

**S United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

**VLR Listed: 6/21/2018**  
**NRHP Listed: 1/31/2019**

**1. Name of Property**

Historic name: Valleydale Packers Inc.  
Other names/site number: Neuhoff, Incorporated; Valleydale Meat Products; VDHR# 129-5051  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**2. Location**

Street & number: 710 E. 8th Street  
City or town: Salem State: VA County: Independent City  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national                         statewide                      X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A                         B                      X C                         D

<p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p>In my opinion, the property <u>  </u> meets <u>  </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  2  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	buildings
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	sites
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	structures
<u>  0  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	objects
<u>  2  </u>	<u>  0  </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: processing site

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

NO STYLE

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; BRICK; ASPHALT;  
SYNTHETICS: rubber

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Valleydale Packers Inc. plant is a large industrial facility comprised of multiple additions, constructed between 1936 and 1971 as a meatpacking plant. Located at 710 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street in an industrial section of the City of Salem, Virginia, the 10.62-acre parcel is bounded by 8th Street to the north, Ohio Street to the east, and Indiana Street to the west with railroad tracks defining the boundary to the south. The interconnected building masses that housed the meat processing functions range from one to two stories in height and are predominantly of fireproof, concrete construction with full basements, brick curtain walls and a flat roof. Utilitarian in design, these buildings are simple in form with no detailing. Windows are limited to industrial, steel-sash windows located above eye level or sawtooth skylights to provide adequate natural light while hiding the unpleasant activities of meat processing from public view. Roll-up metal freight doors at the rear entrance from the stockyard and at the loading docks of the shipping department control the flow of incoming meat and the distribution of the packaged product. Single-leaf personnel doors are located immediately adjacent to employee locker rooms. The arrangement of the interior plan relates directly to the meat processing operation with the interconnecting rooms providing for slaughtering, cutting, grading, cooking/smoking, packaging, storage and shipping. The interior finishes of these workrooms are characterized by exposed structural systems, concrete floors, and glazed-block walls that support the clean and efficient operation of the plant. Both the interior plan and finishes of the processing plant remain intact, as well as some of their associated equipment, including smokers, meat rails, and hangers. The two-story rectangular wing, built in 1951 in the International style to serve as the plant's corporate headquarters, extends across the front of the plant and housed the administrative and shipping activities. Unlike

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the processing plant to the rear, the office building promotes a public presence. The projecting central entrance pavilion welcomes visitors with its double-leaf, aluminum-and-glass doors sheltered by a canopy with double-height windows above it, and finally surmounted by the company name in stylized letters and a roof-mounted flagpole. The property also includes a contributing brick building that served as the sewer screen house. The open land to the rear of the plant was used for livestock pens until the late 1970s when slaughtering was discontinued at the plant.

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## Narrative Description

### *Site*

The Valleydale Packers Inc. plant occupies a 10.62-acre site in an industrial section of the City of Salem, Virginia. Set against the backdrop of the mountains, the level site contains a number of artesian wells that supplied the abundant water required for the processing of meat. The Valleydale property is bounded by 8th Street to the north, Ohio Street to the east, and Indiana Street to the west. Railroad tracks, which originally transported the livestock and processed meat products, define the south side of the property. The 1951 office section of the plant is set back from 8th Street, facing onto a grassy lawn. A concrete path flanked by two trees approaches the main entrance. Public sidewalks run along the north and west sides of the property. A chain-link fence encircles the factory section and several acres of open space behind the plant. This open land was used as stockyards until the 1980s when the plant stopped slaughtering on site. The property includes one contributing secondary resource. According to the 1959 Sanborn Map, this brick building was constructed in 1956 and served as the sewer screen house. The surrounding neighborhood, known as East Bottom, includes worker housing that supported Valleydale Packers Inc. and other nearby industries.

### *Exterior*

A two-story International-style block, housing the public lobby, office and distribution functions, spans the multiple-section, earlier plant's northern side. Dating to 1951, the façade's rectangular wing is of concrete masonry construction with brick curtain walls. The wing stands on a cast concrete foundation. The red brick curtain walls are laid in a five-course common bond. A brick parapet capped with simple concrete coping hides the flat roof. The aluminum-frame windows are evenly spaced, with simple, cast-concrete sills.

Unlike the processing plant behind, the front block, housing administrative offices, was open to the public. This accessibility was emphasized by the slightly-projecting, central entrance bay with double-height aluminum-frame window surmounted by signage reading "Valleydale Packers Inc" in stylized aluminum lettering and a roof-mounted flagpole. The main entrance is situated within a tall center pavilion that protrudes slightly from the front elevation. Recessed brick around the door assembly and the double-height, aluminum-frame window above it further articulate the entrance. An aluminum canopy with rounded corners shelters the door. On the wing's east elevation is a recessed loading dock with three freight openings and a personnel door that relate to the shipping functions located in this section of the building.

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A later addition ca. 1971 is set back from the front of the 1951 office wing, comprising the west end of the front elevation. The large, windowless addition also features brick curtain walls, arranged in a five-course common bond, and a flat roof. Large, individually mounted, brushed-aluminum letters, reading "Valleydale Meat Products," extend across the front of this addition.

The processing plant, a sprawling industrial complex that includes the original 1936 slaughterhouse, is located behind the 1951 façade addition. Meat-processing operations, such as slaughtering, processing and packing, occurred in various interconnected additions as the company grew. The earliest section of the plant, now located at the southeast rear corner of the complex, was constructed in 1936 as the original slaughterhouse. Additions were added to the north and west of this original building in 1938 and 1941 to provide space for the cutting, grading, cooking/smoking and packaging of the meat. A laboratory wing was added at the southwest rear corner in 1956. As the plant expanded, the original 1936 section continued to be integrally related to the industrial process as it served as the entryway into the slaughtering area for livestock from the stockyard.

Constructed between 1936 and 1971, the plant's multiple sections are simple in form and design to relate directly to their industrial function. The additions are one or two stories in height and are predominantly of fireproof, concrete construction with a full basement, brick curtain walls and a flat roof. The low parapets feature a mixture of terra-cotta tile, concrete and metal coping depending on their date of construction. Some later building sections are CMU construction or clad in corrugated metal.

For the most part, the windows in the processing areas of the plant have industrial steel-framed sash and are located above eye level on either walls facing the rear or the interior of the complex. Sawtooth skylights provide additional natural light. The strategic placement of these windows hid the unpleasant activities from public view while allowing for natural light and ventilation in the work spaces. Entrance to the meat-processing plant is limited. Concrete ramps lead to large openings with roll-up metal doors at the rear of the plant to herd livestock from the stockyards into the slaughterhouse. Employee entrances are single-leaf doors, the majority of which have been boarded, that are located immediately adjacent to employee locker rooms. Although sections of the plant were built at different times, there is a consistent architectural vocabulary throughout that reflects its industrial function.

