

# PORK PRODUCTION IN FLORIDA

By JOHN M. SCOTT

Pork production in Florida is not receiving the attention it deserves. At the present time there are more than a million head of hogs in the State. This number, however, does not supply the demand for pork. Twenty-five percent, or more, of the pork consumed in Florida is produced in states farther north. Florida farmers can certainly produce pork more cheaply than the cost of production elsewhere plus the freight.

To make the largest profit from hogs they should be put on the market at the youngest age possible. Many of the native hogs are from one year to a year and a half old before they are ready for market. The Florida market demands a hog that will weigh 175 to 300 pounds. Animals of such weight can be produced in eight to twelve months. When they must be kept and fed for a year to a year and a half, the risk of loss and the cost of feed becomes too great to yield an assured profit. Farmers in the corn belt, where the demand is for hogs weighing from 200 to 250 pounds, have their hogs ready for market within nine months to one year.

There is a too common impression among farmers that the hog is a sort of scavenger, that any refuse will do for it to eat, and any filthy pen will do for it to live in. It is true that hogs do often act as scavengers, and also that they can live in filthy places, but these conditions are generally brought about when the animals have no choice in the matter. Hogs are not naturally filthy animals, but they are capable of existing under unsanitary conditions.

## PEN FEEDING UNPROFITABLE

If we are to get the largest possible returns from raising hogs it will be necessary to make the hogs pay for their keep. How can this be done? One of the best ways will be to insist upon them harvesting the crops grown for feed. The cost of harvesting the various crops adds considerably to the cost of production. This, in a measure, explains the high cost of production when we try to raise hogs by keeping them in small pens. When they are kept in small pens we not only have to harvest and carry the feed