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VOLUME ONE, ISSUE FIVE | 2026



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Pair targeted upgrades with the standards, training, and change management needed to make them stick across a network.

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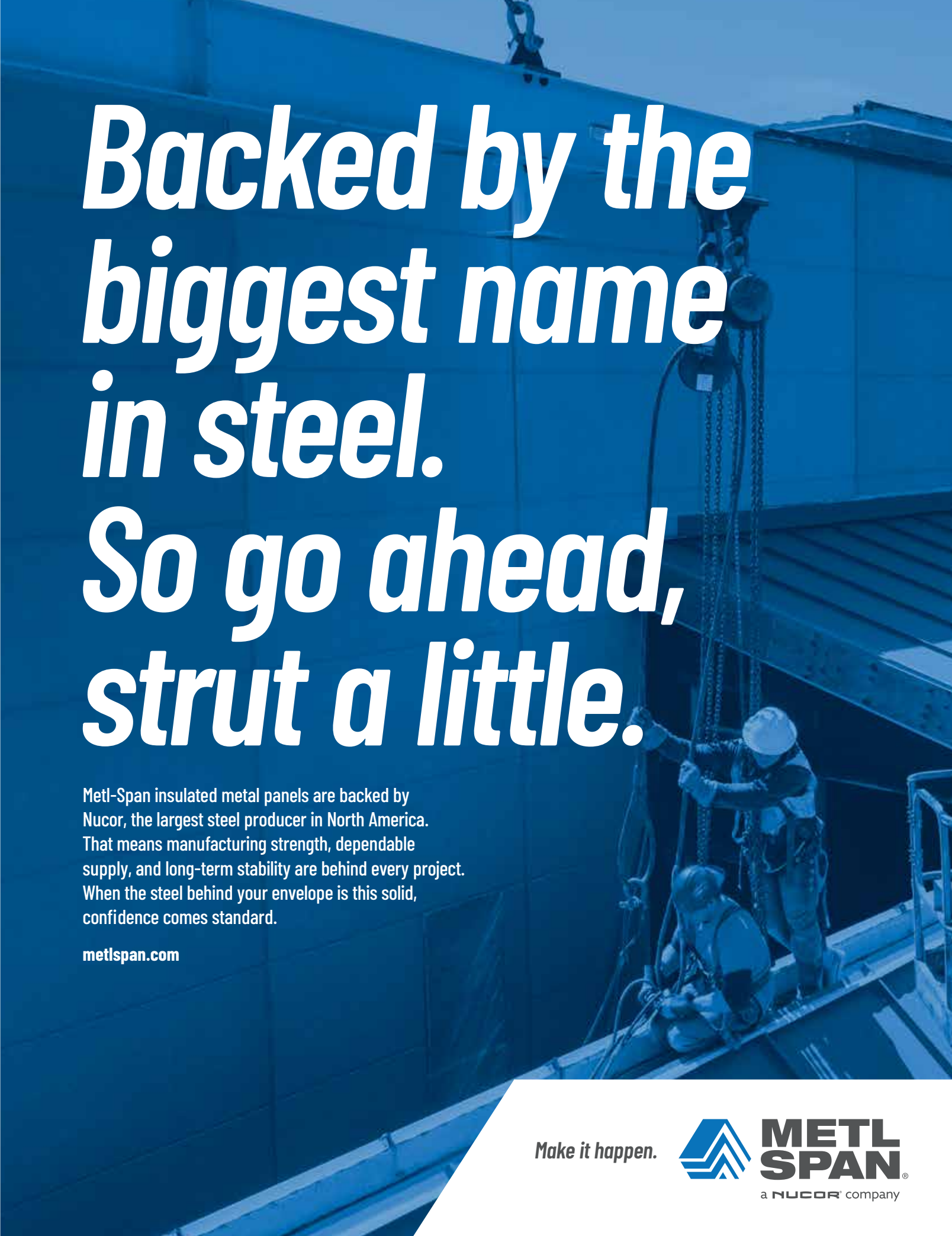

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MESSAGES FROM GCCA LEADERS

OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, I'VE HAD THE PLEASURE OF VISITING OUR MEMBERS AND COLD CHAIN PROFESSIONALS AROUND THE GLOBE – IN NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, AFRICA, EUROPE, AND THE UNITED STATES. DURING THESE TRAVELS, I'VE ALSO WORKED WITH LEADERSHIP AND STAFF ON A NUMBER OF EMERGING POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE DECISIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE UNITED STATES, THAT WILL PROFOUNDLY IMPACT THE GLOBAL TEMPERATURE-CONTROLLED SUPPLY CHAIN.

The cold chain rarely makes headlines until something goes wrong, but this is precisely why our industry deserves more *careful* attention from policymakers, not less attention overall.

When legislation makes it harder to build and operate cold storage facilities, the effects rarely stay within one jurisdiction. Cold chain capacity factors in global, national, and regional food security and public health preparedness.

In the United States, fragmented or inconsistent policies make it harder for our industry's professionals to plan reliable capacity across the country. When a policy decision raises the cost or difficulty of operating cold storage in a specific area, distributors often reroute volume to neighboring regions or states with friendlier conditions. This can concentrate capacity strain elsewhere, raise regional transportation costs, and leave communities more exposed during demand spikes or emergencies.

Temperature-controlled supply chains are also linked to the basics of international trade – imported produce, pharmaceuticals, and specialty goods often pass through a limited number of major cold storage hubs. Storage disruption at a key port of entry can raise costs and create bottlenecks that are felt well beyond U.S. borders.

Supporting our sector does not mean deregulation without any reasonable oversight. But sweeping decisions affecting cold logistics have consequences beyond the state, region, territory, or province where they're made. A single policy can change capacity, investment, and job availability. A pattern of bad policy decisions can weaken the resilience of the whole cold supply chain, with consequences that reach grocery shelves, hospitals, and trading partners far from where the vote was cast.

Policy decisions never happen in a vacuum, and good policy in our sector is not a favor to industry. It is an investment in infrastructure, safety, and sustainability that are critical for communities around the world.

We are the backbone of perishable commodities and an essential part of modern infrastructure. And perhaps our work is never done. There is no such thing as a "perfect" supply chain, but our members, our leadership, and our staff remain committed to policies that balance community safety with the industry's ability to continue operating and investing in the cold chain … in California, or wherever your business may be.



SARA STICKLER, CAE
PRESIDENT AND CEO
GCCA

COLDFACTS

COLD FACTS magazine is published every other month by the **Global Cold Chain Alliance (GCCA)**, an organization that unites partners to be innovative leaders in the temperature-controlled warehousing, transportation and logistics industry.

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A NEW SEASON ACROSS THE COLD CHAIN POLICY LANDSCAPE

A busy agenda is shaped by regulatory, legislative, and political developments nationwide.

By Lindsay Shelton-Gross

If the past three months have taught us anything, it's that the cold chain never gets a quiet quarter. So, buckle up: as 2026 heads into its final stretch, GCCA members are navigating a packed lineup of regulatory, legislative, and geopolitical developments across every region.

Here's where things stand and what's worth watching.

United States

- **Cold storage legislation signed into law in California.** Two "gut and amend" bills born out of the June 2026 Boyle Heights fire have now moved through Sacramento. AB 817, introduced by Assembly Member Mark Gonzalez, requires new cold storage facilities over 20,000 square feet to create and maintain a contingency fund of up to $20 million to receive building approvals.

  GCCA led a fierce opposition to AB 817 and was an active part of the opposition coalition for SB716; however, on September 27, California's Governor Gavin Newsom signed both bills into law. While these laws do not go into effect until January 1, 2027, GCCA commits to regularly updating members and industry stakeholders on our next steps in continued engagement with the legislature.