### *Interior*

The 1951 office addition at the front (north) side of the plant served the administrative and distribution functions of the business. At the center of this office wing is the main lobby, with a reception window for the telephone dispatcher and a trophy case. The rectangular space features terrazzo floors, brick wainscoting, and glazed ceramic block walls. At the center of the floor is a "V" emblem for Valleydale. A mezzanine overlooks the double-height lobby space with its stylized, brushed-aluminum wall clock. Single-loaded corridors lead from the lobby to offices and large rooms at either end where the shipping and accounting departments were located.

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These spaces feature linoleum tile floors and glazed ceramic block walls. The stairs to the second floor are located off the west side of the lobby. The stairs are terrazzo with a simple aluminum handrail, which elegantly curves as it winds up to the second floor. Glazed ceramic block walls continue in the stair hall and second level. Additional offices line the single-loaded corridor of the sales department at the west end. The east end of this level, which was subdivided into offices in the 1990s by Smithfield, originally featured a large, open conference room.

The area behind the lobby and administrative offices in the 1951 front block contains the shipping department on the first floor, with a recessed loading dock at the east end, and dry storage area on the second floor for packaging supplies. Before the construction of the circa 1971 addition, this area on the second floor also functioned as the cafeteria. This shipping and dry storage area consists of concrete floors, concrete columns, and glazed block walls. The elevator and stairwell are also located in this section of the 1951 block. The circa 1971 addition at the west end of the building includes spaces for smoking and cooking meat on the first floor with a mechanical room and new cafeteria on the second floor.

The interconnected spaces at the rear of the plant are physical representations of the industrial processes used to prepare meat for sale. The 1959 Sanborn Map denotes workrooms for killing and cleaning and cutting, grading, and packing. The map also notes spaces for laboratory testing, employee locker rooms, and a machine shop. These workrooms remain intact, as well as some of their associated equipment, including smokers, meat rails, and hangers. The spaces are largely open with steel and concrete columns and exposed ceiling structural framing. The concrete floors include drains and the walls throughout are glazed block. The surfaces throughout the plant are washable, likely due to sanitation requirements for processing meat. There are limited interior doors in the processing area as ceiling-mounted racks and hangers carried the meat through the various stages of processing.

The primary alteration that has occurred is the conversion of the former cutting, grading and packing area to additional refrigerated storage space with the addition of insulated partition walls by Smithfield after the slaughtering of livestock on site was discontinued in the late 1970s. Additionally, many of the partition walls enclosing the cooking and smoking rooms date to the Smithfield operation as products changed and equipment was updated.

### *Secondary Resources*

The property includes one contributing secondary resource. Near the southwest corner of the property is a two-story brick building constructed as the sewer screen house in 1956. The building stands on a concrete foundation. It is constructed of red brick laid in a five-course common bond. A simple brick parapet hides the flat roof. A concrete ramp slopes down below grade to a garage door opening on the front elevation. West of the garage door is an at-grade personnel door. The window openings, which are filled with fixed plate glass, have rowlock brick sills.

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A small, non-contributing CMU building, which was located directly south of the plant, was demolished in 2018. This storage building appeared to date after the 1980s as it did not appear on the 1959 Sanborn map, was not consistent with the appearance of earlier buildings, and was located in the area where livestock was kept before slaughtering was discontinued on site during the late 1970s. The simple building was covered with a flat, contemporary metal roof. Assumed to be a storage building, it had no windows, only a single-leaf door and a contemporary overhead garage door. The function of this building did not appear to be integrally-related to the meat processing operations of the plant as former employees interviewed could not recall the purpose of this building. The outbuilding's site is noted on the attached Sketch Map.

### *Integrity Statement*

The Valleydale Packers property has integrity of location as it is located at the same site since the business relocated from Lynchburg to Salem in 1936 and all parts of the extant building were constructed on-site. The property's integrity of setting changed during the late 1970s with cessation of slaughtering at the plant, which eliminated the need for livestock pens. The larger setting, however, is maintained due to retention of several other industrial properties as well as the working-class neighborhood, East Bottom, adjacent to the nominated property.

Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship are very high, as the sprawling complex retains all sections of the plant dating to the period of significance. The physical materials are illustrative of the building's historic use as a meat packing plant, as are the austere industrial design, minimal ornamentation, and simple, modern materials (brick, concrete, glazed blocks). On the interior, the spatial arrangements are largely unaltered as well. While the 1951 front block presented the firm's public face, the rear sections retain their historic interconnections that trace the processing steps from slaughter to final preparation for shipment. An on-site laboratory space is associated with the necessity for sanitation and testing for contamination in compliance with food safety regulations. These physical aspects of the property thus contribute to its integrity of feeling and association as well. As the headquarters and processing center for a highly successful company, the property is directly associated with significant industrial activity in the city of Salem during the mid-twentieth century.



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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1936 - 1968

**Significant Dates**

1936

1941

1948,

1951

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Valleydale Packers Inc. plant at 710 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Salem, Virginia, is significant as the original plant and headquarters for Neuhoff Incorporated (later renamed Valleydale Packers), a major industrial operation in the southeastern United States and one of the largest employers in Salem. The establishment of this plant in 1936 helped launch the city into a new era of industrial prosperity. The plant complex consists of a 1951 International-style office block on the building's north side, which provided a public face for the company, with the various activities of the meat-processing operations taking place in the numerous, interconnected additions at the rear. These one- and two-story, unarticulated masonry buildings, constructed between 1936 and 1971, were designed to be functional and inconspicuous to shield their unpleasant activities from the public. As a well-preserved example of a meat-processing plant, the intact plan and finishes of the complex demonstrate the sequence of operations involved in processing livestock into packaged meat products for commercial sale and distribution. Lorenz Neuhoff, Jr., who founded Neuhoff Incorporated, was not only a leader in the region's meat packing industry, but also an innovative marketer, capitalizing on the potential of television advertising in the 1950s. The Valleydale Packers Inc. plant is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The property's period of significance is 1936-1968, encompassing the dates of its construction to the traditional 50-year end date for properties where significant activities have continued into the more recent past, as Lorenz Neuhoff continued to own, operate and expand the business into the 1980s.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

**CRITERION A: Industry**

The sprawling plant complex of Valleydale Packers Inc. in Salem is locally significant in the area of industry for its direct association with the company's development and expansion over fifty years as one of the largest industries in Salem. The plant also reflects the evolution of the meat-processing industry during the mid-twentieth century. The many additions constructed onto the small, original, 1936 building physically convey the large growth of the company as the twentieth century progressed. As demand for the company's meat products grew, the need arose for a larger space to accommodate the expanding number of employees. As one of Salem's largest industries, the growth of Valleydale Packers Inc. also parallels the growth and prosperity of the area beginning with the establishment of the Chamber of Commerce in 1935 to promote the commercial and industrial development of the city through the 1980s when Valleydale employed approximately 500 workers and had average annual sales of \$350 million. The development of the working-class East Bottom neighborhood adjacent to the plant was also associated with the establishment and growth of Valleydale and other nearby industries. As a corporate headquarters, the 1951 construction of the International-style office block at the front of the Valleydale Packers Inc. plant

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demonstrates a shift within the company to present a more publicly accessible image. This shift was further displayed in the innovative use of television to create a successful and enduring advertising campaign that featured animated pigs dancing, singing, working and marching to promote the Valleydale brand.

