

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN AUGUST 2013

U.S. mine production of iron ore in August 2013 was 4.61 million metric tons (Mt), 5% greater than that in July. Production was 149,000 metric tons (t) on a daily average basis, 5% greater than that of July 2013 and 6% more than that of August 2012. U.S. iron ore shipments were 5.43 Mt in August 2013, 4% less than those in July 2013. Shipments were 175,000 t on a daily average basis, 4% less than those of July and 4% more than those of August 2012.

Mine stocks at the end of August 2013 were 20% less than those held in July and 11% more than those in August 2012. U.S. exports of iron ore were 808,000 t in August 2013, 13% less than those in July 2013 and 22% less than those of August 2012. U.S. imports of iron ore were 220,000 t in August 2013, 7% less than those in July 2013 and 35% less than those of August 2012.

The amount of pig iron produced by blast furnaces in August 2013 was 4.5% more than that in July, and nearly the same as in August 2012. The amount of raw steel produced using basic oxygen furnaces was 5% higher than that in July and 20% lower than that in August 2012. Production from electric furnaces was slightly lower than that in July and 3% higher than that in August 2012 (table 3).

Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. extended its pellet supply contract with AK Steel Holding Corp. through 2023. Long-term pricing was to be determined by a formula which accounted for shipping charges and price indices (Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., 2013).

Gogebic Taconite LLC (GTAC) has proposed mining iron ore in the Penokee Range in northern Wisconsin. Grunerite occurring in the ore deposit, however, has been found to be

elongate to fibrous. As a result, Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has expressed concern about the health risk posed by the release of the elongate grunerite particles during bulk handling and mining. WDNR is currently reviewing GTAC's bulk handling and mining plans to determine if they are adequate to address that issue (Simonson, 2013).

Essar Steel Minnesota LLC announced that the taconite plant under construction in Nashwauk, MN, would not open until the second half of 2014. The reason for the delay was cited as the 2012 decision to increase planned production from 4 million metric tons per year (Mt/yr) to 7 Mt/yr, requiring an additional \$600 million in financing (Depass, 2013).

References Cited

- Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., 2013, Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. announces long-term pellet supply contract with AK Steel: Cleveland, OH, Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. press release, August 27. (Accessed November 13, 2013, at <http://ir.cliffsnaturalresources.com/releasedetail.cfm?releaseid=78748>.)
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- Index Mundi, [undated], Iron ore monthly price: Index Mundi. (Accessed November 4, 2013, at <http://www.indexmundi.com/commodities/?commodity=iron-ore&months=120>.)
- Simonson, Mike, 2013, DNR asking questions about possible asbestos-like minerals in Penokees: Duluth [MN] News Tribune, August 11. (Accessed November 13, 2013, at <http://www.duluthnewtribune.com/event/article/id/274886/>.)

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

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks ⁴
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	End of Month
2012:					
August	4,350	33,900	5,220	33,800	2,980
September	4,340	38,300	4,670	38,500	2,660
October	4,750	43,000	4,460	42,900	2,970
November	4,580	47,600	4,530	47,500	3,020
December	4,650	52,200	5,500	53,000	2,200
2013:					
January	4,200	4,200	3,110	3,110	3,290
February	3,900	8,100	611	3,720	6,580
March	4,400	12,500	2,020	5,740	8,960
April	3,460	16,000	4,670	10,400	7,830
May	4,280	20,200	5,680	16,100	6,350
June	3,990	24,200	5,170	21,300	5,390
July	4,400	28,600	5,650	26,900	4,130
August	4,610	33,200	5,430	32,300	3,320

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

²Excludes byproduct ores.

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.

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

(Thousand dry metric tons)

Period	Newfoundland and Labrador	Quebec	British Columbia	Total
	2012:			
August	1,410	1,620	2	3,030
September	1,280	2,040	4	3,330
October	1,210	1,430	3	2,650
November	1,460	1,800	5	3,260
December	1,410	1,970	3	3,380
January–December	15,900	20,400	34	36,300
2013:				
January	1,080	1,600	--	2,680
February	1,000	1,430	--	2,430
March	845	1,620	--	2,470
April	1,730	1,730	--	3,460
May	1,950 ^r	1,650	--	3,600 ^r
June	1,840 ^r	2,060	--	3,900 ^r
July	1,760	2,140	--	3,900
August	1,740	2,000	--	3,730

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Includes production from steel plant waste oxides.

Source: Natural Resources Canada.