- **Low-oxygen systems for fire prevention.** GCCA is leading an independent, observational field study on cold storage environments operating under reduced-oxygen (low-ox) conditions used for fire prevention. The study aims to give the industry an evidentiary basis for engaging with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on how to comply with the Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134).

  The research is led by Prof. Thomas Küpper (RWTH Aachen University), with Prof. Peter Hackett (University of Colorado), and PhD candidate Clara Wehle representing the United States. In the past few weeks, 105 fieldwork participants in the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands tested "lite" gear, like half masks and nose cannulas. The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy recently recommended that the Department of Labor and OSHA review and potentially reform 12 workplace safety regulations, including reduced-oxygen environments, with cold storage specifically recognized for using low oxygen to prevent and suppress fires.

- **Traceability: FSMA Rule 204 compliance deadline is July 20, 2028.** For 3PL cold storage operators, FSMA 204 carries particular significance because they will be expected to maintain systems that support all customer compliance obligations. GCCA is working to spread the word on deadlines and requirements, update compliance guidance, host webinars for members and industry stakeholders, and engage directly with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to educate and inform warehouse operators.

  GCCA is a member of the Partnership for Food Traceability coalition, and sits on FDA's Traceability Committee and Pilots Committee. Additionally, GCCA is an active member of two coalitions. The Partnership for Food Traceability (PFT) is an independent, sector-neutral nonprofit developing a shared, overarching vision for food traceability across the supply chain. The Food Industry FSMA 204 Collaboration, organized by GS1, shares industry resources and brings together trade associations and industry groups to provide resources supporting education and guidance.

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Canada

In recent months, the Canadian federal government has strongly emphasized strengthening economic competitiveness by reducing red tape, improving productivity, and building more efficient supply chains. For the cold chain, this creates a policy environment focused on facilitating trade, improving infrastructure, and supporting the movement of goods across Canada.

- **National Food Security Strategy:** Launched in June 2026, the strategy commits to expanding domestic food production, increasing year-round food availability, strengthening food security, and reducing regulatory barriers across the agri-food supply chain.
- **Trade and Market Access:** Canada is also advancing its trade diversification agenda and expanding market access opportunities for Canadian businesses. Key priorities include strengthening economic partnerships with India, deepening engagement across the Indo-Pacific region, expanding commercial opportunities in the Gulf through the Canada-UAE agreement, and supporting exporters through initiatives such as the Strategic Exports Office.
- **Building Canada Strong Act:** Bill C-39 has already advanced to second reading and remains a key priority for the fall parliamentary session. The legislation includes measures to establish strategic trade corridors, reduce transportation bottlenecks, modernize port governance, advance trade digitalization, and streamline permitting processes. For the cold chain, these developments signal a clear commitment to improving the efficiency and resilience of Canada's agri-food supply chain.
- **Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Digitization**: GCCA members were invited to participate in a listening session with CFIA officials, providing an opportunity to hear directly from regulators as they demonstrated the MyCFIA portal. The session also allowed members to discuss operational challenges and share feedback, reinforcing GCCA's role as a valuable resource to CFIA as it continues to advance its digitization efforts.

Europe

- **European priorities and the cold chain:** Trade and tariff uncertainty, the ongoing geopolitical crisis, and energy and supply chain resilience remain the dominant themes for European members this fall. An analysis of online food security conversations showed that the cold chain has low visibility as a standalone sector and is mentioned indirectly in transportation, storage, or supply chain topics. Policymakers generate 85% of engagement, focused mainly on energy costs, food waste, and climate resilience.
- **GCCA policy influence:** Strengthening the base of GCCA's European policy presence begins with policy setting and prioritization by the European Advisory Council and Government Affairs Committee. Opportunities include developing a European Cold Supply Chain Roundtable to raise cold chain issues at the EU level and deepening engagement on topics such as energy costs, fisheries, resilience, and food waste. Additionally, GCCA is examining the 2026 EU Maritime Strategy and the new EU Maritime Alliance to advocate for cold chain visibility in maritime and port sectors.

Latin America/Brazil

- **Brazilian Tax Reform:** Brazil's tax reform continues to be the headline issue for GCCA members. Starting January 1, 2026, Brazil began the practical rollout of its major indirect tax reform, introducing two new consumption taxes – CBS at the federal level and IBS at the state and municipal level under Complementary Laws No. 214/2025 and 227/2026 – replacing five existing levies. Authorities have described 2026 as an "educational year," with a penalty-free testing period once detailed rules are published. For cold chain operators, this affects invoicing systems, pricing, supply chain contracts, and cash flow. The transition is expected to run through 2033.
- **EU Restrictions on Imports:** On September 3, the European Union began implementing restrictions on the entry of animal protein products originating from Brazil, pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/6 regarding the use of antimicrobials. A recent European Commission audit concluded that Brazil's control systems provide enough information to certify that poultry meat exported to the EU complies with new restrictions. Its findings should pave the way for poultry exports to resume once Member States vote to restore them at the relevant Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (SCOPAFF). While good news for poultry, Brazilian beef exports are not expected to resume for at least two years, reflecting the time it takes to raise beef cattle to slaughter. The report will be discussed at the next SCOPAFF Controls and Import Conditions meeting in October.

Africa

- **GCCA convenes in Johannesburg.** GCCA's 2026 Africa Cold Chain Conference in September examined how policy and government decisions shape the continent's perishables trade. Discussions covered the regulatory environment for Africa's food supply chain, infrastructure financing, and operating costs. Delegates also considered how geopolitical tensions, shifting trade relationships, energy supply volatility, and economic pressures are affecting perishable imports and exports. Additionally, GCCA Africa's Food Safety & Compliance Committee met during the conference. A revised draft of VPN 38: Veterinary Quarantine and Public Health was announced by Dr. Mphane Molefe, Director of Veterinary Public Health, Department of Agriculture. GCCA is working with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries to obtain the draft and respond with an industry perspective.

  Finally, GCCA's Africa Council continued work on setting future priorities around engagement with governments and regional authorities, collecting insights on Africa's cold chain businesses, creating networks to tackle shared challenges, collaborating on new opportunities, and determining the role cold chain infrastructure can play in increasing intra-African trade under the AfCFTA.
- **Member-exclusive information from the Center for Risk Assessment (CRA).** Members are eligible to receive monthly political and economic analysis briefings from CRA, typically linked in GCCA's Policy Weekly. Interested in receiving this brief directly? Contact Lindsay Shelton-Gross, lshelton-gross@gcca.org.

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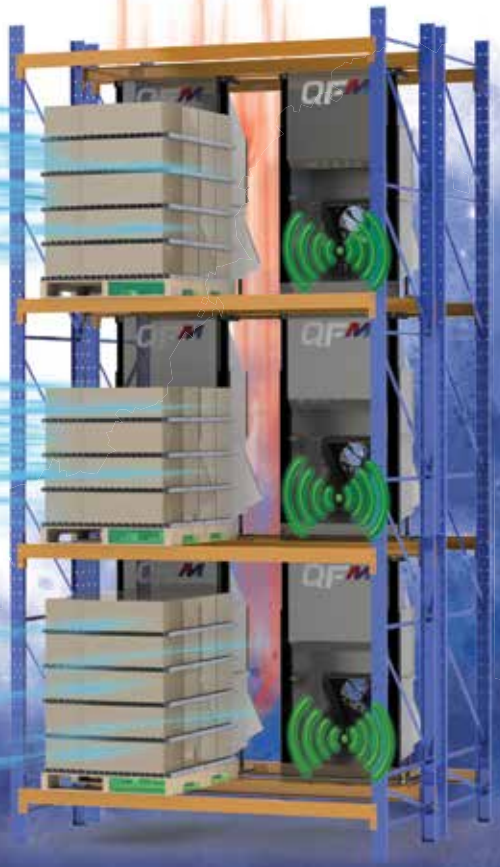

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MAKE YOUR BUILDING EARN ITS NEXT DECADE

Pair targeted upgrades with the standards, training, and change management needed to make them stick across a network.