### **CRITERION C: Architecture**

The Valleydale Packers Inc. plant is architecturally significant at the local level as a well-preserved example of a meat processing plant in which the building's construction and materials, the organization of interconnected spaces, the interior finishes and the building's expansion over the years contribute to an understanding of the meat packing process and the evolution of this industry during the mid-twentieth century. The simple, functional design of Valleydale is defined by an open plan, lack of ornament, and use of reinforced concrete. Technology is combined with practicality in the use of "mushroom-and-slab" construction, which allows for an open plan aiding in the efficient movement of materials while also providing fireproofing. The strength of these reinforced concrete columns allowed for maximum space utilization, creating more open and flexible floor plans in industrial buildings. The layout of the various spaces throughout the plant relate directly to their function and its sequential role in the overall process of producing packaged meat products from livestock. Integral to the process and the function of the various spaces was the continuous overhead tracks that carried the meat through the various stages of production. While the track is no longer continuous, substantial sections of it remain in the building. Along with the interior plan the interior finishes also express the function of the plant. The interior finishes throughout the plant, such as the concrete floors with drains and glazed block walls, are easily washable in order to clean and sanitize the workspaces. The refrigerated areas are located in the central rooms of the building to take advantage of the lack of windows and light to aid in the cooling process.

The design of the building also exhibits the cultural trends of hiding the slaughtering and processing of animals from view, allowing the public to distance themselves from the violence necessary in the production of their meat products. The use of red brick and concrete construction materials, simple architectural form and lack of ornament not only reflects stylistic preferences of the time, but also follows the tendency of meat packing plants to hide interior activities behind inconspicuous, industrial facades. In the production areas on the first floor, windows are placed at the height of the wall to allow for light and ventilation in the workspace while hiding the unpleasant activities from public view. Furthermore, the construction of the two-story office space on the front elevation of the building conceals the slaughtering and processing of meat behind a corporate facade. Designed in the International-style, the 1951 office addition provides a public presence for the company with its central entrance in a projecting pavilion with double-height windows surmounted by the company name in stylized lettering and a roof-mounted flagpole.

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## Historic Context and Background

### The Industrialization and Commercialization of the Meat Packing Industry

The history of the American meat packing industry dates back to as early as 1662, when a pig slaughterhouse was established in Springfield, Massachusetts. By 1676, New York City officials were relocating slaughterhouses out of the densely populated areas of the city. The industrialization of the slaughterhouse occurred in the nineteenth century as part of the national evolution from an agrarian to an industrial society, spurred by urbanization, technological developments and concerns about public cleanliness. Cities around the United States were following New York's lead and building slaughterhouses outside of the city centers. These facilities were thoughtfully designed and located to reduce contemplation and questioning of what was happening inside them by the public. According to Amy Fitzgerald, "They were and still are non-descript—designed to look like any other factory. In Noelle Villaes's words, the slaughterhouse is a 'place that is no-place.'" <sup>1</sup> By removing the slaughtering and processing of meat from the public eye and industrializing the process, the consumption of meat could be detached from the violent and uncivilized processing of the animals. As Vialles notes, "From this point on, slaughtering was required to be industrial, that is to say large scale and anonymous; it must be non-violent (ideally: painless); and it must be invisible (ideally: non-existent). It must be as if it were not."<sup>2</sup>

Technological developments in the second half of the nineteenth century further industrialized and commercialized the meat packing process. As early as the 1850s, the hog slaughter segment of the meat packing industry was utilizing the mechanized disassembly line. This development allowed animal bodies to be continually moved between work stations, sparing workers the time and energy of moving the carcasses themselves and increasing productivity. Not only did this technology speed up the process, but it also allowed for the specialization of labor. The disassembly line influenced Henry Ford's 1913 model for the first assembly line to produce automobiles. <sup>3</sup> In 1875, with the introduction of refrigeration technology, slaughtering could be conducted year-round as meat could now be safely stored. In 1878, the refrigerated railcar, developed by Gustavus Swift and Andrew Chase, allowed processors and packers to distribute their meat to more markets further away.<sup>4</sup> The new dependence on the railroad in the meat packing industry made it necessary for slaughterhouse and processing facilities to be constructed along rail lines. These new technologies were further developed in the early-twentieth century and by 1930, the technological advancements as well as the arrival of chain store circulation, labor costs differentials and federal grading of meat quality made meat processing plants more numerous, standardized and profitable.<sup>5</sup>

### Salem's Industrial Growth

Since the late-nineteenth century, Salem has been a center for manufacturing and industry in southwest Virginia due to both its location along the railroad tracks and the efforts of its leaders to attract new industries to build their facilities in town. The first period of industrial

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growth in Salem occurred during the economic boom of the late 1880s and early 1890s. This growth was stimulated by the presence of the railroad as well as by land development companies. These organizations heavily promoted the town as an ideal place for new industries to locate. Several of the companies joined together to publish a forty-page circular of information titled *Salem, Virginia: Its Advantages and Attractions as a Place of Residence, Business, Investment and Manufacture*. In 1890, 39 buildings were constructed for manufacturing operations. These industries included the Holstein Woolen Mills, the Chadwick Two-Wheeler Works, the Salem Brick Works, Salem Steam Tannery, Camden Iron Works, Conrad Chair Manufacturing Company and Hockman Sash, Door, Blind and Building Company.<sup>6</sup> According to historian Norwood Middleton, by the beginning of the twentieth century, “Salem’s economy was grounded in a variety of manufacturing and industrial enterprises, as well as the usual retail and service establishments.”<sup>7</sup> The major firms employing Salem’s citizens and supporting the local economy were Salem Tannery, Salem Wagon Company, Camden Iron Works, Holstein Woolen Mill and Pants Factory, and Salem Machine Works.<sup>8</sup> Again in 1907, Salem’s business and civic leaders published a thirty-two-page promotional booklet, *Salem, Virginia—Something of Her Past History and Future Prospects*, to further the industrial and commercial development in town. In the 1910s, the Salem economy was supported by the Comas Cigarette Machinery Company and Salem Glass Company.<sup>9</sup>

Although the town was affected by the Great Depression in the 1930s, “a diversified base of governmental, educational and industrial jobs helped sustain Salem’s economy.”<sup>10</sup> Fortunately for the town, in July 1933, the Veterans Administration announced that it had selected a site in Salem for its new facility. The building of this facility created jobs in the local construction industry and 300 new full-time jobs for the town’s citizens once it opened in 1935.

