

Kilic Engineering's stockyard solutions facilitate bulk operations



Kilic Engineering (KE) is a major supplier of bulk handling equipment for grain handlers in Australia, Asia and the Middle East. For over 45 years, KE has serviced the agricultural industry with fixed and portable machinery. However, in more recent years, the demand for portable machinery has grown significantly with an expansion of open stockpile storage facilities (grain pile or bunker storage) replacing traditional grain elevator silo facilities.

Grain pile storage (flat, open bulkhead storages covered with tarpaulins) of grain and other agriproducts is now utilized extensively in Australia to store the harvest each season, given its suitability in the country's Mediterranean type climate. Open flat storage is great, cheap and well suited to regions that experience temperate climactic conditions including many of the major grain growing states in the USA. Of course, this type of storage introduces a different set of material handling challenges. For example, once the grain is stored, how do you reclaim it and turn it into money? More about that later.

For now, let's talk about moving products into flat storage. KE's BunkerStacker range offers modern efficient equipment ideal for handling products in open stockpiles or into horizontal shed or warehouse storages.

BunkerStackers are extremely popular

self-propelled machines which allow road trucks to deliver grain to a shallow above ground road hopper which feeds an under-belly belt conveyor onto a stacking conveyor to move product into the storage grain pile or 'bunker'.

A choice of portable machines is available to suit dry bulk commodity handling operations in Australia and around the world with BunkerStacker machines having recently been deployed for overseas grain and wood pellet loading operations in Qatar and Japan, with earlier models being used in South Africa, Oman and Cyprus.

The new KE BunkerStacker range is also well suited for North American facilities where open grain pile storages are utilized across corn and other cereal crop growing regions of the USA.

With another record winter cereal crop handled in Australia over the 2022/2023 season, coupled with strong grain prices, the grain industry remains extremely buoyant with competition amongst handlers increasing.

KE services the majority of bulk handling operators in Australia with its bunker loading equipment with major customers including Viterra, CBH, Cargill, ADM, CHS Broadbent, Emerald Grain (now owned by Louis Dreyfus), T-Ports, Bunge, Manildra, Fletchers International, Australian Grain Exporters (AGE), BFB Group and Robinson Grain. KE continues to provide

these companies with ongoing services and equipment for the upcoming 2023/24 grain harvest in Australia.

KE's BunkerStacker range includes the base level Joey version, which utilizes a smaller dump pit and conveyor to stack the product at a maximum rate of 600 metric tonnes per hour [tph] (wheat tonnes), to the Super Roo version which receives and stacks product at 750tph (wheat tonnes).

The most popular of the current range of portable stackers is KE's Big Roo BunkerStacker3000 which has a handling capacity of 600tph (wheat tonnes) and is capable of handling truck lengths of over 30 metres with its easy access nine-metre-long approach and exit ramps supporting delivery to a six-metre (19ft) drive-over hopper pit for rapid discharging of the truck's cargo.

These machines are a one-person operation with self-propulsion features and hydraulic lifting jacks for the hopper, stacker and ramps enabling the equipment to move along the grain or product stack with ease. Powered by its own generator set mounted to the unit, the Dump and Go hopper design is a point of difference to other machines on the market and allows for softer handling of agriproducts, particularly pulses and oilseeds, in addition to the major cereal grains in wheat, barley and oats.

Another key feature of the

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BunkerStacker range of portable equipment is its capacity to be used in reclaim mode with the stacker component fitted with a surge hopper which is generally fed by a front-end loader (FEL) for easy out loading from the product stack to trucks.

During 2023, KE has been working with its customer base to develop additional

models to its BunkerStacker fleet which will incorporate Auger discharge conveyors in lieu of its standard underbelly belt conveyors which feed grain and other products from the receival hopper to the conveyor stacker.

Some customers consider the Auger hopper discharge is more suited to oilseed

products and, although many still prefer the belt conveyor option which handles all grains, pulses and oilseeds, KE has been more than happy to modify its designs and manufacture alternative machines to meet specific customer requirements.

As mentioned earlier in this story, KE is not only focused on fast and efficient



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Big Roo BunkerStacker in operation.

inloading of grains and other agriproducts into storage piles, but also on cost-effective solutions for reclaiming products from these stockpiles.

In recent years, KE has also been developing a new reclaiming machine which has been labelled the BunkerSweeper600. Many bulk storage operators have been seeking an alternative to using front-end loaders to recover product from stacks and shed storages and KE has taken on this challenge with the development of its self-propelled temporary storage reclaimer, the BunkerSweeper600.

The self-propelled unit has a capacity of 600tph (wheat tonnes) — 22,000 bushels — and can be used to direct feed into road trucks or into KE's BunkerStacker as detailed above, removing the need for a front-end loader for reclaim operations. Its manoeuvrability, one-person operation and suitability to handle all grains, including oilseeds and pulses makes it a valuable addition to agribulk handling operators

across the globe.

One further feature of the BunkerSweeper600 is its compactness, which enables it to be easily transported from site to site on a flattop truck, without the need for special 'wide load' permits required in some jurisdictions.

KE has plans to introduce its BunkerSweeper600 machines into the North American market in 2023, with a machine being shipped out to the USA in late May for trials to be undertaken either in South Dakota or Nebraska most likely during June/July.

In addition to the portable BunkerStacker range of equipment utilized for grain and other bulk product operations, KE also provides fixed conveying systems to fill stockpiles. Some customers prefer a fixed hopper location to feed their open bulkhead storages and to this end, KE has provided many designs and options required by its customers to meet their specific operational or site

needs. Typically these systems are comprised of in-ground or above-ground dump or discharge hoppers which deliver product via an incline drag or belt conveyor to a series of above ground conveyors which then feed into a travelling stacker along the bulkhead/stockpile. Commonly labelled a conveyor loader system (CLS), this arrangement is an alternative means of stockpile management for some customers to the more portable and flexible BunkerStacker equipment use for filling stockpiles. KE has provided both in-ground and above-ground hoppers, fixed conveyors and stackers to several major Australian bulk handling companies in the past including Viterro and CBH.

KE has supported CBH's operations in recent years with the supply of multi-loader stacker (MLS) machines and drive over grid stackers (DOG Stackers), these machines being CBH designed staples across their extensive network of sites. The quality and service from KE underpins this growing



The BunkerSweeper600 is a new self-propelled temporary storage reclaimer, which meets the needs of operators seeking an alternative to using front-end loaders to recover product from stacks and shed storages.



business relationship with KE set to manufacture more equipment through 2023/24.

In addition to its Australian customers, KE has recently branched out to provide Asian customers in Vietnam and Japan with handling solutions specific to their

requirements. So commodity handlers all around the world might find that KE equipment is just what they need to keep ahead of the competition.

KE is a diverse mechanical engineering company based in Adelaide, South Australia, owned and operated by the Kilic family

since 1973. The company has a long and proud history of excellence in designing, manufacturing and installing a wide range of material handling systems, including its exclusive and most popular BunkerStacker and BunkerSweeper range of portable agri product machinery.



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