A temperature-controlled warehouse does not reach the end of its useful life simply because it is old. It reaches that point when its structure, systems, or location can no longer serve customers competitively – or when the capital required to correct those limitations would be better invested elsewhere.



Left: Roof investigation.
Right: Existing warehouse roof.
(Photos courtesy of Americold.)

That distinction is reshaping the choice between renovating an existing facility, expanding it, or starting over. New refrigeration controls, better envelopes, targeted automation, and real-time operating data can add years of productive life to the right building. Yet capital alone cannot rescue a poorly located asset, overcome an undersized site, or make incompatible technology useful.

The business case comes first.

"Age alone really doesn't determine the facility's viability or its value," says Brian Dunn, Senior Vice President of Facilities and Engineering for Americold. "The question is whether the facility can continue delivering long-term value to the customers and the network efficiently."

When the fundamentals are sound, Dunn says, modernization can extend a facility's operating life by 15 to 20 years. That prospect makes the upgrade-versus-new-build decision less about a building's birth date and more about its ability to support the next generation of customer needs.

Start With the Job to Be Done

The first capital decision should be whether the property still has a useful role in the operator's network. Customer requirements, throughput, reliability, future growth, and the return on invested capital belong in that conversation before a team selects equipment or asks vendors for proposals.

Josh Currie has viewed that decision from several sides: at a design-build company, as a cold-storage operator, and now as President of Thermcon Inc. Each perspective, he notes, reinforces the need to define the owner's needs and work backward.

"From the operator side, there are operational considerations and the needs of many clients to reconcile," Currie says. "As an owner of a design-build firm, we try to blend this experience in order to deliver the best result."

The assessment begins with what customers need, what works today, and what does not. Ownership also matters. A company will evaluate a leased facility differently from an owned asset, especially when an upgrade is tied to an expansion.

Michael Lynch, Senior Vice President of Sustainable Engineering at United States Cold Storage, describes the choices as a continuum. USCS has used refrigeration-control replacements, warehouse management system migrations, room conversions, automation, and energy projects to increase capacity, productivity, and reliability inside existing buildings. The company pursues greenfield development when market demand, automation requirements, or site constraints justify it.

That discipline guards against one of modernization's most common mistakes: selecting technology before defining the problem.

"A lot of folks are just chasing the technology instead of solving the business problem," Dunn says. "Only after we define the challenge, identify the customer's need, and agree on the measures of success do we begin determining which improvements make sense."

That does not rule out experimentation. Currie favors pilots using automated guided vehicles, autonomous mobile robots, or automated storage and retrieval system (AS/RS) modules when they fit the product, volume, and workflow.

These projects can create immediate efficiency while becoming proof cases for future growth. Shared evidence helps executives compare projects across the portfolio and direct scarce capital toward the highest-value constraint first. It gives capital committees a consistent record of why they made each decision.

Their value still depends on integration. A mechanical system that does not communicate cleanly with the warehouse management system – or that conflicts with established operating methods – can introduce more complexity than it removes.

"Overinvesting or underinvesting often correlates directly with the level of knowledge and understanding of the investment," Currie said. "A well-planned, highly integrated and expertly executed system can yield great results."

Interrogate the Bones

Once a building has a continuing business purpose, the investigation turns physical.

A rigorous facility condition assessment should cover traffic flow and site access; the foundation, slab and structure; clear height; the insulated envelope; roof and dock doors; refrigeration and electrical capacity; and life-safety systems. The team also needs a current description of operations, reliable operating data, and a three- to five-year growth forecast.

The proposed use determines which defects are manageable. Additional electrical or refrigeration capacity can often be installed in an existing building. Limited land and low clear height are harder to solve when the business requires high-volume storage. A roof leak can be repaired; a slab that cannot support a high-density automated storage and retrieval system may change the entire project.

"Can the floor handle it if the data shows an AS/RS system makes the most sense?" asks Stephen Wilson, Director of National Sales for Apex Companies. "Slab thickness and condition can be overlooked in the initial bid process and then become an expensive change order, or an entirely new project, just to get the automation job off the ground."

Roof quality matters for the same reason. Correct water intrusion above sensors, controls, and automated machinery before commissioning.

Wilson says the combination of a damaged floor, thin slab, deteriorated roof, and insufficient clear height can make relocation or a newer building the more rational answer.

Refrigeration requires an equally unsentimental review. Douglas Reindl, a Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Director of the Industrial Refrigeration Consortium at



Exterior temperature cooling. (Photo courtesy of Americold.)

the University of Wisconsin–Madison, says mechanical integrity and changes in function are the two principal triggers. Equipment designed for a holding freezer, for example, may not be appropriate when that space becomes a contract blast freezer.

Replacement also creates an opening to reconsider size, materials, maintainability, and layout rather than installing a clone of the original. An expansion may leave a once-peripheral machinery room in the center of the operation, creating an opportunity to recover warehouse space and build a machinery room where equipment can be operated, inspected, and maintained safely.

Good maintenance can complicate assumptions about age. Reindl has seen old systems with decades of useful life remaining because the refrigeration staff cared for them meticulously. He's also witnessed newer equipment run into the ground. Legacy controls and discontinued components can force an upgrade even when the mechanical system is still viable.

Older plants also tend to lack the sensors needed to separate aging equipment from a controls, maintenance, or building problem, Reindl points out.

Count More Than Kilowatts

Modernization proposals are often presented through energy savings, but the most valuable projects solve several problems at once. Operators should consider initial cost, asset condition, reliability, customer service, labor productivity, capacity, safety, and risk reduction alongside energy intensity and maintenance expense.

"One will virtually never justify replacing an existing system with the expectation that the capital cost will be covered in a reasonable time through energy savings," Reindl says. "Energy here is still too cheap."

Smaller measures can deliver attractive paybacks. Adjusting set points may require no capital, while variable-frequency drives on evaporator or condenser fans can reduce energy use at modest cost. Reindl recommends that multi-facility companies benchmark comparable sites using a normalized measure such as energy cost per cubic foot per year. Outliers can reveal low-cost opportunities and expose locations where an apparent equipment problem is really an operating problem.

The economics change when reliability, safety, or refrigerant availability enter the equation. An obsolete control platform, unsupported equipment, or a phased-out refrigerant can create a breakpoint at which continued repair becomes the expensive choice. Reduced downtime, improved safety, and the ability to maintain a system with fewer scarce technical resources may support deeper investment even when the energy-only payback does not.

Building-envelope improvements can also produce layered returns. Wilson frequently sees substantial energy opportunities in roofs and dock doors. Currie noted that a failing envelope can hurt working conditions, refrigeration performance and energy consumption at the same time. Another facility may gain more by repurposing space and redesigning product flow.

Americold uses what Dunn calls "a total-value lens." The company examines energy intensity per square foot, but also measures capacity gains, productivity, customer impact, and risk. Over roughly 18 months, the company upgraded refrigeration controls at 11 sites with AI-enabled systems. LED lighting, meanwhile, can lower energy use while improving visibility and picking accuracy. Real-time monitoring across most of the company's global network gives managers a shared view of performance and helps validate whether an investment delivers the promised result.

