



# NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE FARMER

## TO RAISE GOOD ROAD FUNDS SHOULD FIRST LEARN WHAT TYPES OF HIGHWAYS ARE BEST SUITED TO TRAFFIC AND CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

At the present time there are two principal methods of raising funds for these purposes, but Director Logan W. Page of the public roads department of the government believes that before plans are set on foot for raising funds much should be said regarding the manner in which such funds should be expended.

It should not be assumed that simply because a county owns quarries from which trap or limestone rock can be secured that the expensive macadam road must necessarily be built.

The qualifications of any rock cannot be definitely decided upon until laboratory tests have been held.

Much money has been almost thrown away in this country, however, on the construction of rock-surfaced roads, those having the construction in charge neglecting to call in the services of expert chemists and using rock totally unsuited to their traffic or climatic conditions.

In many cases the results were disastrous, the roads quickly raveling and going to pieces because the cementing value was lacking.

A county which shows sufficient progress to bond itself in a liberal amount for the purpose of securing improved roads should keep its money intact until its officers have learned exactly what class of roads will best meet its requirements, what type of road it is best qualified to construct and what it can best afford.

Those facts can be secured through the aid of the national government, the office of public roads, standing ready to give gratuitous advice and to supply skilled highway engineers who are qualified to tell what type of highway would best meet that county's requirements and to demonstrate those decisions by supervising the building of stretches of model highways, after which local officials may take pattern.

Millions have been wasted in building roads which local conditions made impracticable and out of all cost proportion to the county's revenue.

There are exceptions to all rules, however, and Pike county, Alabama, stands as a glittering exception to the usual construction blunder. There the county officials had planned to expend a large sum in the building of gravel roads.

W. L. Spoon, United States superintendent of road construction, being sent to make an inspection of the county's road possibilities, learned that 700 miles of important routes needed improvement.

He figured that the cost of gravel roads would be \$3,000 a mile—plainly a sum greater than the county could be bonded for.

Conditions, however, were ideal for sand-clay construction and he strongly urged its adoption. By a legal proviso the county could be bonded for only 3 1/2 per cent of the assessed value of the real and personal property.

The plan was decided upon and \$100,000 worth of bonds was voted, and \$100,000 worth of the bonds were quickly sold, being disposed of in \$50,000 allotments.

The first allotment brought a premium of \$25 and the second one of \$25. Forty thousand dollars was at once spent for mules and road-building machinery and work was started.

With the sum remaining 118 miles of the finest sand-clay roads in the south had been built within two years from the date of the bond issue, a generous sum was still on hand, eight gangs were at work and the people were so well pleased that they stood ready to take up the remaining issue of \$45,000 and expend it in the same way.

There is financial wisdom in floating

county bonds for road improvement. In many cases those bonds sold at a premium and everybody interested gains a benefit.

In some southern states good roads bonds have brought a price so high that the premium has wiped out two or three years' interest on the principal.

Bradley county, Tennessee, but a few years ago, the supervisors voted a bond issue of \$99,900. Those bonds bore interest at the rate of 5 per cent.

So enthusiastic were the citizens for road improvement and so much confidence did they have in the locality in which they lived, that the premium was \$20,000, the cash sales placing in the county treasury \$119,900.

It has been ascertained by the office of public roads, the bureau of the federal census, and the land and industrial divisions of twelve great railroads, that the building of modern highways immediately enhances the value of the property through which they run to a marked extent.

This increase is estimated by the most conservative at \$2 an acre, and by the more enthusiastic at \$9. All concede, however, that the increase is immediate and inevitable.

Place the average of the rural portion of a county, therefore, at 200,000 acres and the increased valuation due to the construction of better highways at but \$4.50 an acre, and it will be seen that the property holders whose land is to be thus benefited would gain not less than \$900,000.

## PREPARING POULTRY FOR MARKET

### TO DO IT PROFITABLY THIS MUST BE DONE QUICKLY. SUITABLE FOOL IS A FIRST REQUISITE

BY HAAC NOTES.

To fatten poultry quickly and profitably requires good judgment and proper management in the care of the fowls and proper feeding. The best foods are bits of fat meat, mushes of meal or fine grits made from yellow corn, with skim-milk, boiled potatoes, rice and oatmeal and milk. If anything oatmeal is preferable because of its greater heating qualities and its effect on color or fat.

