

NEWS IN BRIEF

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Agricultural Marketing Services Announces Changes in Cotton Fees

The Agricultural Marketing services (AMS) issued a Federal Register Notice (FRN) announcing the changes to cotton fees that will be collected for the Cotton Board through entries filed with Customs and Border Protection. The change is an increase in the value assigned to imported cotton. This is a proposed change that will go into effect on October 16, 2023, unless there are significant adverse comments received by September 14, 2023. The instruction for comments and the proposed assessment changes per HTSUS classification are included in the FRN that can be found at: [2023-17220.pdf \(govinfo.gov\)](#)

Importers Responsible to Monitor 232 Exclusion Amounts Claimed

The Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has reminded importers that they are responsible for tracking the quantities that they declare under their 232 exclusions for steel and aluminum quota filings. BIS and CBP do not track the quantities used for every exclusion. Importers should be aware when their allowed quantities are getting low and file renewals of their exclusions in a timely manner.

BIS has found that the amounts of some exclusion have had excess quantities filed. The higher duty rates may be required to be paid on the excesses that have been filed. We suggest that every importer with a 232 steel or aluminum exclusion do a review of what has been used and then track the use of the exclusions filed to make sure that do not exceed the granted quantities.

Update on Potential Shipping Disruptions

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) representing labor at the U.S. West Coast ports and terminals finished their contract ratification voting and approved the contract that was agreed on. This contract is for 6 six years, which means relative calm with little disruption for quite a while.

Last week the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada (ILWU Canada) and the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) came together and ratified the contract proposal. This ends the strike in the Canadian northwest ports.

The Panama Canal drought is worsening. In the hot August month, the draft has reduced to 40 feet from the normal 45 feet. The larger ships are now required to carry 60% of the maximum through the canals. Some ships have unloaded excess numbers of containers on one side of Panama to be railed to the other side to be picked up by the ship after it has passed through the locks. The average number of ships allowed to move through the Canal has dropped from 37-38 per day to about 30. Ships with appointments are getting through, but those without an appointment must wait their turn. There is a backlog of about 120 ships waiting to go through with delays of over one week.

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CBP Changes on Filing Blanket Declarations Postposed

U.S. Customs and Border Protection had announced to the trade that customs brokers would no longer be able to file Non-Reimbursement Blanket Statements for antidumping duty declarations and other declarations in the Blanket Declarations Module in the ACE Portal after the blanket declarations moved to the Modernized ACE platform. Customs brokers would be able to input blanket declaration records on behalf of importers only if the importer has an ACE Portal account and the broker could file them for the importer only with access to the importer's ACE account. This was scheduled to start August 29 with the ACE 4 migration. However, CBP has delayed this migration deployment while they review that functionality and how to allow brokers to continue to file blanket declarations in ACE through their own portals.

With the delay in the ACE 4 migration deployment, CBP has cancelled its scheduled support call for the migration scheduled for Thursday, August 31 at 3:00 eastern time.



By **Todd Boice**, President