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Gene Bailey, Port of Delaware Executive Director named IRTA man of the year.

International Refrigerated Transportation Association Cites Official for Dynamic, Creative Approach In Handling Perishable Products.

ALEXANDRIA, VA, July 12, 2006—Port of Wilmington Executive Director Gene Bailey's fresh approach to perishable products has secured him the title of 2005 executive of the year by the International Refrigerated Transportation Association.

Bailey's vision, guidance and drive drew the attention of the IRTA members who nominated him for the award, says IRTA chairwoman Barbara Pratt. "Gene's superb understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in transporting refrigerated products has had a strong positive impact on our industry and his port," she says.

Since Bailey was named Wilmington's executive director, he has taken many different steps that have helped expand business for a port in a potentially difficult position, Pratt says. Although Wilmington has limited land area and is an area where traffic congestion is heavy, the Port's investment in state-of-the-art facilities has brought increased volumes of refrigerated cargoes such as frozen meat, fruit and vegetables, she says.

“Refrigerated transport is one of the most complex and challenging areas of the world economy. Gene Bailey’s work at Wilmington has demonstrated new ways that facilities all over the world can profit from this business,” Pratt says.

Founded more than a decade ago, the Alexandria, VA-based IRTA is the world’s leading organization dealing with the global movement of refrigerated products. An independent organization, it is affiliated with the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses and the World Food Logistics Organization. IRTA selected its Executive of the Year through a process that had members nominate prospective candidates and the group’s board select the final winner.

Bailey attributed the honor to his team of more than 300 employees rather than his own abilities. “I am honored to have been considered and selected to receive this very prestigious award. However, this award reflects great credit upon not only our employees and staff, but also the entire team of logistics experts in Wilmington’s maritime society. Although I have been selected to receive this award, it is a recognition of the collective efforts of our team”, he says.

Hard work has paid off for the port. “Wilmington’s performance definitely caught the attention of our group members. Our board felt that the facility’s performance in recent years and its intensive use of advance technology, strategy and procedures made Bailey the best choice for this honor,” says Cory Rosenbusch.

In recent decades the global refrigerated transportation industry has experienced major changes. Where cargo once moved loaded on four by four foot wood pallets loaded one by one into cargo ships, today refrigerated containers carry a major share of goods. While specialized facilities are needed to handle pallets, which are known in the industry

as “breakbulk” cargo, containers are virtually self-sustained. Each has its own diesel-powered generator or can work via shore power.

This enabled ports which had heretofore not handled refrigerated products to get into the industry. Such a shift could have caused problems for Wilmington, but Bailey’s innovative leadership and his skilled team enabled the port to build on its foundation of expertise and thus expand the volumes of cargo it handles significantly.

With refrigerated containers ever more affordable and accessible, virtually every port in the U.S. deals with some perishable products. What has made Delaware a standout is its commitment to all types of perishables transport. “Bailey oversees a staff of more than 300 transportation professionals and 308 acres of port infrastructure through which pass five million tons of cargo annually,” Pratt says.

Juice concentrates are also a major business for Wilmington, and the port has invested heavily in infrastructure for all types of cold cargoes. “As the nation’s leading gateway for the import of fresh fruit, and juice concentrates, the Port of Wilmington owns and operates the U.S.’s largest dockside cold storage facility and distributes food cargoes to one third of U.S. consumer markets,” Pratt says.

In 2005, Wilmington handled 2.7 million tons of refrigerated and frozen cargo, out of which 1.33 million tons were from the port’s tropical fruit program, another creative initiative implemented by the facility.

Wilmington has more than 800,000 square feet of refrigerated storage space. It also has 16,000 feet of controlled atmosphere storage space. Controlled atmosphere systems lengthen the time that delicate goods can be handled safely through the use of

various gases. Many of the world's most recognized brand names do business with Wilmington.

The port is the mid-Atlantic hub for Dole Fresh Fruit Company and Chiquita Fresh North America. It also handles the largest volume of bananas of any port in the world. In fact, the volume of bananas the port handles is so large that Wilmington is the number one port on the Delaware because of the weekly volume of containers Dole and Chiquita move through it.

Wilmington is also one of the leading US ports of entry for Chilean fruit.

IRTA representatives are available to assist media representatives in contacting anyone quoted in its stories. For more information, contact IRTA president Bill Hudson at 703-373-4300 or Vered Nohi-Becker at Port of Wilmington at 302-472-7819.

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