The main point to keep in view is to fatten your fowls in the shortest time possible. To do this they should be kept in a coop or pen, where they cannot take much exercise, for by exercise they work off flesh and keep down fat. A good way is to confine them in small, light coops made of lath or wire netting. These may sit out in the back yard or barn yard, on well-drained ground. In case of rain or damp weather cover them with oilcloth. Keep the pen dark during the daytime, except when the fowls are eating, by throwing a thick covering over the coops, such as old carpets, blankets or quilts. This will prevent the fowls from stirring about between

meals. In the morning give them boiled potatoes, mashed white hot and thickened with cornmeal, with a little salt and pepper for seasoning.

They should be fed three times a day, and their bill of fare varied as much as possible, but with a large proportion of starchy, heat and fat producing articles. Very little green stuff should be given them, though pumpkin or squash may take the place of boiled potatoes occasionally.

Fresh bedding should be supplied frequently, and the coop and spot it occupies kept clean. The coop should rest on cinders, or on gravelly or sandy soil, with a bedding of hay or straw. The coop being light, it will be easy to move it to a new place occasionally by a man getting at each end and lifting it an inch or so off the ground, gently pushing the chickens along inside the coop as it is moved, having prepared the bed of hay on the new place beforehand.

Unless a hen is a very valuable breeding fowl it does not pay to keep her after she is 2 years old. They should be marketed just before their second moulting.

Whether or not you buy your fowls during the winter, it hardly pays to feed chickens hatched the previous spring, except of course the most promising pullets for next spring's laying. Keep the others well fed and growing until they weigh between three and four pounds, then put them in the fattening coops and give them all they will eat for ten days or two weeks and rush them to market. Both young and old fowls should not be fed within twenty-four hours previous to killing.

Whether you ship dressed or alive must depend upon your market and the wishes of the parties to whom you ship. If you ship to a packing house or a commission firm it is customary to ship in coops, but if you ship to some retail grocer or market in the city it will perhaps be best to ship fowls dressed, as this gives a nearer appearance.

Dry-picked fowls bring a slightly higher price in the open market. White or buff colored sell best, as the pia feathers do not show so much on the dress-fowl, and this gives it a neater appearance.

## VALUE OF THE WEIGHBRIDGE

### It Enables the User to Note Accurately the Gain Resulting From His System of Feeding

BY W. R. GILBERT.

We have repeatedly impressed upon graziers the importance of using the weighbridge in buying, even more particularly in the selling of their grazing stock.

The official returns indicate that the system of weighing live animals is gradually increasing in favor, although it is still far from general and in some parts is almost unknown.

The practice, however, is more common in the case of fat stock than in the buying in of store animals, a result, no doubt, of the growing recognition of the fact that the butcher, who has every facility for testing his judgment by the weight of the carcasses of the fattened animals he buys, is in a better position to estimate approximately the weight of a live bullock than is the farmer, who perhaps never knew the exact weight of an animal that has passed through his hands.

There can be no doubt that the average farmer is at a great disadvantage, as compared with his client, who constantly using the weighbridge in the selling, though not in the buying of his supplies, and who is in a position to apply the experience acquired in the one transaction to the other much to his own benefit.

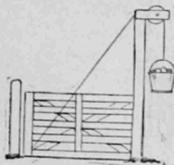
Experience has proved that the scales are at least as important in the buying and selling of store animals, as in the selling of store animals, it is especially desirable to consult the weighbridge in a season when young, growing cattle are fetching prices out of all proportion to the value of the same animals in a fattened condition.

The systematic use of the weighbridge is of the greatest assistance in escaping so undesirable a bargain, since it shows exactly the weight that the buyer is receiving for his money, and if he regulates his bidding in accordance with the weight records and the current fluctuations for beef he can save himself from bargains that must inevitably end to his disadvantage.

The intelligent stock owner appreciates the fact that all classes of store stock are not equal value at the same rate per hundredweight, but it is useful as a foundation to know the gross weight, and, when in this, he can then apply his judgment in estimating the responsive and other inherent qualities of the animals.

## A RISING GATE

This gate is braced both ways and is composed of first-class lumber. The brace weight is wire hung. An iron



sucker is filled with small stones from the bed of a brook until the gate is a little heavier, so that a pull will make it fold back in place.

