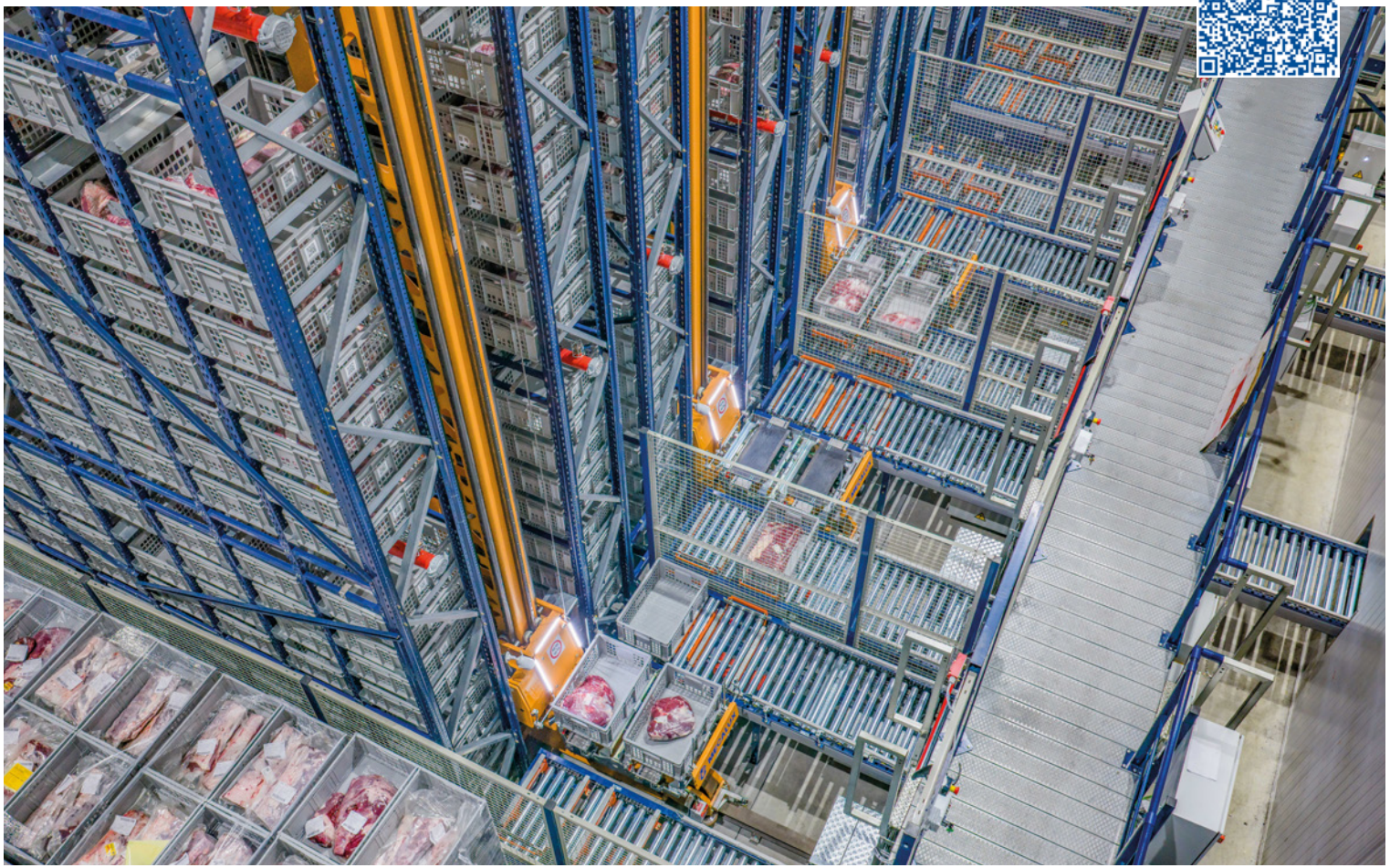
Streamlined tracking of 55 tons of beef per day

Novafrigsa automates the handling and storage of vacuum-packed meat to increase capacity, enhance traceability, and optimize cold chain management.

Country: **Spain** | Sector: **food & beverage**



CHALLENGES

- Manage production growth without compromising traceability for every cut of beef.
- Eliminate manual movements involved in transferring products from the cutting room every day.
- Optimize storage space while maintaining the cold chain.

SOLUTIONS

- Mini-Load System (AS/RS for Boxes).
- Easy WMS Warehouse Management System.
- Roller Conveyor for Boxes, Totes, and Bins.

BENEFITS

- Individual control of every cut of beef and complete, real-time inventory visibility.
- Error-free automated handling of 55 tons of product per day.
- Storage for 21,888 totes in just 4,070 ft^2, with lower energy consumption thanks to centralized inventory.