The relocation of Neuhoff Incorporated from Lynchburg to Salem also helped ignite industrial growth in the small town in the mid-1930s. Only a year earlier, the Salem Chamber of Commerce was established to encourage business development as many residents believed that the city was “right at the beginning of the most prosperous period the town [had] enjoyed in many years.”<sup>11</sup> Along with the construction of the Neuhoff Meat Packing Plant, several other industries were established in Salem during the mid- to-late-1930s. The Peacock-Salem Laundry opened in 1935, the Maid Bess Garment Company opened in January 1937, and in 1938, the Chamber of Commerce created Salem Industries Inc. to raise funds to purchase land and open the Salem Full Fashioned Hosiery Mill, supported by Burlington Mills.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the decade, a study conducted by the Chamber of Commerce determined that Salem was economically prosperous and stable, with a diversity of business and industry.

Industries in Salem continued to prosper into the 1950s, as demonstrated by the trend of constructing major additions for plants including Valleydale Packers Inc., Salem Full Fashioned Hosiery, Rowe Furniture, Salem Foundry and Machine Works, Peacock-Salem Laundry, Woodson Pontiac and Jobe Florists. Valleydale constructed a large office wing to front the plant in 1951 and a laboratory wing on the west side of the plant in 1956.

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Additionally, in 1954, General Electric announced it would construct a multi-million-dollar plant in Salem.

### **Lorenz Neuhoff, Jr. and Valleydale Meat Packing**

The son of a meat packing company owner in Nashville, Tennessee, Lorenz Neuhoff, Jr. began working in the industry in 1919, at the young age of twelve. When he was seventeen his family moved to Atlanta and he became the superintendent of a Swift & Company plant, the youngest in the company's history. In 1933, at the age of twenty-six, he bought Scott Packing Company in Lynchburg, Virginia, and created his own company, Neuhoff Incorporated.

In December 1935, Neuhoff expressed his interest in building a plant in Salem, Virginia, if he could get a railway siding to the proposed site on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The Norfolk & Western Railroad quickly obliged and in 1936, Neuhoff moved his company to Salem. The location near the railroad was important as Neuhoff's company would distribute their products both around the state and beyond to New York, Pennsylvania, and North and South Carolina. Construction on the plant began in March 1936 with a crew of 125 men. The local newspaper at the time heralded the 23,000-square-foot brick and stone plant as including "every modern convenience and equipment."<sup>13</sup> The plant began operations in July 1936, with 75 employees on the payroll. By January 1937, the payroll had increased to 110 employees.<sup>14</sup> Neuhoff insisted on feeding employees one meal a day as the plant opened when the country was still recovering from the Great Depression. Employees were allowed to purchase meat at cost for their families.<sup>15</sup> The plant operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week with employees working in 8-hour shifts. Many of the employees lived in the surrounding working-class neighborhood of East Bottom.<sup>16</sup> As Neuhoff Incorporated continued to grow, the first of several additions to the plant was built in 1938.

In the 1940s and 1950s, Neuhoff expanded his company throughout the Southeast by acquiring companies and packing plants in Tennessee, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina and Alabama. In 1941, Neuhoff completed a second major addition to the plant to accommodate expanded slaughtering and processing activities. During World War II, German prisoners from Salem's POW camp worked at the plant to fill jobs vacated by the men and women who had left to serve in the American war effort.<sup>17</sup> These POWs were first housed in an old garage on Indiana Street near the plant before they were moved to a vacant 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps camp near Catawba Mountain.<sup>18</sup> Companies that employed these POWs typically paid 50-60 cents to the U.S. government. The prisoners would receive 10 cents in special scrip to buy items at camp.<sup>19</sup>

In 1948, Neuhoff changed the company name to Valleydale Packers. Major plant additions continued to be constructed in the 1950s. In 1951, a large, two-story office block was added to the front of the building for shipping, sales and administrative activities. By 1958, annual gross sales for Valleydale Packers were in excess of \$100 million. By 1964, it was the fourth largest employer in Salem, after General Electric, Eaton, Yale & Towne, and Rowe

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Furniture.<sup>20</sup> Valleydale offered opportunities for employees to socialize outside of the workplace, hosting annual company picnics and sponsoring company sports teams. The trophy case in the front lobby displayed the achievements of these company teams.

In 1970, Lorenz Neuhoff, Jr. retired from his position as president of the company; however, he remained Chairman until his death in 1988. During the 1970s and 1980s, the plant reached its peak in production averaging \$350 million in annual sales with a workforce of approximately 500 employees. According to Bruton Taylor, former comptroller, the plant processed between 3,000 and 4,000 hogs a day and 100-200 cattle. The plant also processed sheep in lesser quantities.<sup>21</sup>

In 1992, the Neuhoff family sold the company to Smithfield Foods. Founded by Joseph W. Luter in 1936, in Smithfield, Virginia, to produce Smithfield Hams, the company is now one of the largest pork producers in the world. According to the *Washington Post*, the Salem plant employed 200 people at the time of Smithfield's acquisition. Under Smithfield's ownership, the Salem plant production shifted to focus on bacon and boiled hams. As the plant was no longer used for slaughtering, Smithfield added a number of insulated partition walls for refrigerated coolers as well as more smokers and cookers during this time.<sup>22</sup> The plant was closed in 2005, costing approximately 344 employees their jobs and costing the city of Salem \$135,000 in annual tax revenue.<sup>23</sup> Smithfield Foods blamed the shutdown on "the plant's age, distance from pork suppliers and new Smithfield facilities in North Carolina, as well as estimated costs of plant upgrades."<sup>24</sup>

## Marketing Innovation

Valleydale Packers became known not only for its meat packing success, but also for its innovative marketing that utilized the new medium of television. In 1952, the Roanoke Valley's first television station, WSLS, aired its first commercial advertising Valleydale products.<sup>25</sup> The marketing success of the company is credited to Neuhoff, who realized the potential power of television advertising at an early date. The series of Valleydale commercials produced for television in the 1950s and 1960s featured animated pigs working, singing, dancing and marching in a parade. Also used by Neuhoff's other companies throughout the Southeast, these "dancing pigs" would become integral to the Valleydale and Frosty Morn brands for the next half-century. The iconic pigs were prominently featured in Valleydale advertising, including advertisements in the *Washington Post* and product packaging through the early twenty-first century and are claimed to be one of the most enduring marketing campaigns. The cartoon pigs epitomize 1950s advertising, which utilized a variety of cartoons and animations to take advantage of the television's capacity to show movement.<sup>26</sup> When the *Washington Post* reported on the Smithfield acquisition of the company, it noted the brand as famed for its "marching pigs."<sup>27</sup> When the plant closed in 2005, the *Roanoke Times* reported that longtime area residents could still recall these original ads as well as the jingle, "Hooray for Valleydale." Thus, the legacy of the Valleydale pigs transcends its bygone products.