## COWS EARN \$100 APIECE

"I know a man who lives in Wisconsin," writes ex-Governor Howard, "whose use is worth considering. He owns fifty acres of land and it is possibly worth \$50 an acre. He is now carrying twenty-five cows on this land, and these are cows. A year ago I addressed the farmers at a fair in La Crosse, the county in which he resides. His entire herd was brought out to the race track and I talked for an hour, taking these cows as my text. They were only grades, yet they earned him in cream and skim-milk \$120 a year per cow. He is a constant reader and student of what ever comes his way. He uses four times as much on dairy subjects, consequently he will do just as much business on six times less capital in land and one-half as many cows as the average dairyman."

## STRAWBERRIES GROWING ON ICE

On the old "Oregon trail, with its historic association, may be found one of nature's marvels, probably not duplicated in this country at least.

Near South Pass City, Wyo., is the Pacific Spring, a beautiful spot, where the old freighters and emigrants frequently stopped for a few days after the long and arduous trip across the barren plains. Here they could rest and enjoy some of the almost forgotten luxuries of life.

Pacific Spring is 7,000 feet above sea level, and about it, at the headwaters of the Sweetwater river, is a series of small valleys, or rather meadows, sheltered by the southern extremity of the Wind River mountains. On the north side of the hills is what is locally called a "flat," where the grass grows in green luxuriance. In this tall prairie grass was found the tiny red wild strawberry.

This does not seem marvelous in the warm sunshine, but take a spade and remove the turf and solid cakes of ice are found at a depth of often less than a foot.

The reason for this is quite simple. The warm spring sunshine melts the snow which runs down the mountain side. This goes on till late summer and fall, when the small stream of water freezes at night.

As the warmth of the sun touches only the top of the mountain, the little stream soon becomes solid ice. By the actions of the elements and washings of earth down the mountain a deposit of soil is made on this ice, which, when the summer rolls around once more, springs into green, fresh life.

The few hours of sunshine which reaches this sheltered spot each day suffices to ripen the strawberries, but cannot melt the ice beneath them nor warm the soil below the roots of these brave volunteers.—Mrs. S. B. Titterton.

## NOT AFRAID TO FEED WELL

Charles Foss of Stephenson county, Illinois, is a dairyman who is not afraid to feed his cows liberally on a balanced ration, no matter what the price of feed. He believes it pays and gives the following figures in proof:

After carefully weighing the feed he found he was using \$17.50 worth a week for twelve cows, and he knows that these twelve cows were returning him \$36.25 worth of butter fat and milk, besides 2,400 pounds of skim-milk, estimated at \$6, making the total receipts \$42.25 and the net profit \$24.75 per week.

These cows returned \$2.45 for every dollar's worth of feed consumed.

Last year his herd returned on an average \$118.35 worth of butter and \$20 worth of skim-milk—a total of \$138.35 per cow. The feed cost \$52, leaving \$86.35 per cow net profit.

The herd returned as the average of the year \$2.62 for every dollar's worth of feed consumed.

Mr. Foss has two cows which for several weeks have returned \$4.25 for every \$1.50 worth of feed consumed.—A. T. Bill.

## THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

In England many shepherds shear sheep and lambs before putting them on full feed, but the practice is dying out.

When sheep-shearing machines first came into use there was much prejudice against them because they made many wounds.

A little practice with a machine quickly demonstrated that the work can be done better with it than by hand.

A nice fat sheep, well shorn with a machine, looks somewhat fatter than it really is, doubtless because the work is so evenly done.

If you did not look carefully to the salting of your sheep when first put on pasture this spring, you doubtless lost some from loss.

A little air-slacked lime mixed with the salt is good for sheep.

## TO CURE HARD MILKERS

This is due to an unnatural condition of the sphincter muscles at the end of the teat and often what might be a valuable cow, on this account, is one that everybody wishes to avoid.

The proper method of overcoming hard milking is to wash the teats off with an antiseptic solution, dip a plug into healing ointment and insert same into the point of the teat, preventing teat plugging to remain in the teats from one milking to another.

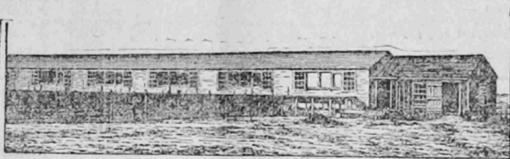
A few treatments of this kind will overcome hard milking in any cow without danger of infecting the teats should be handled with cleanliness.—Dr. David Roberts.

