

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN SEPTEMBER 2010

U.S. mine production of iron ore in September 2010, on a daily average basis, was slightly greater than that for the prior month and 73% greater than that of September 2009, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Average daily production, at 148,000 metric tons (t), was 860 t greater than that of August 2010.

Average daily shipments in September 2010, at 151,000 t, were 7% less than those of the prior month but 47,200 t greater than those of September 2009. Mine stocks at the end of September 2010, which included an inventory adjustment, were 86,000 t less than the stocks held on August 31, a slight decrease. U.S. net exports of iron ore in August 2010 were 768,000 t, with exports 175% greater than imports.

Domestic Production.—Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. (Cleveland, OH) announced production for the third quarter of 2010 for its North American operations. Mine production for all North American Cliffs-managed mines was 9.2 million metric tons (Mt), almost double that of the same period of 2009. Cliffs' share of the total North American production for the third quarter of 2010 was 7.1 Mt (Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., 2010, p. 2).

World Production.—Rio Tinto plc (London, United Kingdom) announced third quarter production for 2010. Rio Tinto's share of saleable iron ore and pellets worldwide for the 9 months ending September 30 was 134.6 Mt—about a 10% increase compared with that of the same period in 2009. Rio Tinto's partially-owned (59%) Canadian iron ore operations increased production in the third quarter by 72% compared with that of the same quarter of 2009. The increased production reflected the recovery from weak market conditions that had resulted in a 5-week shutdown during the third quarter of 2009 (Rio Tinto plc, 2009, p. 2, 13).

BHP Billiton Ltd. (Melbourne, Australia) announced that its share of worldwide iron ore (wet) production for the first 9 months of 2010 was 94.4 Mt—an 11% increase compared with that of the corresponding period in 2009. Production in the third quarter of 2010 increased relative to that of the second quarter reflecting increased production at Western Australian operations

owing primarily to the ramp up of Rapid Growth Project 4 and record production at the Samarco joint venture operations in Brazil, where all three pellet plants increased capacity utilization (BHP Billiton Ltd., 2010b, p. 12; 2010c, p. 3, 12).

In the first 9 months of 2010, Vale S.A. (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) reported iron ore production of 227.5 Mt (including its share of the Samarco joint venture). Iron ore production for the quarter represented a 9% increase compared with that of the previous quarter, and 9-month iron ore production increased by 30% compared with that of the first 9 months of 2009. Vale's pellet production for the first 9 months was 36.8 Mt—a 144% increase compared with that of the first 9 months of 2009 (Vale S.A., 2010).

Mergers and Acquisitions.—BHP Billiton and ArcelorMittal (Luxembourg) announced that they had ended discussion on efforts to combine iron ore interests in Liberia and Guinea (See Iron Ore in January 2010.) into a single joint venture (BHP Billiton Ltd., 2010a).

References Cited

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- Vale S.A., 2010, Vale—3Q10 production report: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Vale S.A., October 15, 12 p. (Accessed March 5, 2011, via <http://www.vale.com/>)

TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS OF IRON ORE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more of manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production		Shipments	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2009:				
September	2,560	17,100	3,120	18,200
October	3,080	20,100	3,370	21,600
November	3,140	23,300	4,380	26,000
December	3,180	26,500	3,960	29,900
2010:				
January	3,040	3,040	2,400	2,400
February	3,270	6,300	943	3,340
March	3,630	9,930	2,630	5,970
April	3,780	13,700	4,790	10,800
May	4,560	18,300	5,230	16,000
June	3,700	22,000	4,940	20,900
July	4,630	26,600	5,060	26,000
August	4,550	31,200	5,050	31,000
September	4,430	35,600	4,540	35,600

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Excludes byproduct ores.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE IN SEPTEMBER^{1,2}

(Thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

State	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks ⁴	
	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009
Michigan	1,130	667	1,010	1,030	1,970	1,400
Minnesota	3,300	1,890	3,530	2,090	1,190	4,030
Total	4,430	2,560	4,540	3,120	3,150	5,430

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Excludes byproduct ore.

