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*Royal Fumigation gives you the advantage of over 25 years of innovation, technology and quality management, handling your fruit from ship to market.*



*Welcome Chilean Fruit*

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# Efficient Fumigation Process *Maintains* *Fruit Quality* From Dockside to Market

Moving fruit from ship to market without delays or damage depends on careful planning and good communication among the many people who handle the cargo, including port personnel, shippers, customer agents, surveyors, receivers, stevedores, USDA inspectors, and fumigators. In fact, fumigation is an integral part of the distribution process even before the fruit cargo arrives at dockside.

Royal Fumigation in New Castle, Delaware, fumigates more than half of the Chilean fruit that enters the U.S. East Coast each winter, including the tons of fruit that come into the Port of Wilmington, Delaware annually. "Having fumigated millions of cases of fruit without a single damage claim is testament to the company's efficient process and ability to coordinate the handling of fruit cargo very effectively with the Port of Wilmington," noted John Achzet, General Manager of Royal Fumigation.

Achzet credits achieving these results to thorough communications with all of those involved in the process. To prepare for incoming loads, Achzet communicates with Port Operations to determine which warehouses are available at the Port of Wilmington, what crews are on hand to move the pallets, how the weather may impact the movement of fruit, and how best to arrange the fruit as it is unloaded and readied for fumigation.

Fruits and vegetables exported to the U.S. must be inspected and

fumigated or cold treated according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations as a condition of entry to protect the country's agricultural industry from harmful pests and diseases. This measure also protects imported produce from becoming pest-damaged before it reaches its final destination.

"Our goal is to always achieve time and cost efficiencies while upholding quality and safety and to



ensure that every service we provide is in full compliance," Achzet said. Royal Fumigation works in close cooperation with port logistical personnel to meet this goal.

Before fruit arrives at the Port, the vessel hold is slowly brought up to a temperature ideal for facilitating the fumigation process. If the fruit pulp is too cold, condensation would result, and the ensuing fumigation could cause spotting of the fruit. Working with direction from Pacific Seaways and Dole and with input from Royal Fumigation, Murphy Marine Services' longshoremen from ILA Local 1694 unload the vessels, and warehouse laborers from ILA Local 1694-1 move the fruit from dockside into the 144,000 sq. ft. dedicated fumigation warehouse,

where fruit is sorted and organized. Fumigation, usually scheduled overnight, is ideally begun the same day the fruit is discharged from the ship, to minimize the chance of any damage occurring to the fruit. For this to happen, sometimes the pallet layout is reorganized several times to adjust to changing needs or circumstances. Ben Dempsey, Cargo Coordinator at the Port, configures the layout of the pallets in the shed. Pacific Seaways and Dole direct the sorting and organization of the pallets, while Royal Fumigation prepares all aspects of the fumigation process.

"The aim is to maximize the amount of fruit fumigated at once, because that can make the difference between fumigating the same day of discharge or fumigating a day or more later," Achzet explained. Currently, Royal Fumigation can fumigate 4,000 or more pallets in an 8-hour period. The company has established a protocol to accommodate 5,000 pallets in one night.

Once the fruit is fumigated, Royal Fumigation employs a proprietary advanced technology called RapidCool™ to quickly get the fruit temperature back down to cool warehouse temperatures after fumigating. This cooling process suspends ripening, therefore, lengthening the fruit's shelf life.

All these proactive measures create an efficient, cohesive operation for the fumigation process so shipments through the Port of Wilmington have a commercial advantage in their distribution throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.