

STUDY OF PORK PRODUCTION IN SOUTHERN
HANSEMOND COUNTY, VIRGINIA, 1932.

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by

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STUDY OF PORK PRODUCTION IN SOUTHERN
HANSEMOND COUNTY, VIRGINIA, 1932.

General farming in Southern Hansemond County affords three major sources of income. Peanuts and cotton are well adapted to this area, and sufficient feed is available to make cheap gains on hogs.

When peanuts are harvested, some of the crop is left on the land. This makes excellent pasture for hogs and is the most economical method of harvesting the residue. Soybeans are grown with corn, and make good pasture for hogs. Permanent pastures for hogs in this region are generally on swamp lands that are unfit for any other type of agriculture.

Both peanuts and soybeans produce a soft, oily fat. This in itself presents a serious problem in marketing the pork products. Various experiments have shown the different methods of disposal and of feeding, along with other information valuable to the farmers raising hogs. These experiments show to a certain degree what can be done. This study was made to determine what the farmer was actually doing with his hog enterprise.

During the summer of 1933, records of the entire farm business were obtained on 545 farms in Southern Hansemond County, Virginia for the crop year 1932. In addition, certain data were obtained concerning the hog enterprise. This

information was secured directly from the farmers by the survey method¹. These records were summarized individually and checked. A summary of all records was made and the averages for the 545 farms were calculated from this summary.

Breeding animals were tabulated separately and subdivided into boars and sows. The term "fattening hogs" in this study was applied to animals raised for fattening purposes. Pigs were not included with fattening hogs.

Size of the Hog Enterprise

The total amount of pork available on the 545 farms in 1932 was nearly two and one-half millions of pounds. This includes animals on hand at the beginning of the year, animals bought, and pork produced on the farm during the year. Of this pork, 21.2 per cent was on hand at the beginning of the year, 2.2 per cent was purchased, and 76.6 per cent was produced (table 1).

Table 1.-Total Pounds of Pork Available on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

Source	Total pounds	Average pounds per farm	Per cent of total
On hand January 1, 1932	519,711	954	21.2
Bought	54,799	100	2.2
Produced	1,878,815	3,447	76.6
Totals	2,453,325	4,501	100.0

1. The validity of the survey method is discussed by S. W. Warren in An Economic Study of Agriculture in Northern Livingston County, New York, Cornell Univ. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 539, 1932.

The total pounds of pork available per farm was 2.25 tons, of which 3447 pounds were produced, 100 pounds were purchased, and 954 pounds were on hand at the beginning of the year.

The size of the hog enterprise in this section of the state is relatively large compared with other areas in Virginia. Rail shipments originating in Nansemond County in 1932 amounted to only 250 hogs. In 1931 there were 125 hogs shipped by rail. No definite information is available as to the volume of hogs moved by truck ².

At the beginning of the year 1932 the average investment in hogs on these 545 farms was \$45.33, of which \$26.52 was invested in boars and sows for breeding purposes (table 2).

Table 2.-Hogs on Hand January 1, 1932 on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia.

	Average per farm			Average value per 100 pounds	Average pounds per head
	Number	Pounds	Value		
Sows	2.719	467.96	\$23.18	\$4.95	172
Boars	.402	74.78	3.34	4.47	186
Pigs	1.308	29.93	2.24	7.48	23
Fattening hogs	3.060	380.92	16.57	4.35	124
All hogs	7.490	953.59	\$45.33	\$4.75	127

The average number of sows at the beginning of the year was 2.719 and their average weight per head was 172 pounds. The average number of sows for the year, allowing for purchases, sales, and deaths, was 2.92 per farm. There were approximately 2 boars for every 5 farms at the beginning of the year, or 1 boar for about 7 sows. The average weight of the boars at the

2. Virginia Farm Statistics, 1933, pp. 62 and 65.

beginning of the year was 186 pounds. The total number of hogs at the beginning of the year was 7.49 and their average value was \$4.75 per hundred pounds. The average value per hundred pounds of pigs was somewhat higher than for the other classes. This was probably due to the different bases of valuation. Farmers valued most of their hogs on the per pound basis while pigs were valued by the head. The average weight of all hogs on hand at the beginning of the year was 127 pounds per animal, and the average weight of all hogs purchased was only 53 pounds.

