

# Tomato Council Ensures Uniform Pack

(Continued from Page 2)

500,000 pounds of green beans a day," said Jim Seabrook, Jr.

Of all their produce, the single most popular is the creamed spinach, of which they pack 175,000 cases per year, or about two million pounds, Seabrook told the tour group.

But some of the other vegetables on the processing line included Stop and Shop brand frozen peas; John Cope's Sweet and Creamy White Corn brand, packed for the Rheems, Pa. company; Pathmark Veggies brand mixed vegetables, coming off the line in four-pound packages; Stop and Shop brand cut corn; Shop Rite brand cut okra; Sysco Classic Corn brand; and others.

Seabrook markets to Shop Rite, Weis, Campbell Soup, Pathmark, Giant, and other major chains. Fresh vegetables are packed from April 1-Dec. 1, the heart of the season. There are three shifts operating year-

round.

The company is owned and operated by 10 shareholders, all family, of which seven work at the plant, according to Seabrook.

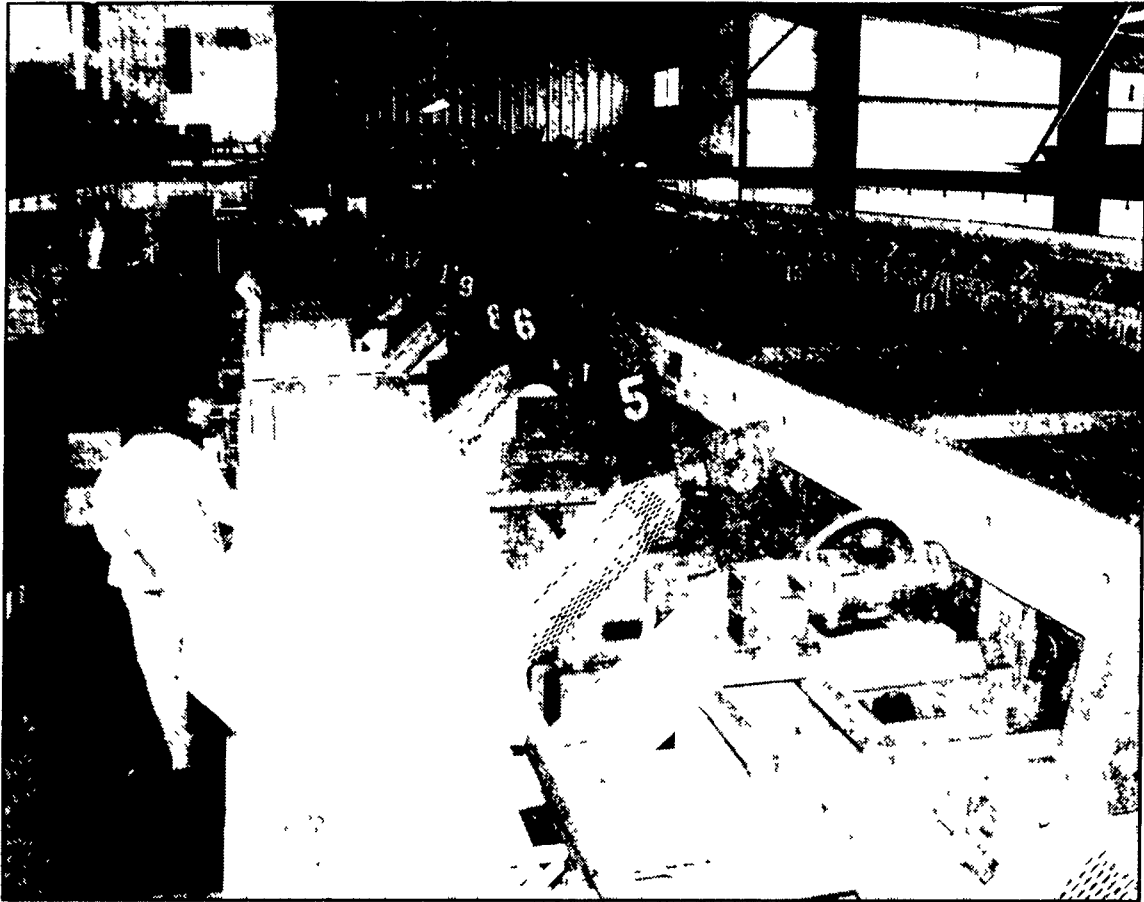
The average salary of the plant workers is about \$10.25 per hour, he told the tour group.

The company is in the process of becoming certified organic. Seabrook Brothers also does a lot of kosher packing.

Package waste amounts to about 12 percent, but 99 percent of the problem is "selling it," according to Seabrook, in addition to ensuring they have enough supply of a crop. Damaged packages, according to Seabrook, go to food banks in Delaware and Philadelphia.

Seabrook tries to obtain and maintain spinach contracts to have a dependable supply, Seabrook said.

"There is a high demand for this item," Seabrook said.



The line at the New Jersey Tomato Council can pack up to 1,000 25-pound boxes. Fifty employees handle various tasks, including grading, packing, and shipping.



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