

directly in the crate. When the crate was filled it was pushed aside and an empty crate was taken from the crate chute. For the more common sizes, two, three or four packers were used so that while one worker was replacing a crate the next worker selected the celery that had been permitted to pass by. With a little training the workers soon learned to place a new crate with one hand and at the same time sort from the chain with the other.

Managers of many firms refused to try this faster method, although they realized that they could save five or six minutes of labor per crate. They were opposed to using the system for sorting and packing only the smaller or extremely larger sizes, the volume of which, out of an ordinary run, is ordinarily insufficient to keep one person busy. The chief arguments used against the system of a single person doing sorting and packing were that a worker could not sort out the proper size, concentrate on packing and at the same time get the correct number of stalks in each crate. The managers would not consider the possibility of slowing down the packing chain to give the workers more time to sort out the proper sizes and place the stalks directly in crates.

To determine the effect of various packing methods on accuracy and quality of pack, a detailed study was made of the packs put up by 15 firms. Two of the firms packed directly from the sorting chain. Results indicate that there is little need for slowing down the sorting chain to obtain a good, accurate pack by packing directly into the crate from the chain.

In making the study of the 15 firms, only 511 packed crates were examined, but every stalk in the crate was examined in detail. The crates were selected at random, care being taken to select different sizes. Only four or five crates for an individual firm were examined in one day and the samples were taken throughout the season.

Of the 511 crates examined, 68.5 percent were packed with both the correct number of stalks in the crate and the correct number in each layer in the crate (Table 33). An additional 4.1 percent of the crates had the correct number of stalks, but they were placed in the crate out of order. Of the 511 crates, about 20 percent were either under- or over-packed within a tolerance¹⁴ of about 5 percent, while about 7 percent were under- or over-packed beyond the tolerance.

¹⁴ See footnote to Table 33.