

ADM/Farmland Handles First Shipment of Grain to Cuba

For the first time in forty years, grain was shipped from a U.S. port to the country of Cuba.

In January 2002, the ADM/Farmland export grain elevator located in Galveston loaded 30,000 metric tons of wheat bound for Cuba on the vessel *H. Ishmail Kaptoangolu*.

“We were proud to have part of such an historic event,” stated Acting Port Director Steven M. Cernak. “Galveston has traditionally been an agricultural port, and this fits exactly with plans to grow our current cargo mix.”

U.S. Representative Nick Lampson actively pursued lifting the U.S. trade embargo that had been in place since 1963. Former President Bill Clinton signed the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act in October 2000 making possible the sale of food and agricultural products to Cuba.

“I am proud the first commercial shipment of American wheat to Cuba in 40 years, one-fourth of it from Texas, is going through the Port of Galveston,” Rep. Lampson said. “This demonstrates the potential economic benefits that trade with Cuba can provide both to our Texas farmers and our Texas ports.”

John Kavulich, President of the U.S. – Cuba Trade and Economic Council said Galveston was selected as the shipping point for several reasons. He said ADM/Farmland’s working relationship with the port was a factor, as were the proximity to Cuba, convenience for the growers, and political clout.

“The management of the Port of Galveston has been very active,” Kavulich said. “They have been very helpful. They have been good partners.”

The opening of more trade with Cuba could benefit the Port of Galveston. According to reports, President Fidel Castro has agreed to purchases of agricultural products in the range of \$35 million after his country was devastated by a hurricane. Events could dictate the opening of the further trade with Cuba