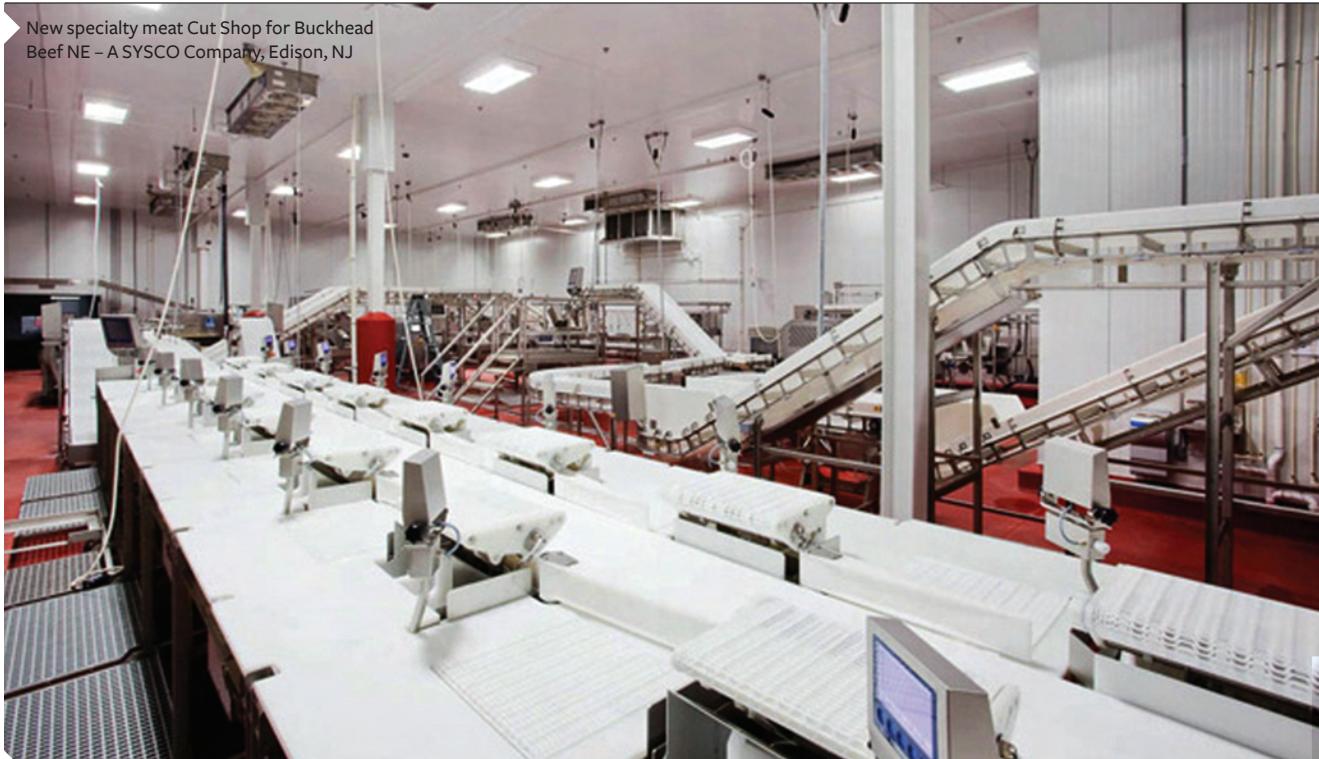


## Old-fashioned Service

**+** New Jersey-based V. Paulius & Associates prides itself on offering clients a full slate of services, including design to construction. *By Vicki Martinka Petersen*

*"We're ahead of the curve of what other cold storage [contractors] do in terms of products and services."*

*> Kip Kramer, vice president*



### V. Paulius & Associates

[www.vpa.com](http://www.vpa.com)

**2009 sales:** \$50 million

**Headquarters:** Allendale, N.J.

**Employees:** 30

**Services:** Design/build/and general contracting

tenure, he has witnessed the growth in both the frozen food and cold storage construction industries. "The construction industry, as far as cold storage is concerned, is growing," Kramer notes. "We've got a lot of food users as clients."

V. Paulius & Associates designs and builds facilities that the company owns and leases to clients for cold storage distribution. "We'll build wherever we have to," Kramer says. "While we're in the third-party construction industry heavily, we own 12 of our own buildings."

### Park Place

In addition to buildings, V. Paulius & Associates owns industrial parks throughout the country, including in New York,

Ohio, Georgia and Florida. Clients often suggest where they would like a facility built. The company locates the land and sometimes purchases additional acres if it decides to pursue an office park in the area, Kramer says. From there, the contractor constructs the facility and leases the building to the client.

Many of the parks are situated near transportation hubs – an asset to meet distributors' needs. Port Carteret, a unique industrial seaport complex in Carteret, N.J., offers access to all major national and international modes of transportation. A direct access road links Port Carteret to the New Jersey Turnpike, one of the primary routes in the state. Port Carteret also has

### **> When V. Paulius & Associates Vice**

President Kip Kramer was a child, he recalls, there was only one frozen food aisle in the grocery store. Today, it is not uncommon to see several aisles in a store dedicated to frozen foods. The growth of the frozen food industry has benefited V. Paulius & Associates, which designs, constructs and leases cold storage facilities.

Kramer began working for the general contractor when he was 15. During his

deep-water anchorage located on the Arthur Kill, which is part of New York Harbor and adjacent to Port Newark, Port Elizabeth and the Atlantic Ocean.

Upon completion in 2012, the 184-acre site will be home to 2.1 million square feet of industrial space within seven buildings, including White Rose Foods, a grocery food distributor that occupies two of the buildings in the industrial park. V. Paulius & Associates constructed both facilities, consisting of an 800,000-square-foot dry conventional storage building and 300,000 square feet of frozen foods storage warehouse.

### **Customer Relations**

V. Paulius & Associates considers itself one of the few actual design/build firms. "What differentiates V. Paulius from its competitors is this old-fashioned general contractor approach," Kramer explains. "We meet with the customer, locate property, secure a lease agreement and move into the building, all using in-house professionals and construction crews. It's really start to finish from the design to turning over the facility once it's built."

While most general contractors hire subcontractors, V. Paulius & Associates prides itself on having its own crew. For most jobs, the company hires only a few subcontractors for specialty areas such as electrical and mechanical.

Another advantage is the company owns portable concrete plants. Kramer says this helps the company meet its deadlines by not having to work around an outside plant's schedule and helps maintain quality controls on its concrete tilt-up walls and floors. "We set up ourselves to handle all capacities in modern distribution warehousing/processing construction to accommodate today's high cube distribution and complex processing centers," he adds.

### **'Ahead of the Curve'**

Like with many companies, the poor economy continues to be a challenge for V. Paulius & Associates. Kramer notes it is

difficult to secure financial deals for perspective tenants because many banks are not lending right now. "We've had banking relationships dating back 40 years," Kramer says. "It's much different for them now. A whole new set of rules are applied to financing."

Despite this challenge, V. Paulius & Associates continues to meet its clients' needs. One project the contractor completed last month is the renovation of the Buckhead Beef (Sysco) food processing facility in Edison, N.J. Originally a dry

warehouse, the newly renovated 50,000-square-foot facility consists of 23,000 square feet of cold storage areas, 15,500 square feet of production areas and 11,500 square feet of office areas. The USDA facility processes specialty cut meats for fine restaurants.

"It's probably the most modern processing facility in the nation," Kramer says. "We're ahead of the curve of what other cold storage [contractors] do in terms of products and services compared to what we offer customers." ☀