Compliance spending can also become a useful modernization window. A required project may offer little direct return on its own, but bundling it with controls, automation, or infrastructure work can create operating value and avoid reopening the same area later. Wilson advises choosing equipment, software, and infrastructure that can adapt as regulations evolve, rather than locking the facility into a rigid solution to today's requirement.

Modernize Without Losing Your Cool

The best design on paper can fail if its construction plan disrupts temperature control, food safety, employee safety, or customer service. Retrofit teams must map rigid and flexible parts of the operation, shutdown windows, construction sequence, seasonal volume swings, and temporary requirements for cooling, power, and fuel.

Product may have to move to another room, another building, or refrigerated trailers at the dock. Those moves belong in the project budget. So does the premium for multiple mobilizations when installers must return for each phase.

"Exclusively prioritizing the minimization of operational impacts can result in far less efficient construction methods and longer completion timelines," Currie said. "If that balance is not clearly understood and planned, there can be risks to temperature control, food safety, and employee welfare."

Americold manages large improvements through a project-governance framework grounded in Project Management Institute practices. Scope, schedule, milestones, project-performance indicators, risks, and mitigation plans remain visible throughout the work. Dunn said those controls protect safety and uninterrupted customer service rather than treating them as assumptions.

The lesson is practical: phasing is an operating model, not merely a construction schedule. Operations, engineering, maintenance, safety, and customer teams must agree on how the facility will work during every stage, not just how it should perform when the ribbon is cut.



Standardize Before Automating

Commissioning is the midpoint of modernization, not the finish. New tools change work, and the value disappears when employees revert to the familiar process or when each site invents its own version of the system.

"Successful adoption of any new technology or automation first requires some standardization," Dunn said. "You have to have standardization before you have digitization and automation."

Americold's answer is its operating system that establishes common processes and aligns key performance indicators, training, and governance across more than 230 facilities in more than a dozen countries. The portfolio includes conventional warehouses, plant-attached operations, and highly automated facilities, each with a different workforce, culture, and operating history. A common framework gives the company a baseline without pretending those differences do not exist.

For example, Dunn says the company used early equipment management while installing an AI-enabled optical grader and sorter for fruit. Operations, maintenance, engineering, safety, human resources, and finance participated from concept and design through procurement, installation, and commissioning. Frontline equipment operators learned cleaning and inspection before the machine went live, including where fruit wax or juice could contaminate photo eyes and sensors. Then the equipment operators helped establish cleaning, inspection, and lubrication standards and trained other operators.

That early involvement makes maintainability and reliability design criteria rather than post-installation complaints. It also creates local ownership of the new process.

USCS reinforces adoption through common platforms, formal lessons-learned reviews, and enterprise standards for controls, communications, safety, and integration. Lynch says the company measures training progress, user adoption, and operating results so a successful deployment means more than installing software or equipment. Institutional knowledge matters as well: experienced leaders remember which earlier projects succeeded, which failed, and why.

Portfolio consistency still needs disciplined exceptions. Currie recommends standards for controls architecture, equipment preferences, temperature monitoring, maintenance, safety, training, documentation, and KPIs. Those choices make employees more transferable, simplify maintenance, strengthen purchasing leverage, and improve management visibility. Climate, building age, product mix, customer requirements, and refrigeration design may nevertheless require a different answer at a particular site.

"The goal is to establish a common operating standard and then document justified, site-specific deviations from that standard," Currie says. "That creates consistency without forcing a solution onto a facility where it does not make operational or economic sense."

Together, those practices turn modernization from a capital event into an asset-management discipline. The end-user company defines the customer problem and investment thesis; the project team tests the building and systems; and the people who operate and maintain the equipment help shape the work before startup. Common data and standards then make lessons portable across the network.



Above: Interior cooling system. Below: An old electrical panel. (Photos courtesy of Americold.)

"The future of cold storage is not simply about building more facilities," Dunn says. "It is about extracting greater value from existing assets through strategic capital, reliability-focused maintenance, targeted automation, and disciplined change management – not chasing technology for technology's sake."

KEITH LORIA is an award-winning journalist who has been writing for major newspapers and magazines for close to 20 years, on topics as diverse as sports, business and technology.

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PREPARING NOW FOR 2028 FOOD TRACEABILITY RULE

Opportunity for operators to evaluate new tech solutions.

By Isobel Davidson

The United States Food & Drug Administration's postponement of the Food Traceability Final Rule (FSMA 204) to July 2028 has given temperature-controlled logistics operators time to assess state-of-the-art systems and technologies that can help them meet the new requirements. Platform development, data warehousing, and advances in AI, along with cloud platforms, mobile scanning, 2D barcodes, sensors, Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), and standardized data structures, are enabling new, advantageous solutions for food traceability.

Preparing for New Requirements

GCCA's Vice President for Global Projects & Partnerships Amanda Brondy says, "We do not expect any further changes to the Final Rule, neither in its requirements nor to the compliance date of July 20, 2028. GCCA members are assessing the requirements for specific facilities and operations, speaking with customers and supply chain partners, and putting in place systems to smooth the transition."

The FSMA Final Rule applies to food supply chains operating within the United States and to firms outside of the country that are producing or exporting food for U.S. consumption. The Final Rule's forthcoming implementation is driving change, but the business case for greater precision in food traceability extends beyond regulatory compliance.

Beyond food safety, recall exposure, brand protection, and insurance expectations, greater traceability precision helps avoid writing off more edible food than necessary. Consumers trust brands that respond quickly to recalls.

Many cold chain operators are now testing technologies to help create the required continuous, interoperable digital threads.

Lucy Angarita, Director of Supply Chain Visibility at GS1 US, explains that investment is starting to focus more on data flow.

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"Organizations are increasingly considering how traceability data moves end to end and where it breaks, leading to investments that can integrate with existing operations instead of becoming another isolated tool."

Angarita advises priority actions for 3PLs should include mapping data flows, focusing on high-volume partners, validating master data, and conducting mock recalls and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) response drills.

New Role in Food Traceability

The role of cold chain operators in food traceability has changed substantially since the turn of the decade. "Historically, many companies relied on paper records, spreadsheets, disconnected systems, and manual reconciliation to determine what happened to a product after a concern arose," says Michael Armanious, CEO of Datex, a warehouse management software business. "Traceability has moved from being a retrospective recordkeeping exercise to becoming part of real-time warehouse execution. Temperature-controlled 3PLs now operate as both physical custodians of product and critical custodians of data."

Chris McGinnis, Principal Solution Advisor, Supply Chain Advisory at Blue Yonder, a digital supply chain transformation business, agrees.

"Operators that ship and receive listed foods now have responsibilities for capturing key data elements from executed critical tracking events," says McGinnis. "Lot codes, with event history attached, are reorganizing what every system in the chain has to do. The 3PL has changed from supporting a customer's supply chain to being an extension of their customers' supply chains, and their technology must match what their customers have."

Final Rule Challenges

Maintaining the complete and usable chain of information required by the Final Rule brings particular challenges for 3PL cold chain businesses. Temperature data must connect to traceability data that establishes product identity, location, ownership, status, and movement history; and different customers may have different lot structures, requirements, data formats, and expectations.

For foods on the FDA's Food Traceability List, companies must maintain Key Data Elements associated with applicable Critical Tracking Events and connect those records to the appropriate traceability lot code. Beyond receiving and shipping, additional services can introduce further complexity.

