

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN NOVEMBER 2020

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. mine production and shipments of iron ore in November 2020 were 3.70 million metric tons (Mt) and 4.08 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 123,000 metric tons (t), a slight increase from the revised production in October 2020 and an 8% decrease from that of November 2019. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 136,000 t, a slight increase from the revised shipments in October and an 11% decrease from those in November 2019. Mine stocks were 3.69 Mt at the end of November 2020, a 9% decrease from the revised stocks held at the end of October and a 14% increase from those held in November 2019 (fig. 1, table 1).

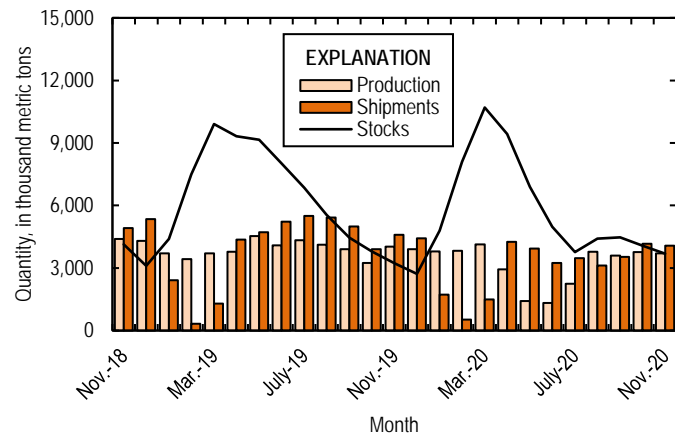


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from November 2018 through November 2020.

U.S. exports of iron ore were 969,000 t in November 2020, a 25% increase from those in October and a slight increase from those in November 2019 (fig. 2, tables 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 318,000 t in November 2020, a 78% increase from

those in October 2020 and a 49% increase from those in November 2019 (fig. 2, tables 4, 6). The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$124.36 per dry metric ton in November 2020, a 4% decrease from \$119.78 per dry metric ton in October 2020 (fig. 2).

Shipments and production decreased from average annual levels in the second quarter of 2020 as a result of the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic and decreased steel consumption.

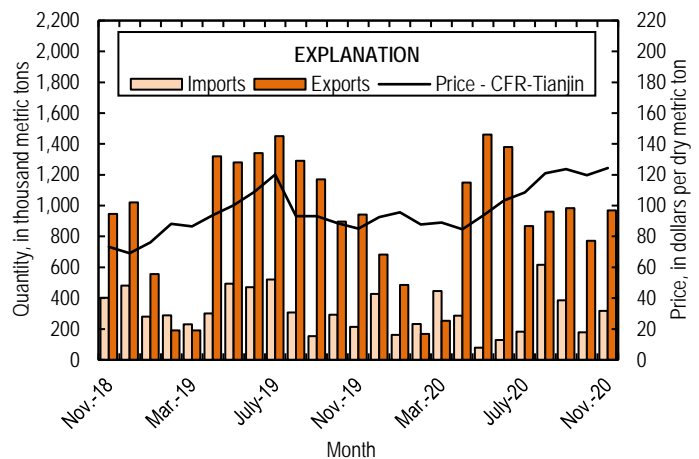


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from November 2018 through November 2020. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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
2019:					
November	4,030	42,900	4,590	42,700	3,230
December	3,900	46,800	4,420	47,200	2,720
2020:					
January	3,790	3,790	1,720	1,720	4,790
February	3,830	7,620	520	2,240	8,100
March	4,140	11,800	1,490	3,720	10,700
April	2,930	14,700	4,250	7,980	9,430
May	1,420	16,100	3,940	11,900	6,900
June	1,320	17,400	3,240	15,200	4,980
July	2,250	19,700	3,470	18,600	3,760
August	3,780	23,400	3,120	21,700	4,410
September	3,600	27,000	3,540	25,300	4,470
October	3,760 ^r	30,800 ^r	4,160 ^r	29,400 ^r	4,070 ^r
November	3,700	34,500	4,080	33,500	3,690

^rRevised.