The government experts have taught western farmers how to kill prairie dogs by coating wheat with a preparation of strychnine, cyanide, or potassium, anise oil and molasses. This kills any time.

## A CURTAIN FRONT POULTRY HOUSE

This style of building is regarded very highly by practical poultry raisers. A curtain-front house 20 feet wide by 400 feet long has been planned and used with most excellent results by the

each section being twenty feet long. All of the sections are alike. The front side of each section has two storm windows of twelve lights of 10x12-inch glass. These windows are screwed on



THE LATEST CURTAIN-FRONT POULTRY HOUSE.

Maline experiment station. The description is here given, as it represents the latest development of this style of poultry house.

The building rests on a stone wall high enough from the ground for dogs to get underneath to look for rats or skunks. The wall is built on the surface of the ground and has openings in it like cellar windows every twenty feet, to allow the air to draw through and keep the basement dry during the



INTERIOR OF CURTAIN-FRONT POULTRY HOUSE.

summer. The building is boarded with one-inch boards and is papered and shingled with good cedar shingles on walls and roof. The floor is of two thicknesses of hemlock boards which break joints in the laying.

The building is divided by tight board partitions into twenty sections.

## SCIENCE IN BREEDING

In the breeding of to-day utility swings to the front as the chief standard of merit. For this to be secured perpetuated the importance of careful and systematic selection and mating must be everywhere insisted upon.

We talk about man being helped or hindered by his environments, by boys being brought up under a choked environment, but do we stop to consider the environments of the farm animals from which we are trying to reap a harvest of gain, or the animals that are performing our farm work?

The successful dairyman is the man who applies the most improved business methods to his dairy operations from the cow to the delivery of his produce to the consumer.

It is difficult to conceive of a good system of farming without there is a systematic rotation of crops. Any other system is based largely upon a hit and miss plan and is largely dependent upon the seasons and markets. The man who follows a definite cropping plan every year is the winner during a series of years.

The practical farmer should regard his farm as a book of nature that is spread out before him, inviting the closest study and the most careful observation of facts pertaining to soil, climate, variety of production to which it is adapted and the markets for the products.

## DANGEROUS WILD CATTLE

Such has been written lately about wild horses infesting certain mountain ranges of the west and menacing the interests of the stockmen. Now comes a report from a district in the Shasta national forest of California that wild cattle have become a nuisance.

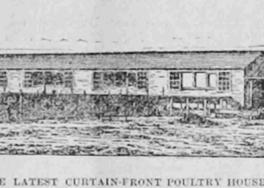
These animals are the descendants of domestic cattle, but having run without restraint for several generations have become as wild as deer. Stockmen with hot apply for ranges infested by these cattle, since tame cattle soon adopt the habits of their wild relatives and become equally as unmanageable.

It is impossible to gather young stock in the fall which have run with these animals even for a season.

The majority of the stockmen desire to shoot them, but certain mountain dwellers claim them and shoot an occasional one for winter beef.

The forest officer will in conjunction with the stockmen endeavor to investigate the matter and decide upon some plan of ridding the ranges of this pest.

up out of the way when the platform is being cleaned. The back roost is twelve inches from the wall and the space between the next two are sixteen inches.



The roosting closet is shut off from the rest of the room by curtains similar to the one described. There are two curtains each 10 feet long and 3 feet wide and are hinged at the top so as to be turned out and hooked up. The space above this curtain is coiled and in it are two openings each 3 feet long and 6 inches wide, for ventilating the roosting closet when necessary.

Ten trap nests are placed in two tiers against the partition in each end of the room, each nesting space being 1 foot wide, 1 foot high and 1 foot long, with the entrances near the partition, away from the light, and with hinged covers in front for the removal of the eggs. Each section of five nests can be taken without disturbing anything else, cleaned and returned.

A light frame made of 1x3-inch pine strips and 1x6-inch crossbars is covered with ten-ounce white duck and hinged at the top of the front opening, which it covers when closed down. This curtain is easily turned up into the room, where it is caught and held by swing hooks until released.