Purchases averaged 1.888 hogs per farm, which represented 100.54 pounds of pork and a total cost of \$5.37 (table 3).

Table 3.-Hogs Purchased During the Year 1932 on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia.

	Average per farm			Average value per 100 pounds	Average pounds per head
	Number	Pounds	Value		
Sows	0.147	17.83	\$0.94	\$5.27	122
Boars	0.078	7.89	0.43	5.45	101
Pigs	1.004	28.06	1.93	6.87	28
Fattening hogs	0.659	46.76	2.07	4.43	71
All hogs	1.888	100.54	\$5.37	\$5.34	53

The average price per hundred pounds paid for hogs was \$5.34. This was higher than the average price for hogs on hand in either the beginning or ending inventory. The price per hundred pounds paid for pigs was higher than for the other classes. More pigs were purchased than any other class. Purchases play only a small part in the average hog enterprise in this section.

Average Production

The average production per farm after allowing for hogs on hand at the beginning of the year, hogs purchased, and death losses, was 3447 pounds. This meat was worth \$154.32 to the farmer, or \$4.48 per hundred pounds live weight. The net production amounted to 76.6 per cent of the total meat available.

The number of pigs weaned per farm was 24.3. The number of pigs weaned per sow, including spring and fall litters, was 8.3. On 203 of these farms for which the data were obtained, 57.5 per cent of the sows farrowed as many as 2 litters each, and 0.5 of one per cent of the sows farrowed three litters during the year. Pigs farrowed per sow averaged 10.6 for these 203 farms. The average size of the litters was 6.7 pigs.

The number of hogs raised on the 545 farms was 22.2 per farm. These hogs were disposed of in various ways. Some were sold alive either for breeding or meat purposes, some were held over for the next year, and others were butchered.

In calculating average pounds of pork produced per sow only records for farms not purchasing any hogs and not having fattening stock or weaned pigs on hand at the beginning of the year were used. There were 106 such farms included in the study. These farms had 3125 sows and their average production was 1274 pounds of pork per sow, valued at \$55.16. During the year 9991 hogs were butchered on the 545 farms, or an average of 18.3 hogs per farm. These hogs had an average weight of 160 pounds live weight

and 124 pounds dressed.

Average Weights

The average size of hogs grown in the peanut section of Virginia is small compared with hogs in other sections. The most common breeds are the Duroc Jersey, Poland China, Berkshire, and the native scrub or "pine-rocter", as it is called by the farmers. A few purebred herds were found.

The average weight of the sows was 172 pounds at the beginning of the year and 176 pounds per head at the end of the year (table 4). Sows that were butchered were much heavier than those kept for breeding purposes.

Table 4.--Average Weights per Head of Hogs on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	Average pounds per head				
	Sows	Boars	Pigs	Pat- ten- ing hogs	All hogs
Beginning inventory	172	186	23	124	127
Hogs purchased	122	101	28	71	53
Ending inventory	176	191	28	129	123
Hogs sold alive	194	152	31	112	81
Hogs sold dressed whole:					
Live weight	252	458	--	159	160
Dressed weight	195	373	--	123	124
Other butcherings:*					
Live weight	248	312	--	158	160
Dressed weight	194	248	--	121	124

* Hogs butchered for home use or for sale by the piece.

3. The average weight of 27,762,000 hogs slaughtered under Federal inspection from October 1932 to April 1933 was 228 pounds per head live weight as reported in Corn and Hog Statistics, U. S. D. A. Production Division--Corn and Hog Section November, 1933.

The average weight of boars was 186 pounds at the beginning of the year and 191 pounds per head at the end of the year. Boars butchered were also much larger than those kept on hand for breeding purposes.

Pigs on hand at the beginning of the year averaged 23 pounds, pigs purchased averaged 28 pounds, those on hand at the end of the year averaged 28 pounds, and those sold alive averaged 31 pounds per head.

