

Direct Heading of



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WHEREVER subterranean clover is grown the problem of how to harvest the seed arises. The fact that the seed is formed on or under the ground, with the foliage on top, places the harvesting of this crop in a class by itself, and diverse methods are employed to secure payable yields. Previous methods include mowing and raking, sheepskin on the roller, a special lifting attachment on the mower, and recently the hayrake was found reasonably satisfactory. Now comes a method which has made quite an auspicious start—direct heading. Recent operations in Marlborough using the header harvester have been very promising.

As the seed lies on the ground covered by the foliage, at first glance the employment of the header seems to be practically impossible. But by using lifters which raise both foliage and seed to a sufficient height before the knife passes its use becomes more feasible. At Fairhall, Marlborough, at least two headers have been fitted up to handle subterranean clover seed. One seen working on Mr. W. Corlett's property last season was making a very satisfactory attempt—collecting, cutting, and threshing at the one operation two bags of field-dressed seed an acre. After the header had passed very little seed was left on the ground—less than usual after the older harvesting methods.

The header used was a small 40-inch-cut machine, and to it were attached special pea-lifters known locally as Cuddon lifters. For subterranean clover these attachments were fixed to each finger, three inches apart. The lifters were set right on the ground and the fans were taken low to deal with the flow of crop. This arrangement dealt very satisfactorily with the clover, which was three to four inches high and very dry, although at the time of

1. A close-up of the crop before harvesting.
2. Direct heading in progress.
3. The special lifters, three inches apart, which gather the crop before cutting. The ordinary outside divider makes an excellent swath-cutter in subterranean clover.