



Agriculture Transportation Coalition

"The principal voice of agriculture in U.S. transportation policy"



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[Issues](#)

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AgTC: Agriculture Export Losses due to West Coast Container Port Disruption-- **New Data Demonstrates Extent of the Injury** February 9, 2015

On-going contract negotiations/dispute between the ILWU and the PMA (negotiating for the marine terminal operators which operated the ports and hire the longshoremen) are now entering their 9th month. The ports are functioning far below normal pace, crippling the most important US maritime export - agriculture and forest products. The loss of exports by dollar are in the billions (see more detail below), and the job losses and the loss to the family farms and businesses are unconscionable.

Today, Feb. 9, California Senators Feinstein and Boxer sent a letter to the ILWU and PMA emphasizing the urgent need to find a solution and get the ports operating again.

Tomorrow (Feb. 10) the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee is conducting a hearing.

Currently as of Feb. 9, the ILWU and the PMA are negotiating on yet another issue that has arisen, whether one party can fire the arbitrator that, under the contract, is required to stand ready to resolve the frequent disputes that arise under the contract.

The PERMANENT injury to US agriculture mounts. Our foreign customers are now unable to get the US food and farm products they need, so they are turning to other countries for hay, pork, beef, citrus, Christmas trees, apples, cotton, rice, almonds. As we unfortunately learned when the West Coast ports shut down in 2002, those customers, once gone, do not necessarily come back. We are currently witnessing the truth of the principle that guided the founding of Agriculture Transportation Coalition in 1987: *"There is nothing that we produce in this country in agriculture and forest products, that cannot be sourced somewhere else in the world. We can grow the best in the world, but if we can't deliver affordably and dependably, the customer will go somewhere*

else... and may never come back".

LATEST DATA:

- Containerized agriculture exports from West Coast ports are now running at less than 50% of the normal volumes. [[Click here for Accelerating Losses: U.S. Ag Exports through West Coast Container Ports, 2014 to 2013 \(Value in Dollars\) CHART](#)]
- Currently, US agriculture exports are reduced by \$1.75 billion each month or \$444,000,000 per week. **[NOTE: These numbers do not take into account the economic injury in and job loss to all the ancillary industries such as, processing, farming, trucking, and warehousing. So it's not even close to a total economic impact, to the US agriculture sector.]**
- The American Meat Institute and the National Pork Producers Council report losses of \$40,000,000 in exports each a week. Shipping delays have made it impossible to ship chilled beef or pork to Asia. We are losing these markets to foreign competitors.
- The US Hides, Skin and Leather Assoc. reports losses of \$45,000,000 in hide exports each week.
- US Forage Export Council reports losses of hay and forage exports of \$266,000 each day.
- In January alone, cherry growers in Oregon lost over \$250,000 of export sales directly related to port disruption; if not resolved, it will lead to a sales loss of \$5 million in 2015.

[Click here to view: Accelerating Losses: U.S. Ag Exports through West Coast Container Ports, 2014 to 2013 \(Value in Dollars\)](#)

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC) is known as "**the principal voice of agricultural exporters in US transportation policy.**" The AgTC's membership includes companies that represent virtually all agriculture products and many forest products exported from the United States. These products are grown, raised, processed, packaged and shipped from all regions of the U.S., to all markets worldwide, where they typically face competition from similar products sourced elsewhere. The AgTC was founded in 1987. The website is www.AgTrans.org.

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