

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN APRIL 2017

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in April 2017 were 4.02 million metric tons (Mt) and 4.25 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 134,000 metric tons (t), 10% greater than that of March and 49% greater than that of April 2016. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 142,000 t, more than three times those in March and virtually the same as those in April 2016. Mine stocks at the end of April 2017 were slightly less than those held at the end of March 2017 and slightly greater than those held at the end of April 2016.

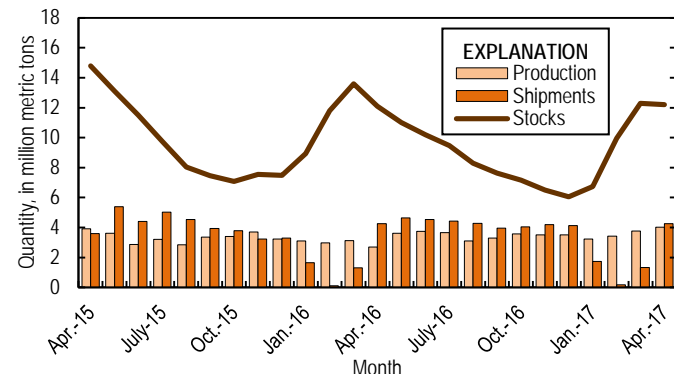


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from April 2015 through April 2017.

Monthly iron ore data are reported as gross weight unless otherwise noted and do not include iron metallics such as pig iron, direct-reduced iron, hot-briquetted iron, or iron nuggets.

U.S. exports of iron ore totaled 926,000 t in April 2017, more than double those in March 2017 and 59% greater than in April 2016. U.S. imports of iron ore totaled 384,000 t in April 2017,

significantly higher than those in March and 48% greater than those in April 2016 (fig. 2).

Seasonal variations in trade, especially of exports, during the winter months are attributed to freezing of waterways and the closing of the Soo Locks, which are used to transport iron ore in the Great Lakes region through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

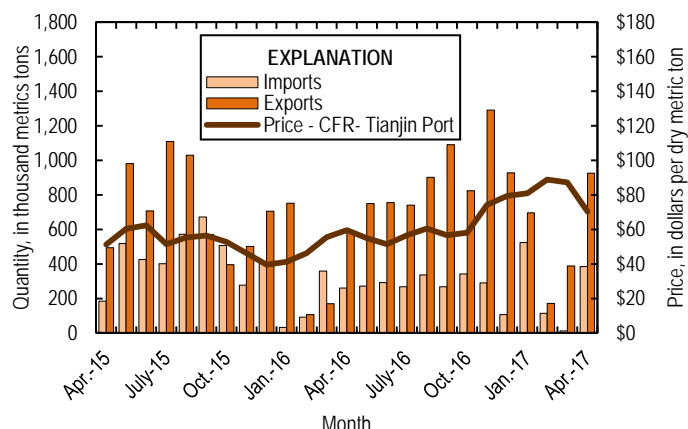


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for iron ore import fines, 62% iron content CFR, at Tianjin Port, from April 2015 through April 2017. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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, usable ore)

Period	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	End of Month
2016:					
April	2,700	11,900	4,260	7,320	12,100
May	3,610	15,500	4,640	12,000	11,000
June	3,740	19,200	4,540	16,500	10,200
July	3,670	22,900	4,430	20,900	9,470
August	3,100	26,000	4,270	25,200	8,300
September	3,290	29,300	3,950	29,100	7,630
October	3,580	32,900	4,050	33,200	7,170
November	3,520	36,400	4,200	37,400	6,500
December	3,510	39,900	4,140	41,500	6,050
2017:					
January	3,240	3,240	1,740	1,740	6,730
February	3,420	6,660	179	1,920	9,970
March	3,760	10,400	1,340	3,260	12,400
April	4,020	14,400	4,250	7,510	12,200

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

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallics.

³Includes rail and vessel.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL, BY TYPE OF FURNACE¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Pig iron production		Raw steel production			
	Basic oxygen furnace		Blast furnace		Electric furnace	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2016:						
April	2,150	8,980	1,860	7,820	4,460	17,300
May	1,910	10,900	2,210	10,000	4,770	22,000
June	2,280	13,200	1,950	12,000	4,550	26,600
July	2,220	15,400	1,890	13,900	4,480	31,100
August	1,860	17,200	2,160	16,000	4,490	35,600
September	1,770	19,000	2,070	18,100	4,120	39,700
October	1,610	20,600	1,940	20,000	4,290	44,000
November	1,660	22,300	1,920	22,000	4,260	48,200
December	1,810	24,100	2,090	24,100	4,370	52,600
2017:						
January	1,940	1,940	2,240	2,240	4,740	4,740
February	1,930	3,870	2,140	4,380	4,280	9,020
March	1,960	5,830	2,250	6,630	4,640	13,700
April	1,870	7,700	2,150	8,780	4,540	18,200

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

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY AND TYPE ^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country and type of product	2016	2017				
	January–April	April		January–April		
	Quantity	Quantity	Value ³	Quantity	Value ³	Value ³
	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand dollars)	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand dollars)	(dollars per ton)
Canada	1,610	573	43,100	1,590	111,000	69.69
Japan	(4)	331	20,700	475	29,600	62.38
Mexico	(4)	21	2,720	54	6,520	120.70
Other	(4)	(4)	6	60	4,180	69.60
Total	1,610	926	66,500	2,180	151,000	69.36
Concentrates	(4)	2	356	7	895	127.86
Fine ores	(4)	30	2,030	30	2,070	69.06
Pellets	1,610	893	64,100	2,080	143,000	68.96
Other	(4)	(4)	5	68	5,090	74.85
Total	1,610	926	66,500	2,180	151,000	69.36

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

²All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of exports per month included in "Other."

³Free alongside ship (FAS) value.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
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	2016	2017				
	January–April	April		January–April		
	Quantity	Quantity	Value ³	Quantity	Value ³	Value ³
	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand dollars)	(thousand metric tons)	(thousand dollars)	(dollars per ton)
Brazil	434	162	19,200	475	47,700	100.47
Canada	152	97	10,300	169	17,100	100.89
Chile	54	52	4,650	151	12,200	80.66
Sweden	75	73	7,120	152	13,900	91.39
Other	25	(4)	25	85	15,600	183.72
Total	741	384	41,300	1,030	106,000	103.26
Concentrates	145	52	4,650	151	12,200	80.69
Fine Ores	50	23	2,280	43	12,200	283.95
Pellets	546	309	34,400	837	82,100	98.05
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	741	384	41,300	1,030	106,000	103.26

-- Zero.

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

²All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
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.)	Pellets			Total, all products		
	January–April		April	January–April		April
	2016	2017	2017	2016	2017	2017
New Orleans, LA (20)	546	837	309	624	1,020	383
Other	--	--	--	117	11.00	(3)
Total	546	837	309	741	1,031	384

-- Zero.

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

²Customs Districts with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.