"The operational difficulty appears in the exceptions and value-added processes: repacking, relabeling, kitting, commingling, transformation, cross-docking, inventory holds, owner changes, and transfers between facilities," Armanious says. "If the physical process changes the product or its traceability relationship, the supporting data must preserve that history."

The disconnect between solutions for planning, manufacturing, transportation, and warehousing is another major challenge. A single lot's history could be spread across multiple systems sharing no common data model or format. "The cost lands on operators and supervisors," McGinnis says, "for whom building an end-to-end view means opening each system in turn, exporting, and reconciling by hand. People who should be running a floor spend their shift stitching spreadsheets together instead."

Brondy also highlights the difficulties posed by the lack of data standardization. "In the event of a traceback, retrieving records within 24 hours of FDA's request becomes very difficult if all the records are stored and shared in different formats."

Today's Technologies

Cold chain businesses are looking to new and emerging technologies to enable precision traceability alongside other key operational needs such as efficiency, resilience, sustainability, speed, and flexibility to customers' needs.

For 3PLs serving multiple customers, modern Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) can provide a common operational foundation while allowing customer-specific workflows and controls. Armanious says, "There is a fundamental shift: traceability is no longer a report assembled after the fact. It is an operational record created by the warehouse processes themselves."

Advances in command centers are unlocking new opportunities too. "Traditional control towers, being reactive by design, could flag a problem but not work out who needed to act on it," explains McGinnis. "The current generation of command centers detects meaningful change, works out who is affected, recommends a response, and coordinates it across the parties involved."

Another exciting developing technology in food traceability for McGinnis is the shift from supply chain point solutions to supply chain suites.

"Instead of pulling from five systems, supply chain suites leverage a unified underlying data model," says McGinnis. "One model runs across every stage, so a lot code means the same thing to the planning engine, the warehouse, the transportation planner, and the labor system. Downstream execution will adjust in real time to upstream changes."

Angarita highlights 2D barcode systems such as the GS1 DataMatrix. Omnidirectional, these tolerate damage and print imperfections

GCCA Update on FSMA

"GCCA continues to engage with the FDA on Final Rule implementation, including through the Partnership for Food Traceability (GCCA represents members in this partnership). We are raising key cold chain concerns, including the lack of standardization for technologies and traceability lot codes, and the lack of protocols for action when the data a 3PL receives is bad or missing. We are impressing upon regulators the differences between the 3PL model and distribution models where product ownership passes on.

"Many GCCA members are progressing in their preparations, businesses not yet underway should reach out to GCCA for help getting started and to connect you to suitable contacts and relevant guidance. GCCA is creating new and updated FSMA resources for members on a regular basis, and there is also useful information on the FDA, GS1, and Partnership for Food Traceability websites."

GCCA Vice President Global Projects & Partnerships Amanda Brondy

through error correction and hold more data in a smaller footprint.

"In a cold, wet, fast-moving environment, error correction isn't a spec sheet feature. Being able to communicate a traceability lot code from wherever the product was initially packed all the way downstream, without a human typing numbers, is dramatically less error-prone and more efficient." Angarita also points to EPCIS (Electronic Product Code Information Services), a global GS1 standard that enables trading partners to create and share supply chain visibility event data.

The Next Developments

Exciting emerging technologies are set to advance food traceability still further. For Armanious, the most promising developments are the technologies that reduce the distance between a physical warehouse event and its digital record. "Connected sensors can bring environmental and product-condition data closer to inventory movement records," he says. "Mobile scanning, 2D barcodes, RFID (radio-frequency identification), and potentially computer vision can reduce manual entry and improve the accuracy and timeliness of lot-level identification."

Developments also continue in connected packaging, where sensors put on the case, and eventually the item, enable automated reporting of their location and condition. The chain of custody becomes self-reporting rather than reconstructed after the fact. "This has been a standard in high-value pharmaceutical shipping for years," says McGinnis, "and falling costs are now moving it into the food and grocery vertical."

A pilot is underway for the GS1 US Rapid Record, helping growers capture information at harvest, cooling, packing, and shipping. Angarita says: "With no app, no new platform or Wi-Fi needed, it saves time recording events and produces an organized, standardized, sortable electronic file for downstream partners to use."

AI's maturation is expected to move the needle, too. However, Armanious notes that AI cannot reconstruct an event that was never captured or correct for an unreliable product identity at the source.

"The future of food traceability is not about collecting the most data," Armanious concludes. "It is about creating reliable, connected, and usable data at every critical operational event. When traceability is built into warehouse execution, operators can protect consumers, respond faster, and avoid unnecessarily disrupting product that was never affected."

ISOBEL DAVIDSON is a media consultant in the food and logistics industries.

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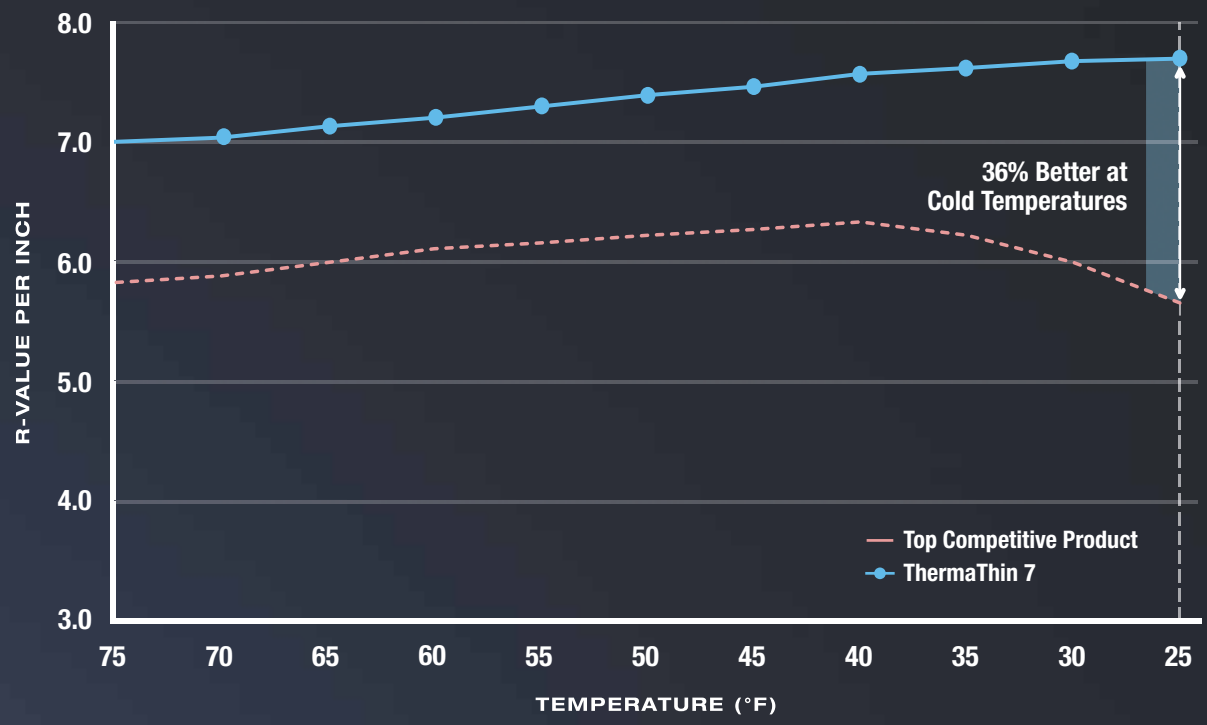

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[1]Tested in accordance with ASTM C518 and using publicly available competitor data. (2) Energy savings estimates are based on modeling of the DOE EnergyPlus Benchmark Large Refrigerated Warehouse template with an R-60 roof assembly across U.S. ASHRAE climate zones. Actual results will vary depending on climate, energy costs, building design, operating conditions, and other factors.

