

Halstrom-East-Gulf-Ports

SPEAKERS

John Herath, Dan Halstrom

John Herath 00:00

Ports on the East and Gulf Coasts of the United States could shut down at the end of this month if the International longshoremen's Association and U.S. Maritime Alliance fail to reach a new contract agreement. While the majority of U.S. red meat shipments flow from the West Coast ports, a work stoppage in the East and Gulf would still be very disruptive to the industry according to U.S. Meat Export Federation President and CEO Dan Halstrom.

Dan Halstrom 00:22

The largest ports for U.S. beef and pork exports are on the West Coast, the three big ports there, but that doesn't mean that the East and Gulf Coast isn't important. We look at total waterborne exports of pork, about 45% of those go through the East and Gulf Coast ports, and on the beef side, about 30% of the waterborne exports. You know that 30 might sound a little low, but it doesn't mean it's not important, because there's quite a high percentage of chilled beef that goes out, very high value chilled beef, that goes out from the East Coast, in particular for destinations like Europe and Middle East. So we can't overstate the importance of the East Coast and Gulf Coast ports, even though the West Coast is larger, still, a very significant quantity as exported through the East and Gulf Coasts.

John Herath 01:10

While some traffic is being redirected to the West Coast, those ports could not absorb all of the shipments.

Dan Halstrom 01:17

Redirecting to the West Coast is a potential, very short-term solution, but it's by no means a long-term solution at all, because it's not just U.S. beef and pork. You've got all sorts of commodities that use these same ports. So we're challenged to export all of our product today using all the ports, so we cannot afford a shutdown in any part of the supply chain. Here we are just a few days away from the expiration of the contract on Sept. 30. Most definitely, we need to get the White House or anyone else involved that can help to spur discussions to get back to the table and avoid any kind of interruption of service later this month.

John Herath 01:56

For more, please visit [USMEF.org](https://usmef.org). For the U.S. Meat Export Federation. I'm John Herath.