of the Ontario Department of Transport.

Transport Minister Irwin Haskett said: "This is one aspect of safe driving that deserves more intense study, discussion and consideration so that any areas of action that could achieve greater

safety for all road-users can be more clearly defined."

Physicians, surgeons, psychiatrists, judges, lawyers, motor vehicle and safety administrators, and other individuals concerned with the medical aspects of safe driving will be attending the two-day conference at the Westbury Hotel.

Delegates will discuss defective vision, medical impairment, psychiatric disorders, alcoholism and drug dependence as they relate to driving ability.

The objectives of the seminar are to review existing procedures and standards...to develop recommendations aimed at identifying drivers with physical and mental deficiencies...and to establish levels of medical fitness related to driving competence in line with today's medical opinion.

The seminar should also develop proposals for solving problems involved in detecting and evaluating physical and mental deficiencies and reporting them to licensing authorities.

In addition, delegates will be asked to review the role of medical advisory boards as related to driver licensing authorities, and develop a consensus on the most urgent line of research into the medical aspects of driver capability.



The skyrocket juniper is a good example of the narrow columnar-shaped evergreen.

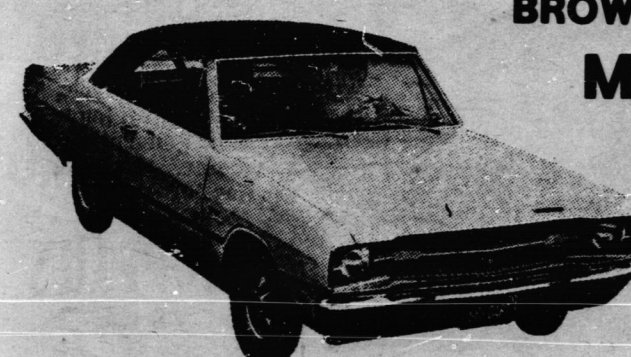
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