³Includes rail and vessel.

⁴Includes usable (marketable) material at mines, concentrators, pelletizing plants, and loading docks. Excludes stocks of crude ore at mine and concentrates at agglomerating complexes.

Note: An imbalance of production and shipments compared with stock changes indicates an inventory adjustment at the mines of 23,000 metric tons.

TABLE 3
CANADA: SHIPMENTS OF IRON ORE^{1,2}

(Thousand dry metric tons)

Period	Newfoundland and Labrador	Quebec	British Columbia	Total
2009:				
August	1,480	1,570	8	3,060
September	1,540	1,580	8	3,130
October	2,060	1,510	7	3,580
November	2,010	1,000	8	3,020
December	1,660	1,320	(3)	2,980
Year total	17,100	14,500	73	31,700
2010:				
January	1,300	1,090	3	2,390
February	1,130	872	3	2,000
March	1,390	1,100	6	2,500
April	1,500	1,510	7	3,020
May	1,840	1,340	11	3,190
June	1,970	1,710	10	3,690
July	1,630	1,350	12	2,990
August	1,350	1,390	12	2,760

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes production from steel plant waste oxides.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: Natural Resources Canada.

TABLE 4
PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL IN THE UNITED STATES, BY TYPE OF
FURNACE¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Pig iron production, blast furnace		Raw steel production			
	Monthly	Year to date	Basic oxygen furnace		Electric furnace	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2009:						
August	2,090	12,700	1,810	10,900	3,460	22,200
September	1,930	14,600	2,230	13,100	3,540	25,700
October	2,510	17,100	2,080	15,200	3,480	29,200
November	2,240	19,400	2,000	17,200	3,470	32,700
December	2,410	21,800	2,120	19,300	3,450	36,100
2010:						
January	2,350	2,350	1,830	1,830	3,890	3,890
February	2,530	4,870	1,960	3,790	3,720	7,610
March	2,870	7,740	2,560	6,350	4,240	11,800
April	2,030	9,770	2,820	9,170	4,140	16,000
May	2,830	12,600	2,560	11,700	4,440	20,400
June	2,800	15,400	2,530	14,300	4,300	24,700
July	2,450	17,800	2,050	16,300	4,320	29,000
August	2,490	20,300	2,250	18,600	4,130	33,200

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION AND TYPE^{1,2}

(Thousand metric tons)

Country of destination and type of product	2009	2010			
		1st quarter	2nd quarter	July	August
Belgium	194	1	105	(3)	(3)
Canada	3,060	918	2,110	968	1,140
China	99	--	139	60	60
Colombia	19	4	3	1	(3)
Finland	--	--	35	--	--
France	179	25	211	--	--
Germany	234	--	341	--	--
Mexico	70	151	19	16	(3)
Serbia	--	--	44	--	--
Singapore	--	--	--	--	5
South Africa	52	--	--	--	--
Spain	--	--	131	25	--
Other ⁴	10	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Total	3,910	1,100	3,140	1,070	1,210
Concentrates	123	6	67	64	60
Coarse ores	5	--	35	(3)	25
Fine ores	24	(3)	72	3	1
Pellets	3,760	1,090	2,960	1,000	1,110
Briquettes	3	--	--	--	5
Other agglomerates	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	--
Roasted pyrites	1	(3)	(3)	(3)	1
Total	3,910	1,100	3,140	1,070	1,210

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes agglomerates.

³Less than ½ unit.

