

left end and then the right end, leaving the two wires around the center of the crate until last. The workers could give no reason why they closed the wires in this particular order. It was found that the crate would close easier by closing the wires from one end to the other in order. By so doing, less of a bulge was left in the center of the crate. Consequently, the last end was easier to fit over the head of the crate and fasten.

No attempt was made to time the workers closing crates. Every washhouse employed one man to close crates for each side of a packing chain. The output of the crate closer was thus dependent on the output of the packing chain and not on the efficiency of the worker closing crates.

#### SORTING, PRECOOLING AND LOADING

After the crates are closed they are placed on conveyors and sent either to the sorting room or directly into the precooler. Ten out of 15 firms for which floor plans were obtained used sorting rooms. Some of the larger firms that had sorting space did not use it. Other houses without such space were planning to provide it by additional building.

There are good arguments both for and against sorting prior to loading. In general, the sales department encourages the use of a sorting room because more exact orders can be filled. If several cars are being loaded the sorting room provides for temporary storage of a quantity of a given size of celery which can all be sent into the precooler and loaded into one car without the necessity of keeping the doors of another car open and thereby losing refrigeration.

The management of practically all firms stated that the use of a sorting room required additional labor. As the crates came off the packing chain, all sizes were mixed up. Some sorting must be done either in the cars as they are loaded or on the floor before the crates go into the precooler.

No effort has been made in this study to analyze the labor involved in sorting, precooling or loading. The problem of sorting depends largely on size of business, type of sales outlet, available floor space, and whether precooling facilities are available in the washhouse. There are about as many different arrangements for precooling as there were firms studied. Some owned their precooling unit, but it was on a rail siding while the washhouse was several miles away. Still others contracted with private firms to do their precooling and loading.