Fattening hogs purchased averaged 71 pounds per head compared with 112 pounds when sold alive. The average weight of fattening hogs on hand at the beginning of the year was 124 pounds and the average weight of those on hand at the end of the year was 129 pounds per head. The average weight of fattening hogs dressed and sold whole was 159 pounds alive and 123 pounds dressed, compared with an average of 158 pounds alive and 121 pounds dressed for those butchered for home use or for sale by the piece.

The average weight of all hogs at the beginning of the year was 127 pounds and the average weight of all hogs at the end of the year was 123 pounds. The average weight of all hogs purchased was 53 pounds, that of all hogs sold alive was 81 pounds.

Although the weights of hogs sold dressed whole and hogs butchered for home use or sale by the piece were equivalent, the figures represent different groups of animals. The number butchered for home use or for sale by the piece was 7247 and the number dressed whole was 2744.

Methods of Disposal

Pork produced was either sold alive, butchered, or kept over into the next year. Death losses were not counted as production.

Of the total meat available, 29.8 per cent by weight was held over as 1933 breeding animals and stock hogs. The average number kept per farm was 10.93 hogs, and their average weight was 123 pounds per head (table 5).

Table 5.--Hogs on Hand December 31, 1932 on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	Average per farm			Average value per 100 pounds	Average pounds per head
	Number	Pounds	Value		
Sows	2.846	502.07	\$23.23	\$4.63	176
Boars	.422	80.78	3.46	4.28	191
Pigs	2.262	62.73	3.77	6.01	28
Fattening hogs	5.400	694.15	28.21	4.06	129
All hogs	10.930	1339.73	\$58.67	\$4.38	123

There was not much change in the number of breeding animals kept per farm during the year. The average weight of all hogs on hand at the end of the year was slightly less than the weight of those on hand at the beginning of the year, and the average price per hundred pounds was slightly less. The average number of fattening hogs on hand increased from 3.06 at the beginning of the year to 5.4 at the end of the year. The average amount of money invested in hogs per farm at the end of the year was \$58.67.

Hogs sold alive made up 5 per cent of all pork handled. An average of 2.784 hogs per farm were sold alive (table 6).

Table 6.-Hogs Sold Alive on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	Average per farm			Average value per 100 pounds	Average pounds per head
	Number	Pounds	Value		
Sows	.035	6.78	¢ 0.30	¢ 4.42	194
Boars	.028	4.27	0.23	5.39	152
Pigs	1.121	35.31	2.46	6.97	31
Fattening hogs	1.600	178.43	8.48	4.75	112
All hogs	2.784	224.00	¢11.47	¢ 5.10	81

The average weight of all hogs sold alive was 81 pounds per animal, and the average price received was \$5.10 per hundred pounds. The average weight of fattening hogs sold alive was 112 pounds, and pigs sold alive averaged 31 pounds per head. Fattening hogs and pigs accounted for most of the sales of live hogs. The sales of fattening hogs shown in table 6 include young breeding stock as well as fattening hogs, since information concerning the purpose of sale was not obtained.

The average number of hogs butchered per farm was 18.3 of which 5 were sold off the pole. These 5 hogs averaged 160 pounds alive and 124 pounds dressed. Their value was \$31.91 per farm (table 7).

Of all meat butchered, 43.6 per cent was used in the house, 16.6 per cent was sold as cured meat, 12.4 per cent was sold fresh by the piece, and 27.4 per cent was sold dressed whole. These percentages represent the average for the 545 farms and naturally they are not the same for all farms. For instance, only 128, or 23.5 per cent, of the 545 farms sold cured meat.

Sales of cured pork on these 128 farms averaged 1109 pounds per farm. The dressed equivalent of this pork was 1594 pounds.

Table 7.-Disposal of All Hogs Butchered on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	Average per farm		Value	Value	Percent
	Pounds				
	Live	Dressed	Value	pounds	total
Hogs sold dressed whole	804	623	\$ 31.91	\$ 3.97	27.4
Pork sold cured	487	375	31.82	6.53	16.6
Pork sold fresh by piece	363	280	18.82	5.18	12.4
All dressed pork sold	1654	1278	\$ 82.55	\$ 4.99	56.4
Meat spoiled	1	1	-----	-----	-----
Pork for home use	1281	987	52.35	4.09	43.6
All hogs butchered	2936	2266	\$ 134.88	\$ 4.59	100.0

* Live weight basis.