Valleydale Packers  
Name of Property

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Adams, Duncan. "A great untold story of World War II: German POWs aren't forgotten in Southwest Virginia." *The Roanoke Times*. June 4, 2011.

Adams, Duncan. "Valleydale Foods in Salem will cease operations." *The Roanoke Times*. November 29, 2005.

Arnould, Richard J. "Patterns of Concentration in American Meat Packing, 1880-1963." *The Business History Review*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring 1971), pp. 18-34.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3113303> (accessed March 5, 2018).

Cronk, Sheryl. Telephone interview. March 8, 2018

"Digest: Economy." *The Washington Post*. September 2, 1992. F2.

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Fitzgerald, Amy J. "A Social History of the Slaughterhouse: From Inception to Contemporary Implications." *Human Ecology Review*. Vol 17, No. 1 (Summer 2010), pp. 58-69.  
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Stebbins, Frances. "German prisoners left lasting legacy." *Salem-Times Register*. August 4, 2016.

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<http://proxygw.wrlc.org/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxygw.wrlc.org/docview/302219130?accountid=11243> (accessed October 30, 2017).

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January 23, 2014. <http://ourvalley.org/valleydales-success-was-capitalizing-on-tv-commercials/>.

Vialles, Noelie. *From Animal to Edible*. Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Young, William H. and Nancy K. Young. *American Popular Culture through History: the 1950s*. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 2004.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR File No. 129-5051

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property:** 10.62 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. NW Corner: Latitude: 37.282840°

Longitude: -80.046310°

Valleydale Packers  
Name of Property

Salem, VA  
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2. NE Corner: Latitude: 37.283040° Longitude: -80.045260°  
3. SE Corner: Latitude: 37.281020° Longitude: -80.043050°  
4. SW Corner: Latitude: 37.280540° Longitude: -80.045670°

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:  
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:  
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:  
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is coterminous with the lot lines of tax parcel 186-6-1 as recorded by the City of Salem. The attached Sketch Map + Photo Key shows the true and correct historic boundary.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the 10.62-acre property associated with Valleydale Packers since its construction in 1936 and thus includes the property's historic setting and all known historic resources.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Kathryn Kronau  
organization: Hill Studio, PC  
street & number: 120 Campbell Avenue SW  
city or town: Roanoke state: Virginia zip code: 24011  
e-mail: kkronau@hillstudio.com  
telephone: 540-342-5263  
date: May 2018

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**Additional Documentation**

Valleydale Packers  
Name of Property

Salem, VA  
County and State

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Valleydale Packers  
City or Vicinity: Salem (City)  
State: Virginia  
Photographer: Katie Gutshall  
Date Photographed: September 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 14: North (front) elevation, view south from 8<sup>th</sup> Street
- Photo 2 of 14: North (front) elevation, view SE
- Photo 3 of 14: Shipping dock and north (front) elevation, view SW from 8<sup>th</sup> Street
- Photo 4 of 14: South (rear) elevation, view NE from Indiana Street
- Photo 5 of 14: East elevation, view NW from Ohio Avenue
- Photo 6 of 14: Stockyards behind the plant, view NW
- Photo 7 of 14: Front entrance and lobby, view from second floor mezzanine
- Photo 8 of 14: Stairs in office addition, second floor
- Photo 9 of 14: Corridor along General Manager's office and shipping office, view west
- Photo 10 of 14: Shipping area/shipping cooler, view east
- Photo 11 of 14: Cook area, view NW
- Photo 12 of 14: Smoking area/sausage manufacturing, view east

Valleydale Packers  
Name of Property

Salem, VA  
County and State

Photo 13 of 14: Historic cafeteria, view SE  
Photo 14 of 14: Sewer screen house, view SW

