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USA Trucking Weight Limits

It’s the last step in imports, the delivery from the US port to the warehouse door, that restricts how many cases by weight that can be shipped in a container. Road weight limits in European origins and during ocean or rail transport are higher, but due to the North American highway and bridge network, federal weight restrictions limit the total gross vehicle road weight to 80,000 lbs, with further weight maximums for each axle. For US importers, communicating the correct cargo weight limitations and loading instructions for cargo distribution over the axles for any container destined to move inland in the USA, is crucial.

Overweight containers or axles can lead to logistics headaches such as heavy fines, additional transport and handling costs for re-working loads, and even exposure to civil and/or criminal lawsuits should an overweight container be involved in an accident.

A container that may be within the legal total vehicle weight limits can still be overweight on an axle due to the uneven distribution of the cargo (which includes anything else in the container - blocking and bracing equipment, dunnage, etc) in the container. For a 40’ dry container, the standard load configuration is 44,000 lbs on 22 pallet spots (2,000 lbs each). If that same cargo weight is distributed only on 17 pallets then the weight distribution would shift towards the front of the container, causing an overweight drive axle. Similarly, 20’ containers of wine loaded in the staircase manner, with more weight in the front of the container, would also lead to an overweight drive axle.

As the weight limits include the tractor, chassis, and container in addition to the cargo, and these three elements can vary, there is no universal maximum cargo weight. Tractors used for long haul transportation, with sleeper units, can increase the total truckhead weight to between 18,500 to 20,000 lbs. Chassis equipment varies per region or provider, so using a 20’ slider chassis or a 20’ tri-axle chassis, can further impact the maximum payloads. Likewise, shipping in a refrigerated container, with or without a genset, further affects the total vehicle weight. Containers delivered with shipping lines may have stricter cargo limits that containers handled by JF Hillebrand USA, Inc., depending on their contracted motor carriers and/or chassis equipment available in specific markets.

The Port to Door Solutions team and the North American Transportation Department at JF Hillebrand USA has provided the following general guidelines for cargo weights for deliveries they arrange, subject to correct loading distribution as previously mentioned. (see table) Some states allow for overweight permits for international containerized cargo moving to warehouses within specific port zones. Goods can be cross-docked and reworked for the maximum payloads for destinations further inland. Permit fees and equipment requirements (specific chassis) must be met.

For specific inquiries into weight limitations on import or domestic loads, inquire with your sales representative or the North American Transportation Department at JF Hillebrand USA.

| Container Guidelines for Drayage to/From Marine and Rail Terminals and Warehouses |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Container Type                  | Maximum Payload (lbs) | Maximum Payload (kgs) |
| 20’ Dry                         | 38,000 lbs       | 17,237 kgs      |
| 40’ Dry                         | 44,500 lbs       | 20,185 kgs      |
| 20’ Reefer (without genset)     | 36,200 lbs       | 16,420 kgs      |
| 40’ Reefer (without genset)     | 42,700 lbs       | 19,368 kgs      |
| 20’ Reefer with genset          | 33,700 lbs       | 15,286 kgs      |
| 40’ Reefer with genset          | 40,200 lbs       | 18,234 kgs      |

The use of a 40’ HC Dry reduces the maximum cargo load by 300 lbs (136 kgs) and 500 lbs (227 kgs) for a 40’ HC Reefer JF Hillebrand VinLiner equipment only adds 30.8 lbs (14 kgs) per 20’ container and 61.7 lbs (28 kgs) per 40’ container.
American Trucking Faces Rising Challenges

According to the American Trucking Association (ATA), 9.2 billion tons of freight annually in the USA moves on a truck (that’s about 70% of total freight moved in the USA). That volume per year requires roughly 3 million trucks, 3 million drivers, and 37 billions of diesel fuel. Forecasts from the Federal Highway Administration and the ATA indicate that demand won’t be slowing down anytime soon.

Driver Shortage: It seems that being a truck driver just isn’t attracting enough young American workers. Working long hours on the road away from home for lower wages than other industries such as construction, may contribute to the fact that a lot of younger drivers are passing on this line of work. According to the US Bureau of Labor, the average age of truck drivers is 55 and the average compensation is $38,000 a year. ATA reports that there are roughly 30,000-35,000 unfilled trucking jobs today and that number will grow with demand. Motor carrier companies are starting to implement long overdue changes to recruit and retain career drivers, such as increasing compensation, shortening routes, and improving training programs.

Hours of Service Regulations: New rules from the Federal Hours of Service (HOS), which mandates driver work and rest/break times, are also impacting the industry. In brief, the HOS rules restrict a driver’s average maximum allowable hours of work per week from 82 to 70 hours with a 34 hour re-start rule per week. This 34 hour re-start must include shifts within the 1am-5am time frame which has resulted in longer re-start wait periods depending on what time the driver finished the 70 hour work week. This can affect team drivers on coast-to-coast round trip operations and short hauls can also run into HOS limits if there are extensive wait times for chassis pickup and port terminal runs, or traffic delays. The restrictions on time behind the wheel not only affect the routes and number of turns, but also tie back directly to total driver compensation.

