



New Research: Agricultural Exporters Hamstrung and Losing Money due to Changes to “Earliest Return Dates” by Ocean Shipping Carriers

by [Reese Giangola](#), on Oct 19, 2020 11:52:15 AM

Changes to Earliest Return Date Hitting Industry Where It Hurts – the Bottom Line

Washington, DC – A new research report from the DC-based Agriculture Transportation Coalition and TradeLanes, an advanced technology company that is streamlining global commodity trade, shows that ocean carriers’ uncommunicated changes to “Earliest Return Date” (the earliest date a loaded export container can be delivered to the carrier) are wreaking havoc on logistics teams and the bottom line of agricultural exporters across the US.

In a survey conducted with hundreds of the top US agricultural exporters, AgTC and TradeLanes uncovered that changes to ERD are so problematic that 92% of respondents want to jointly pursue industry action.

"AgTC is dedicated to resolving transportation challenges facing our members – the nation’s agriculture and forest products exporters” says Peter Friedmann, Executive Director of AgTC. "Costs and disruption imposed by inaccurate and changing Earliest Return Dates for containers are eroding margins. Restoring ERD integrity is a top priority for our industry."

As if covid-19 and trade wars were not enough, agricultural exporters are saddled with new operational disruptions related to ERD changes.

Over 75% percent of respondents report that their carrier bookings do not always have a listed ERD - thereby not providing them critical information needed to manage operations and costs.

Most respondents report more than a quarter of their shipments had ERD changes – with 36% of respondents reporting ERD changes more than half of shipments.

It’s clear these issues hit the bottom line with a whopping 78% of respondents reporting that at least 5% of shipments incur extra costs that are negatively affecting the bottom line.

Eight percent of respondents say 50% or more of their shipments incur extra ERD costs.

Seven percent report incurring costs of \$1,000 or more to individual shipments.

“We know that technology alone cannot resolve this problem, but it can make a significant difference,” says Vijay Harrell, CEO of TradeLanes. “By getting information to shippers earlier, they can make better decisions for their business; and with data right at their fingertips, they can successfully negotiate reimbursement for any extra costs incurred for changes imposed by carriers.”

AgTC and TradeLanes continue to work on joint solutions to address challenges facing the agricultural export industry.

Read the full research report can be found here: <https://www.tradelanes.co/ERD-research-results>

About AgTC

The Agriculture Transportation Coalition (AgTC) was founded in 1987 with the objective of assuring transportation service which allows U.S. agricultural exporters to be competitive in the international market. AgTC now handles many additional issues of concern to ag exporters, ocean shipping issues continue to be our priority. Learn more at agtrans.org

About TradeLanes

TradeLanes is a technology company building the future of global trade. We apply advanced technology and artificial intelligence to make global trade smarter, faster, easier, and more profitable. Our core product, the TradeLanes Trade Delivery Platform, transforms B2B trade - bringing trade execution operations entirely online and leveraging data and machine intelligence to drive simplification, efficiency, and performance. We are the new way businesses trade with other businesses. Learn more at tradelanes.co

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