

# Heavy lifting at freezer facility

**C**rown lift truck company equipment, which is, supplied in South Africa by Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC), has been contracted to supply a range of materials handling equipment for the frozen foods facility in Cato Ridge of wholesaler and distributor of frozen foods Merlog Foods.

The Crown order includes an ESR 5000 series cold store reach truck, five Crown GPC series low-level order pickers with platform lift, two WT3040-2.0 series electric pallet trucks and two electric 1.8 t counter-balanced forklifts, used for shunting stock in receiving and dispatch and picking and replenishing in the picking store.

Merlog operates from two

facilities – one in Cato Ridge, near Durban, and the other in Heriotdale, Johannesburg. The Cato Ridge facility is Merlog Foods' new head office and distribution centre. Its freezer facility includes an 11 300-pallet fully automated bulk cold store with an automatic storage and retrieval system and warehouse management system.

Merlog operations manager **Malcolm Fuller** states that the freezer facility is the only one of its kind in the country.

"In essence, it is a 'dark store', which means that, aside from one crane operating at  $-25^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the bulk store, there are no other staff or equipment," says Fuller.

He notes that many of Merlog's competitors in the frozen foods industry said that the concept

would never work.

"But it has, in a big way," he says, explaining that the new configuration has improved stock accuracy, eliminated stock and racking damage, reduced working hours and significantly improved efficiencies.

He explains that Crown was chosen owing to the quality of its machines, combined with outstanding service from GLTC's team.

"Merlog can trust Crown equipment and, in the event of something going wrong, GLTC's service team will attend to the problem quickly and efficiently," Fuller says.

He notes that the streamlined operation was accomplished through vision, a clear market understanding and setting goals and sticking to them.

"We listen carefully to our clients to provide them with the products and logistics solutions suitable for their needs," he adds.

Fuller explains that the Crown machines are well suited for the operation, which is hi-tech and

### Award-Winning Machinery

The ESR 5000 reach truck series won multiple international awards for design and performance while the WT3000 series was awarded the prestigious British Industrial Truck Association-organised Design for Safety Award in the Industrial Vehicles category at the International Materials Handling Exhibition trade show last year.

an exceptional technological achievement.

"Crown's design and performance are unsurpassed and they certainly complement this state-of-the-art facility," says Fuller.

GLTC MD **Darryl Shafto** says that Crown machines are popular both here and globally owing to a combination of first-class design with superior operator comfort and practical features.