

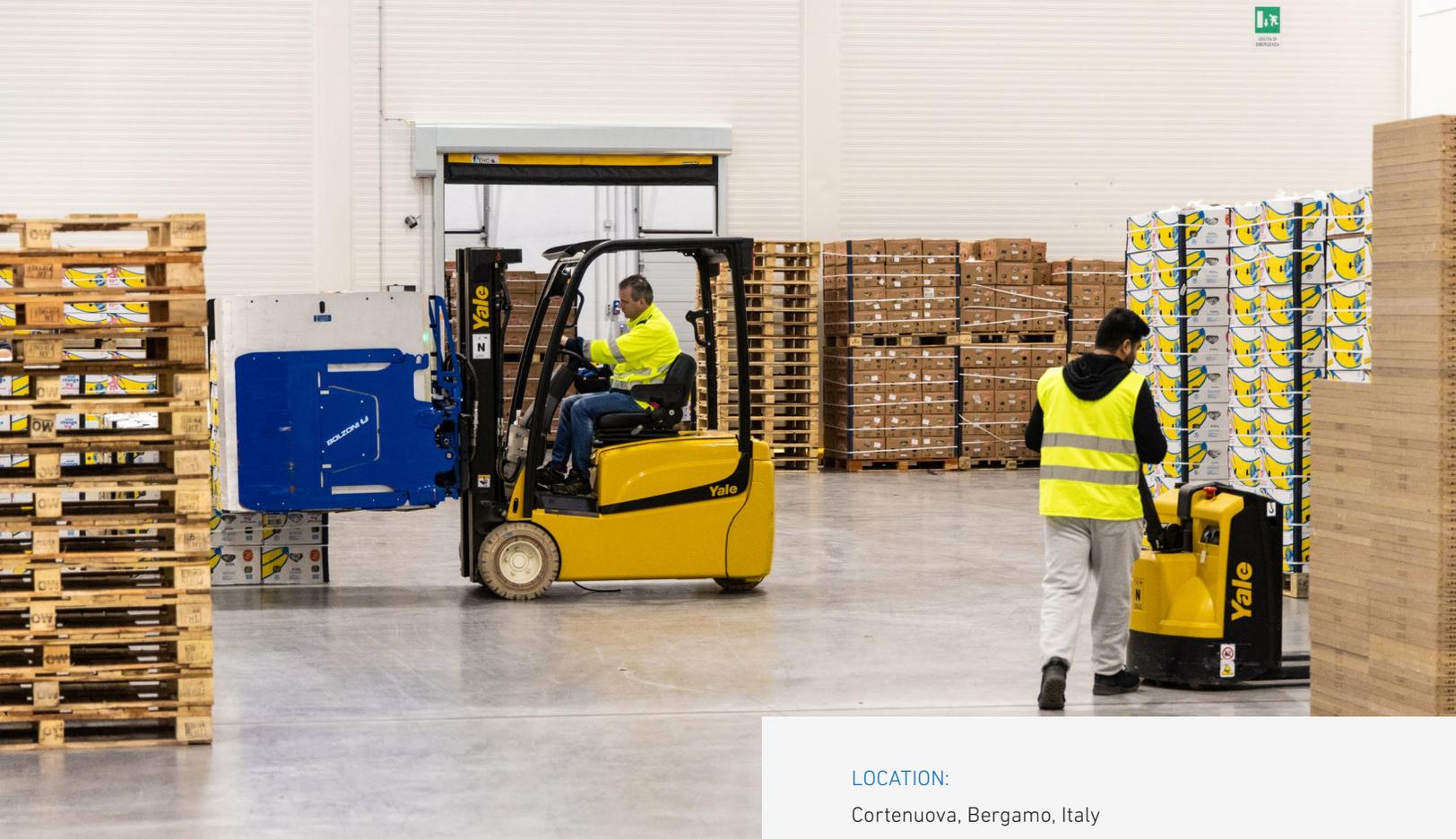
FOOD PROCESSING & DISTRIBUTION | ELECTRIC LIFT TRUCKS

Chiquita Banana

Efficient Yale fleet helps keep fruit fresh at Chiquita

CASE STUDY





Challenge

PRECISE COLD-STORAGE HANDLING

Cold storage conditions place specific demands on materials handling equipment, particularly when it comes to dealing with perishable food products that need specialized processing. Understanding these demands has been a key element in the successful relationship between Yale Lift Truck Technologies, its local dealer, Unicar, and the Chiquita facility in Cortenuova, Bergamo, northern Italy.

