



For Immediate Release

May 23, 2017

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Port NOLA Joins USDA's Southeast U.S. Cold Treatment Pilot Program

Pilot Expands Shipping Options & Reduces Perishable Cargo Transit Time

NEW ORLEANS – The Port of New Orleans announced a new opportunity for shippers looking to transport perishable cargo from South America. Port NOLA received approval by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for inclusion in the Southeast U.S. In-Transit Cold Treatment Pilot Program. Participation in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) pilot program means select time-sensitive products can be treated to meet customs compliance **in-transit** rather than after it arrives to the U.S. – resulting in shorter transit times and increased efficiency for shippers.

“Participating in this pilot is a significant gain and highlights Port NOLA’s ongoing commitment to developing new business,” said Brandy D. Christian, Port of New Orleans President and CEO. “This program gives current and future port shippers additional options to transport refrigerated cargo, while reducing transit time from origin to the consumer.”

Prior to this program, refrigerated cargo had to flow through specialized treatment facilities in the Northeast U.S. to be cleared for distribution. With more than 900 refrigerated plugs available at Port NOLA’s facilities, the Port is equipped to handle additional perishable cargo.

Cold treatment is a process whereby perishable fruits are brought to a certain temperature for a period of time as dictated by authorities to fulfill APHIS quarantine requirements targeting pests such as fruit flies.

The following commodities are included in this pilot:

- Blueberries, citrus, and grapes from Peru
- Blueberries and grapes from Uruguay, and
- Blueberries, apples, and pears from Argentina.

“NOCS is excited to work with the Port of New Orleans and potential customers to take advantage of this opportunity to bring new products through the US Gulf,” said Jim Henderson, Vice President Sales and Marketing New Orleans Cold Storage. “With all the global container routes coming into this port from many producing areas around the world, combined with the unique cold chain infrastructure and growing distribution market in the region, the Port of New Orleans is a natural fit. We look forward to working with the industry and community to further develop this trade.”

New Orleans is well-positioned to grow in the refrigerated import sector with additional leverage coming from efficient rail connections to inland markets.



“It is an exciting development for the Port of New Orleans to be approved by APHIS as a pilot port in the Southeast for cold-treatment in-transit of certain tree fruit and stone fruit from South America,” said John Hyatt, Vice President of the Irwin Brown Company, a New Orleans freight forwarder. “Historically, fruit subject to infestation by med-fly could not be imported south of the Mason Dixon Line, a geographical designation. With this test program, more niche cargoes of this type, can be considered as candidates for on-shore/on-dock cold treatment.

Port NOLA is the most recent Southeast U.S. port to be included in this pilot.

“Congratulations to the Port of New Orleans for becoming an official participant in the Southeast U.S. In-transit Cold Treatment Pilot,” said Dr. Laura Jeffers, APHIS National Operations Manager. “Approving the Port of New Orleans in this pilot will help promote the health of U.S. agriculture in the international trade arena.”

Port NOLA will partner with APHIS and the U.S. Custom and Border Protection Agency to implement this pilot.

The Port of New Orleans is a deep-draft multipurpose port at the center of the world’s busiest port system — Louisiana’s Lower Mississippi River. Connected to major inland markets and Canada via 14,500 miles of waterways, six class-1 railroads and the interstate highway system, Port NOLA is the ideal gateway for containers and breakbulk cargo, as well as passenger cruises. A growing network of ocean carrier services, along with services like container-on-barge make Port NOLA the superior logistics solution.

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