North Louisiana produces an excellent quality of tomato which is heavy, bright in appearance and equal to or superior to tomatoes grown in surrounding states. Most of the cars are loaded in the territory between Farmerville and Winnfield on the north and south and from Chatham to Logansport on the east and west. At present, only U. S. No. 1 stock is being packed in the standard tomato lug and the tomatoes are either mechanically sized or are carefully hand sized so that the larger tomatoes can be packed together and the smaller tomatoes packed together. The size is marked on the end of the lug and generally ranges from 4x5 in the larger sizes to 6x7 in the smaller sizes. Three layers are generally packed with the individual tomatoes wrapped in paper. When all 3 layers contain the same count the pack is known as a "straight pack." If the lower 2 layers contain one size smaller tomatoes than the top layer the pack is known as an "extra row pack." In the case of the 6x7 pack only 12 to 15 extra tomatoes are usually placed between the second and top layers to give the lug a satisfactory bulge when the lid is nailed in place. Such a pack is known as a "bridge pack."

Most cars are center braced and 650 lugs are loaded to the car. The lugs are so spaced that there is an air passage between each row of lugs with strips between layers so as to keep the lugs in place and to protect the bulge.

Louisiana growers need an outlet for their U. S. No. 2 tomatoes and it is recommended that either they be ripened and sold as "Pinks" or else that arrangements be made with the buyers so that the U. S. No. 2 stock can be shipped. Under the present marketing setup too large a percentage of the tomatoes is lost through culling. The returns on the U. S. No. 1 stock have been quite satisfactory; and if an outlet can be developed for the U. S. No. 2 stock our growers should do very well. Proper spraying during the growing period will help cut down the percentage of U. S. No. 2's and Culls.
One of North Louisiana's tomato packing sheds.

Tomatoes for shipment should be mature green. They are brought to the loading sheds in field crates where they are hand or mechanically sized, wrapped in paper, and then packed in lugs.

Tomatoes which have been bush ripened being delivered to one of our Louisiana canning plants.

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