

A new shipping service delivering Dole pineapples and bananas to the United States will pass through Port Tampa Bay starting later this summer, newspaper [Tampa Bay](#) reports.

In addition to fruit, the direct weekly route linking Tampa, Honduras and Guatemala will also deliver containerized shipping of cargo like automobiles and other commodities. Two ships, the MV Dole Maya and MV Dole Aztec, will deliver all goods and materials from Central America to Tampa; Gulfport, Miss.; and Freeport, Texas.

One reason Tampa was picked was a 135,000-square-foot refrigerated warehouse that opened in 2018, allowing the port to receive shipments of bananas, pineapples, limes, mangoes and other fruit from Central America.

“Our cold storage and port terminal operations facility is ideally positioned to serve the Tampa/Orlando I-4 corridor, which is Florida’s largest and fastest growing market, and reaching well beyond,” developer Richard Corbett of Port Logistics Refrigerated Services, which operates the warehouse, said in a statement.

John Trummel, vice president and general manager of Dole’s commercial cargo division, said in a statement the new Tampa route would enable the company and its non-agricultural clients new ways to reach their destinations “faster and more competitively.”

While Dole Food Company is the world’s leading commercial producer of pineapples and bananas. Port president and CEO Paul Anderson highlighted the opportunity to import all kinds of commodities.

“This marks a major milestone in our strategic efforts to continue to diversify our cargo mix and expand our container volume, which is now our fastest growing line of business,” Anderson said in a statement.

Dole’s containerized service to Tampa is scheduled to begin in late July.