

Governor Minner

ANNOUNCES NEW LONG TERM PARTNERSHIP

OPPORTUNITY WITH DOLE

In marking the first steps in the development of a new 60,000 sq. ft., a projected \$7.5 million refrigerated warehouse project, Gov. Ruth Ann Minner recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Dole Fresh Fruit Company for exclusive use of the new facility as well as an extension of the company's lease agreements with the Port.

"I congratulate and thank Dole for their continued commitment to the Port of Wilmington and for the preservation and growth of well-paying jobs here at the Port," Gov. Minner said. "This is another example of a nationally recognized company committed to growing its business in the First State," she added.

The Governor and Nathan Hayward, III, Secretary of Transportation and Chairman of the DSPC, and Dennis Kelly,

Vice President of U.S. Ports & Terminals, Dole Fresh Fruit Company, signed the agreement between the DSPC and Dole on October 21, 2004.

Dole, the world's largest fruit company, is Wilmington's largest customer-tenant. Dole is planning to lease the new warehouse for the next 15 years to support the continued growth and market development of its pineapples, melons and other tropical fruit and vegetable imports through Wilmington.

Since 1982, Dole's weekly container shipments of bananas and tropical fruit have increased five-fold. This business, coupled with the substantial growth in its Chilean winter fruit imports and related business from the Port's importers, has enabled Wilmington to lead the nation as the No. 1 port in imported fresh fruit. The Port

also has the largest container cargo movements on the Delaware River.

"The combination of this planned new state-of-the-art warehouse facility, excellent transportation infrastructure, a dedicated and specialized work force, and a strong and unique partnership with the Port of Wilmington and the State of Delaware has given Dole a clear choice in selecting a port where we could develop our tropical fruit market on the U.S. East Coast," said Dennis Kelly.

This construction project will be funded through a bond bill appropriation and a lease agreement with The Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA).

The design phase of Warehouse H is completed and construction is scheduled to begin this spring and finish in time for the 2005-06 winter fruit season.



Dole is planning to lease the new 60,000 sq. ft. cold storage warehouse for the next 15 years to support the continued growth and market development of their produce imports through Wilmington. Shown are, left to right: Dennis Kelly, Vice President of U.S. Ports & Terminals, Dole Fresh Fruit Company; Gov. Ruth Ann Minner; Gene R. Bailey, Executive Director, DSPC; and Nathan Hayward III, Chairman of the DSPC.