

# Warming up the customer experience

**Garden State Cold Storage:** How a warehouse management system helped third-party logistics provider strengthen its customer service



## Snapshot

### Company

Garden State Cold Storage

### Industry

Cold Storage and Packaging Logistics

### Number of Employees

120

### Warehouse Size

350,000 sq. ft

### Infios Competency

Supply Chain Software

### Solution(s)

e3PL Warehouse Management System

## Complexity

Overcome sub-optimal warehouse processes for a growing 3PL.

## Best practice

Optimize the facility and its processes to enhance the customer experience.

For over 20 years, Garden State Cold Storage has provided cold storage expertise within the Northeast region of the United States to national and international businesses that require food and packaging logistics from pickup to delivery. Customer service is at the forefront of the operations and is measured by the speed, reliability and efficiency of the infrastructure, team and technology.

### Challenges and changes

Almost 50 years ago the Ruggiero family created their own seafood business that started small and grew to be very successful. While running Ruggiero Seafood, the family decided to open their own seafood plant, the first of its kind. The local government exercised the power of eminent domain to take over the seafood plant and in its place build a school. The Ruggiero family had to find a solution for their current product. After researching options, they decided to invest in a cold storage warehouse. Furthermore, they knew the pains of being a customer of a third party logistics and decided to not only store their own seafood but to open the cold storage space to paying customers as well. This turned into what is now, Garden State Cold Storage; an organization built on accuracy, efficiency and most importantly, customer service.

1hr

turnaround for products in the warehouse

650%

increase in shipped orders per day

10

years average employee retention rate

When the Ruggiero family moved into a new field they knew a standard operating process and a well-designed warehouse were key. From 1990 to 2009, the Ruggiero family operated their first warehouse of 800 pallet positions located in Newark, NJ with their own internal processes. In 2009, Garden State Cold Storage was established and a new state-of-the-art freezer warehouse with 10,000 pallet positions was opened in Newark, NJ. By 2016, they had far outgrown both warehouses and a 3rd warehouse was opened in Carteret, NJ with 22,000 pallet positions. With a disorderly warehouse layout in the new leased building in Carteret, (wide aisles and double and triple deep racks) it shined a light on problems within the operation. This affected the customer experience, and ultimately Garden State Cold Storage as a business, with inefficiencies, time wasted and an inability to keep up.

Having previously had poor experiences as a customer of third-party logistics, it was essential to Garden State Cold Storage that they kept customers at the forefront of their business plan. It was clear to do right by their customers; they needed an efficient system to operate the facility. To better serve their customers, Garden State Cold Storage invested, renovated and re-racked the entire building to a very-narrow-aisle turret operated warehouse with an increased capacity of 30,000 pallet positions.

#### Finding the right solution

Garden State Cold Storage needed a solution that would allow their facility to be reliable, efficient and fast. Having little experience in this industry Garden State Cold Storage reached out to another prominent freezer company in the area for recommendations. This organization, who handled most of the market recommended Infios's e3PL Warehouse Management System as a solution that could address Garden State's immediate needs and scale with the future plans of the business. Infios's e3PL WMS received similarly favorable feedback from other peer organizations during Garden State's research.



“Customer service is the top priority in this business and Infios’s software allows us to provide the best service possible.”

**Eric Ruggiero**

VP of Operations, Garden State Cold Storage



“I don’t think we could do what we do without the warehouse management system today. It really is like Infios has no limits.”

**Eric Ruggiero**

VP of Operations, Garden State Cold Storage

#### Centralizing control

Coming highly recommended, Garden State decided to move forward with Infios. Infios's e3PL WMS was implemented over a three-month period and had relatively minimal affect in disrupting business operations. The e3PL WMS revolutionized operations by allowing employees to know where everything is located at all times using barcodes and scanners. Team members use handheld scanners upon the arrival of inventory and track it throughout the warehouse; keeping the facility organized under one centralized system. Such is new-found efficiency at the organization Garden State can now allow customers to receive their products in an hour or less, upon request.

WMS has been an overwhelming success at Garden State. Not only is this due to the technology, but also the training and support provided by the Infios team. Infios provided three-months of on-site training which accelerated knowledge transfer for employees transitioning to a computer-based system; leading them to be faster and more efficient.

Garden State Cold Storage has realized a number of key benefits since implementing WMS:

- 1-hour turnaround upon customer request for product in the warehouse
- Increased shipped orders per day from less than 40 to 300
- Fast integration and deployment
- Reduced internal processing times
- Increased picking quality and accuracy, while reducing employee training time



“Without Infios, we would not be able to quickly, efficiently and accurately accomplish the work we are able to do today.”

**Eric Ruggiero**

VP of Operations, Garden State Cold Storage

#### **Next steps**

Garden State Cold Storage’s initial goals of optimizing the facility and providing the best customer experience has been successful. The Infios solution also gives the organization a platform to ensure those goals continue to be met in the future. As Garden State continues to grow, they have their sight set on building a fourth warehouse. Additionally, with the continued expansion of their customer base, Garden State plans to implement the TMS offered by Infios into their standard operations as well.