

LUCERNE AND CLOVER AS POULTRY-FOODS.

In view of the present scarcity of wheat, pollard, bran, &c., and the future uncertainty as to food-supplies, I cannot too strongly advocate the growing of a patch of lucerne, when possible, by all poultry-keepers. The high value of lucerne as a poultry-food has been clearly demonstrated in the recent tests carried out at the Milton Poultry-station. Poultrymen who have a good patch of lucerne will be in a strong position next year, as a liberal supply of this great fodder will be found the best of all means of reducing the feed-bill. In the first place, there is nothing better for keeping fowls in good condition, and also for promoting egg-production, than an ample supply of chaffed green lucerne fed in the troughs during the day. Again, well-cured lucerne hay, chaffed and steamed overnight, will be found a valuable material for the morning mash, especially in the off season. Further, where the necessary appliances are available it can be ground into meal, and can wholly take the place of pollard. Experience is proving that lucerne can be grown under a great variety of conditions, and that it thrives in locations which at one time were thought to be an impossible habitat for this plant. Certainly great care has to be taken to secure a good clean seed-bed and keep the young plants free from weeds, but when lucerne is well established it can be maintained in a flourishing condition at little cost in the way of labour. A bulletin giving hints on the growing of lucerne will be supplied gratis on application to the Department.

Clover is another valuable food for poultry which is not appreciated by poultry-keepers in the Dominion as it should be. It is a popular food in America, and is fed at all seasons of the year, by egg-farmers in particular. Like lucerne it is an excellent green food and can be fed in large quantities, while in its dry chaff form, if steamed the night before using, it not only adds to the value of the morning mash, but also cheapens its cost and makes it decidedly appetizing.

THE APIARY.

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SEASONAL PREPARATION.

OCTOBER is perhaps the month when the apiarist can do most to help his bees to work up to full strength in time for the main honey-flow. In the warmer parts of the country swarms may be looked for about the middle of the month, but in the southern districts they will probably not appear until three or four weeks later. By 1st October, unless the weather for some weeks has been cold and wet every hive should have been examined and its condition noted with regard to stores, population, and health. No colony should be allowed to dwindle because it has not sufficient food to provide for the offspring of a prolific queen. Yet, on the other hand, some beekeepers prefer that all the old honey in the hive should be used up before the new