Farmers who sold their hogs dressed off the pole generally received lower prices per hundred pounds live weight than those who sold their hogs on foot. The average price received for hogs dressed and sold whole was \$3.97 per hundred pounds live weight, compared with \$5.10 for those sold alive (tables 6 and 7). On a live weight basis, the average price received for all pork sold butchered was \$4.99 per hundred pounds (table 7).

On a live weight basis, prices received for cured meat sold averaged \$6.53 per hundred pounds, and prices received for pork sold fresh by the piece averaged \$5.18 per hundred pounds live weight (table 7). Although these prices are somewhat higher than those received for pork sold alive, prices received for cured meat and fresh pork sold by the piece represent not only the value of the meat itself, but also the dressing and curing

processes. In deciding whether or not to sell cured pork or fresh pork by the piece in preference to selling the hogs on foot, the farmer should consider not only the relative prices to be received on a live weight basis, but also whether the difference in price will adequately compensate him for the extra labor and other costs involved, as well as possible alternative uses for the labor at that particular time. However, the fact that 88.1 per cent of all pork sold from these farms was sold dressed, either fresh or cured, indicates that many of these farmers may have obtained an advantage from marketing their pork in this manner.

The 123 of the 545 farms that sold fresh pork by the piece averaged selling 1240 pounds of this class of pork per farm. The live weight equivalent of this pork was 1610 pounds.

A comparison was made of the amount of pork used in the house by white farmers and colored farmers. The average amount of pork produced by white farmers was 4307 pounds per farm, compared with 1615 pounds per farm by colored farmers. The average amount used in the house by white families was 1068 pounds per farm, compared with 815 pounds per farm for colored families (table 8).

The proportion of total pork produced that was used in the house was more than twice as great for colored as for white farmers. White families consumed about one-fourth of their total production, compared with about one-half for colored families. On a live weight basis, the consumption per person was 209 pounds for white families and 129 pounds for colored families. The difference is probably due to a much larger production

and smaller families on the part of white farmers as well as to the possibility that some colored families may have had home-produced meat for only a part of the year.

Table 8.-Comparative Production of Pork and Use in the House by White and Colored Farmers in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	White	Colored
Number of farms	371	174
Average pounds of pork produced	4307	1615
Average pounds of pork used in house*	1068	815
Percent pork used in house	24.83	50.44
Average number at table	5.1	6.3
Average consumption per person*	209	129

* Live weight basis.

Dressing and Curing Percentages

The average dressing percentage for fattening hogs was 77.2 per cent, and for all hogs 77.5 per cent (table 9).

Table 9.-Average Weight and Dressing Percentages of Hogs Butchered on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

	Sold dressed whole			Home use and sold by piece			All hogs butchered		
	Average pounds per head			Average Pounds per head			Average pounds per head		
	Live	Dres- sed	Per- cent- age	Live	Dres- sed	Per- cent- age	Live	Dres- sed	Per- cent- age
Sows	248	192	77.4	248	194	78.2	249	194	77.9
Boars	468	380	81.2	310	247	79.7	327	260	79.5
Fat hogs	159	123	77.4	158	121	76.6	158	122	77.2
All hogs	160	124	77.5	160	124	77.5	160	124	77.5

Since heavier hogs showed higher dressing percentages than light hogs, boars on these farms dressed slightly higher percentages

than sows and sows dressed higher than fat hogs. All hogs butchered included 9991 hogs averaging 160 pounds live weight and 124 pounds dressed. On the dressed weight basis, the 545 farms averaged selling 375 pounds of pork as cured meat (table 7). The farmers' estimates showed that this meat weighed only 260 pounds when cured. The curing percentage was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{260 \text{ pounds cured meat sold}}{375 \text{ pounds dressed equivalent}} = 69.3\% \text{ curing percentage.}$$

This represents a loss of 30.7 per cent of the dressed weight in the curing process. This figure is somewhat higher than figures found in experiments.

