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SOME NOTES ON WOOGENELLUP
SUBTERRANEAN CLOVER

By B. J. QUINLIVAN, B.A., B.Sc. (Agric.), Botanist, Weeds and Seeds Branch

OVER the last few years an early midseason type of subterranean clover, commonly known as "Pearsons" or "White Flowered Mid" has attracted the attention of a number of farmers in the South-West and lower Great Southern districts. In some instances their enthusiasm for the strain was such that on at least three properties attempts were made to segregate pure lines for seed production.

It has now been included in the seed certification scheme under the name of "Woogenellup"—a district some 20 miles east of Mt. Barker, where it has become a popular pasture strain.

A number of trials are at present being carried out to assess the relative value of this strain in comparison with others of similar maturity. As some certified seed is likely to be available next year, a few general comments at this stage would not be amiss.

ORIGIN

The strain was first noticed on Mr. L. Pearson's property at Benger in 1948—hence the earlier generally accepted name of "Pearson's". Since its original discovery at Benger it has been found growing in practically all districts where the midseason Mt. Barker strain is the basic pasture. It has obviously been established in the State for many years and more than likely was introduced as an impurity with some of the midseason seed sown on Group Settlement properties during the early 1920's.

STRAIN CHARACTERISTICS

Woogenellup has a thin crescent-shaped, pale mark across the centre of the upper leaf surface. The leaf, peduncle, and petiole are hairy but the runners are hairless. The stipules are unusually large with distinct red stripes. The flower has a green calyx and white petals. The seed colour is black.
The first flowers normally appear about mid-September. It is thus about two weeks earlier than the Mt. Barker strain. In common with later-maturing strains the majority of the burrs are formed above the ground surface.

PASTURE CHARACTERISTICS

From observation, it appears that, Woogenellup is most suitable for districts with a rainfall between 20 and 30 inches per annum. It does not appear to be as productive as the Mt. Barker strain in the higher rainfall areas. In districts such as Manjimup, Woogenellup has set seed and finished its growth by late October, whereas the Mt. Barker and Tallarook strains are still actively growing. These later two strains make much better use of the longer growing season and are more suited for such districts.

Being an early midseason type, the strains with which it should be compared as regards productive capacity are Bacchus Marsh and Clare.

Bacchus Marsh is a Victorian strain which has been grown in this State for the last ten years or more on a limited scale. It is very palatable and productive but in some instances has been rather disappointing in that after three to five years under normal grazing the stand of clover thins out appreciably.

Clare is a South Australian strain which, in comparative trials in the Eastern States, has compared favourably with other strains of similar maturity. It has only recently been introduced to this State and at this stage it is too early to decide how it will behave under local conditions.

Woogenellup is generally noted for its vigorous growth and good winter production. It is a strain long adapted to survival under local climatic and grazing conditions. Such regional strains often have advantages over similar introduced types.

AVAILABILITY OF SEED

Over the last few years considerable quantities of mixed seed containing varying proportions of the Woogenellup strain have been harvested and have found a ready market. A few tons of certified seed should be available next season.

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