The roost platform is made tight and extends along the whole length of the room against the back wall. It is 4 feet 10 inches wide and 2 feet above the floor. There are three roosts framed together in two ten-foot sections. The tops of the roosts are one foot above the platform and hinged to the back wall, so they may be turned

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Dr. Patterson, a California man, who is away from home a great deal, has devised an ingenious way of feeding his big flock of chickens regularly every day, whether he is at home or not.

He set up in the chicken house a big alarm clock which goes off regularly at 5 o'clock every morning and 4 o'clock every afternoon.

The alarm gives out the welcome news to all the chickens—little, big, old and young—that breakfast or dinner is coming, and the ringing brings out all of the fowls on the keen jump. It did not take them long to learn the significance of the "feed bell."

By a cleverly devised attachment the revolving alarm wheel twists open a number of small sliding doors in the feeding trough, which hold back the feed. The sudden opening of these doors permits the requisite amount of feed to fall out.

One advantage is that the chickens are fed on "schedule" time, and get their meals regularly—to the very minute.

So successful does Patterson's device work that he has decided to secure a patent on his ingenious contrivance and has already made application for one.

## FOLLOWING THE GRASS ROUTE

England is cutting down her meat bill with America. Last year Britain bought \$7,500,000 less from us than the year before. It is also a significant fact that she bought \$500,000 less beef from countries outside her own borders in the same time.

England eats as much beef as ever, and in fact much more. The significance of her smaller meat bill, therefore, is that she is buying beef at lower prices. She is getting grass-fed beef from the Argentine Republic and at prices that are beginning to hurt our beef raisers.

With the disappearance of our great grass ranges we cannot make beef as cheap as we did before, and the Argentine Republic, with her millions of acres of the finest grass in the world, is underselling us.

The great Canadian ranges that have been opened up during the past few years, are also turning off sheep and fine beef, which find ready sale in the English markets and at lower prices than the American exporter can meet.

Free grass makes cheap beef, and the markets of the world are being flooded with the ranges. What will become of our surplus of our fresh meat supply is a serious problem and one that must inevitably affect the fortunes of our American farmers to an alarming degree.

## CROP VALUES OF CALIFORNIA

Investigations that have been made into the yields of various crops in California by the California promotion committee give insight into the vast importance of those industries to which little consideration is generally given. According to the calculations of the committee the total industrial output of the state for the year 1908 amounted to \$1,065,000,000.

Of this vast total agriculture played a very important part, its production amounting to more than \$400,000,000. How much importance is to be attached to these figures is better understood when it is realized that this output is just double that of three years ago.

Fifteen years ago wheat was about the only grain grown, and at that time it was the mainstay of agriculture. The average annual production of wheat then was valued at about \$40,000,000, with other grains comparatively without computational value. In 1908 wheat value had fallen to about \$19,000,000, while barley had increased to \$28,413,333 and corn had increased from about \$50,000,000. Rye, which increases annually in output, was valued at \$228,000, making a total output value of these two grains of more than \$27,000,000, which was more than the combined value of all other cereal products of the state.

Hops, also, which is a growing industry, makes a heavy output on an invested capital of about \$7,000,000. More than half of the grape vines in California are in the state, and the production of which there is an invested capital of more than \$100,000,000. About \$160,000,000 of capital is invested in these four industries in California, with an annual output value of more than \$25,000,000, and for the production of nearly \$54,000,000, or one-fourth of the total of all agricultural products.

A capon bears the same relation to a rooster as a steer to a bull, and as a bull must be castrated to steer meat, so are roosters not equal to steers meat.

When cockerels become capons they cease to grow combs and wattles, do not crow and fight, grow much faster and finer flesh and bring more money than ordinary chickens.

If a cock weighs ten pounds a capon will weigh fifteen and bring three to four times the price, \$125 often being paid for 100 capons.

It certainly pays to caponize surplus cockerels. A set of tools, with full instructions for using, costs about \$2.50 and only ordinary skill is required. With a little practice the operation can be quickly and safely performed.

For caponizing cockerels must be less than six weeks old and weigh a pound or more.

## IT PAYS TO CAPONIZE

Anything turns the appetite of a crow?

A mess of cooked turnips given to young stock often is excellent in improving digestion. The turnips are not very nutritious, but they are appetizing and form a change from the usual dry feed.

