

# Wilmington's Cool Cargoes Success Gains Bailey 2005 Exec of the Year Title

Gene Bailey doesn't view being named IRTA executive of the year as an honor he gained himself. Instead he sees it as a victory achieved by his entire team at the Diamond State Port Corporation—a team that has focused on the refrigerated transport market with such strength and effectiveness that the port is now a national leader in the area.

"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", Bailey says.

Multiple criteria go into naming the executive of the year—and those honored must have a strong sense of vision, make an ongoing commitment to the refrigerated transport marketplace and show they are dedicated to expanding the industry's boundaries through innovative strategies, effective use of technology and appropriate use of a skilled and highly trained workforce.

Bailey and Wilmington's accomplishments touch all of these—and that's why an award would be incomplete without profiling the port of

Wilmington at the same time. Bailey was named Executive Director of the Diamond State Port Corporation in 2003. Delaware's focus on the perishables market began long before he arrived and will continue long after he leaves.

## Building on Cold Foundation

What Bailey has done is to ensure that an already successful strategy has built even more momentum. Compared to many of the nation's super ports, Wilmington has neither a large footprint nor a huge staff. The facility employs about 300 people and is located on 308 acres. Specialization is one of the best ways for Wilmington to compete against larger facilities, and over the years the port has made major investments in creating a high-quality refrigerated transport infrastructure.

A total of five million tons of cargo pass through Wilmington every year. Of that, 2.7 million tons are refrigerated or frozen cargo. Port officials say that Wilmington is now the nation's leading gateway for the importation of fresh fruit and juice concentrates.

Although reefer containers are accounting for a growing porportion of the industry's business, a huge share of perishable goods still move on breakbulk ships. Wilmington has 800,000 square feet of space to help handle such goods.

It also has more than 16,000 square feet of realatively costly controlled atmosphere storage space.

Many of the world's most recognizable brands make use of Wilmington's cold chain infrastructure. 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 number of containers Dole and Chiquita move through it. Wilmington is also one of the leading US ports of entry for Chilean fruit.

Bailey's extensive maritime background has helped him reinforce Wilmington's already strong position. He has spent more than 30 years in the maritime industry, most recently serving as Deputy Executive Director for Sales, Marketing and Operations for Maryland Port Administration.

IRTA members have taken note of Wilmington's success. "Gene Bailey's work at Wilmington has demonstrated new ways that refrigerated facilities all over the world can profit from this business," says IRTA Chairman Barbara Pratt.

## Catching IRTA's Attention

Estimates are that the refrigerated goods that move through Wilmington's facilities are distributed to more than one third of U.S. markets.

Port economic activities generate at least 5,800 quality jobs in the region, produce \$213 million in business revenue and \$225 million in salary and wages, and generate \$23 million in state and local tax.

"Wilmington's performance definitely caught the attention of our 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 IRTA staff member Corey Rosenbusch.



**Eugene R. Bailey**



**Ability--and willingness--to move breakbulk cargoes are a key Wilmington strength.**