CARLISLE SYNTEC SYSTEMS



THE LONG SHADOW OF THE HORMUZ DISRUPTION

A post-conflict geopolitical risk analysis.

By Chris Hattingh

When Chinese political pressure made Hong Kong untenable for global institutions, Singapore absorbed the exodus. Banks moved their regional headquarters south; fund managers followed. A decade of accumulated trust in one hub transferred to another, almost within a single business cycle, because the underlying demand for a stable Asian financial base never disappeared – it just needed a new address.

Though the trigger is different, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) now presents a structurally similar question and challenge.

Since February 2026, war between the United States, Israel, and Iran has closed or crippled the Strait of Hormuz for five months. A ceasefire memorandum in June 2026 briefly raised hopes of normalization, but it broke down within weeks. By late July, renewed strikes had pushed Brent crude above $100 a barrel before it settled back near $89, and war-risk insurance premiums for Gulf shipping remain several times their pre-conflict level.

If this disruption reshapes the risk calculus for foreign investors and logistics operators moving food, medicine, and other temperature-sensitive cargo through the Gulf, one question follows: Which nodes absorb the redirected flows, and which are left behind?

After the Guns Fall Silent

A post-conflict GCC will not return to its pre-February baseline automatically. Recovery will arrive in stages, and the stages will not move at the same speed.

Energy recovers first. Sovereign capital follows political direction – not market sentiment – so state-linked infrastructure projects such as the UAE's Jebel Ali Port expansion and the long-discussed GCC Railway will likely



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resume on schedule once a durable ceasefire holds. Governments have both the balance sheets and the political will to keep national strategies moving regardless of near-term risk.

Private capital moves more slowly. Cold chain investment depends on multi-year lease and financing decisions made by companies answering to shareholders. Those shareholders will want to see months, not weeks, of stable transit through Hormuz before committing new capital to warehouses, reefer fleets, or long-haul contracts. The months of disruption already logged in 2026, on top of a broken ceasefire, will likely extend that observation period well past the point a formal peace agreement is signed.

A risk premium will persist even after hostilities end. War-risk insurers who raised premiums fourfold or fivefold during active conflict do not return to baseline pricing the moment strikes stop. They wait for a track record. The Hormuz disruption of 2026 is a live illustration of how quickly confidence in a supply route can collapse and how slowly it rebuilds once the immediate danger passes.

Structural Shift or Temporary Disruption?

The question that matters most for the GCC's food trade and cold chain infrastructure is whether the appetite for foreign investment snaps back to where it was in January 2026 or recalibrates permanently around a Gulf that carries a standing geopolitical discount.

Financial flows can reverse in a quarter; a trader that avoided Hormuz-adjacent routes in April can resume them in October, if justified by prices and safety data. Infrastructure commitments do not work that way.

A cold storage facility, a reefer fleet, or a port terminal represents a decision with a 10 or 20-year horizon. Once that capital has been redirected to an alternative hub, and the corridor logistics and customer relationships around it have been rebuilt, reversing the decision costs more than the original one did.

This asymmetry is the reason infrastructure tends to lag conventional recovery narratives. It also means that if enough operators redirect capital during a period of sustained risk, the redirection becomes durable even after the original threat has faded, simply because rebuilding the old network costs more than maintaining the new one.

The GCC imports up to 85% of its food, including 90% of its cereals and all of its rice. That level of dependence means any credible alternative route to move perishable and temperature-controlled cargo into the region, or through it, will attract sustained attention regardless of how the conflict resolves. Investors who diversify sourcing and routing during 2026 are unlikely to fully unwind that diversification in 2027, because the cost of insurance and delay they experienced this year will not be forgotten quickly – even if it is not repeated.

Where Does Trade Redirect?

If a structural shift is under way, three types of beneficiary nodes emerge, and they do not all follow the same logic.

South and Southeast Asian cold chain hubs benefit from commercial logic more than political alignment. Singapore, Malaysia's Port Klang, and India's western ports already carry established cold storage capacity and shipping frequency. They do not need new political relationships to absorb diverted volume. They need capacity expansion, and several are already building it in response to demand from GCC-linked trade diversification.

East African corridor development follows a mixed logic. Ports in Kenya, Tanzania, and Djibouti sit closer to Gulf markets than Asian alternatives, and Gulf sovereign wealth funds have already invested directly in East African port and agricultural infrastructure. That combination of proximity and existing capital ties makes East Africa a candidate for GCC-direction rather than purely commercial redirection. The corridor benefits when Gulf capital moves to de-risk its supply base, not only when third-party investors choose a new route.

Turkey and Egypt occupy the most politically inflected positions. Both offer land-bridge and Suez-adjacent alternatives to a maritime route through Hormuz, and both have used the conflict to position themselves as reliable players. But their attractiveness depends on continued stability in the Red Sea corridor as well, which has also been disrupted through Houthi activity against Saudi Red Sea ports.

A redirection toward Turkey and Egypt bets on two separate geopolitical variables resolving favorably at once, making it a higher-risk, higher-reward option than the more commercially straightforward Asian alternative.

Distinguishing which redirections are driven by commercial logic and which by political alignment matters. It tells operators which flows will persist regardless of who is in power in the destination country, and which flows depend on relationships that could change with the next election or the next succession.

The New Model

If GCC instability proves durable, the reconfigured global food trade architecture over the next 36 months will not look like a return to the pre-war map with a Gulf-shaped gap filled by a single new hub. It will look more like a diversified network in which no single chokepoint carries the weight Hormuz once did, mirroring what happened globally after the 2021 Suez blockage prompted permanent interest in alternative east-west routes.

The institutional winners will be the ports and cold chain operators that had already begun building multi-temperature capacity and digital traceability systems before the conflict started, because they can absorb new volume immediately rather than waiting years to build it. Gulf-based operators that invested early, such as the cold chain expansions already underway in Riyadh, are positioned to capture a share of the region's own diversification rather than lose ground entirely to outside hubs.

Logistics operators and investors should watch three signals over the coming months: whether war-risk insurance premiums for Hormuz transit begin a sustained decline rather than a temporary dip during lulls in fighting, whether GCC sovereign wealth funds increase direct stakes in East African or South Asian port infrastructure, and whether private cold chain capital that left the region during 2026 begins returning to Gulf-based facilities or instead commits to long-term leases elsewhere.

The first movements in each of these three indicators will tell the story well before any formal peace agreement does.

CHRIS HATTINGH is the Executive Director for the Centre for Risk Analysis.

GLOBAL COLD CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY OF GCCF ACTIVITIES

This column features news about key projects of the Global Cold Chain Foundation (GCCF) and its work with members, aid organizations and international development partners to help emerging economies and lower-income countries meet the challenges that arise when growing a safe and efficient global cold chain.

ACTIVE PROJECTS

Cold Chain Development in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, 2023 – 2027

Dr. Elhadi Yahia – Postharvest Technology, Tropical Fruit & Produce expert on the GCCF Council of Scientific Advisors – is delivering a 12-session virtual course on postharvest handling practices for a variety of fresh produce. More than 200 participants from public and private organizations across the region have joined the training so far. Past GCCF Chairman Manuel Cabrera-Kabana is providing technical support to develop cold chain protocols for customs authorities in Guatemala.



Participants from the Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala visited GCCA member COLDS after the Institute Latin America.



