

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN FEBRUARY 2018

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in February 2018 were 3.90 million metric tons (Mt) and 214,000 metric tons (t), respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 139,000 metric tons (t), 19% more than that of January and 14% more than that of February 2017. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 7,640 t, 84% less than those in January and 20% more than those in February 2017. Mine stocks at the end of February 2018 were 44% more than those held at the end of January and 20% more than those held at the end of February 2017.

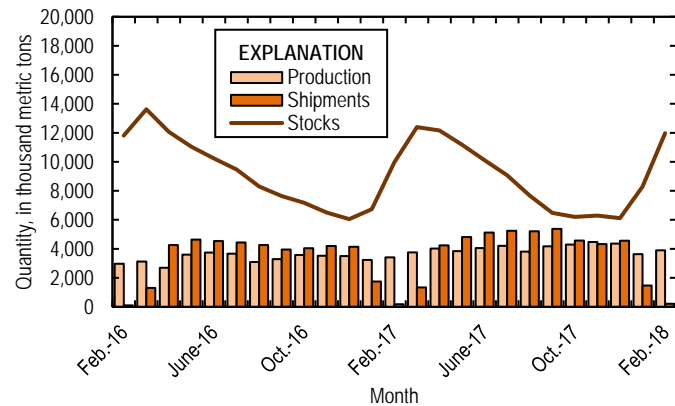


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from February 2016 through February 2018.

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 were 217,000 t in February 2018, 75% less than those in January and 27% more than those in February 2017 (table 3). U.S. imports of iron ore were 92,000 t

in February 2018, 71% less than those in January and 19% less than those in February 2017 (fig. 2, table 4).

Seasonal variations of shipments, imports and 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.

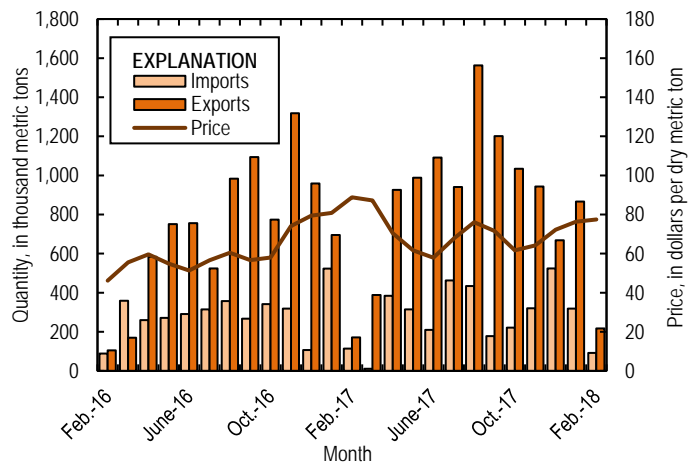


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for iron ore import fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, from February 2016 through February 2018. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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
2017:					
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
May	3,840	18,300	4,820	12,300	11,200
June	4,050	22,300	5,120	17,400	10,100
July	4,210	26,500	5,240	22,700	9,080
August	3,810	30,300	5,210	27,900	7,670
September	4,180	34,500	5,380	33,300	6,470
October	4,300	38,800	4,570	37,800	6,210
November	4,470	43,300	4,330	42,200	6,300
December	4,360	47,600	4,560	46,700	6,120
2018:					
January	3,640	3,640	1,470	1,470	8,290
February	3,900	7,540	214	1,680	12,000

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
2017:						
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
May	1,940	9,630	2,210	11,000	4,690	22,900
June	1,830	11,500	2,090	13,100	4,700	27,600
July	1,860	13,300	2,200	15,300	4,760	32,400
August	1,930	15,300	2,250	17,500	4,850	37,200
September	1,850	17,100	2,160	19,700	4,490	41,700
October	1,690	18,800	2,000	21,700	4,860	46,500
November	1,770	20,600	1,980	23,700	4,660	51,200
December	1,840	22,400	2,120	25,800	4,620	55,800
2018:						
January	1,920	1,920	2,240	2,240	4,650	4,650
February	1,790	3,710	1,980	4,210	4,620	9,270

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 OR LOCALITY AND TYPE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality and type of product	2017			2018		
	January–February	February		January–February		
	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Canada	803	160	11,600	921	66,900	72.64
Mexico	32	58	7,300	120	13,000	108.48
Other	29	(4)	5	42	1,550	36.81
Total	865	217	18,900	1,080	81,500	75.22
Concentrates	4	4	1,410	4	1,490	371.75
Fine ores	(4)	(4)	7	(4)	18	4.50
Pellets	824	213	17,500	1,040	78,400	75.63
Other	37	(4)	3	42	1,520	36.29
Total	865	217	18,900	1,080	81,500	75.22

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 OR LOCALITY AND TYPE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality of origin and type of product	2017			2018		
	January–February	February		January–February		
	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Brazil	313	92	11,000	338	38,900	115.23
Other	324	(4)	40	73	8,170	111.86
Total	637	92	11,000	412	47,100	114.35
Concentrates	99	--	--	10	1,110	111.20
Fine Ores	9	(4)	40	(4)	61	15.25
Pellets	529	92	11,000	401	45,900	114.57
Other	--	(4)	--	--	--	--
Total	637	92	11,000	412	47,100	114.35

-- 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–February		February	January–February		February
	2017	2018	2018	2017	2018	2018
New Orleans, LA (20)	529	401	92	637	401	92
Other	--	--	--	(3)	10	(3)
Total	529	401	92	637	412	92

-- 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.