



## CUSTOMER RESULTS



“With this design, we now have another three to four years before we need to consider purchasing another facility. I’m looking forward to working with Crown again to design racking and pallet flow for future new buildings. The Crown team did a great job. They were very flexible and knew exactly how to handle the project.”

**Paul Cochrane,**  
Inventory Manager  
Columbus Vegetable Oils



Watch how Crown Equipment helped Columbus Vegetable Oils realize 50% more warehouse space.

# Columbus Vegetable Oils

## Storage System Increases Capacity, Saves Cost of Purchasing New Warehouse

### APPLICATION

Columbus Vegetable Oils is a Des Plaines, Illinois-based provider of shortening and oils. Within its 330,000-square-foot warehouse, the company processes and packages more than 100 different products, including salad and cooking oils, solid and liquid shortening, bakery oils and more. Packaging varies from 24-ounce retail size to industrial bulk tankers. The company’s products are distributed in all 50 states and select international locations. At any given time, about 2,000 totes, each containing 2,000 pounds of product, are stored in the facility. About 45 to 50 truckloads (20 pallets a truck) of product are shipped per day, with about 80 percent of the product moving through the facility within a week.

### CHALLENGE

Unexpected growth significantly strained the warehouse’s capacity and threatened to negatively impact warehouse flow. At that time, the Columbus Vegetable Oils’ facility did not contain any racking. Product was stacked on pallets, which were placed directly on the floor. As business increased, more pallets were added, which in turn took up more space and increased placement and retrieval times. As space disappeared, it became more difficult to manually rotate product, which slightly increased the risk of oil spoilage.

### SOLUTION

Crown worked closely with Rack Builders, Inc. and Mallard Manufacturing to create a dynamic storage system comprised of push-back racks for put-away aisles and pallet-flow racks for shipping aisles. The pallet flow racks apply the “first in, first out” principle: pallets are loaded on the entry side, and the slope of the racks automatically takes the pallet to the next position. When the front pallet is removed, the remaining pallets slide into place. The racks support 50-inch high totes containing up to a ton of product each. With the new racking system in place, Columbus Oils is now able to meet its growing capacity needs.

### RESULT

- The company **did not have to purchase another warehouse.**
- Realized **50% more warehouse space.**
- The warehouse team is no longer physically rotating stock, **reducing traffic flow by two-thirds.** And, forklift operators who used to spend a good deal of time driving all around the facility are now able to be more productive in their work.



Columbus Vegetable Oils now has 8,000 pallet positions in racks with staging, compared to 4,500 pallet positions and floor stocking.