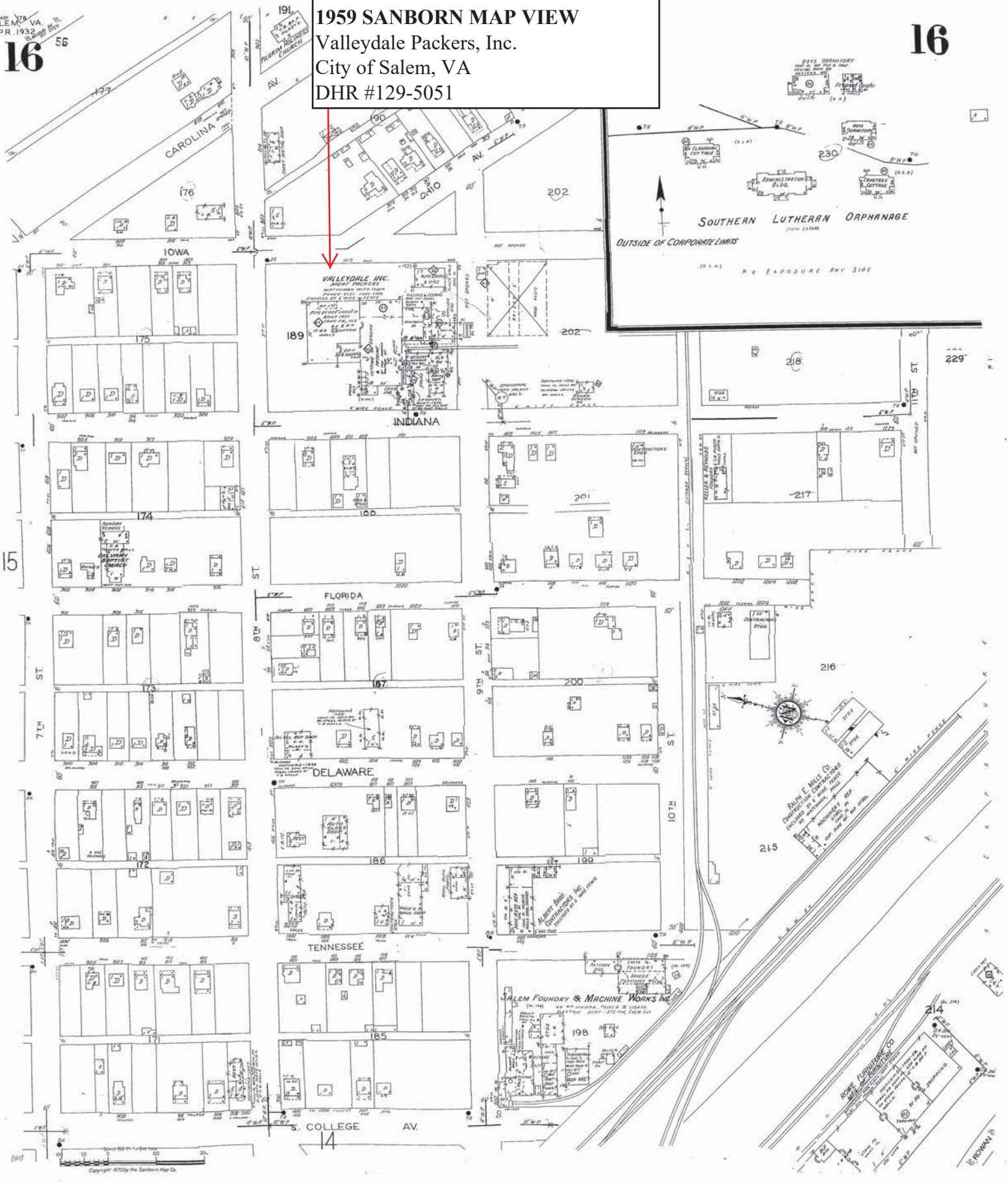
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Amy J. Fitzgerald, *Social History of the Slaughterhouse*, 59-60
- <sup>2</sup>Noelie Vialles, *Animal to Edible*, 22
- <sup>3</sup>Fitzgerald, 44
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid, 41
- <sup>5</sup>Richard J. Arnould, *Changing Patterns of Concentration in American Meat Packing*, 26
- <sup>6</sup>Norwood Middleton, *Salem: a Virginia Chronicle*, 133-134
- <sup>7</sup>Middleton, 232
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid, 233
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid, 270-71
- <sup>10</sup>National Register Nomination, "Downtown Salem Historic District"
- <sup>11</sup>Norwood, 314
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid, 314-15
- <sup>13</sup>Valleydale Company History, 1
- <sup>14</sup>Norwood, 314
- <sup>15</sup>Bruton Taylor Interview
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid
- <sup>17</sup>Ibid
- <sup>18</sup>Stebbins, Frances. "German prisoners left lasting legacy." *Salem-Times Register*, August 4, 2016.
- <sup>19</sup>Duncan Adams, "A great untold story of World War II: German POWs aren't forgotten in Southwest Virginia," *The Roanoke Times*.
- <sup>20</sup>Alfred Wright Stuart, *The Suburbanization of Manufacturing in a Small Metropolitan Area: Roanoke, Virginia*, 161
- <sup>21</sup>Taylor Interview
- <sup>22</sup>"Smithfield Foods," *Washington Post*
- <sup>23</sup>Adams, Duncan. "Valleydale Foods in Salem will cease operations." *The Roanoke Times*
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid
- <sup>25</sup>Middleton, 367
- <sup>26</sup>William and Nancy Young, *American Popular Culture through History: the 1950s*, 42
- <sup>27</sup>"Smithfield Foods," *Washington Post*,

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION:**  
**1959 SANBORN MAP VIEW**  
Valleydale Packers, Inc.  
City of Salem, VA  
DHR #129-5051



**1959 Sanborn Map  
Salem, VA**

## Legend

### Digital Location Map

Valleydale Packers, Inc.

VDHR ID# 129-5051

710 E. 8th Street

City of Salem, VA 24153

### LOCATION COORDINATES

1. NW Corner

Lat: 37.282840°

Lon: -80.046310°

2. NE Corner

Lat: 37.283040°

Lon: -80.045260°

3. SE Corner

Lat: 37.281020°

Lon: -80.043050°

4. SW Corner

Lat: 37.280540°

Lon: -80.045670°

WGS84

Map Source: VCRIS



Feet

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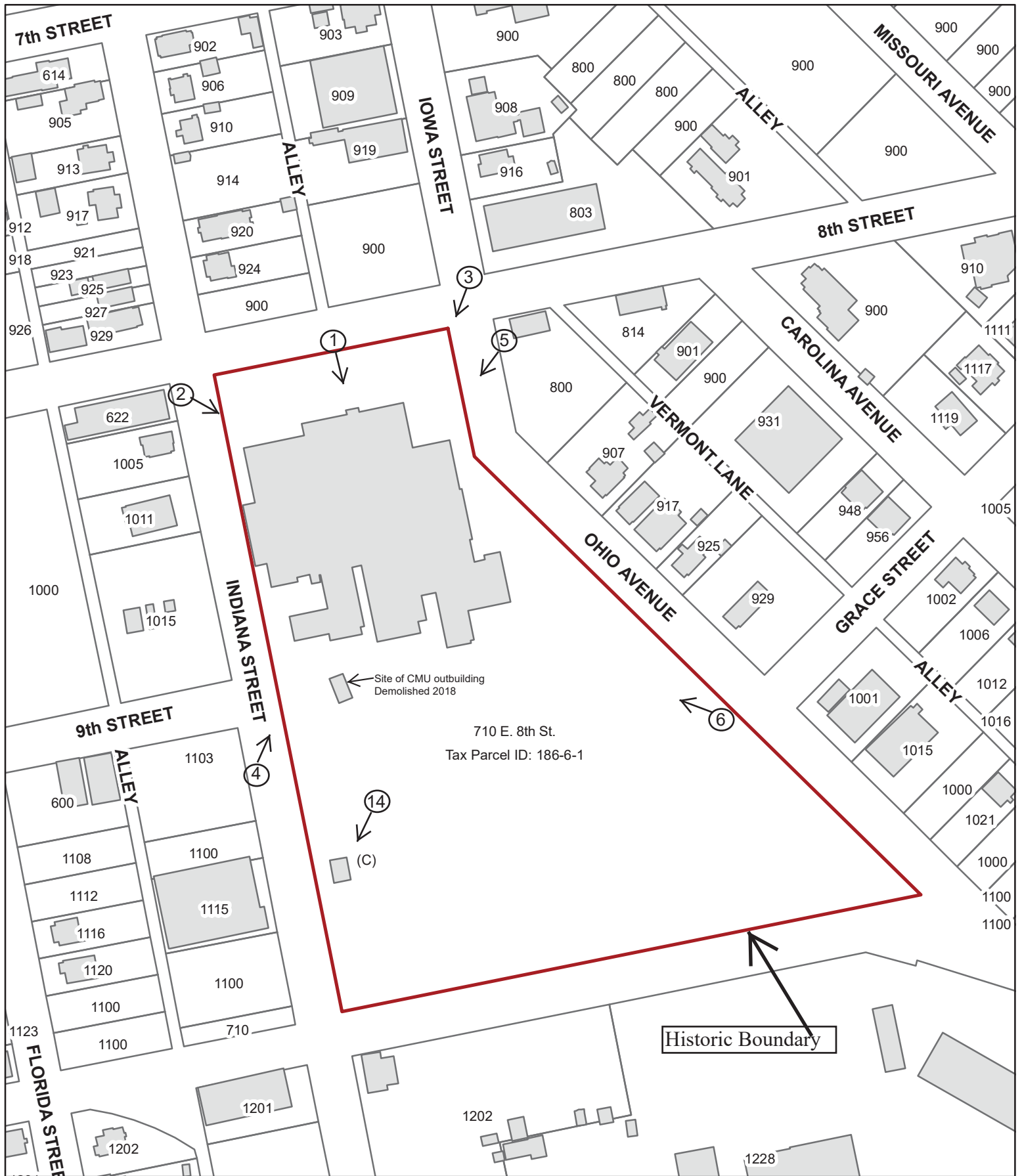
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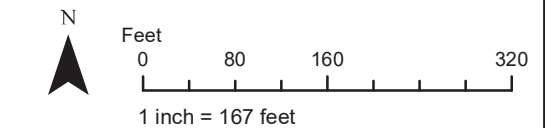
**Date: 2/12/2018**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*



