

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Del Monte Fresh Produce & Port of Hueneme Seal the Deal

PORT OF HUENEME, CALIFORNIA – Port Officials and Del Monte Fresh produce celebrated their 34 year partnership by executing a third modification of its 1995 contract.

“34 years represents a lifetime in the maritime community. A lot has changed but the partnership between the Port and Del Monte has only gotten better with time,” said Harbor Board President Jason Hodge, “We are proud that a world class customer like Del Monte chooses the Port of Hueneme for their west coast operations.”

Del Monte’s Port manager Chuck Caulkins manager said, “We’re very happy with the continuation of our presence on the west coast. The Port has been a valuable partner in helping us stay competitive in an increasingly regulated business environment. This contract modification extending our 1995 agreement includes one more five year extension.”

Port CEO and Executive Director Kristin Decas noted at the announcement, “This extension is particularly well timed as it comes the day before the Port celebrates its 2nd annual Banana Festival. DelMonte is one of the event’s top banana sponsors supporting the event contributing \$5,000 and providing thousands of bananas. Ms. Decas added, “DelMonte is one of our best customers, a strong business partner and a friend to the Port and the community.”

Del Monte arrived at the port in 1979, encouraged by a motivated and sustainable labor force. Having no refrigerated facilities in those days, bananas had to be unloaded box-by-box utilizing an elevated conveyor system connecting directly into the side of the ship. At each end of the conveyor, longshoremen handled 40- pound banana boxes from the ship onto a staged pallet alongside the wharf. Full pallets, consisting of 48 boxes would in turn be loaded by teamsters onto waiting trucks.

Shiploads of approximately 100,000 boxes were handled in this manner for almost ten years until the introduction in 1988 of pre-palletized boxes that could be off-loaded directly from the ship using onboard cranes onto the wharf for loading onto waiting trucks.

The next big change in the handling of bananas came in 1995 when the Port constructed for Del Monte a 30,000 square foot refrigerated facility capable of maintaining up to 2,500 pallets of fruit at a perfect 57 degrees F. This allowed Del Monte to simultaneously improve the temperature ‘cold-chain’ so important for quality, handle more boxes of fruit and more efficiently schedule truck arrivals throughout the week reducing road congestion.

In January of 2005 the Port completed a 56,000 square foot expansion of the original refrigerated facility which has allowed Del Monte to better accommodate more fresh produce such as pineapple, honeydew melon and cantaloupe.

From a weekly maximum in 1979 of 100,000 boxes of fresh produce for our regional marketplace Del Monte today, routinely handles in excess of 325,000 boxes of fresh bananas, pineapple, honeydews and cantaloupe.

Del Monte is internationally recognized for its quality and food safety standards. The company focuses on understanding and satisfying customer requirements and employees throughout its organization continuously participate in quality and food safety awareness programs.

The Port of Hueneme is one of the most productive and efficient commercial trade gateways for niche cargo on the West Coast. The Port is governed by 5 locally elected Port Commissioners. The Port moves \$7 billion in goods each year and consistently ranks among the top ten U.S. ports for automobiles and fresh produce. Port operations support the community by bringing \$1 billion in economic activity and creating 9,448 trade-related jobs. Trade through the Port of Hueneme generates more than \$63 million in annual state and local taxes which funds vital community services.

We Make Cargo Move

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