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PORT OF GULFPORT SECURES LONG-TERM LEASE WITH DOLE

GULFPORT, Miss. - The Board of Commissioners for the Mississippi State Port Authority (MSPA) has approved the execution of a lease with Dole Fresh Fruit Company which provides the company with terminal space in Gulfport for up to 23 years, or through 2038. Construction on the terminal is expected to be complete by the end of 2016 and the result will be a state-of-the-art facility that will double the amount of container storage spaces, while also providing for future expansion potential.

"The Port of Gulfport is a great asset to the state of Mississippi, and the construction slated to take place will allow Dole, as well as other existing and potential tenants, to meet the needs of their consumers even more efficiently and effectively," Gov. Phil Bryant said. "A major component of Mississippi's strong business environment is our extensive transportation network and ease of access to national and international markets, and the upgrades being made at the Port of Gulfport will benefit its tenants, as well as the state's economy, for many years to come. I appreciate the Dole team for again placing its confidence in our business climate and for its commitment to the port and the Gulfport community."

Within the lease agreement, MSPA will construct a transit shed which includes 21,000 square feet of climate controlled chiller space, 130,000 square feet of dry cargo storage, an administrative office, and a maintenance and repair facility.

"Dole has had a great working partnership with the Port of Gulfport over the past 50 years and is excited to enter this next phase with the same expectation of excellence, commitment and dedication," said Barry Jung, Director of US Terminal Operations for Dole. "This new state-of-the-art facility ensures Dole will be in a position to provide even better service to our customers, allowing for future growth in the market."

"I want to personally congratulate the Port of Gulfport and Dole on the execution of a long-term lease," said Darius Johnson, president of the ILA local #1303. "We look forward to working with Dole, as we have done over the past 50 years, and plan to make the next 23 years even more productive."

As the Port increases capacity and prepares for the delivery of three ship-to-shore gantry cranes in Spring 2016, the lease also guarantees Dole with two gantry cranes during their operations.

"We knew it was critical to keep Dole in Gulfport and I believe we have reached an agreement that not only validates Dole's commitment for another quarter of a century in the state of Mississippi, but also provides them with a highly efficient facility," said Jonathan Daniels, MSPA executive director and CEO. "The new facilities provide Dole, and other businesses we are currently courting, with access to a modern, efficient cargo terminal."

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