Novafrigsa is a member of the Coren Group specializing in beef processing. Based in the Galicia region, the company is part of one of Spain's largest agricultural and food cooperatives. Its industrial capacity and commitment to quality and food safety have made it a significant player in the meat industry.

» **Founded: 1995**
» **Employees: 420**

When a company supplies thousands of pounds of fresh meat to customers on three continents, logistics is no longer just an operational support function — it becomes a strategic priority. For Novafrigsa, business growth presented a clear but demanding challenge: to increase capacity without compromising traceability, the cold chain, or operational efficiency.

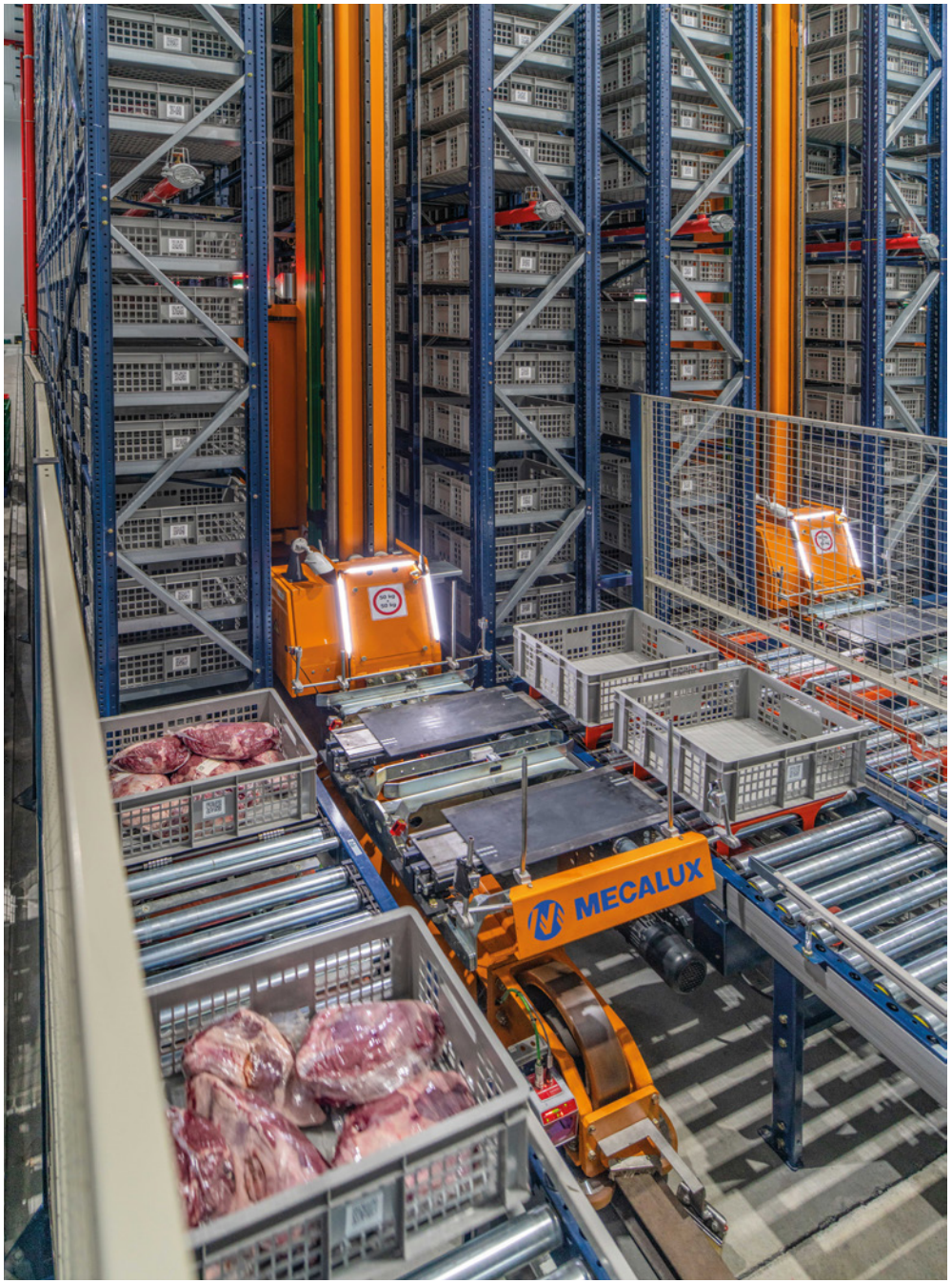
Novafrigsa's facility in Lugo — the largest beef processing center in Galicia — has grown steadily in recent years. "In 2025, we exceeded $225 million in revenue and reached a record production volume. In addition to supplying the domestic market, we export to Europe, Asia, and Africa. This growth required a more scalable logistics operation capable of handling larger product volumes," says Javier Prieto, Production Manager.



