
EDITION 172
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Middle East Conflict Clouds Global Air Cargo Outlook for 2026

The escalating Middle East conflict is creating uncertainty in the global air cargo market, especially as key logistics hubs like Doha, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi face disruptions. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz — a route responsible for roughly 20% of global oil shipments — has pushed crude prices above \$100 per barrel, increasing jet fuel costs and putting pressure on air freight rates.

If the conflict continues, analysts warn that air freight prices on affected routes could double or even triple due to hub closures and restricted airspace. Major trade corridors such as India–U.S. East Coast, which rely on Middle Eastern transit hubs, may also face delays and higher logistics costs. However, if the disruption is short-lived, the market could stabilize without long-term cost spikes.

Source: Supply Chain Dive

Gulf Shipping Crisis Triggers Record Cargo Cancellations

Escalating tensions around the Strait of Hormuz have triggered major disruptions in global shipping, with container cancellations exceeding 21,700 TEUs in a single day. Import bookings dropped nearly 60% between March 1–3 as shippers pulled back from routes through the region. The instability threatens to cause supply chain delays, higher freight rates, and potential rerouting of global trade flows if conditions persist.

Source: Supply Chain Brain

China Petrochemical Futures Drop as Crude Oil Prices Slide

China's petrochemical futures fell sharply on March 10 after a sudden drop in Crude Oil, with prices of key products such as plastics, aromatics, and ethylene glycol declining by up to 7.8%. However, Styrene moved against the trend, posting slight gains due to improving export expectations. The shift highlights how closely China's petrochemical markets track global oil price movements, impacting chemical feedstocks and downstream pricing.

Source: ICIS

Iran Conflict Threatens Global Helium Supply

Conflict involving Iran has disrupted helium production in Qatar, removing nearly one-third of global supply from the market. Operations were halted at Ras Laffan Industrial City, where helium is extracted during natural gas processing. The

FDA Plans New Rule to Tighten Safety Checks on Food Ingredients

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is preparing a new rule to reform the Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) system, which currently allows companies to self-determine the safety of certain food

disruption is linked to security concerns and shipping restrictions around the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global trade route. The facility typically produces about 17 metric tons of helium per day. Helium is essential for industries such as semiconductor manufacturing, MRI systems, and scientific research.

Source: CEN.ACS

ingredients without formal approval. Expected in 2026, the proposal would likely require manufacturers to notify the FDA and submit safety data before introducing new ingredients. The move aims to close the so-called “GRAS loophole” and improve transparency and oversight in the food supply.

Source: CEN.ACS

EU Tightens Chemical Compliance Rules for REACH, CLP, and Drinking Water Regulations

The European Union is introducing stricter chemical compliance measures affecting regulations such as REACH, CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging), and the Drinking Water Directive. These updates aim to improve chemical safety, environmental protection, and regulatory transparency across the EU market. The changes will require companies to strengthen product classification, labeling, and chemical registration practices, while also ensuring that substances used in materials that come into contact with drinking water meet stricter safety requirements.

Source: EChem

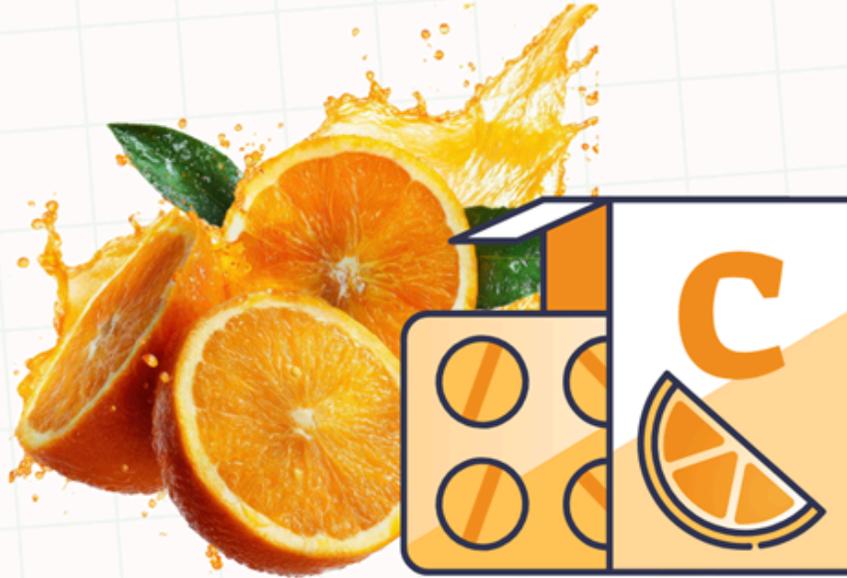
Neuland Labs Expands with Advanced Peptide Manufacturing Facility

Neuland Laboratories is expanding its operations by building a state-of-the-art commercial peptide manufacturing facility at its Bonthapally campus near Hyderabad, expected to become operational in summer 2026. The project marks the company’s entry into large-scale commercial peptide production. The first module of the facility will add 6,370 liters of peptide synthesis capacity, supporting both solid-phase (SPPS) and liquid-phase (LPPS) peptide synthesis with reactor sizes ranging from 250 L to 3,000 L. Customer commitments of about \$30 million have already been secured for this phase.

Source: Chemical Digest

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