

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The beef cattle and swine work is being done in cooperation with the Division of Animal Husbandry of the Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture. As stated in the previous discussion of the pasture work, the Bureau of Plant Industry is cooperating in conducting some of the grazing work with beef cattle.

The livestock work as such was started in the fall of 1932. Because of the short period of time that the projects in beef cattle and swine have been in progress, definite recommendations are not ready for publication. The results given herein are necessarily in the nature of a progress report. It is felt that the information most needed by the farmers of the Coastal Plain area in regard to livestock is that pertaining to the practical side of breeding, feeding, disease control and herd management. With those things in mind the work that is being carried on is of a practical nature.

There is a vast acreage of cut-over and marginal lands in the Coastal Plain region that should be bringing in some revenue from beef cattle production. To do this it is necessary to develop improved pastures at small expense and provide cheap feed crops to maintain the cattle during the off pasture seasons and to finish cattle for the market.

The soil, climate and cropping systems in the Coastal Plain are ideal for hog production. To make this enterprise profitable, however, a year-round grazing system should be developed and cheap supplemental feeds provided.

During this period of return to normal conditions the farmers are finding it a decided advantage to make greater use of livestock in their farm program. It is essential from a subsistence point of view. A farm in the South without at least enough livestock to adequately supply the needs of the farm family is an unbalanced farm. Very often crops can be marketed through livestock to better advantage than otherwise. In the Coastal Plain area an abundance of roughage can be grown which fits in well with cattle production. Also the forage and feed crops (green legumes, oats, corn, peanuts, sweet potatoes, etc.) grown in this area make swine production very attractive. These

things are creating quite a demand for information relative to swine and beef and dairy cattle. With these conditions and demands in mind, the livestock work at this Station is being planned and carried on so as to be of maximum benefit to the farmer.

BEEF CATTLE

The six main divisions of the work with beef cattle may be designated as follows:

1. Veal herd for the production of veal calves.
2. Feeder herd for the production of feeder calves.
3. Feeder calves.
4. Steers on fattening experiments.
5. Purebred Polled Herefords.
6. Breeding bulls.

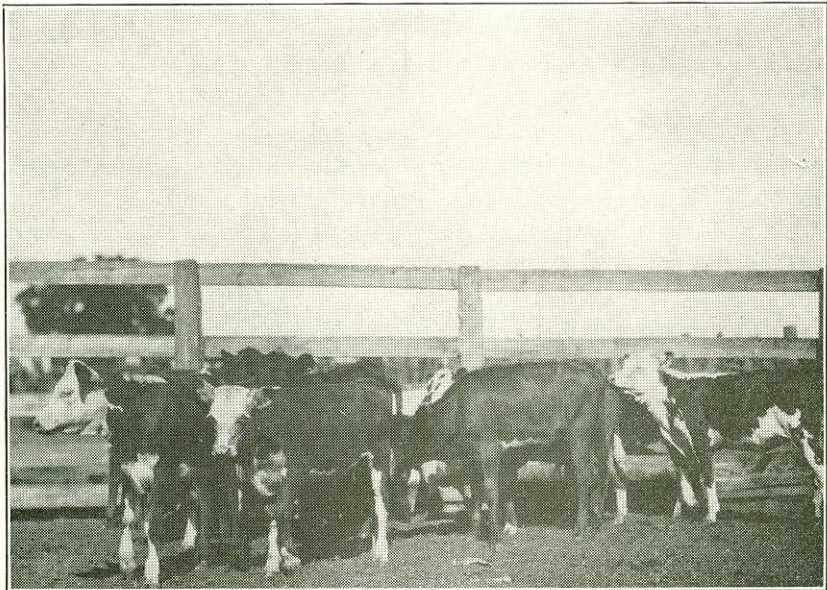
Since this work has been under way for only a short time, most of the discussion concerning the divisions of cattle work shown above will cover the period during which the various herds were being assembled and pastures were being developed.

VEAL HERD—FOR THE PRODUCTION OF VEAL CALVES:

The veal herd is composed of approximately fifty head of grade Jersey and native cattle. The cows are bred during the latter part of April, May and early June. The herd is divided into two equal groups, one-half being bred to a purebred Hereford bull and the other half to a purebred Shorthorn bull. The majority of the calves will be sold as veal calves. Records will be kept that should be of value in connection with the production of veal calves in the Coastal Plain area. The best heifer calves will be kept for replacements and increase. Fourteen calves averaging 225 pounds each were sold during the spring of 1934.

From about the first of April until about the middle of November the veal herd is carried on permanent pasture composed of Carpet grass, Dallis grass and lespedeza. During the winters of 1932-33 and 1933-34, the herd was maintained on velvet bean fields. During the

latter part of February and through March, it was grazed part of each day on green oats. The herd was grazed on oats enough each day to furnish the cows approximately a maintenance ration. During the winter of 1934-35 the cows were carried on velvet bean fields after the corn had been gathered. From January 1 the herd was carried 61 days on sorghum silage, cotton seed meal and oat straw. The cows were fed 20 pounds of sorghum silage and one pound of cotton seed meal per day during the first part of this 61 day period. In the latter part of this period they were fed 20 pounds of sorghum silage, 2 pounds of cotton seed meal and all the oat straw they would consume, which was about 1.5 pounds per day. The cows dropped calves during this period. The average birth weight of the forty calves was 51.3 pounds. During March the herd was grazed part of each day on green oats. On the first of April the herd was placed on permanent pasture and bred during April and May.



Veal calves ready for market.

