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Logistics changes forecast by Advance Customs Brokers

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Logistics play an increasingly larger role in the Peru asparagus deal starting with changes in shipping modes.

“One major trend in Peruvian asparagus is a shift from air to ocean shipping, which began in early 2000,” said Pat Compres, CEO of Advance Customs Brokers in Miami. “We think this year we’re going to see 30 percent higher ocean volumes with air volume dropping.”

While the downside of increased ocean transportation is a reduction of shelf life, Compres noted positive economic aspects. “Instead of paying an airfreight premium you’re saving an incredible amount of money via ocean,” she said. “Ocean cargo also opens up other ports. There are some

companies now shipping to Philadelphia and Savannah.”

Advance Customs Brokers continues to explore ways to help importers reduce costs. “We are fumigating inside containers and consolidating air cargo for fumigation,” explained Compres. “We work closely with USDA to advocate for our customers on fumigation issues. We were instrumental in pushing Seaboard to start a nine-day service for asparagus. Seaboard has been doing this since 2018 and it’s been growing.”

According to Compres, information is a crucial component of the deal. “Since we are a 24/7 operation, information to our customers is vital and given throughout the clearing process” she said. “Customers can make sales decisions based on our information. We’re working on changing our IT systems to allow us to retrieve much more information and provide the customer with direct reporting electronically on the status of their cargo as well as historical information.”

Yet even with information technology, Advance will always provide a personal service.

“That will never go away,” stated Compres. “The personal contact is most important -- it’s about custom tailoring logistics solutions to each customer’s need because everyone has a different need. We’ve hired a lot more staff as we’ve grown, but one of the biggest things our customers appreciate is how Maria and I are personally available 24/7 for any consultations.”

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