

## **Butchering Day**

Electronic mail message from Paul Koehler, St. Joseph, MI

I'm going to try to answer Bernelda Becker's requests on Butchering Day as best as I can remember and with a little help from my sister.

The last butchering day that we had was in 1948 and I was just a wee Lad of 12 years and after 50 years the brain begins to take on some cob-webs:

We would always butcher when the weather turned cold, like the last week in November or the first weeks of December. It was usually a hog and a beef but at times it was more pork.

Early in the morning a fire was started under the kettle to get the scalding hot water ready for the large drum, on an angle, to put the pork in to remove the hair.

We also stored some of the meat in a crock with lard. The meat was fried and the lard was heated up to liquid. The meat, like pork chops, etc., was packed into the crock and the liquid lard was poured over it until the crock was level full. These crocks were stored in the cellar. Sometimes there developed some mold on top of the lard but this was scrapped off of the top when it was time to consume the meat. The meat was taken out and warmed up and ready for the hungry mouths.

The hog's stomach was cleaned. We had most of our meat ground up at a local General store and butcher shop. This ground meat was seasoned, cooked and then stuffed into the stomach and hung up to dry. We had an outside building where the meat was hung. Sausage's, hams and bacon were also hung in the outside building, up high, to keep away from any animals.

Most of the time when warm weather came around the outside meat was all consumed but if there was some left it to was stored in the cellar and sometimes also put into the crock method.