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

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallica.

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
2019:						
November	1,720	20,500	1,970	24,500	5,120	56,000
December	1,850	22,300	2,140	26,600	5,160	61,200
2020:						
January	1,680	1,680	2,270	2,270	5,380	5,380
February	1,920	3,600	2,270	4,540	4,800	10,200
March	1,910	5,510	2,230	6,770	4,770	14,900
April	1,110	6,620	1,240	8,010	3,580	18,500
May	949	7,570	1,100	9,110	3,820	22,300
June	1,170	8,740	1,230	10,300	3,690	26,000
July	1,310	10,000	1,500	11,800	3,930	30,000
August	1,520	11,600	1,710	13,500	4,220	34,200
September	1,610	13,200	1,840	15,400	4,140	38,300
October	1,700	14,900	1,960	17,300	4,270	42,600
November	1,700	16,600	1,910	19,200	4,390	47,000

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	2019		2020			
	January–November Quantity (thousand metric tons)	November		January–November		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Canada	7,830 ^r	667	63,700	6,430	551,000	85.73
China	--	64	6,890	64	6,920	108.14
Japan	2,370 ^r	141	9,740	1,710	116,000	67.89
Spain	41	52	5,220	52	5,220	100.39
United Kingdom	130	45	1,580	253	8,850	34.99
Other	300 ^r	(4)	40	941	65,900	70.04
Total	10,700 ^r	969	87,200	9,450	754,000	79.80
Concentrates	198	64	6,910	68	8,220	120.87
Fine ores	31 ^r	(4)	26	2	417	208.50
Pellets	10,200	860	78,700	9,130	737,000	81
Other	233 ^r	45	1,580	254	8,990	35.40
Total	10,700 ^r	969	87,200	9,450	754,000	79.80

^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	2019		2020			
	January–November Quantity (thousand metric tons)	November		January–November		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Brazil	1,880	152	19,500	1,440	176,000	121.96
Canada	829 ^r	83	10,200	699	83,500	119.46
Chile	117	20	6,020	78	13,800	176.56
Sweden	78	63	6,360	386	44,200	114.59
Other	646 ^r	(4)	10	414	41,700	100.82
Total	3,550	318	42,100	3,020	359,000	118.95
Concentrates	907 ^r	--	--	196	14,200	72.58
Fine Ores	191	73	11,400	285	32,700	114.73
Pellets	2,450	235	29,700	2,510	310,000	123.21
Other	6	10	1,030	22	2,190	99.32
Total	3,550	318	42,100	3,020	359,000	118.95

^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–November		November	January–November		November
	2019	2020	2020	2019	2020	2020
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	9	170	7	210 ^r	192	7
New Orleans, LA (20)	2,360	2,320	228	2,670	2,510	299
Tampa, FL (18)	--	--	--	8	17	10
Other	77 ^r	26	(3)	666 ^r	298	(3)
Total	2,450	2,510	235	3,550	3,020	318

^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.

TABLE 6
U.S. IRON ORE TRADE SUMMARY¹

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Exports		Imports	
	Quantity	Value ²	Quantity	Value ³
2019:				
January–November	10,700 ^r	915,000	3,550	441,000
November	942	79,500	213	27,900
December	682	67,600	428	58,500
January–December	11,400	983,000	3,980	499,000
2020:				
January	486	45,900	162	21,500
February	168	11,200	233	32,700
March	254	18,800	446	52,300
April	1,150	89,000	286	29,400
May	1,460	110,000	78	7,150
June	1,380	101,000	129	15,700
July	867	72,000	183	21,500
August	960	73,200	617	67,900
September	983	78,900	387	46,800
October	772	67,900	179	21,700
November	969	87,200	318	42,100
January–November	9,450	754,000	3,020	359,000

^rRevised.

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

²Free alongside ship (FAS) value.

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.