⁴Includes all countries receiving less than 5,000 metric tons in any month during the 2-year period.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY AND TYPE^{1,2}
 (Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country of origin and type of product	2010					2009
	August		Year to date			January-August
	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Brazil	28	3,810	145	16,000	110.61	114
Canada	371	42,400	3,230	318,000	98.62	1,510
Chile	--	--	82	8,290	101.12	99
China	--	--	--	--	--	(4)
Finland	--	--	--	--	--	6
France	--	--	(4)	4	4,480.00	--
Greece	3	348	3	348	116.00	--
Mexico	--	--	48	3,980	83.00	54
Norway	--	--	3	56	18.67	2
Peru	--	--	7	315	45.00	34
Russia	--	--	606	69,900	115.35	--
South Africa	--	--	--	--	--	29
Spain	--	--	4	142	35.50	1
Sweden	--	--	--	--	--	4
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	120	17,200	143.27	--
Turkey	--	--	(4)	3	91.51	--
Ukraine	--	--	95	13,700	143.78	--
United Kingdom	--	--	--	--	--	8
Venezuela	36	4,160	116	9,510	81.99	--
Total	438	50,700	4,450	458,000	102.72	1,860
Concentrates	28	3,820	239	24,600	102.75	179
Coarse ores	36	4,160	36	4,160	115.61	8
Fine ores	81	9,870	237	25,300	106.65	297
Pellets	294	32,800	3,940	403,000	102.40	1,370
Briquettes	--	--	4	142	35.50	1
Other agglomerates	--	--	--	--	--	2
Roasted pyrites	--	--	(4)	4	4,480.00	6
Total	438	50,700	4,450	458,000	102.72	1,860

-- Zero.

¹Data, with the exception of the dollars per ton column, are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes agglomerates.

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE IN AUGUST 2010^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Country of origin	Type of product						Total
	Concentrates	Coarse ores	Fine ores	Pellets	Briquettes and other agglomerates	Roasted pyrites	
Brazil	28	--	--	--	--	--	28
Canada	(3)	--	78	294	--	--	371
Greece	--	--	3	--	--	--	3
Venezuela	--	36	--	--	--	--	36
Total	28	36	81	294	--	--	438

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes agglomerates.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 8
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PELLETS, BY COUNTRY¹

Country of origin	2010					2009
	August		Year to date			January-August
	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Value ² (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Brazil	--	--	37	3,780	102.16	38
Canada	294	32,800	3,000	293,000	97.83	1,330
Peru	--	--	--	--	--	5
Russia	--	--	606	69,900	115.35	--
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	120	17,200	143.18	--
Ukraine	--	--	95	13,700	143.78	--
Venezuela	--	--	80	5,350	66.91	--
Total	294	32,800	3,940	403,000	102.40	1,370

-- Zero.

¹Data, with the exception of the dollars per ton column, are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 9
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE,
 BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT^{1,2}
 (Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	August	January-August	
	2010	2010	2009
Baltimore, MD (13)	--	1,910	130
Charleston, SC (16)	--	--	5
Chicago, IL (39)	28	138	149
Cleveland, OH (41)	294	1,710	1,150
Detroit, MI (38)	--	(3)	--
El Paso, TX (24)	--	3	--
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	37	38
Los Angeles, CA (27)	--	--	(3)
Minneapolis, MN (35)	--	(3)	--
Mobile, AL (19)	36	156	5
New Orleans, LA (20)	77	489	336
New York, NY (10)	--	(3)	--
Nogales, AZ (26)	--	--	2
Norfolk, VA (14)	--	1	--
Ogdensburg, NY (07)	1	6	13
Philadelphia, PA (11)	--	--	6
Port Arthur, TX (21)	3	3	8
Seattle, WA (30)	--	--	17
Total	438	4,450	1,860

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes agglomerates.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 10
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PELLETS,
 BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	August	January-August	
	2010	2010	2009
Baltimore, MD (13)	--	1,910	130
Chicago, IL (39)	--	30	44
Cleveland, OH (41)	294	1,700	1,150
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	37	38
Mobile, AL (19)	--	120	5
New Orleans, LA (20)	--	136	--
Total	294	3,940	1,370

-- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.