

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN DECEMBER 2013

Average daily U.S. mine production of iron ore in December 2013 was 125,000 metric tons (t) (Table 1), 19% less than that of November 2013 and 17% less than that of December 2012. Average daily U.S. iron ore shipments were 150,000 t, 5% greater than those of November and 15% less than those of December 2012.

Mine stocks at the end of December 2013 were 49% more than those at the end of November and 68% more than those at the end of December 2012 (Table 1). U.S. imports of iron ore were 173,000 t in December 2013, 51% less than those in November 2013 and 49% less than those of December 2012. U.S. exports of iron ore were 1.11 million metric tons (Mt) in December 2013, 15% less than those in November 2013 and 46% greater than those of December 2012 (Table 4).

U.S. iron ore production in 2013 was 51.0 Mt, a slight decrease from 52.2 Mt in 2012, calculated from monthly production figures. U.S. iron ore shipments were 51.8 Mt in 2013, a slight decrease from 53.0 Mt in 2012, calculated from monthly shipment figures.

Nucor Corp. began production at its direct reduced iron (DRI) facility in St. James Parish, LA, in late December. Output quality matched that of another Nucor facility in Trinidad. The 2.5 million-metric-ton-per-year plant was the largest DRI facility of its kind in the world and the first constructed in the United States since 2009. Future plans for the site included a pellet plant, a blast furnace, a steel mill, and a second DRI facility (Boone, 2014).

Construction of Magnetation Inc.'s pellet plant in Reynolds, IN, was only a few days behind schedule despite months of harsh weather. Railways at the site required 2,100 meters (7,000 feet) of additional internal rail to connect to the CSX Corp. lines, and water and sewer utilities were expected to be connected in April 2014. The facility is expected to be operational in the second half of 2014 (Colombo, 2013).

Gogebic Taconite LLC's (GTAC) proposed iron ore mine in northern Wisconsin was slated to undergo separate reviews from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The WDNR is required to act on the mining permit within 420 days, whereas the Army Corps of Engineers review of the project has no time limits. The

Army Corps of Engineers and the WDNR will consider coordinating their review wherever possible (Bergquist, 2014).

In China, receipts from Australia increased 11%, receipts from Brazil decreased 19%, and receipts from India increased 346% in December, compared with those of December 2012, indicating higher reliance on ore from Australia and India.

A ruling in mid-November 2013 by the Supreme Court of India allowed electronic auctions of iron ore stockpiled in India's Goa State, although mining restrictions continued. Meanwhile, the ban on production in India's Karnataka State was lifted, but no iron ore exports were allowed (Wong, 2014). The Odisha (State) Steel and Mines Department issued a notification in December, which was upheld by the Orissa High Court, ordering iron ore producers in Odisha to reserve half of their monthly production for domestic sale. The High Court also stated that if the Odisha Government could not develop a mechanism for fair distribution and market pricing to domestic consumers, then the policy could be delayed (Mohapatra, 2014).

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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, 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 |
| September | 4,780 | 38,000 | 5,400 | 37,700 | 2,770 |
| October | 4,460 | 42,500 | 5,120 | 42,900 | 2,110 |
| November | 4,650 | 47,100 | 4,280 | 47,100 | 2,470 |
| December | 3,870 | 51,000 | 4,660 | 51,800 | 3,690 |

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: | | | | |
| 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 | 1,650 | -- | 3,600 |
| June | 2,220 | 2,060 | -- | 4,280 |
| July | 1,880 | 2,140 | -- | 4,030 |
| August | 1,840 | 2,260 | -- | 4,100 |
| September | 1,640 | 2,000 | -- | 3,640 |
| October | 1,710 ^r | 2,300 | -- | 4,010 ^r |
| November | 1,640 ^r | 1,690 | -- | 3,330 ^r |
| December | 1,390 | 2,440 | -- | 3,830 |
| January–December | 18,900 | 22,900 | -- | 41,800 |

