

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

Candice C. Tuck, Iron Ore Commodity Specialist
National Minerals Information Center
U.S. Geological Survey
989 National Center
Reston, VA 20192
Telephone: (703) 648-4912, Fax: (703) 648-7757
Email: ctuck@usgs.gov

Robin C. Kaiser (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7948
Fax: (703) 648-7975
Email: rkaiser@usgs.gov

Internet: <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/>

IRON ORE IN MARCH 2018

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in March 2018 were 4.07 million metric tons (Mt) and 1.36 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 131,000 metric tons (t), about 6% less than that of February and 8% more than that of March 2017. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 44,000 t, nearly six times those in February and slightly higher than those in March 2017. Mine stocks at the end of March 2018 were 23% more than those held at the end of February and 18% more than those held at the end of March 2017.

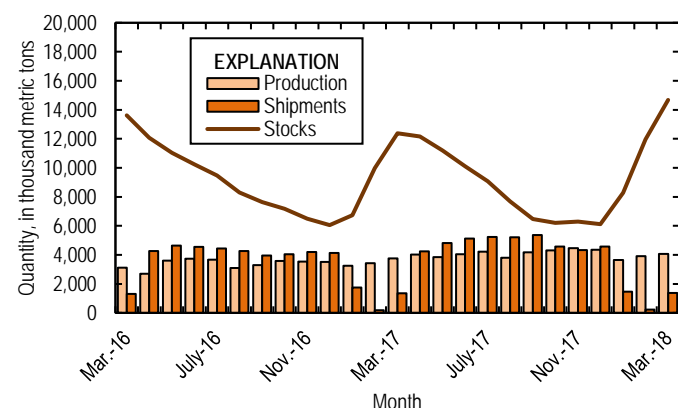


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from March 2016 through March 2018.

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

U.S. exports of iron ore were 311,000 t in March 2018, 43% more than those in February and 20% less than those in March 2017 (table 3). U.S. imports of iron ore were 157,000 t in March

2018, 71% more than those in February and more than 14 times those in March 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.

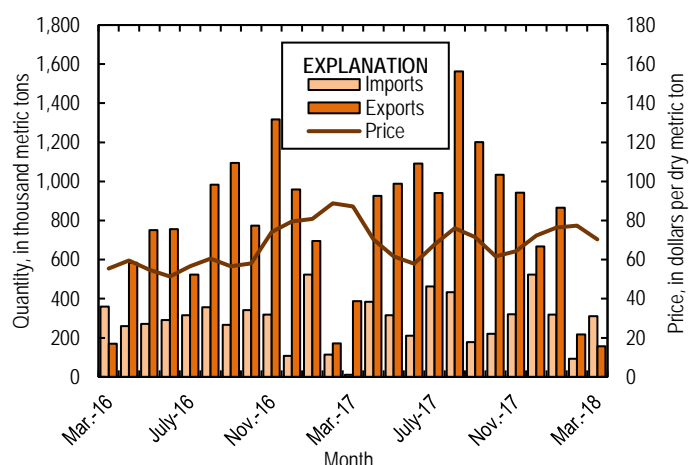


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for iron ore import fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, from March 2016 through March 2018. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

List services and web feed subscribers are the first to receive notification of USGS minerals information publications and data releases. For information on how to subscribe, go to <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/>.

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:					
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
March	4,070	11,600	1,360	3,050	14,700

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:						
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
March	1,970	5,680	2,270	6,490	5,060	14,300

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		2018		
	January–March	March		January–March		
	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	1,020	168	12,800	1,090	79,700	73.16
Germany	--	29	1,550	71	3,070	43.21
Japan	144	28	1,960	28	1,960	70.00
Mexico	33	86	9,010	206	22,000	106.94
Other	60 ^r	(4)	14	(4)	42	10.50
Total	1,250	311	25,300	1,390	107,000	76.60
Concentrates	4	33	2,900	37	4,380	118.43
Fine ores	(4)	(4)	19	(4)	37	9.25
Pellets	1,180	278	22,400	1,320	101,000	76.67
Other	68	(4)	6	42	1,530	36.43
Total	1,250	311	25,300	1,390	107,000	76.60

^rRevised. -- 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 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		2018		
	January–March	March		January–March		
	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	151	17,800	490	56,700	115.79
Venezuela	--	5	897	5	897	179.40
Other	335 ^r	1	124	74	8,290	112.01
Total	648	157	18,800	569	65,900	115.86
Concentrates	99	8	848	18	1,960	108.89
Fine Ores	20	(4)	36	(4)	96	24.00
Pellets	529	149	17,900	551	63,900	115.91
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	648	157	18,800	569	65,900	115.86

^rRevised. -- 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–March		March	January–March		March
	2017	2018		2017	2018	
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	--	--	--	18	8
New Orleans, LA (20)	529	551	149	637	551	149
Other	--	--	--	11 ^r	(3)	(3)
Total	529	551	149	648	569	157

^rRevised. -- 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.