react to quality differences rather than on why they behave in a particular fashion. When viewed from the standpoint of the applicability of the results, the choice seems a reasonable one.

The basic approach employed in the study consisted of the creation of test situations in retail food stores where the consumer, without the restraint of prices and in the absence of undue promotional influences, could exercise a preference for different quality characteristics in tomatoes. This was accomplished by using special matched-lot displaying techniques. The displays were designed to reflect distinct and predetermined differences in quality and size.

Since resource limitations precluded the possibility of testing all grade-size combinations of mature green tomatoes, the test was confined to those of greatest interest and applicability in the industry. A total of 11 grade-size combinations was included in the study (Table 1). The combinations tested reflect

TABLE 1.—COMBINATIONS TESTED IN THE STUDY OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE FOR GRADES AND SIZES OF FLORIDA TOMATOES.

Grade	Size				
	5 x 6	6 x 6	6 x 7	7 x 7	7 x 8
U. S. 1	X		X*	X	X
U. S. 2	X	X	X	X	
U. S. 3	X	X	X	X	

* Matched with all other grade and size combinations in each test situation.

a certain degree of preoccupation with the lower grades and smaller sizes of tomatoes. This is because a major area of decision-making within the industry relates to the question of what constitutes marginal quality in tomatoes under various supply and demand situations.

Purchase patterns of consumers under the various test situations with which they were confronted served as the primary source of analytical data. In each of the matched-lot test situations, one component of the display consisted of U. S. No. 1 size 6 x 7 tomatoes while the other was systematically changed to represent other size-quality combinations. This arrangement assured that customers would always have access to tomatoes generally regarded as satisfactory from a quality standpoint. Preferences of consumers were obtained through the measure-