^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, 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 |
| September | 2,880 | 25,800 | 2,460 | 23,000 | 4,400 | 39,500 |
| October | 2,870 | 28,700 | 2,510 | 25,500 | 4,490 | 44,000 |
| November | 2,760 | 31,500 | 2,430 | 27,900 | 4,340 | 48,300 |
| December | 2,780 | 34,200 | 2,380 | 30,300 | 4,340 | 52,600 |

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 | 3d quarter | December | 4th quarter | 1st quarter– 4th quarter |
| Canada | 6,370 | 1,290 | 1,630 | 1,370 | 457 | 1,790 | 6,080 |
| China | 4,110 | 412 | 458 | 703 | 563 | 1,180 | 2,750 |
| Colombia | 1 | (3) | (3) | (3) | (3) | (3) | (3) |
| France | -- | -- | -- | 82 | -- | -- | 82 |
| Germany | 3 | 5 | 7 | (3) | -- | -- | 12 |
| Hong Kong | 3 | -- | 164 | -- | -- | -- | 164 |
| Japan | 37 | -- | -- | 58 | 31 | 31 | 89 |
| Mexico | 641 | 338 | 272 | 244 | 60 | 272 | 1,130 |
| Slovakia | -- | 47 | 68 | -- | -- | -- | 115 |
| Spain | (3) | (3) | -- | 189 | -- | -- | 190 |
| United Kingdom | -- | 222 | 140 | 61 | -- | (3) | 423 |
| Other | 12 | 1 | (3) | (3) | (3) | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 11,200 | 2,320 | 2,740 | 2,710 | 1,110 | 3,280 | 11,000 |
| Concentrates | 1,330 | 485 | 631 | 655 | 204 | 622 | 2,390 |
| Coarse ores | 1,330 | 130 | 83 | -- | -- | -- | 213 |
| Fine ores | 249 | 213 | 91 | 29 | 31 | 50 | 382 |
| Pellets | 8,260 | 1,490 | 1,860 | 1,830 | 876 | 2,610 | 7,790 |
| Briquettes | (3) | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Other agglomerates | 23 | -- | 70 | 196 | (3) | (3) | 266 |
| Roasted pyrites | 3 | (3) | (3) | (3) | (3) | (3) | 1 |
| Total | 11,200 | 2,320 | 2,740 | 2,710 | 1,110 | 3,280 | 11,000 |

-- 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 | | 2013 | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|--|
| | January–December | December | | January–December | | |
| | Thousand metric tons | Thousand metric tons | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Thousand metric tons | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Value ^{3,4} (dollars per ton) |
| Argentina | 81 | -- | -- | 137 | 23,100 | 168.88 |
| Brazil | 739 | 29 | 2,920 | 630 | 74,700 | 118.63 |
| Canada | 3,810 | 85 | 11,300 | 2,090 | 280,000 | 133.97 |
| Chile | 104 | 27 | 6,690 | 77 | 12,400 | 161.08 |
| China | (5) | (5) | 3 | 1 | 100 | 100.00 |
| Finland | 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| France | (5) | -- | -- | (5) | 4 | 175.65 |
| Germany | (5) | -- | -- | (5) | 8 | 242.45 |
| India | (5) | -- | -- | (5) | 8 | 596.15 |
| Latvia | (5) | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Mexico | 47 | 1 | 60 | 1 | 90 | 90.00 |
| Netherlands | (5) | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Norway | (5) | -- | -- | 78 | 11,900 | 152.77 |
| Peru | 44 | -- | -- | 12 | 2,260 | 187.92 |
| South Africa | 91 | 22 | 3,200 | 95 | 13,800 | 145.55 |
| Sweden | 72 | 11 | 1,950 | 49 | 7,310 | 149.27 |
| Trinidad and Tobago | -- | -- | -- | (5) | 59 | 164.57 |
| Ukraine | (5) | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| United Kingdom | 76 | -- | -- | (5) | 5 | 4,590.00 |
| Venezuela | 75 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Total | 5,140 | 173 | 26,200 | 3,170 | 426,000 | 134.30 |
| Concentrates | 862 | 77 | 12,800 | 491 | 56,900 | 115.88 |
| Coarse ores | 51 | 11 | 2,000 | 45 | 6,390 | 141.91 |
| Fine ores | 363 | (5) | 3 | 573 | 79,600 | 138.84 |
| Pellets | 3,860 | 85 | 11,300 | 2,060 | 283,000 | 137.26 |
| Briquettes | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Other agglomerates | (5) | -- | -- | 1 | 97 | 97.00 |
| Roasted pyrites | 4 | -- | -- | (5) | 19 | 1,050.56 |
| Total | 5,140 | 173 | 26,200 | 3,170 | 426,000 | 134.30 |

