

in manual and lightly mechanised operations. It is unfortunate that there is no sectorwide programme of mechanization for woodworkers. Paradoxically, it is precisely in the sawmilling enterprises that handling operations are most labour-intensive. Here, it is very important to introduce new technologies.

The mechanization of hoist-handling operations in the initial stage of production must be based on a crane system of unloading involving the use of grapples. In view of the diversity of incoming raw material various mechanisms are required: for unloading logs from flatcars - cranes with a lifting capacity of 10 to 12.5 tonnes, for half timber lengths - 16 to 20 tonne cranes, and for full lengths - 32 tonne cranes. At present, we cannot boast of such diversity.

Nor is there any equipment for the stacking of lumber, its kiln-drying and dismantling. We have no wheel-mounted loaders with jaw grapples. Generally, finished product warehouses should be assembled with sawmilling and drying shops. It would then be easier to introduce computerised address-distribution systems there.

A major step forward in the mechanization of handling operations would be the use of standardised bundling units. Cranes for working with them should be equipped with special hoisting devices, enabling the transfer to be effected under controlled or automated conditions.

It would seem that the furniture industry is most favourably placed with respect to mechanization. The level of it there averages 72 to 75 per cent, although this is on basic production tasks only as not more than 26 per cent of the handling operations are mechanised.