GLOBAL COLD CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY OF GCCF ACTIVITIES

Powering Food Banks Project, 2025 – 2027

Partnered with Michael's Energy, University of Arkansas Sam M. Walton School of Business, and Feeding America

GCCF and partners are piloting an energy efficiency program with two food banks in Texas. The project aims to reduce energy consumption and generate cost savings. After conducting energy audits and generating 28 recommendations, the food banks have incorporated several operational recommendations to improve energy efficiency. In August, the project team collected data to evaluate the impact of these interventions on energy consumption. The analysis will be completed before the end of 2026 and help inform future GCCF programs with food bank partners.

Ongoing Industry Support to Reduce Food Loss and Waste

GCCF launched the Food Waste Reduction Initiative in 2022 centered around three objectives:

1. Support food rescue groups by increasing their access to GCCA's resources and network;
2. Alleviate the barriers that prevent GCCA members from donating food that would otherwise go to waste; and
3. Increase awareness within the membership of the problems caused by food loss and waste and potential solutions.

GCCF has more than 90 food waste reduction members. The Energy Excellence program, piloted through the Powering Food Banks project, has also shown the cost savings food banks can achieve by using private-sector expertise to reduce energy consumption.



Participants from the Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala attended Institute Latin America in Mexico City, with eight students graduating this year.



The Powering Food Banks team met with the Food Bank of the Golden Crescent in Victoria, Texas, in August as part of the project evaluation.



GCCA Cold Chain Institutes Around the World

This summer, GCCA's Cold Chain Institute reached major milestones across three continents and celebrated a new generation of industry leaders.

- **Mexico City (July 20-22):** Fifty-two students and 15 faculty members gathered for Institute Latin America. Highlights included honoring 16 graduates and an engaging Cold Chain Connection event featuring NielsenIQ México's Managing Director Eduardo Ragasol.
- **São Paulo (August 18-20):** Institute Brazil celebrated its historic inaugural graduating class, supported by 20 faculty members. Seventeen of the 27 students crossed the stage to receive their diplomas, with many noting how transformative the three-year journey has been for their careers.
- **Rotterdam (September 7-9):** Institute Europe closed out the summer by honoring its very first graduating class of 17 alongside 67 total students and 29 faculty. Attendees gained valuable industry insights from keynotes by DP World's Marc Aupers and Wageningen UR's Rian Timmermans.

Institute students and graduates celebrated in Mexico City (top), Sao Paulo (middle) and Rotterdam (bottom).

ASSOCIATION NEWS

NEWS ABOUT GCCA CORE PARTNERS



Testing oxygen equipment for GCCA's Low Oxygen Study.

GCCA Engages in Low Oxygen Study

GCCA's independent, observational field study on cold storage environments operating under reduced-oxygen conditions continues. In late August, two weeks of intensive field studies across the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands involved 105 participants testing "lite" SCBA equipment – such as half masks and nose cannulas – in reduced-oxygen, cold storage environments. Participants then mimicked the typical activities a cold storage operator would perform in these environments, such as climbing stairs and walking through the warehouse, all while critical data such as heart rate, skin temperature, and blood-oxygen content were measured.

"It was exciting to support this research for GCCA and our members. It contributes not only to scientific knowledge but can also effect change on a regulatory level," says Amanda. "I'm grateful to our members and other participating facilities in Europe who allowed us to conduct the tests and whose staff volunteered to participate."

FSMA Rule 204 Compliance: December Webinar Announced

Are you ready for July 30, 2028? Cold chain operators store and move product – we do not buy, sell, or make production decisions. Yet under **Section 204(d) of the Food Safety Modernization Act** traceability rules, 3PLs face record-keeping obligations designed for producers and retailers. Want to hear industry insights on where we are with traceability requirements, and where we need to be? Register now for the December 9, 2026 "FSMA 204: Countdown to Readiness" webinar at www.gcca.org/events

GCCA 2026 Cold Chain Africa Conference

"An effective and reliable cold chain is key to minimizing post-harvest food loss. Studies report that food loss can be reduced in the range of 20–50% with effective cold storage and refrigerated transport … In sub-Saharan Africa, postharvest losses are concentrated at the production, storage, and transportation stages: greater access to cold chain services will bring a transformative impact."
Dr Newton Matope, Chair of the GCCA Africa Advisory Council

The 2026 GCCA Cold Chain Africa Conference was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 2-3 September. Over 80 delegates convened to discuss the state of Africa's cold chain and the conference theme, "It's Time for Dialogue."

The morning's opening assembly included remarks from GCCA leaders Adam Thocher, Sara Stickler, and GCCA Africa Advisory Council Chair Dr. Newton Matope. DP World's Mohammed Mahomedy delivered a keynote on how integrated logistics, rail connectivity, and public-private collaboration can strengthen the continent's cold chain.

The afternoon panel, "People and Partnerships," facilitated by Elvin Harris, brought together Dr. Ikechukwu Opara of the University of the Western Cape and Cassandra Potteiger and Ozzy Nel of SA Harvest to discuss reducing postharvest losses, improving food security, and the creation of new business opportunities through case studies and peer dialogue.

Photos from this year's event can be seen on the GCCA Flickr account: https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjD4oG5

GCCA Around the Industry

- This August, GCCA President and CEO Sara Stickler was honored to speak at two cold chain events: **New Zealand Cold Storage Association's Annual Conference**, and the **Refrigerated Warehouse & Transport Association of Australia (RWTA)'s Annual Conference**. Both events emphasized core industry values:



Speakers at the GCCA 2026 Cold Chain Africa Conference.



Nor-Am Cold Storage was visited by GCCA leadership in September.

the cold chain is critical infrastructure, regional challenges exist, and the cold chain must lead with a coordinated voice to deliver the resiliency needed in today's uncertain world.

- On September 9, GCCA staff participated in the **Partnership for Food Traceability (PFT) FSMA 204 Workshop**, focusing on lot-level tracking, interoperability, and practical solutions for meeting the rule's traceability requirements.
- On September 25, GCCA leadership was honored to attend member **Jamison Door and the BMP Group's** groundbreaking for their new Maryland facility.
- Also in September, GCCA leadership **visited member facilities** NorAm and Cold Solutions at Rush Creek in the Kansas City, Missouri, region, as well as CCH, Digistics, and Chilleweni Cold Storage in Johannesburg.
- In early October, GCCA Vice President Amanda Brondy spoke at the **Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association (PTNPA) Food Safety Symposium** in New Jersey. She delivered a briefing on cold chain topics, including transportation, storage, and supply chain patterns and disruptions affecting the global food industry and food safety.



COOL SOLUTIONS

SCIENTIFIC ANSWERS TO COLD CHAIN CHALLENGES

This section highlights a cold chain question and answer submitted through the GCCA Inquiry Service to the team of experts on the GCCF Council of Scientific Advisors (CSA) and the roster of advisors. Submit your cold chain questions to the Council of Scientific Advisors at www.gcca.org/inquiry.

Q: We are investigating the possibilities of checking product temperature in pallets without probing, such as Thermo cameras, but would like to learn more before committing to the investment. Could you provide some information on this, and anything we should be mindful of?

A: The biggest problem in accurately measuring the exterior of a pallet without probing is emissivity. For example, exposed human skin has very high emissivity and is easy to measure accurately with current thermal camera technology. Metal surfaces are at the low end of the emissivity spectrum. Obtaining accurate temperature measurements is difficult, especially for polished metal surfaces because they reflect images of high-emissivity objects such as lighting. Cardboard cases fall somewhere in between, depending on the surface treatment applied to the cardboard (painted surfaces, wax lining, UV treatment, etc). FLIR, a leading thermal cam manufacturer, has several great online articles describing the issue.

