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Netherlandsâ?? WEC Lines enters refrigerated container market

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Dutch shipping company WEC Lines is entering the refrigerated container market by adding the first batch of 50 brand new 45ft High-Cube Pallet-Wide refrigerated container (reefer) units to its extensive container fleet.

The carrier says the demand for reefer containers has been rising steadily across various industries, including food and beverage, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare, driven by the need for reliable and secure transport of temperature-sensitive goods. According to the projections published in Drewryâ??s 2023 Reefer Shipping Forecaster, container carriers will see their carryings of reefer containers rise by 4 per cent a year between 2023-2028 as the perishables trade proves more resilient to economic downturns.

The new 45ft refrigerated containers are all equipped with a state-of-the-art (electric) cooling system to maintain precise temperature control within a range from -30ÂºC to +30ÂºC, ensuring the integrity of temperature-sensitive or perishable cargo throughout the transportation process, such as fruit and vegetables, fresh or processed food, pharma, and dairy products.

With its short sea vessels already equipped with reefer plugs and sufficient reefer slots, last month, WEC Lines launched a new direct service between Agadir in Morocco and Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom as a fast and green alternative for fresh produce importers to overland trucking. The service provides onward linkages to North-western Europe, e.g., the Netherlands, France, and Belgium, where Moroccan tomatoes and citrus fruits are currently finding their way into European supermarkets.

These reefer containers will be included in the company's rotation over the coming months, most likely also adding refrigerated containers to its deep-sea operations.