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RABBITS FED SOYBEAN OR LINSEED CAKE GROUND INTO PEA-SIZE DEVELOP RAPIDLY

Domestic rabbits being raised for meat make excellent gains on linseed or soybean cakes ground into particles about the size of peas, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Broken into pea-size these protein supplements are less expensive than in the pellet form.

Feedings tests with both forms of the two protein supplements were conducted by the Biological Survey at the U. S. Rabbit Experiment Station, Fontana, Calif. The results, showing that soybean and linseed protein supplements ground to pea-size are satisfactory, were announced recently before 300 commercial rabbit raisers attending the annual field day of the experiment station. At these meetings officials of the experiment station review the year's research accomplishments with the rabbit raisers.

"Rabbits fed pea-size linseed and soybean protein supplements in whole grain rations ate them just as readily as rabbits given these same proteins in pellet form, and made just as good gains," says George S. Templeton, director of the experiment station. Rabbits dislike finely ground soybean or linseed meal, but in earlier tests it was found that given these feeds in pellet form they will eat the proper quantities necessary for maximum weight gains. Following this discovery rabbit raisers began including pelleted proteins in the rations.

Mr. Templeton also reports that the method of feeding whole grains and protein supplements in self feeders that was developed at the experiment station has been widely adopted among rabbit raisers. The self feeders have separate feed compartments that permit the rabbits to feed "cafeteria style." During a year the number of rabbits kept at the experiment station reaches 4,000, and all are used in experimental work to develop better feeding and management methods.