

## **Port of Galveston and Port of Victoria to Cooperate on Agricultural Exports**

The Port of Galveston announced a new cooperative arrangement in early March with the Port of Victoria, Texas in support of the export of Texas-grown agricultural products. The cooperation between the two ports involves the development of agricultural storage facilities at the Port of Victoria and the exportation of agricultural products through the new Galveston Bulk Terminal at Pier 35 at the Port of Galveston.

“We are truly excited about this unique cooperative arrangement with the Port of Victoria,” stated Steven M. Cernak, Galveston Port Director. “This is an excellent opportunity for an inland port to work hand-in-hand with a deep water port to facilitate economic growth in our state. This will also support our efforts to increase trade with Cuba. It complements the Memorandum of Understanding signed with Alimport in December to facilitate food imports for the 11 million residents of Cuba. Alimport is Cuba’s single largest importer of food supplies.”

Under the agreement, Port of Galveston facilities will be utilized for the movement of U.S. licensed cargoes, especially food and agricultural and forest products to Cuba. Products to be sent include wheat, corn, rice and other grain products.

“This cooperation between our two ports will provide an outlet that has not previously existed for agricultural products grown in Texas,” continued Cernak. “It will also support further development of Galveston Bulk Terminal and the creation of additional cargo volume moving through that facility. Our partnership with Victoria will ultimately result in reduced transportation costs for Texas farmers in delivering their goods to market. Additionally, and importantly, it will help to create new jobs and economic impact for the communities in which the ports are located.”

Galveston Bulk Terminal (GBT) at Pier 35 at the Port of Galveston became available at the end of 2003, having operated previously as the Imperial Sugar Company import terminal.

The Port of Victoria will build and manage an export facility on its port rail line near the barge loading dock. The cost of the entire facility will be over two million dollars. The work will be completed in time to move this year’s crop.

This export facility in Victoria will be the largest, most modern in the region and will allow South Texas farmers to participate in the ever-expanding world marketplace.

“The new relationship between the Port of Victoria and the Port of Galveston is the next step after the development of an agricultural export facility here in Victoria,” stated Howard Hawthorne, Port of Victoria Executive Director. “We can load barges here at the Port of Victoria for shipment to Galveston Bulk Terminal at the Port of Galveston. This is a great opportunity for the Port of Victoria to support regional economic growth in cooperation with the Port of Galveston.”

The Port of Victoria is a joint effort supported by the Victoria County Navigation District and the West Side Calhoun County Navigation District. Major cargoes are liquid and dry bulk, general and project cargoes. The Port is located on the Victoria Barge Canal that connects Victoria to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The GIWW connects the inland Port of Victoria to the deepwater Port of Galveston.