Experiments conducted on curing pork in East St. Louis, Illinois and Fort Worth, Texas showed that 11447 pounds of soft pork lost 15.92 per cent in curing and in a retaining period of from 19 to 21 days ⁴.

The relatively high loss in curing on the Nansemond County farms is probably due partly to the length of time farmers kept their cured meat. The cured weight was obtained at the time the meat was sold. On the basis of the average dressing percentages in table 9, the cured meat represented 53.4 per cent of its live equivalent. For example, 150 pounds of cured meat would represent 281 pounds of live hog.

Death Losses

The largest death loss in the hog enterprise was found

4. L. B. Burk, Shrinkage of Soft Pork Under Commercial Conditions, U. S. D. A. Bul. 1086, October, 1922, pp. 7, 9, and 15.

with pigs before weaning. On 203 of these farms the average number of pigs farrowed per sow was 10.6. A comparison of this figure with 8.3 pigs weaned per sow for all farms indicates a death loss of 21.7 per cent of the pigs before weaning. This means that about one out of every five pigs farrowed died before weaning. This death loss might be reduced by better care of the sows at farrowing time through improvement in sanitary conditions on some farms. Proper rations and separating the sow from other hogs until the pigs are large enough to take care of themselves would help decrease the death rate of the pigs.

The death rate of hogs including pigs after weaning was 4.95 per cent.

Equipment Used for Hogs

Hog equipment includes troughs, scalding tubs, kettles, movable fence wire, feeders, lard cans, and miscellaneous. Very little hog equipment was found on the farms in this section. The average value of equipment for the 545 farms was \$6.29 per farm at the beginning of the year and \$6.11 at the end of the year. Purchases of new equipment amounted to only \$0.21 per farm, and repairs amounted to \$0.09 per farm.

Only 229 of the 545 farms reported any hog equipment. The average value of equipment per farm for these 229 farms was \$14.91 at the beginning and \$14.47 at the end of the year.

Summary

The average number of sows was 2.92 per farm for the 545 farms.

The average production of pork was 3447 pounds per farm. The average value of this pork produced was \$154.32 per farm.

The average number of hogs raised was 22.2 per farm.

In calculating average pounds of pork produced per sow only records for farms not purchasing any hogs and not having fattening stock or weaned pigs on hand at the beginning of the year were used. On 106 such farms, having 3125 sows, the average production was 1274 pounds of pork per sow, valued at \$55.16.

The average weight per head of 9991 hogs butchered on the 545 farms studied was 160 pounds live and 124 pounds dressed.

The average dressing percentage of these hogs was 77.5 per cent.

Cured meat, when sold, weighed 69.3 per cent of its dressed weight.

The average value per farm of all hogs on hand was \$45.33 at the beginning and \$58.67 at the end of the year.

Of the total pork available on the 545 farms 21.2 per cent was on hand at the beginning of the year, 2.2 per cent was purchased, and 76.6 per cent was produced during the year.

The average live weight of all hogs butchered was 2936 pounds per farm. Of all pork butchered on the farms, 56.4 per

cent was for sale, and the remainder was used in the house.

The heaviest death losses occurred among pigs before weaning, aggregating 21.7 per cent of the pigs farrowed. Death losses after weaning aggregated 4.95 per cent.

Very little hog equipment was used on Southern Nansemond County farms.

Table 10.-Total Numbers, Weights, and Values of Hogs on 545 Farms in Nansmond County, Virginia, 1932.

Number farms having	Inventory January 1, 1932			Purchases			Inventory January 1, 1933			Sold alive			Sold slaughtered Pounds			Others butchered Pounds			Died Number			
	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Live	Dressed	Value	Number	Live		Dressed	Value	
Sows	492	1483	255040	80	9720	\$ 514	1551	2736	28	\$12661	19	3695	\$ 166	14.5	3650	2826	\$ 126	135.5	33640	26340	1426	51
Boars	258	219	40755	42.5	4299	236	230	440	23	1886	15.5	2325	123	5	2292	1864	83	45	14041	11151	569	14
Pigs	500	713	16314	547	15295	1049	1233	341	88	2052	611	19244	1340	-	----	----	--	--	-----	-----	---	800
Other hogs	509	1668	207602	359	25485	1129	2943	3783	12	15373	872	97244	4620	2724.7	432412	334878	17183	7066.3	1114426	857680	54133	44
Total		4083	519711	1028.5	54799	\$ 2928	5957	7301	51	\$ 31972	1517.5	122508	\$ 6249	2744.2	438354	339568	\$ 17392	7246.8	1162107	895171	\$ 56128	909

