

A COMPARISON OF CUSTOMER PURCHASE RATES

In the analytical procedure it was found desirable to effect a transformation of the aggregate sales data into a form that would be more meaningful and permit a wider application of the study results. Consequently, the basic sales data were converted into purchase rates for each 100 customers passing through the stores during the periods when each test situation was in effect. This transformation served as a means of making needed adjustments in total purchases to account for size variations among stores in which the tests were conducted. Using customer purchase rates also reduces the results to a common denominator that will facilitate the general application of the findings to other retailing situations.

The customer purchase rate for each grade and size combination is shown in Fig. 4. The study results indicate that some grades and sizes of Florida tomatoes are much preferred over others. There was a distinct preference for the larger sizes of tomatoes over the smaller ones. Within a given size category, customer purchase rates appear to vary directly with the grade.

The most popular grade-size combination of tomatoes included in the test was the U. S. No. 1 size 5 x 6. The purchase rate for this quality level was 9.7 pounds per 100 customers, which was well above the rate for any other type of tomatoes. The 5 x 6 tomatoes in the No. 2 grade were purchased at a rate of 7.3 pounds per 100 customers. The third highest sales rate was obtained for the size 6 x 6 tomatoes of the No. 2 grade. Purchases of this type were 1.1 pounds per 100 customers less than the purchase rates of this same grade in the next larger size, and they were 0.6 pound per 100 customers greater than U. S. No. 3 size 5 x 6 tomatoes.

The sales rates for all other grade-size combinations were below 5 pounds per 100 customers. Customers bought about equal quantities of size 6 x 6 No. 3 and size 7 x 7 No. 1 tomatoes. This same situation held for the 6 x 7 No. 2 and the 7 x 8 No. 1 categories. Further, there was only a slight difference between the 6 x 7 No. 3 and the size 7 x 7 No. 2 tomatoes.