To determine the percentage of cream in the milk of different cows, set some of each in glass tumblers. The thickness of the cream can be seen through the glass.

A pail of milk standing ten minutes where it is exposed to the scent of a strong-smelling stable, or any other offensive odor, will imbibe a taint that will not leave.

Corn loses one-fifth by drying, and wheat one-fourteenth, hence it is better to sell at considerable loss price in the fall than to hold till spring.

The cork crib can be made rat and mice proof by lining it with small-mesh chicken wire.

## GAMES CROSSED WITH LEGHORNS

I have been a fancier and advocate of pure bred poultry for over forty years, and the way I have followed the one fault of the White Leghorn is by introducing Indian game blood.

Six years ago I purchased some Indian game fowls, and by using White Leghorns since ever since I have built up the best flock for general utility I have ever owned.

The game blood has added these characteristics to the Leghorns, hardiness, increased size and improved qualities. They are, if possible, better layers and the best fowls for raising chickens I ever had.

To-day I have 160 fowls, over 100 pullets, about every one pure white, but some having the game form and comb.

I purchase new cockerels of White Leghorn blood each year to head the flock.

In some portions of the south the government has established a school for farmers to grow better corn and other crops. The instructors are in many cases paid by the county.

## RAISING SUGAR CANE

### This is Profitable for the Syrup Yield and in Addition It Has a High Value As Stock Food

Sorghum is divided into two general classes. In the first is included all of the varieties which contain enough sugar that it will pay to cultivate for the sugar. This is the saccharine class.

In the second class is included the varieties that are cultivated for the seed, stalks, etc., used for feed for farm animals. This class is called the non-saccharine class. It contains some sugar, but it is low in sugar content, while the saccharine class may contain as much as 20 per cent of sugar in its juice.

The saccharine or sweet varieties are cultivated primarily for the sugar, but the seed and blades both make good feed for animals. The seed make good feed for almost any farm animals and for poultry.

Sorghum is cultivated very much like corn. It is planted in rows 3 1/2 to 4 feet apart and the hills are about 2 feet apart in the row, with four to five stalks to the hill.

The first cultivation is very tedious as the plants start up slowly, but after the plants get up a little the cultivation is not more difficult than corn. An acre of good sorghum will yield from 100 to 200 gallons of syrup.

The plants should be done a little later than early corn, as the sorghum will not do much growing until the soil gets warm. When the seed gets ripe the stalks are bladed and the blades cured and tied into bundles.

The stalks are cut and tops cut off. The tops and seed heads should be allowed to dry out before storing away, else they will mold.

The stalks are crushed in a cane mill and the juice strained and boiled either in an evaporator or a large pan. Before the juice reaches the boiling point all of the green stuff must be skimmed off.

Another way to dispose of the green stuff is to put the juice in a long, deep box, with small holes in one end, and with wooden plugs, for drawing off the skim without agitating the juice in the box.

## AXLE GREASE SAVES MONEY

When you hear the wheels of a wagon or any kind of farm machinery squeaking, be sure the squeaks cost the owner money, because the axles are being cut to pieces.

There is a great difference in axle grease, and the only way to know which is the best adhesive quality is by actual test. Cheap grease is generally dear.

Axle grease that quickly wears off increases the friction; this pulls the flesh off the team and flesh costs money.

The wagon wheels of all vehicles and machinery should be carefully examined often. It will not do to catch with dry wheels when away from home or in the midst of a busy day in the field.

## ALFALFA RACK

For feeding alfalfa hay to hogs this is a splendid rack. It is made of 1x4 inch stuff. It is 3 feet high, 5 feet long and 16 inches wide. The top is open.



The ends solid and the four-inch slats have four-inch spaces between them. The trough is four inches deep and extends seven inches beyond the bottom of the rack.

## HOG RAISING IN THE NEW WEST

There has been a wonderful development of the swine industry in Oklahoma and Texas during the past twenty years.

During that period a vast area has been changed from a grazing to a farming territory and with the farmer has come the hog.

Instead of a few razor-backs, good hogs are now being raised and shipped to market, and from this time forward the growth of this industry will be still more rapid.

It is claimed that cottonseed meal, a cheap feed in that section, can be safely fed to hogs, the safeguard being the use of plenty of water in the slops in which it is used.

If this is true the southwestern hog producer will be a more formidable competitor than ever.