We are in a new era of vegetable culture and marketing. The shift of production from small family-sized farms to larger combined and often corporate-type farms is proceeding rapidly. Production for specific purposes is increasing and with most crops that are presently being processed, the trend is toward greater processing. Since World War II the factory processing of vegetables has increased at approximately 4½ percent/year. Much of this increase comes from new technologies aimed toward producing convenience goods, cost reduction, and products and quality control rather than purely for preservation. Mechanization at all stages of production and especially at harvest has been accomplished. Mechanical harvesting of tomatoes for canning and cucumbers for pickles represent recent important developments. These changes have encouraged specialized areas of production where the highest yields and quality can be produced at the lowest cost per unit. Fertilization, precision planting, and all other cultural practices will be geared toward producing not only high yields but uniform maturity and high quality.

I. IMPORTANCE OF VEGETABLES AND POTATOES

In 1965, there were 3,356,015 acres of vegetables (excluding potatoes) produced in the USA, of which 1,725,345 acres were grown for fresh market and 1,630,670 acres for processing. These had a value of $1,535,000,000 of which more than two-thirds or $1,134,000,000 was derived from fresh market produce. Leading states were California with 592,650 acres; Florida, 292,950; Wisconsin, 286,930; Texas, 268,350; and New York, 166,600. These five states accounted for more than half of the total acreage.