Novafrigsa's solution combines a mini-load system (AS/RS for boxes) and Easy WMS, Mecalux's warehouse management software, to consolidate all vacuum-packed meat in one location. Operating at temperatures between 28 and 32 °F, the facility connects directly to the cutting room through an automated roller conveyor for boxes. These solutions accelerate material handling and enable accurate product tracking.

"With the mini-load AS/RS, we can consolidate all the meat in one storage system. We've optimized space and improved operational efficiency. We can now ensure traceability for every cut of beef," says Prieto. "Digitalization gives us complete visibility of what products we have, where they are, and when they need to ship."

Easy WMS ensures meat traceability from receiving through shipping





Cut-by-cut traceability

"We decided to automate the handling of around 55 tons of meat a day because the process was becoming increasingly complex and relied on manual tasks. We needed to eliminate internal movements to improve productivity and efficiency," says Laura Expósito, Novafrigsa's Organization and Methods Manager.

After the meat is cut, employees place the vacuum-packed products into boxes. A two-level automated conveyor then transports them to the mini-load AS/RS. There, Easy WMS — integrated with the company's ERP — organizes storage locations according to operational criteria and a FIFO (first in, first out) rotation strategy. This process allows Novafrigsa to optimize inventory management and preserve its products in a temperature-controlled environment.

"In the meat industry, where shelf life is critical, Easy WMS enables us to maintain individual traceability for every cut of beef," Expósito says. "We always know which product SKU each bin contains, where it came from, when it was packaged, and the other details needed to meet our customers' needs."



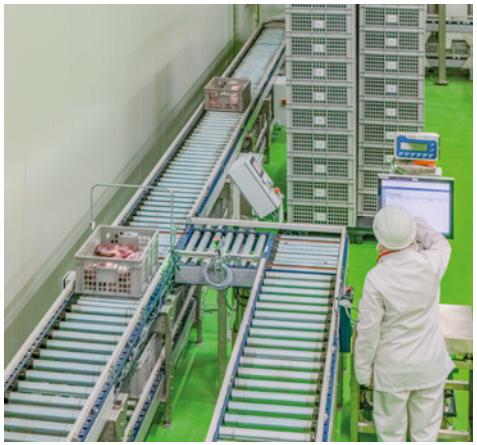
"With the automated warehouse, we've optimized space and improved operational efficiency. We can now ensure traceability for every cut of beef."

Javier Prieto
Production Manager, Novafrigsa

Maximum throughput in a compact footprint

Storing 21,888 totes in just 4,070 ft² is possible thanks to a design that makes full use of the available space. Novafrigsa's automated storage and retrieval system (AS/RS) features six aisles measuring 89′ long and 39-foot-high racking. It stores all vacuum-packed beef in a footprint smaller than a basketball court.

This high level of storage density is especially beneficial in temperature-controlled environments. "Keeping inventory in one location helps us operate more efficiently from an energy standpoint," says Prieto. "Since the AS/RS remains enclosed, it preserves the temperature more effectively and reduces the energy required to keep products at the right temperature."



When orders are created, Easy WMS coordinates the release of totes to the picking area in the optimal sequence. Expósito says: "The system itself identifies the most suitable products for each order based on criteria such as rotation, weight, and individual customer requirements."

The automated warehouse has four pick stations that operate according to a goods-to-person strategy. "The main advantage is that associates no longer have to walk around looking for products," says Expósito. "The goods arrive directly at the workstation, reducing unnecessary travel and physical effort."





> *"The Mecalux solution has enabled us to simplify the work, minimize order picking errors, and respond to customers more quickly."*

Laura Expósito
Organization and Methods Manager, Novafrigsa



Guided by Easy WMS, associates fill orders in boxes that, once complete, are palletized and sent to shipping. According to Expósito, automation has been key to streamlining logistics processes: "We've simplified the work, minimized order picking errors, and now respond to customers more quickly."

A partner for continued growth

Handling more tons of beef, ensuring traceability for every cut, and maintaining the cold chain required a large-scale logistics transformation. "Mecalux addressed a strategic need for our growth. From implementation through day-to-day operation, the company's guidance, technical support, and post-sale service have set it apart," says Prieto. Expósito shares this view: "Working with Mecalux has meant having a close partner that adapts to our needs. Thanks to the automated solution, we can increase our production capacity and continue expanding in both the domestic and international markets."