

route of distribution for avocados from Florida; facilities for receipt and storage were available from a regular handler of avocados; and the general offices of the cooperating store group were located there.

Each quality factor was tested in the 6 stores for a full week. Arrangement of the displays among stores was completely randomized. Subsequent analysis indicated that the randomization was adequate to remove any bias due to location of fruit in the display. Daily records of the number of avocados sold were made in each store.

Tests the first week were of normally shaped avocados of the Lula variety of varying sizes: small (size 20, average weight 11 ounces), medium (size 16, average weight 14 ounces) and large (size 12, average weight 18½ ounces).³ All of the sizes were of the U. S. No. 1 grade. Avocados were priced according to the average weight in each of the sizes used and within the range of prices acceptable to the store management. Size 12's were priced at 29 cents each, size 16 at 22 cents and size 20 at 17 cents. The 3 sizes, placed side by side in the store display, were separated by a divider.

In the second week's test normally shaped avocados of the Lula variety, size 12, with 3 degrees of skin blemish, principally scab and scar, were used. Variations in amount of surface area scabbed and scarred were: 0-5 percent, 15-25 percent and 40-50 percent. Fruit of the 3 categories were placed side by side, separated by a divider, in the store display and sold at a constant price of 25 cents each.

The third week's test was confined to shape of fruit. U. S. No. 1 grade, size 14 avocados of the Lula (pear-shaped) and Booth 7 (round-shaped) varieties were placed in the test stores and sold at 21 cents each.

CUSTOMERS' RECOGNITION OF QUALITY FACTORS

SIZES

When customers were given a choice of size, within a range of prices in which the weight-price relationship and quality were relatively constant, more small-sized avocados were purchased than large-sized ones. However, their purchases were such that on a weight basis there was very little difference among sizes in volume sold (Table 1, Figs. 2 and 3). At constant relative

³ Official weight-size relationships established by the Florida Avocado Administrative Committee.