Total of the average number of sows - 1592.5
 Total number of hogs raised - 12086
 Total number pigs weaned - 13,263
 Total production - 1,878,815 pounds valued at \$84105.
 Production per farm - 3447 pounds worth \$154.32

Table 11.-Average Numbers, Weights, and Values of Hogs on 545 Farms in

	Inventory January 1, 1932			Purchases			Inventory January 1, 1933			Sold alive			Sold slaughtered Pounds			Others butchered Pounds					
	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Pounds	Value	Number	Live	Dressed	Value	Number	Live	Dressed	Value	
Sows	2.719	467.96	\$23.18	.147	17.83	\$0.94	2.846	502.07	\$23.18	23	.035	6.78	\$ 0.30	.027	6.70	5.19	\$ 0.23	.249	61.72	48.33	\$ 2.62
Boars	.402	74.78	3.34	.078	7.89	0.43	.422	80.78	3.34	46	.028	4.27	0.23	.009	4.21	3.42	0.15	.083	25.76	20.46	1.04
Pigs	1.308	29.93	2.25	1.004	28.06	1.93	2.262	62.73	3.34	76	1.121	35.31	2.46	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Other hogs	3.060	380.92	16.57	.659	46.76	2.07	5.400	694.15	28.18	21	1.600	178.43	8.48	5.000	793.41	614.45	31.53	12.966	2044.82	1573.72	99.33
Total	7.489	953.59	\$ 45.34	1.888	100.54	\$ 5.37	10.930	1339.73	\$ 58.18	66	2.784	224.79	\$ 11.47	5.036	804.32	623.06	\$ 31.91	13.298	2132.30	1642.51	\$ 102.99

Table/2.-Disposal of "Others Butchered".*

	545 farms				Average per farm			
	Pounds			Value	Pounds			Value
	Live	Dressed	Cured		Live	Dressed	Cured	
Pork sold cured	264873	204032	141967	\$17344	486.00	374.37	260.49	\$ 31.82
Pork sold fresh by piece	198002	152521	-----	10256	363.30	279.85	-----	18.82
Meat spoiled	682	525	-----	-----	1.25	.96	-----	-----
Pork used in house	698550	538093	-----	28528	1281.75	987.33	-----	52.35
Total	1162107	895171	141967	\$56128	2132.30	1642.51	260.49	\$102.99

* The total weights and total value correspond to those found in "Others Butchered" in table 1.

Live weight = 129.8195% of dressed weight.

Table 3.-Summary of the Hog Enterprise on 545 Farms in Nansemond County, Virginia, 1932.

Source	Average per farm				Disposal	Average per farm			
	Liveweight					Liveweight			
	No.	Lbs.	%	Value		No.	Lbs.	%	Value
On hand January 1, 1932:					On hand December 31, 1932:				
Breeding animals	3.1	543	12.1	\$ 26.52	Breeding animals	3.3	583	13.0	\$ 26.69
Other hogs	4.4	411	9.1	18.82	Other hogs	7.6	757	16.8	31.97
Hogs purchased	1.9	100	2.2	5.37	Hogs sold alive	2.8	225	5.0	11.47
					Hogs sold dressed				
					whole	5.0	804	17.8	31.91
Pigs weaned	24.3				Other butcherings**	13.3	2132	47.4	102.99
Hogs raised (22.2)*		3447	76.6	154.32	Death losses***	1.7	1	----	-----
Total	33.7	4501	100.0	\$205.03		33.7	4501	100.0	\$205.03

* Does not agree with number of pigs weaned because pigs sold alive before fattening were not counted among hogs raised.

** Hogs butchered for home use or to be sold by piece.

*** Hogs and pigs weaned that died. Meat that spoiled after butchering amounted to approximately one pound per farm.

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