



Delaware Governor Jack A. Markell

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## **Long-Term Deal Announced between Port of Wilmington and Fresh Fruit Maroc**

*Agreement supports jobs and economic activity, offers certainty to Port from key customer*

**Wilmington, DE** – The Port of Wilmington has reached an unprecedented five year agreement with Fresh Fruit Maroc, a Moroccan association of citrus growers and exporters, which will ensure Delaware continues to be the North American distribution hub for its clementines through 2017.

The association began using the Port in 2000, but had always operated under short-term, and mainly one-year, deals until now. With a projected 30 percent increase in the volume of imports this season, and an increase in revenue, the direct jobs impacted by the new agreement will be 89, up by 30 percent from last year's total of 69.

"The commitment of our Moroccan partners to a five-year pact is a credit to our outstanding workforce and high quality infrastructure at the Port," said Markell. "It's critical that we do what it takes to maintain that quality, recognizing that our investments are well worth it for the jobs and economic activity that are created. Furthermore, partnerships with companies like Fresh Fruit Maroc are critical to strengthening our global competitiveness in an economy that requires us to think beyond our borders."

Today's announcement will help the Port plan further into the future. The new agreement includes 10-13 ship arrivals at the Port each year during a season that runs from October through March. Shipments are expected to bring an annual volume of 35,000 metric tons of fruit.

"The long-term commitment from the Moroccan growers, affirms the Port of Wilmington's leadership and specialization in the critical handling of fresh fruit and produce from around the world for the benefit of the citizens of the Eastern United States and Canada," said Alan B. Levin, Chairman, Diamond State Port Corporation.

**The Port of Wilmington, Delaware** is the largest port in the US for the importation of perishable cargo, such as fruit, both tropical and deciduous, and juice concentrates. Wilmington is the largest banana port in North America and 2nd largest in the world. The deepwater port and marine terminal handles about 400 vessels Annually with an annual import/export cargo tonnage of more than 5 million tons.

Today, Delaware's port is the busiest terminal on the Delaware River. Located at the confluence of the Delaware and Christina Rivers, 65 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, the Port is owned and operated by the Diamond State Port Corporation (DSPC), a corporate entity of the State of Delaware.