



# TIME TESTED

## 25 YEARS OLD, 126,000 HOURS

In 1991, a single wheel loader went to work at a brand new plant located in the woods of South Carolina, constructed to manufacture Medium Density Fiberboard (MDF). At that time the plant manager determined the need for a maintenance manager. Working with a local equipment supplier, he selected one of their mechanics to work for Arauco as a freelance maintenance manager for all of the plant's rolling stock. Twenty-five years later, that mechanic, David Merchant, is still at work keeping the equipment in fine shape, still vendor-supplied, and not surprisingly, that now 25-year old 90ZII loader is still strong and productive.

### ARAUCO LOADERS AT WORK 24/7

"When the plant was built, it was originally owned by Willamette Industries and it was a paper mill, particleboard and MDF operation, with their own chipping operation. The design called for the MDF plant to receive blown material on a continual basis into various piles, depending on what the material was. A single loader then stood at the ready to charge a receiving hopper with varying quantities of certain materials, depending on the type of board we're set to make during the shift," says Mike Henry, Plant Manager.



Bottom line, a single loader is either idling in stand-by with an operator in the cab, or its actively loading or segregating material through two shifts a day, every day of the week. As the years started to add up on that original wheel loader, a second was brought in to work as a back up. It was a Kawasaki 90Z7 with the same specs, standard in every way with the exception of a 7.5 cu. yd. roll-up bucket and in-cab scales. The work is not especially demanding; it's just constant.

“The reliability of the Kawasaki-KCM loaders has always been spot-on,” notes Henry. “The operational guys notify me if there is a problem, but that is certainly not often. And, the KCM parts and service support, along with our local dealer, has been great. But honestly, a lot of the credit goes to David’s skill in maintaining our entire rolling stock fleet.”

Says Merchant, “When I was hired, the Plant Manager at the time advised me that whenever a part needed to be replaced, buy two and put one in stock. So, we typically have a part on the shelf, and we replace before failure. There are different philosophies about taking care of equipment and the management here has always taken the position of making good equipment last a long time.”



*“Good maintenance practices from Arauco have allowed me to fix things before bad things happen,” says David Merchant. “Product support from KCM has been very good.”*





"I service the equipment twice a month with fresh engine oil, clean filters and an overall check-over. It might be overkill, but you have, ahem, to look at the records. On this oldest loader, I've replaced the engine twice, before failure, and I replace the hydraulic pumps around every 2,000 hours. I know that some would go longer before it self destructs and sprays metal parts throughout the system, but the cost of a pump compared to the labor and downtime of cleaning out the whole system, well, there's no comparison. I've never replaced the transmission. Just changed the bucket bushings and repacked the cylinders 4 times."

This year, the plant decided to trade their oldest with the newest technology, a 90Z7 Tier 4 final model. Same specifications. "Someone is going to get a fantastic machine for the money," notes Merchant. "It runs remarkably well for the hours. But, we're all excited about learning and being around the newest. For one, how the Auto Idle shutdown works in our operation will be very interesting!"

## A HIGH QUALITY PRODUCT

"We especially make a very highly refined fiber product, which we've branded Tru-Plan High Plus, that is specifically designed for computer-driven forming and cutting machines. These machines are for high production manufacturing of furniture and cabinets or any other similar product that requires heavy routing." says Henry. "For this product, we run 60% straight green pine chip and 40% dry pine shavings. We also make other products that are less critical in their application, whether they are covered up or used in doors. Our products are well known for meeting exacting specifications."

Arauco has multiple plants in North America making similar products as well as throughout the world. They sell through wholesale millwork distributors, which in turn, provide Arauco products to the largest furniture manufacturers as well as local custom shops where they make counters, cabinets and other built-in furniture for primarily commercial and institutional applications. The hotel or doctor's office counter you rest your hands on, probably started as an MDF panel.

*Serviced by May Heavy Equipment, Columbia, SC*

### Arauco North America: Sustainable Forest Product Manufacturer



*The Arauco crew standing along side the new 90Z7 T4F a new standard in production class wheel loaders.*

Arauco is globally based in Santiago, Chile and was established 47 years ago to produce and manage renewable forest resources. Since its start, the company has maximized the value of its forest plantations and the products bought for processing by engineering multiple manufactured products that used nearly every part of the tree, from plywood, particleboard products to MDF panels and premium, formed molding. The company maintains 30 production facilities in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, the United States, and Canada and has a sales presence in over 80 countries.