-- 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 DECEMBER 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 | 29 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 29 |
| Canada | -- | -- | -- | 85 | -- | -- | 85 |
| Chile | 27 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 27 |
| China | -- | -- | (3) | -- | -- | -- | (3) |
| Mexico | -- | 1 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1 |
| South Africa | 22 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 22 |
| Sweden | -- | 11 | -- | (3) | -- | -- | 11 |
| Total | 77 | 11 | (3) | 85 | -- | -- | 173 |

-- 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–December | December | | January–December | | |
| | Thousand metric tons | Thousand metric tons | Value ² (thousand dollars) | Thousand metric tons | Value ² (thousand dollars) | Value ^{2,3} (dollars per ton) |
| Brazil | 284 | -- | -- | 199 | 31,200 | 156.88 |
| Canada | 3,500 | 85 | 11,300 | 1,790 | 240,000 | 134.42 |
| Germany | -- | -- | -- | (4) | 5 | 217.22 |
| Norway | -- | -- | -- | 78 | 11,900 | 152.23 |
| Sweden | -- | (4) | 3 | (4) | 3 | 212.44 |
| United Kingdom | 76 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Total | 3,860 | 85 | 11,300 | 2,060 | 283,000 | 137.26 |

-- 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.

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–December | | December |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------|----------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2013 |
| Baltimore, MD (13) | 1,450 | 11 | -- |
| Buffalo, NY (09) | -- | (3) | -- |
| Charleston, SC (16) | (3) | -- | -- |
| Chicago, IL (39) | 689 | 528 | 51 |
| Cleveland, OH (41) | 2,210 | 1,560 | 85 |
| Detroit, MI (38) | (3) | 1 | -- |
| Houston-Galveston, TX (53) | 54 | 44 | -- |
| Los Angeles, CA (27) | (3) | (3) | -- |
| Mobile, AL (19) | 48 | 18 | -- |
| New Orleans, LA (20) | 618 | 1,000 | 37 |
| New York, NY (10) | (3) | (3) | -- |
| Nogales, AZ (26) | -- | (3) | -- |
| Ogdensburg, NY (07) | (3) | (3) | -- |
| Pembina, ND (34) | -- | (3) | -- |
| Philadelphia, PA (11) | 4 | -- | -- |
| Port Arthur, TX (21) | 27 | -- | -- |
| San Diego, CA (25) | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Seattle, WA (30) | 37 | -- | -- |
| St. Albans, VT (02) | 1 | 3 | -- |
| Tampa, FL (18) | 3 | 9 | -- |
| Total | 5,140 | 3,170 | 173 |

-- 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–December | | December |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------|----------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2013 |
| Baltimore, MD (13) | 1,260 | -- | -- |
| Chicago, IL (39) | 41 | -- | -- |
| Cleveland, OH (41) | 2,210 | 1,550 | 85 |
| Detroit, MI (38) | -- | (2) | -- |
| Houston-Galveston, TX (53) | -- | 44 | -- |
| New Orleans, LA (20) | 345 | 463 | -- |
| Total | 3,860 | 2,060 | 85 |

-- 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.