

## Big fleet for small goods

**Client:** Primo Smallgoods  
**Location:** Chullora, New South Wales  
**Application:** Warehousing/Distribution  
**Equipment:** Turret trucks, Orderpickers, Gas forklifts, Pallet trucks, Reach trucks, Electric C/B.



**Primo Smallgoods is a family-owned and operated business that is now a household name both locally and abroad. From humble beginnings, the company has gone on to become the largest producer of ham, bacon and smallgoods in Australia.**

Catering for both the domestic and export market, Primo holds a unique position in the industry, owning and operating abattoirs, manufacturing plants, packing facilities and distribution warehouses.

Primo Smallgoods was founded in 1985 when it opened a manufacturing facility in Homebush, Sydney with approximately 38 employees on staff. In 20 years, the company has had an astounding rise to success and now has more than 2,000 loyal employees. Sticking to traditional recipes that date back five generations, Primo maintains its first and foremost obligation is to





**"The Lindes are a very tough and reliable bit of gear. There is a lot to be said for German engineering."**

Peter Treneman – General Manager, Primo



**Right:** Primo operates a 100+ forklift fleet, which is predominantly the Linde brand.



**Left:** Primo's new 'K-series' turret trucks are the first in the world of this new model to be installed in a refrigerated operation.

**Below:** The new 'K-series' enables sophisticated analysis of the machine's parameters through the use of laptops.



satisfy the needs of customers by supplying high-quality food in a timely manner.

As demands on the business escalated over the years, Primo relocated from Homebush to its current site at Chullora early in 1998. Covering more than 20,000 square metres, the Chullora plant is one of the largest multi-purpose factories in the southern hemisphere. The site defines Primo's place in the market as the most hygienic, modern and cost-effective plant in the world.

The same year, Primo Smallgoods attained an abattoir at Port Wakefield, South Australia. The state-of-the-art abattoir now processes in excess of 12,000 pigs per week for both the resale and wholesale trade as well as serving export markets with pork cuts, both fresh and frozen. The following year, Primo purchased a second abattoir at Scone in the picturesque Hunter Valley. The export registered abattoir has since become the central point of the Primo Meats division in Australia.

"These abattoirs use the most modern equipment available and have enabled Primo to provide meat solutions to the overseas retail and food service markets, meeting local tastes and providing healthy eating alternatives," said Paul Lederer, Managing Director of Primo. "They have increased our capability of developing customer specific products for world markets and in doing so we are fast achieving the goal of becoming the leading exporter of value-added food in Australia."

"To remain at the forefront of the industry, we benchmark our costs against the best practice globally, not locally," Paul added. "We remain proactive and continue to be focused. The loyalty of our people and their dedication to our customers is, without doubt, our greatest competitive advantage."

Primo today produces more than 40,000 cartons of ham and bacon smallgoods per day, makes 160,000 sausages per hour and loads a semi at its Chullora production plant every half hour.

Over the past three years, the company has increased its market-share nationally in packaged smallgoods by 400%. This has been achieved by innovation, new packaging and a national advertising campaign.

Such dramatic growth is obviously always going to place huge pressure on any company's logistics activities. A decade ago, Primo operated two forklifts. Now, the company operates very narrow aisle, high bay freezer warehouses and a forklift fleet of over 100.

According to Primo's General Manager, Mr Peter Treneman, it's been a very steep, but successful learning curve. He says that the company's 10 year partnership with Linde forklifts has played a major role in managing the dramatic increase in product lines and inventory.

"The Primo culture is still today very much based on our farming heritage. We've always dealt with farmers and in true country style we are loyal to our suppliers and believe in partnerships that are good for both companies.

"Linde has been an integral part of our logistics progression. We get them involved in the planning stages so they can provide our operations with the most effective piece of equipment from a safety and productivity viewpoint.

"For example, when we were building our Chullora freezer it made financial sense to build higher than originally planned, to optimise building cost per pallet space. Our restriction was the ability to access pallets in double-deep racking at 10 metres.



**“One of the key reasons we have stayed with Linde is the benefits of dealing direct with the manufacturer.”**

Peter Treneman – General Manager, Primo

“Linde brought in a warehouse equipment expert from Linde UK who then designed and custom-built a double-deep reach truck that could handle one tonne at 10 metres. It was the first of its kind in Australia and is still a key part of our fleet.

“This scenario has been typical of our relationship with them. We give them loyalty and in return they add great value through providing genuine solutions. I could source much cheaper forklifts than Linde, but Primo has never been about just saving upfront dollars because the real cost of a forklift is driven by operator comfort, productivity and running costs.

The Linde fleet at Primo now includes Turret Trucks, Orderpickers, Gas forklifts, Pallet trucks, Reach trucks and Electric Counterbalance Forklift with the majority of the fleet being freezer proof.

“One of the key reasons we have stayed with Linde is the benefits of dealing direct with the manufacturer.

“It’s very unlikely a distributor could have provided the factory support that Linde is able to offer. It’s also important to know that a key supplier is going to be around to support you in the years to come.

“Most importantly, the products are outstanding. This is a very tough environment. Our fleet is working in refrigerated and freezer environments for up to 24 hours/day, six to seven days/week. The Lindses are a very tough and reliable bit of gear. There is a lot to be said for German engineering.

“The safety of our staff is always the priority, so we are comforted by the level of safety measures and ergonomic features that Linde seem to lead the industry in. The main issues we look for in forklifts is operator comfort, the ergonomics of the controls, and visibility, especially on reach trucks that are retrieving pallets at 10 metres,” explained Peter.

The Linde fleet is used in all aspects of Primo’s abattoir, manufacturing and warehousing operations including the loading and unloading of trucks, production and cold store warehousing.



**Above:** A Linde Reach Truck stacking pallets at 10 m on double-deep racking.

**For further information contact**

Linde Materials Handling  
 5 Distillers Place,  
 Huntingwood NSW 2148  
 Phone: 1300 135 463  
 Email: [contact@lindemh.com.au](mailto:contact@lindemh.com.au)