Chiquita, a leading international producer and distributor of bananas, opened a brand-new warehouse in April 2024. The plant is the biggest ripening center in Europe, strategically located in the heart of Italy's logistics operations.

The new site includes nine loading docks and 24 ripening rooms, each with a capacity of 48 pallets, and two packaging lines producing up to 45 trays per minute. The site features the latest cooling techniques, which minimize the dehumidification of internal air to optimize fruit ripening conditions. The packaging operations and pallet handling both take place in a temperature-controlled

LOCATION:

Cortenuova, Bergamo, Italy

PRODUCTS:

- ERP16VT
- ERP20VT
- MP16
- MP20X
- M020X

area so that bananas are kept in an ideal environment. With loading docks on both sides, Chiquita has designed the optimum flow of daily operations, creating an efficient working environment and supporting site safety processes.

The facility operates seven days a week running a single shift of 8-10 hours, with temperatures between 57 and 64 degrees Fahrenheit (14 and 18 degrees Celsius). Green bananas are received from the port, stored in ripening rooms and dispatched to customers. The ripening rooms have narrow, off-center aisles, which makes pallet handling a complex challenge. Loading and unloading operations and pallet transport in the warehouse also require efficiency and precision to protect against spoilage and damage.



The primary challenge we face is maneuvering pallets in and out of the ripening rooms, especially when stocking the upper levels. The narrow and off-center aisles cause the lifting cylinders to occasionally touch the metal structures, so we needed an ergonomic and compact solution. The Yale trucks are performing well for these tasks, and we are maintaining efficient operational timings.

ROBERTO GALDONI

Distribution Center Manager, Chiquita



Solution

EMPOWERING SMOOTH WAREHOUSE MOVES

The Yale ERP16VT and ERP20VT 3-wheel electric counterbalance forklifts are at the heart of Chiquita's warehouse operations. These efficient, versatile lift trucks are a strong fit for indoor warehouse applications, which include loading and unloading incoming and outgoing tractor-trailers, managing the intricate operations within the ripening rooms and transporting pallets throughout the warehouse. To meet Chiquita's needs, the lift trucks are equipped with non-marking tires and clamp attachments to support facility cleanliness and precise picking and selection.

Complementing the forklift fleet are MP16 and MP20X low-lift pallet trucks, with and without operator platforms. These reliable and efficient trucks are essential for horizontal transportation of pallets within the warehouse, enabling smooth and timely movement of goods.

The latest addition to Chiquita's fleet is the innovative MO20X order picker pallet truck. Designed for optimal performance in confined spaces, this lift truck excels at picking and placing pallets at various heights. Its compact design and precise controls make it an invaluable asset for efficient order fulfillment.

Strategically deploying these Yale trucks helps Chiquita maximize productivity and minimize downtime in its warehouse. The combination of powerful forklifts, versatile pallet trucks and efficient order pickers enables the company to meet the requirements of its intense operations while maintaining a high level of precision and adhering to site safety rules.

Impact

A COMPLETE FLEET AND SERVICE SOLUTION

"We selected Yale as our logistics equipment partner because of its reputation for building reliable trucks, delivering top-tier quality and longevity," explained Roberto Galdoni, Distribution Center Manager, Chiquita. "Moreover, their swift and efficient after-sales service was a crucial factor for us, as uninterrupted operations are paramount to our business. Additionally, Yale presented the most compelling return on investment, making it a financially sound decision."

"Our collaboration with Unicar, an experienced and independent Yale dealer, has been exceptionally positive. The service provided has been consistently excellent and highly efficient. This level of support and responsiveness has significantly contributed to our overall satisfaction with Yale," said Galdoni.



For more information on Yale warehouse trucks, visit [Yale.com](https://www.yale.com).