

VIII International Transit Conference

TRANSESTONIA 2012: The Food Hub

24.10.2012 Meriton Grand Spa & Conference Hotel, Tallinn, Estonia

Early Estonian history, the emergence and development of medieval towns was based on geographical advantages and the transit trade. For example, history knows Narva as the traditional center of international trade. Waterways along River Narva were already set up during the Viking era (5th-9th century). It was one subsidiary of the famous Baltic-Mediterranean river route, which is known in the Old Russian scripts as "The Road from Varangians to Greece". Ever since Estonia has been making fortunes by utilizing its superior geographical location and ice free natural deep water ports. The country serves as a gateway to the consumer market of 300 million, including Russia, CIS and Central Asia.

Hundreds of years ago foodstuffs were most important articles transiting Estonian territory. Mainly sea salt from Portugal and Russian grain. Also today food plays important role for the Estonian transit industry. The country has become an important distribution center for different types of food and drink articles. Transshipment, temporary storage, consolidation, cross-docking and value adding of the foodstuffs from all over the world, following further to the east, are the everyday services offered to the food manufacturers, traders and retail chains in Russia, CIS and Central Asian countries. Overnight deliveries are arranged also to Finland, Sweden, Latvia and Lithuania. Time definite transport services are provided on request.

Constantly high service quality, reliability, responsiveness and flexibility are considered as common standard, what comes to the metrics. Estonian logistics system works 24/7 all 365 days a year. Efficient combinations of sea, air, road and rail transportation, quick loading and discharging of vessels, rail cars, trucks and containers result in the shortest transshipment lead times and lowest total cost in the region. Depth at the quays allows to load and discharge the vessels up to Post Panamax size loaded until 14m draft. Safe and efficient storage facilities, advanced warehousing technologies and real time on-line overview about the status of the goods makes it easy for foreign customers to facilitate their hub operations in Estonia. Webcam support is provided on request.

The harmonised SMGS railway bill enables transportation of goods across the entire 1520 mm (Russian) gauge rail network (CIS, Baltic countries, Mongolia, Finland) and beyond on the basis of unified standards. Tariffs can be fixed for up to 5 years. Cross docking of goods from containers/trucks to rail cars with 72 ton payload enables to achieve considerable cost savings on transportation over long distances to destinations in Russia, CIS and Central Asia. Unique value added services and high flexibility of the specialized terminals and warehouses enable customers to trade with wide variety of goods and commodities directly from the distribution center (DC) located in Estonia.

By using third party FMCG contract logistics platform, customers are able to make their products available all over the retail network, instantly. Besides

distribution, warehousing and value added logistics services also inventory management, demand forecasting, purchasing, campaign management and credit handling services are provided. Therefore the manufacturers and brand owners are able to make their products available on the market without need for own logistics setup and local administrative unit. Full EDI support both down- and upstream allows to save time, lower the costs and increase accuracy.

This briefly described above Estonian highly competitive food hub concept will be the subject of this year's international transit conference **TRANSESTONIA 2012**. One day conference takes place in Tallinn on October 24, 2012. It will be followed by site visits and participation at the 16th international food fair **Tallinn FoodFest 2012** on October 25-27. The annual conference TRANSESTONIA brings together most of the Estonian leading logistics operators, shipping lines, ports and terminals. The event is co-organized by the Estonian Logistics Cluster, and is supported by the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Port of Tallinn and Estonian Railways. This year TRANSESTONIA will be arranged for the eighth time. Expected number of participants is 250 people, a half of which are foreign guests from the food industry and retail. TRANSESTONIA 2012 is the biggest food transit event in the Eastern Baltic Sea region. Please visit the conference website www.transestonia.ee for further information, cooperation proposals and registration.