

# Fresh Dairy Deliveries Are Faster for a Leading Supermarket Chain Using a Kelley HULK Lift

**Company:**  
Market Basket

**Challenge:**  
Accommodating a variety of truck sizes on the loading dock without room for a concrete ramp.

**Solution:**  
Kelley® HULK® Hydraulic Dock Lift

**Industry:**  
Grocery

**Geography:**  
Wilmington, MA

“We turned to Kelley,” recounts Martin, “not because it was the lowest priced lift, but because thinking about it, for us Kelley equipment has stood the test of time.”

- Normand Martin, Director of Facilities and Planning, Market Basket

Market Basket, a New England-based supermarket chain, found themselves tight on dock space at their new store in Wilmington, MA. They solved their space constraint issues by installing a versatile, cost-effective Kelley® HULK® Hydraulic Dock Lift to help them accommodate a variety of vehicle sizes for loading and unloading.

Market Basket is well known throughout New Hampshire and Massachusetts for their winning combination of low prices and well-merchandised stores that offer a large selection of products. And thanks to this combination, the chain has been on an aggressive growth track over the past few years, opening up to five stores annually, with one of their more recent stores opening in Wilmington, MA.

Although the location was ideal for the new store because it was part of an existing shopping plaza, the property footprint was not optimal for shipping and receiving. The store was able to accommodate a loading dock for both dry grocery and frozen foods on its northern end, but not a dairy dock at the southern section. “The layout,” pointed out Normand Martin, Market Basket’s Director of Facilities and Planning, “meant that we couldn’t dig down to create a driveway or pit for a standard loading dock.”

Market Basket and Martin’s department has been using Kelley dock equipment



for years, and has a long standing relationship with Bob Knapp at Baron Industries Company, the local Kelley distributor. Before the Wilmington project, Martin looked at dock lifts offered by a number of manufacturers for a Market Basket warehouse in Andover, MA when Knapp suggested Kelley’s HULK lifts. “We turned to Kelley,” recounts Martin, “not because it was the lowest priced lift, but because thinking about it, for us Kelley equipment has stood the test of time.”

A typical dairy dock sees almost every size and style of truck imaginable, from major dairy trailers to LTL deliveries by smaller trucks delivering gourmet cheese and other specialty products. Some of the trucks are 48” off grade, while others are 24” off grade. They even see some trucks that require the driver to off load product one case at a time by hand.

However, they are now all accessible thanks to the new, pit-mounted

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6,000 lb. capacity HULK Hydraulic Dock Lift. A truck can pull up to the lift and once the driver is out of the cab they raise the platform to the height of the truck floor. From there the driver moves the load onto the platform and then rides down to ground level where the product is moved into the store’s backroom and to the dairy cooler.

The driver has full control over the dock lift motion with the pre-wired, NEMA-4X hand-held push-button controller. The lift safely and smoothly lowers the platform to the ground without jostling the load. The dairy cases are then transported on dollies designed specifically for milk crates the short distance from the HULK’s platform into the dairy coolers. This efficient operation means the driver can quickly get the dairy load off the truck, load on empty containers and move so the next truck can access the lift for unloading.

The HULK’s 8’ long and 7’ wide platform provides full access to any kind of vehicle. If necessary, the driver can pull a pallet jack onto the lift platform and load a large number of dairy cases at a time for efficient unloading with fewer up and down cycles.

This heavy-duty industrial dock lift is made of hollow structural steel tubing for maximum strength and durability. The HULK Hydraulic Dock Lift is powered by two hydraulic cylinders and can raise or lower the platform right to where the operator needs it in under one minute.

Safety features on the HULK Hydraulic Dock Lift include removable handrails to compensate for a variety of loads,



beveled toe guards, a maintenance safety strut, safety chains across the operating ends, upper travel limit switch and a safety tread plate steel deck. Velocity fuses on the lift cylinders prevent the lift from free falling in the event of power loss.

This value-conscious chain indeed offers low prices, but when dealing with paper thin margins other considerations enter into the decision-making process. “When you look at any equipment for a facility,” says Martin, “you always think about the cost, but if you are really doing your job you have to weigh what the acquisition is going to cost us every year you use it.” he added.

And for Market Basket, installing the Kelley HULK Hydraulic Dock Lift was the best option to keep costs down annually. “The Kelley lift was a good choice for us,” Martin said, “because in the past, our Kelley equipment has stood up to the test of time.” he added.