Capacity and Alternatives: Current capacity is estimated to be decreasing 12-15%, mostly due to growing demand, but equipment costs and industry acquisitions play into that figure as well. Other times when capacity was short or trucking costs went up, shippers would switch cargo to the railroads. However this year the rail system is facing capacity issues of its own, as it struggles with the boom in domestic shipments from oil and agriculture.

As we move into the fall season, existing contracts for equipment and rates with motor carriers will be put to the test. Shippers can expect trucking services and rates will directly correlate to the current industry situation.

Delivering Wines in Winter at the Perfect Temperature

It may be to early to tell if this winter will be as harsh as last year with its record-breaking subzero temperatures, but it’s not too early to start planning. The Winter Wine Program is just around the corner, which is a hybrid solution of delivering wines to US inland destinations in temperature-controlled 53’ trailers, after cross-docking the inbound marine containers. With five different ports of entry and deliveries to 2000+ cities across 40 states, your wine will show up perfectly chilled, not frozen. For more information contact your sales representative at www.jfhiellebrand.com/USA
Our Italian operations rolled out their expanded warehousing and consolidation footprint last quarter with an additional warehouse option in La Spezia. Situated in Santo Stefano Magra, the facility is approximately 10 kms away from the port terminals, and close to major highways and rail networks.

Leghorn port (Livorno) has traditionally been the main port of call due to its proximity to the Tuscany wine region and will continue to be a prime location for consolidation and temperature-controlled wine storage. However having additional storage and consolidation capabilities in La Spezia will bring more flexibility for exports and imports along the Ligurian sea coast. La Spezia is equidistant from both Genoa and Leghorn ports, so as shipping industry alliances trigger more port competition for scheduled port calls on major trade lanes, or in the case of labor action or port congestion, its a good alternative warehousing location.

For further information on the La Spezia warehouse, or Italian warehousing and storages options in general, contact your local sales representative at www.jfhillebrand.com/USA.

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**USA West Coast** - Shippers were relieved when the International Longshore Warehouse Union (ILWU) and the Pacific Maritime Authority (PMA) both pledged to keep cargo moving, despite the expiration of the contract. Negotiations for a new contract are still ongoing at press time and are closed to media, so when both parties issued a statement late last month indicating they had reached a tentative agreement on health care benefits, one of the hot button issues, this was taken as a positive sign.

**West Africa** - Maritime activity has been impacted due to the Ebola epidemic in Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Shippers are seeing modifications to shipping line routing and transit times. Hapag-Lloyd has implemented an Inspection Surcharge Fee USD250 per container on shipments into these regions.

**Asia** - The 24 hour rule, which mandates carriers to submit cargo information on loads destined for Japan, China and the European Union 24 hours prior to departure from the export port, is causing challenges for exporters. Japanese customs in particular, have been issuing Warning Guidance letters in cases where there has been missing, late or incomplete data on AFR (Advanced Filing Rules) filings, raising concerns of potential customs holds and/or fines.

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**La Spezia Warehouse - Key Features**

- Close to the Port - located in Santo Stefano Magra (La Spezia back port area)
- Easy access - 10 kms to La Spezia port and close to major highways and rail networks
- Room to Grow - space capacity up to 8,000 square meters
- Secure - fully insured with 24/7 state of the art security systems
- Bonded - fully bonded with an on-site customs clearance facility
- Equipped - palletized or slip-sheeted cargo capabilities, container safety devices, VinLiner installation and labeling services upon request

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**California Harvest Underway**

The 2014 grape harvest is underway in California - starting with the Central Valley and now underway on the coastal regions. Despite the well publicized drought, preliminary reports of grape quality are positive and yields are coming in around expected volumes. On the tail of two record crops in California, crush and storage capacity is at its maximum and we expect an increase in California wine shipments to the US domestic market, and beyond.
JF Hillebrand has been expanding its LFL services to more national markets, and overseas too. If you only have a few cases, or a few pallets, there's no reason to wait for more before you bring it in. Reduce lead times and inventory at origin with JF Hillebrand's West Coast LFL services, conveniently consolidated in Northern California. With regular pickups in and around California, Washington and Oregon and weekly fixed departures to New York/New Jersey, Chicago, Miami and beyond, we make it easy to get product here, from there.

Routine Pickups. Fixed Departures. Specialist Care. The Hillebrand Difference

Napa Earthquake and Hillebrand Academy

Earthquake hits Napa California in August

The county of Napa is now estimating that the industry damages countywide from the 6.0 magnitude earthquake that struck at the end of August at over $400 million.

The JF Hillebrand USA Export Branch, located in the southern part of Napa, luckily only sustained minor damage and only a brief closure not for damage but for potential gas leaks in the area from aftershocks the week following. The JF Hillebrand warehouse in Benicia didn’t have any damage to product or the warehouse structure. While all our staff were unharmed, most of those who reside in the county sustained property damages to their homes. The care and concern from our colleagues and customers around the world has been deeply appreciated.

Relief efforts were rapidly mobilized, from the American Red Cross, to a special disaster relief fund set up by the local Napa Valley Vintners Association. More information can be found on their respective websites.