**Sketch Map + Photo Key**  
**Valleydale Packers, Inc.**  
**VDHR ID # 129-5051**  
**710 E 8th Street**  
**City of Salem, VA**



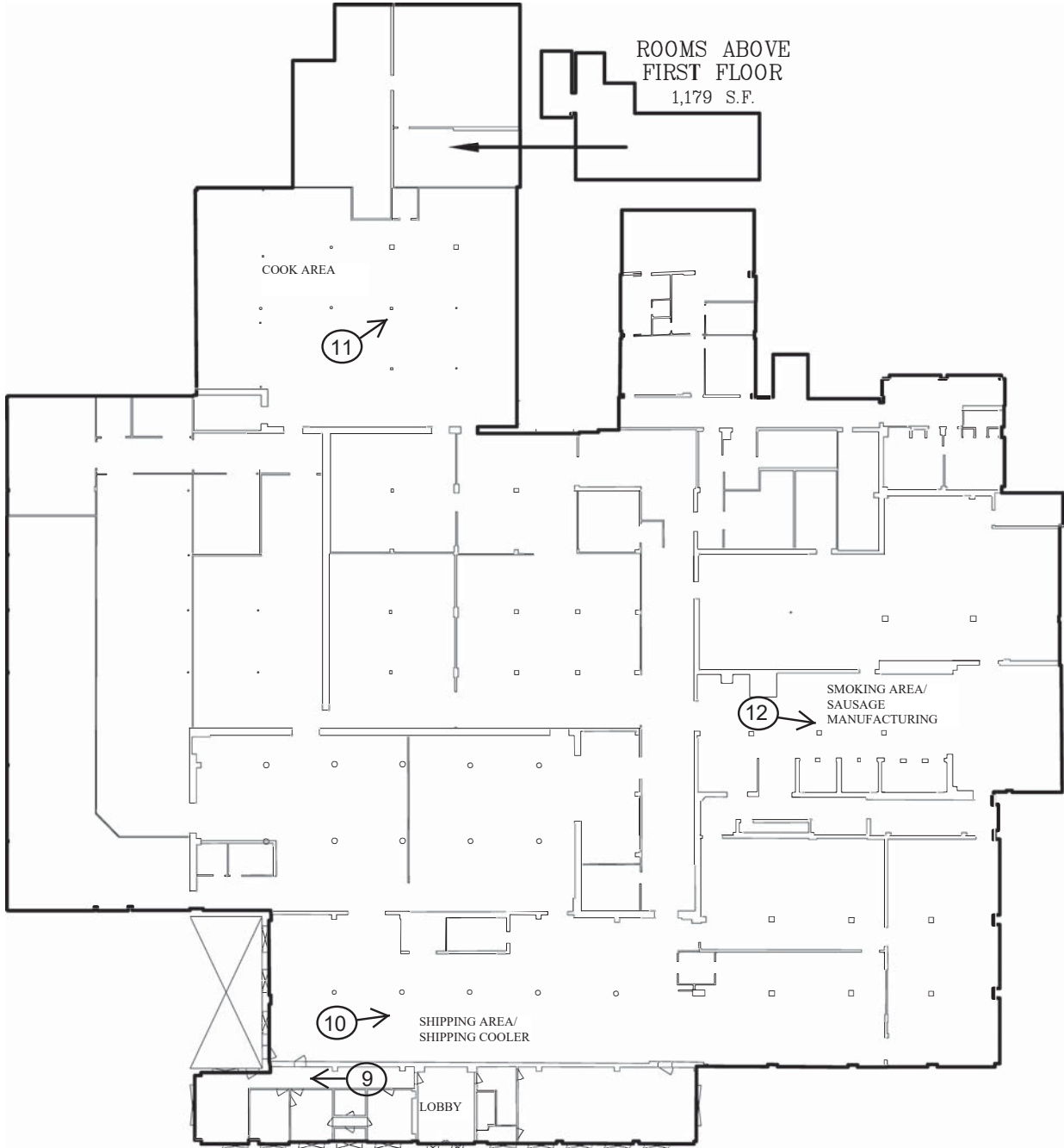


# FIRST FLOOR - PHOTO KEY

Valleydale Packers, Inc.

City of Salem, VA

DHR No. 129-5051



FIRST FLOOR  
56,445 S.F.