That said, two methods could be used to accurately detect pallet surface temperature. The first is to Reduce Variables to Standardize Emissivity. If you point the camera at the top of the pallet, there will be less reflection from stretch wrap, which is generally applied to the sides before the pallet arrives at a warehouse. If all pallets use similar cardboard (changes in cardboard coatings and colors can affect emissivity), this will probably provide acceptable results.

The second method is to Utilize Machine Learning. With AutoSense, we achieved high confidence and accuracy by collecting extensive data. If you are currently probing the pallet's surface temperature, combining that probe data with IR photo data will determine if there is a case for correlation between the two. A third set of data, air temperature, might also be required to understand what it takes to achieve correlation.

This answer was provided by CSA Industry & Freezing Expert Bob Tippmann, QuickFreeze.

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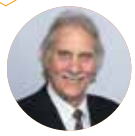
GLOBAL COLD CHAIN FOUNDATION

Council of **Scientific Advisors**

The Global Cold Chain Foundation (GCCF) Council of Scientific Advisors is an eminent group of food scientists, logistics, and packaging experts from around the world. The Council provides cutting-edge research and advice to members of the Global Cold Chain Alliance and its Core Sectors.



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of New Jersey, Microbiology Expert



Dr. S. Paul Singh
Michigan State University,
Packaging & Labeling Expert



Bob Tippmann
Industry & Freezing Expert,
QuickFreeze



Dr. Elhadi Yahia
Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro,
Mexico, Postharvest Technology,
0Tropical Fruit & Produce

Have a burning cold chain question?
Submit an inquiry to the Council of Scientific Advisors at www.gcca.org/inquiry

2026 GCCA EVENTS

JANUARY

- 21 January 2026 — Cold Chain Development in Latin America (Webinar)
- 29 January 2026 — The Global Year Ahead (GCCA Members Only Webinar)

FEBRUARY

- 7–10 February 2026 — U.S. Cold Chain Institute East | Atlanta, Georgia, United States

MARCH

- 1–4 March 2026 — U.S. Cold Chain Institute West | Tempe, Arizona, United States
- 10 March 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Medellín | Medellín, Colombia
- 12 March 2026 — Cold Chain Transportation Best Practices (Webinar)
- 18–20 March 2026 — GCCA Europe Conference | Düsseldorf, Germany

APRIL

- 15 April 2026 — Brazil Regulatory Forum | Brasília, Brazil
- 27–29 April 2026 — GCCA Convention | Scottsdale, Arizona, United States

MAY

- 13 May 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Guatemala | Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 21 May 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Singapore | Singapore
- 27–28 May 2026 — Brazil Cold Chain Congress | São Paulo, Brazil

JULY

- 8–9 July 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Canada | Toronto, Canada
- 20–22 July 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Latin America | Mexico City, Mexico
- 22 July 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Mexico City | Mexico City, Mexico

AUGUST

- 18–20 August 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Brazil | São Paulo, Brazil
- 26–27 August 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Midwest | Kansas City, Missouri, United States

SEPTEMBER

- 2–3 September 2026 — GCCA Africa Conference | Johannesburg, South Africa
- 7–9 September 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Europe | Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 9 September 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Rotterdam | Rotterdam, Netherlands

OCTOBER

- 14–15 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Northeast | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States
- 27–28 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Lima | Lima, Peru
- 27–28 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Pacific NW | Seattle, Washington, United States

NOVEMBER

- 2–3 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Southeast | Atlanta, Georgia, United States
- 18–19 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Gdansk | Gdansk, Poland
- 27 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Brazil | Itajei, Brazil

CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES & CONGRESSES

Major industry gatherings with broader programming and networking opportunities.

- 18–20 March 2026 — GCCA Europe Conference | Düsseldorf, Germany
- 27–29 April 2026 — GCCA Convention | Scottsdale, Arizona, United States
- 27–28 May 2026 — Brazil Cold Chain Congress | São Paulo, Brazil
- 2–3 September 2026 — GCCA Africa Conference | Johannesburg, South Africa

COLD CHAIN INSTITUTES

Multi-day training and professional development programs powered by the Global Cold Chain Foundation.

- 7–10 February 2026 — U.S. Cold Chain Institute East | Atlanta, Georgia, United States
- 1–4 March 2026 — U.S. Cold Chain Institute West | Tempe, Arizona, United States
- 20–22 July 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Latin America | Mexico City, Mexico
- 18–20 August 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Brazil | São Paulo, Brazil
- 7–9 September 2026 — Cold Chain Institute Europe | Rotterdam, Netherlands

COLD CHAIN CONNECTIONS

Regional, informal networking and education events — often alongside other industry activities.

- 8–9 July 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Toronto | Toronto, Canada
- 22 July 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Mexico City | Mexico City, Mexico
- 26–27 August 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Midwest | Kansas City, Missouri, United States
- 9 September 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Rotterdam | Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 14–15 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Northeast | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States
- 27–28 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Lima | Lima, Peru
- 27-28 October 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Pacific NW | Seattle, Washington US
- 2–3 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Southeast | Atlanta, Georgia, United States
- 18–19 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Gdansk | Gdansk, Poland
- 27 November 2026 — Cold Chain Connection Brazil | Itajei, Brazil

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MEMBER NEWS

NEWS FROM MEMBERS OF GCCA CORE PARTNERS

BGO COLD CHAIN and the J.G. Petrucci Company, Inc. announced Freshpet, the fresh pet food brand, has leased in its entirety their 216,000-square-foot cold storage development in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The facility is scheduled for on-time and on-budget completion by year-end 2026. The facility is Freshpet's first dedicated cold storage facility for the distribution of its temperature-sensitive products.

• • •

CARRIER will donate more than a quarter of a million dollars to hunger-relief organizations worldwide, including Feeding America, which will help provide 1.2 million meals to people facing food insecurity through the organization's network of food banks and agency partners. The grant also equipped nine U.S. food banks with critical infrastructure support, enabling them to fund essential needs like cold storage units, freezers, refrigerators, and repairs.

In recognition of Hunger Action Month and the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste on September 29, Carrier is collaborating with Feeding America, the European Food Banks Federation, and food banks worldwide to mobilize employee volunteers through November to collect, sort, pack, and serve meals to community members in need.

• • •

JAMISON DOOR COMPANY and its parent company, the BMP Group, hosted a groundbreaking ceremony to mark construction on a new 355,000-square-foot advanced manufacturing facility in Hagerstown, Maryland. The development represents a $35 to $50 million investment and marks the first phase of a long-term vision for BMP Group's manufacturing campus across 58 acres.



Carrier volunteers inspect donated produce at a food bank in Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Carrier.)





Elected state and local officials, representatives from GCCA and the National Association of Manufacturers, project developers, community stakeholders, and leaders from BMP Group attended the ground-breaking ceremony celebrating Jamison Door's new facility. (Photo courtesy of Jamison Door Company.)

LINEAGE announced that its Murcia facility in Spain has been authorized as a Customs Bonded Warehouse (Depósito Aduanero). This marks the company's first bonded warehouse in Spain and further expands its network of customs-enabled facilities across Europe. With its new bonded warehouse designation, the Murcia facility allows import customers to store temperature-controlled food products under customs supervision until they are ready to be released to the market.

RLS LOGISTICS CEO Russell Leo has been named to Family Business Magazine's 2026 CEOs to Watch list. Leo's grandfather, Rosario, came to the United States from Italy in 1958 and started the company, and Leo is the third generation to lead RLS.

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