

## **Retail Container Imports Expected to Increase 1.6 Percent in July**

WASHINGTON, July 10, 2012 – Import cargo volume at the nation’s major retail container ports is expected to increase 1.6 percent in July compared with the same month last year, and modest year-over-year increases are expected through the holiday season shipping cycle, according to the monthly Global Port Tracker report released today by the National Retail Federation and Hackett Associates.

“Whether consumers are going to have the confidence to spend during the next few months depends on what happens with employment, but retailers are being cautiously optimistic,” NRF Vice President for Supply Chain and Customs Policy Jonathan Gold said. “Sales can fluctuate from month to month, but these import numbers show that retailers are still expecting this year to be better than last year.”

U.S. ports followed by Global Port Tracker handled 1.34 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Units in May, the latest month for which after-the-fact numbers are available. That was up 4.1 percent from April and 2.3 percent from May 2011. One TEU is one 20-foot cargo container or its equivalent.

June remained at an estimated 1.34 million TEU, the same as May but up 4.7 percent from June 2011. July is forecast at 1.38 million TEU, up 1.6 percent from last year; August at 1.44 million TEU, up 6.2 percent; September at 1.45 million TEU, up 6.8 percent; October at 1.47 million TEU, up 12.6 percent over lower-than-usual numbers last year; and November at 1.3 million TEU, up 2 percent.

The first half of 2012 totaled an estimated 7.5 million TEU, up 2.6 percent from the same period last year. The total for 2011 was 15.1 million TEU, up 0.6 percent from 2010. NRF projects 2012 retail sales will grow [3.4 percent](#) to \$2.53 trillion.

Numbers in this month’s report reflect the addition of Miami to the list of ports covered.

“Economists and commentators are talking the economy down,” Hackett Associates founder Ben Hackett said. “Despite the mixed signals, we remain optimistic that consumers will remain in the market.”

Global Port Tracker, which is produced for NRF by the consulting firm Hackett Associates, covers the U.S. ports of Long Angeles/Long Beach, Oakland, Seattle and Tacoma on the West Coast; New York/New Jersey, Hampton Roads, Charleston, Savannah and Miami on the East Coast, and Houston on the Gulf Coast. The report is free to NRF retail members, and subscription information is available at [www.nrf.com/PortTracker](http://www.nrf.com/PortTracker) or by calling (202) 783-7971. Subscription information for non-members can be found at [www.globalporttracker.com](http://www.globalporttracker.com).

As the world's largest retail trade association and the voice of retail worldwide, NRF represents retailers of all types and sizes, including chain restaurants and industry partners, from the United States and more than 45 countries abroad. Retailers operate more than 3.6 million U.S. establishments that support one in four U.S. jobs – 42 million working Americans. Contributing \$2.5 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation's economy. NRF's [Retail Means Jobs](#) campaign emphasizes the economic importance of retail and encourages policymakers to support a [Jobs, Innovation and Consumer Value Agenda](#) aimed at boosting economic growth and job creation. [www.nrf.com](http://www.nrf.com)

Hackett Associates provides expert consulting, research and advisory services to the international maritime industry, government agencies and international institutions.

###