TABLE 3
U.S. PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL, 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
2012:						
August	2,860	24,600	3,180	22,900	4,450	36,000
September	2,440	27,000	2,720	25,600	4,090	40,100
October	2,260	29,300	2,700	28,300	4,090	44,200
November	2,820	32,100	2,480	30,800	3,960	48,100
December	2,900	35,000	2,550	33,400	4,270	52,400
2013:						
January	3,060	3,060	2,740	2,740	4,300	4,300
February	2,760	5,820	2,530	5,280	4,050	8,350
March	3,040	8,860	2,660	7,940	4,300	12,600
April	2,800	11,700	2,510	10,500	4,340	17,000
May	2,880	14,500	2,660	13,100	4,480	21,500
June	2,760	17,300	2,440	15,500	4,340	25,800
July	2,760	20,100	2,430	18,000	4,680	30,500
August	2,890	22,900	2,550	20,500	4,580	35,100

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

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION AND TYPE^{1,2}

(Thousand metric tons)

Country of destination and type of product	2012	2013			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	July	August
Canada	6,370	1,290	1,630	496	295
China	4,110	412	458	236	269
Colombia	1	(3)	(3)	--	(3)
Germany	3	5	7	(3)	--
Hong Kong	3	--	164	--	--
Japan	37	--	--	28	--
Mexico	641	338	272	104	55
Slovakia	--	47	68	--	--
Spain	(3)	(3)	--	--	189
United Kingdom	--	222	140	61	--
Other	12	1	(3)	(3)	(3)
Total	11,200	2,320	2,740	926	808
Concentrates	1,330	485	631	218	277
Coarse ores	1,330	130	83	--	--
Fine ores	249	213	91	28	(3)
Pellets	8,260	1,490	1,860	597	478
Briquettes	(3)	--	--	--	--
Other agglomerates	23	--	70	82	54
Roasted pyrites	3	(3)	(3)	1	(3)
Total	11,200	2,320	2,740	926	808

-- 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 5
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	2012		2013			
	January–August	August		January–August		
	Thousand metric tons	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ^{3,4} (dollars per ton)
Argentina	40	--	--	88	15,900	181.17
Brazil	627	83	7,900	227	26,300	115.97
Canada	2,570	136	17,300	1,320	177,000	133.94
Chile	96	--	--	50	5,720	114.32
China	(5)	1	50	1	97	97.00
Finland	4	--	--	--	--	--
France	(5)	--	--	(5)	4	175.65
Germany	(5)	(5)	5	(5)	5	217
India	--	--	--	(5)	3	2,681.00
Latvia	(5)	--	--	--	--	--
Mexico	47	--	--	(5)	5	100.00
Norway	(5)	--	--	(5)	28	299.89
Peru	8	--	--	(5)	7	1,642.50
South Africa	39	--	--	43	6,150	142.98
Sweden	66	--	--	18	1,930	107.33
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	--	(5)	59	164.57
Ukraine	(5)	--	--	--	--	--
United Kingdom	76	--	--	(5)	5	4,590.00
Venezuela	33	--	--	--	--	--
Total	3,600	220	25,300	1,750	233,000	133.34
Concentrates	642	53	4,410	213	21,900	102.92
Coarse ores	(5)	--	--	19	1,730	91.16
Fine ores	231	30	3,490	422	59,800	141.79
Pellets	2,720	136	17,400	1,090	150,000	136.88
Briquettes	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other agglomerates	(5)	1	50	1	97	97.00
Roasted pyrites	4	--	--	(5)	14	2,306.83
Total	3,600	220	25,300	1,750	233,000	133.34

-- 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.

⁴Values are calculated and may not reflect actual amounts per ton.

⁵Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE IN AUGUST 2013^{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	53	--	30	--	--	--	83
Canada	--	--	--	136	--	--	136
China	--	--	--	--	1	--	1
Germany	--	--	--	(3)	--	--	(3)
Total	53	--	30	136	1	--	220

-- 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 7
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE PELLETS, BY COUNTRY¹

Country of origin	2012			2013		
	January–August Thousand metric tons	August		January–August		
		Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Value ^{2,3} (dollars per ton)
Brazil	284	--	--	77	12,800	167
Canada	2,360	136	17,300	1,020	137,000	134.62
Germany	--	(4)	5	(4)	5	217.22
United Kingdom	76	--	--	--	--	--
Total	2,720	136	17,400	1,090	150,000	136.88

-- Zero.

¹Data, with the exception of the dollars per ton column, are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

³Values are calculated and may not reflect actual amounts per ton.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 8
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.)	January–August		August
	2012	2013	2013
Baltimore, MD (13)	1,440	--	--
Charleston, SC (16)	(3)	--	--
Chicago, IL (39)	447	195	84
Cleveland, OH (41)	1,090	938	136
Detroit, MI (38)	(3)	1	--
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	10	(3)	--
Los Angeles, CA (27)	(3)	(3)	--
Mobile, AL (19)	22	18	--
New Orleans, LA (20)	560	594	--
New York, NY (10)	(3)	(3)	--
Nogales, AZ (26)	--	(3)	--
Ogdensburg, NY (07)	(3)	(3)	--
Philadelphia, PA (11)	4	--	--
Port Arthur, TX (21)	27	--	--
San Diego, CA (25)	--	(3)	--
Seattle, WA (30)	(3)	--	--
St. Albans, VT (02)	--	3	--
Tampa, FL (18)	3	--	--
Total	3,600	1,750	220

-- 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 9
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE PELLETS,
BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	January–August		August
	2012	2013	2013
Baltimore, MD (13)	1,260	--	--
Chicago, IL (39)	28	--	--
Cleveland, OH (41)	1,090	937	136
Detroit, MI (38)	--	(2)	--
New Orleans, LA (20)	345	156	--
Total	2,720	1,090	136

-- Zero.

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

²Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.