

Terminal 6: Making Local Business Global

The Port of Portland's three marine terminals connect businesses across the Pacific Northwest to the global economy by shipping their products to countries around the world. From agriculture to autos, and bulk minerals to big machinery, we provide a competitive advantage for shippers, connect people to the products they love, and support thousands of family-wage jobs, many of which don't require a college degree.

Container Service

The Port has operated container service at Terminal 6 (T6), the only ocean container terminal in Oregon, providing global market access to businesses and consumers throughout Oregon and the Pacific Northwest for 50 years.

T6 handles containers full of Pacific Northwest goods ranging from agriculture to furniture. Beyond containers, the 420-acre site also handles imported and exported cars and break bulk – large, heavy materials that need a lot of space to ship.

Container Transportation

T6 is a central link between multiple modes of container transportation, including truck, rail, and ship. The 52-acre intermodal yard at T6 offers on-terminal rail access to the transcontinental rail network via two Class 1 railroads: BNSF Railway (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP).

Economic Benefits

- **Quality Jobs:** Container operations at T6 create more than 1,500 jobs in the region in industries that include trucking, ILWU, warehouse/distribution, and freight forwarders/brokers.
- **Value:** In 2022, the Port of Portland handled \$308 million of export cargo at T6.

A Few of the Hundreds of Large and Small Regional Businesses That Depend on T6

Bob's Red Mill, Portland (*whole-grain foods*) | Bossco Trading, Tangent (*hay grower*)
Cascade Pacific Pulp, Halsey (*wood pulp*) | Harry & David, Medford (*food and gift products*)
Jeld Wen, Klamath Falls (*windows, doors*) | K&L Building Supply, Salem (*building materials*)
Les Schwab, Bend (*tires, auto service*) | Pacific Motion, Canby (*furniture*)
Pacific Seafood, Clackamas (*seafood*) | Whittier Wood Products, Eugene (*furniture*)

Current Service at T6

SM Line has been calling at Terminal 6 with a weekly service since shortly before the start of the COVID pandemic. As of 2022, SM Line relocated their Pacific Northwest headquarters to Portland as they seek to grow business through our port.

MSC, the largest ocean carrier in the world, started calling Portland in late 2021. Volumes were slow to start because of COVID and the supply chain crisis, but MSC has been vocal about its commitment to the regional market.

Agricultural Products

Container service is important for many Pacific Northwest industries, but it is especially critical for agricultural exporters from the Willamette Valley, where most grass seed and animal feed products – our top containerized export – are produced.

2022 Top Exports through T6

Hay and animal feed
Recyclables (metal and paper)
Grass seed
Wood Products
Grain and vegetables

2022 Top Imports through T6

Furniture
Toys and games
Tires
Auto parts
Apparel

Other agricultural products currently handled at T6 include hay, straw, wheat, potatoes, vegetables, hazelnuts, cheese, cranberries, and seafood.

Challenges of Operating Container Service in Portland

T6 differs from other West Coast seaports for several key reasons, which have led to a long history of economic instability in the marine container business in Portland.

- 1. Geography:** The Port is more than 100 miles upriver from the ocean and there are limits on river depth.
- 2. Increased ship sizes:** The Columbia River has a depth of 43 feet, which limits the size of vessels that can optimally deliver container cargo to Portland.
- 3. Market size:** Our regional consumer market is small in comparison to other West Coast cities.

And, while other ports operate their terminals through terminal operating companies, the Port is currently the only public operator of an international container terminal on the West Coast.