

CASE invests in European manufacturing footprint

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CASE Construction Equipment is investing in its European plants in Italy as part of its manufacturing strategy for the region, which is based on the creation of two production hubs, focusing manufacturing expertise on specific product families in each facility: one for excavators in San Mauro, the other for wheeled equipment in Lecce. The aim of this strategy is to provide customers with products of consistently high quality and have the manufacturing flexibility to respond swiftly to the demands of the market. These actions to optimise the brand's European manufacturing footprint fit within the overall strategy to establish CASE as global full liner and strengthen its position in the region.

San Mauro: CASE Excavators Hub for the European market

CASE's single source excavator strategy builds on more than 20 years of successful partnership with Sumitomo. The longstanding global product supply agreement with its technological partner was strengthened in 2015 with a new technical licensing agreement that opened the door to localising in the San Mauro plant of production of crawler excavators with Sumitomo technology for the European markets.

The driver of the localisation project is the overarching objective of delivering Quality First. The products manufactured in San Mauro are exactly the same as those produced at the Sumitomo plant, and the same components are used. The manufacturing processes at the two facilities are fully aligned and implement the same standards. Sumitomo resident expert engineers based in San Mauro have been supporting entire localisation process from the beginning. San Mauro not only implements all the quality checks in Sumitomo's manufacturing process; it has introduced additional tests to ensure consistently high standards of quality in every single unit that leaves its assembly line.

The localisation project, which represents a significant investment, has reached an advanced stage and full production of the first CX models has started at the San Mauro plant. By June, eight models ranging from 13 to 30 tons will be manufactured in San Mauro. European customers will benefit in several ways from being served by a manufacturing plant close to them. When the localisation project is completed, delivery lead times will be shorter. Also, CASE will be able to operate with greater flexibility to respond to customers' needs. In addition, it will be possible to better customise the products to fit specific European requirements.

Lecce: CASE Wheeled Equipment Hub for the European market

CASE is also making significant investments in its Lecce plant, introducing new production systems and revising its manufacturing and quality control processes. The factory is focused on four product families: wheel loaders, backhoe loaders, telehandlers and compact wheel loaders, and is in the process of integrating a fifth line, graders.

The facility installed a new paint system, cab assembly line, testing and finishing area and sub-welding and cutting area, while the new grader assembly line is in preparation. The aim of these investments is to gain full control of every phase of the production process, from sheet metal to the finished product, in order to guarantee the highest levels of quality and shorter lead times.

Quality First with World Class Manufacturing

The San Mauro and Lecce plants apply World Class Manufacturing practices, which are based on the principles of continuous improvement and the involvement of every single employee in organising the workspace, ergonomics, safety and the manufacturing process itself. The objective of World Class Manufacturing is to achieve zero defects, zero waste, zero time wasted, zero accidents.

This approach has meant a smooth introduction of new products and practices at the plants, with every member of the production team involved and taking responsibility for every step of the process, as well as identifying possible improvements. Everyone on the shop floor takes a hands-on approach to problem solving and is encouraged to come forward with practical suggestions on how to improve the production processes.

The investments at both plants have also included work to bring more natural light and create a brighter work environment on the shop floor, improving working conditions for employees.

A full CASE brand experience

It is important for customers to see how their equipment is manufactured and the care that goes into achieving the quality they need. To this end, the two manufacturing hubs have new welcome areas. Visitors will be immersed in the full CASE experience as they walk in, surrounded by strong branded elements that reflect the values and heritage of the CASE brand, encapsulated in the words: *CASE Experts for the Real World*.

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