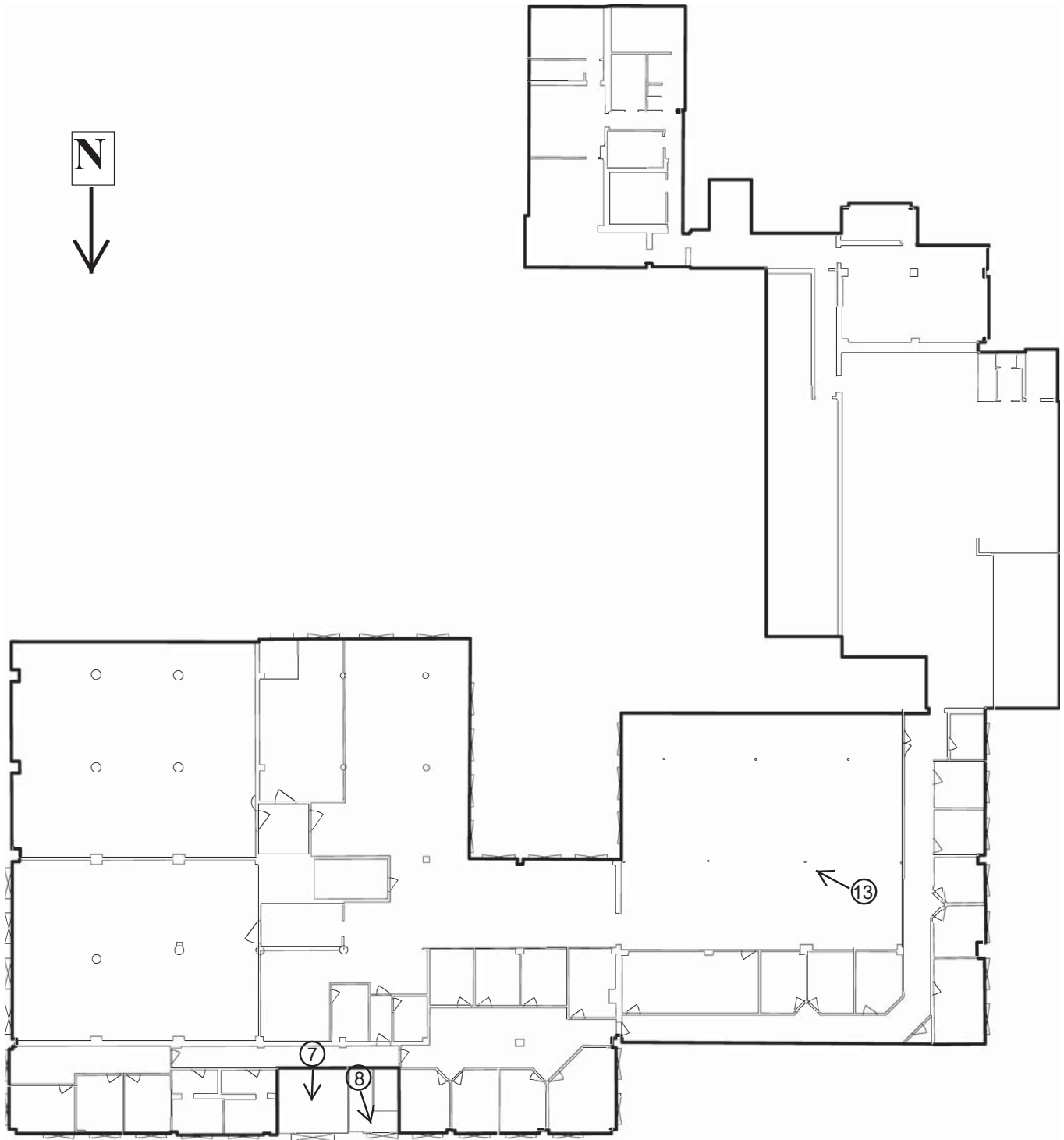


# SECOND FLOOR PLAN AND PHOTO KEY

Valleydale Packers, Inc.

City of Salem, VA

DHR No. 129-5051



SECOND FLOOR

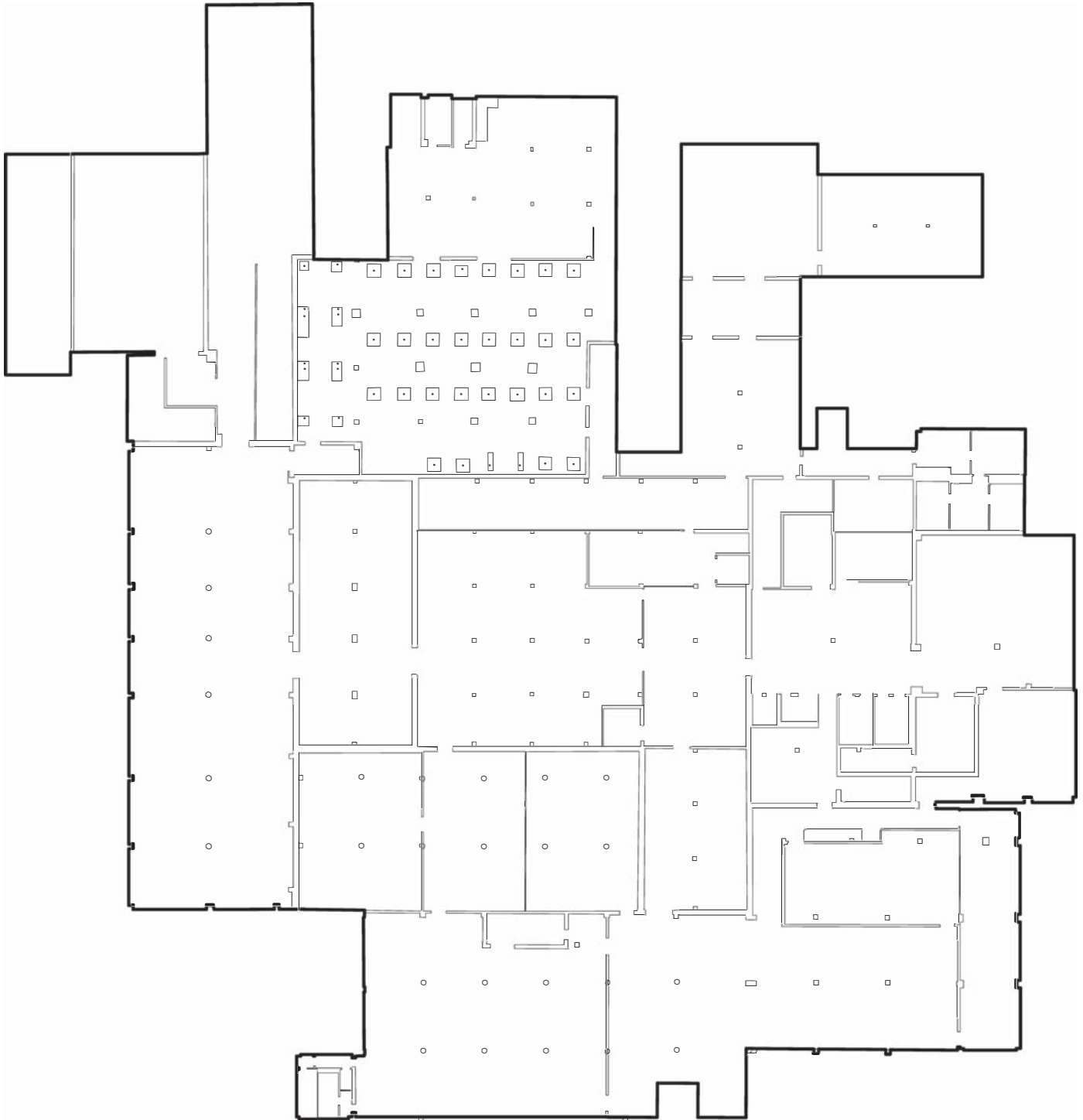
26,045 S.F.

# BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

Valleydale Packers, Inc.

City of Salem, VA

DHR No. 129-5051



BASEMENT  
68,482 S.F.



**ANNOTATED FIRST FLOOR PLAN**  
Valleydale Packers, Inc.  
City of Salem, VA  
DHR No. 129-5051

