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J.W. McCarty
South Dakota State University

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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPF HERD
 AT THE EUREKA STATION

J. W. McCarty

A herd utilizing 3 breeds in a rotation-breed-cross has been maintained at the Eureka Station since 1953. The decision was made in 1950 to continue the herd as an SPF herd to overcome disease problems. In order to "clean up" the hog facilities at the station, bred sows were moved to the Newell station in early December, 1960. During the winter and early spring for a period of six months, there were no hogs at Eureka. All housing and equipment were thoroughly cleaned.

Pigs born by hysterectomy and artificially reared to 4 weeks of age were taken to Eureka during May, 1961. One purebred Yorkshire boar and six breed-line-cross sows were raised that season. These gilts represented the 15th generation of a breed-rotation cross, which has been continued using boars of the Hampshire, Duroc and Yorkshire breeds--in that order--and crossline gilts produced each season. Five of the gilts have farrowed and raised spring and fall litters (sired by the Yorkshire boar) during 1962. Pigs were farrowed in central facilities using farrowing crates and moved with the sows to lots on clean ground as soon as practicable. Following weaning, spring pigs were grown-out on alfalfa-native grass pasture. Fall pigs are being raised in small dry lots on clean ground. During the growing-finishing period, all pigs received a complete mixed ration self-fed. Management and rations conform to current recommendations for swine.

Table 1. Litter Data Summary

	1962	
	Spring	Fall
Number litters	5	5
Number pigs per litter		
Farrowed	11.6	12.8
56 days	8.8	11.4
140 days	8.6	<u>1/</u>
Weight per pig		
Farrowed	2.8	3.0
56 days	50	55
140 days	203	<u>1/</u>
Weight per litter		
Farrowed	32	38
56 days	437	625
140 days	1745	<u>1/</u>

1/ Data not available until February, 1963.

Litter size and growth have been very acceptable. These records suggest an improvement in growth performance because of the more desirable environment as compared with hogs of the same breeding raised at Eureka in previous seasons. However, data are too limited to draw any firm conclusions.

Table 2
Carcass Data Summary 1962 Springs Pigs

Number carcasses	20
Average: Market weight, lb.	215
Market age, days	144
Carcass length, in.	29.7
Carcass backfat, in.	1.9
Loin eye area, sq. in.	3.1
Per cent lean cuts:	
Of live weight	37.0
Of carcass weight	49.7
Per cent ham, loin of cold carcass weight	34.0

Carcasses from crossbred pigs raised at Eureka in previous seasons have been somewhat too fat and less meaty than is desirable. Carcasses from the first available SPF pigs in the cross are similar to but fatter than those in past seasons. Whether this is chance or real is not known. Carcasses from a number, but not all, SPF hogs from purebred herds in South Dakota, which were slaughtered and processed at the South Dakota State College Meat Laboratory, were also observed to be excessively fat. Data are not available to determine whether removing some of the stresses during the growing period by SPF procedures has an influence on relative carcass fatness. There seems to be no reason to expect that the SPF procedures should have a real influence on carcass quality. Strains of breeding which have good carcass qualities before cleaning up should also have them afterwards or vice versa.

Producers of SPF, and other fast-growing hogs, have questioned whether currently recommended calcium and phosphorus levels for growing-finishing pigs are high enough. 1962 fall pigs at the Eureka station are presently on a trial to check these requirements. Results will be reported as they become available.