

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN JULY 2021

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

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in July 2021 were estimated to be 4.2 million metric tons (Mt) and 5.2 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 136,000 metric tons (t), a slight increase from that in June and an 88% increase from that in July 2020. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 166,000 t, nearly unchanged from those in June 2021 and a 49% increase from those in July 2020. Mine stocks were estimated to be 7.9 Mt at the end of July 2021, a 10% decrease from those held at the end of June and more than double those held at the end of July 2020 (fig. 1, table 1). Production and shipments were substantially higher than those in July 2020 because the industry has recovered to some extent from the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

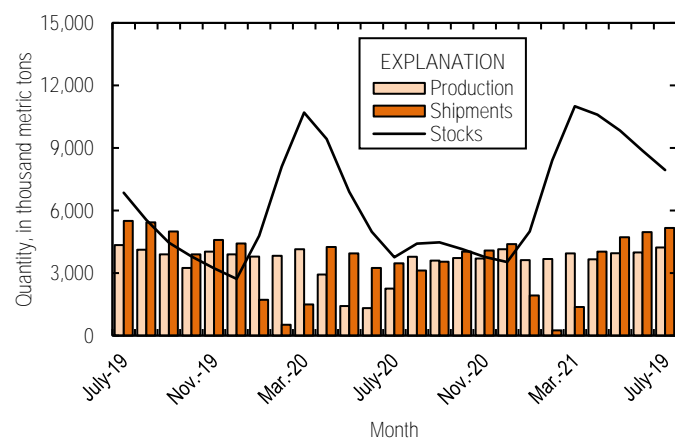


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from July 2019 through July 2021.

U.S. exports of iron ore were 1.30 Mt in July 2021, a 20% decrease from those in June and an 49% increase from those in

July 2020 (fig. 2, tables 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 564,000 t in July, an 87% increase from those in June and more than triple those in July 2020 (fig. 2, tables 4, 6).

The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$214.14 per dry metric ton in July 2021, nearly unchanged from \$214.43 per dry metric ton in June and nearly double the \$108.52 in July 2020 (fig. 2).

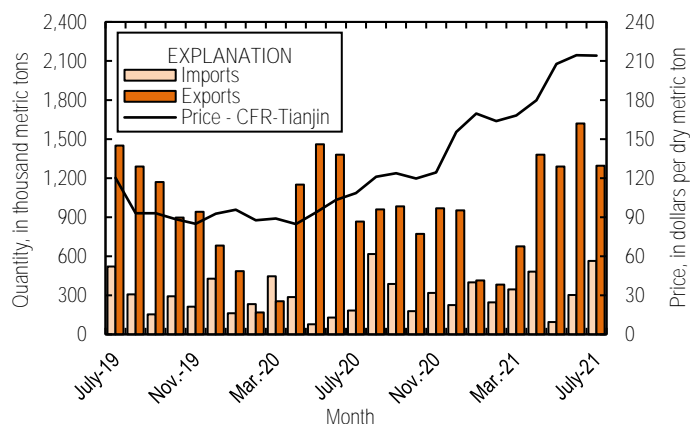


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from July 2019 through July 2021. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and IndexMundi, undated.

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TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% 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 |
| 2020: | | | | | |
| 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 | 3,720 | 30,800 | 4,030 | 29,300 | 4,150 |
| November | 3,700 | 34,500 | 4,080 | 33,400 | 3,770 |
| December | 4,140 | 38,600 | 4,390 | 37,800 | 3,530 |
| Total ⁴ | XX | 38,100 | XX | 38,000 | 3,290 |
| 2021: ⁵ | | | | | |
| January | 3,620 | 3,620 | 1,920 | 1,920 ^r | 4,990 ⁶ |
| February | 3,670 | 7,290 | 250 | 2,170 ^r | 8,410 |
| March | 3,940 | 11,200 | 1,370 | 3,540 ^r | 10,980 |
| April | 3,660 | 14,900 | 4,030 | 7,570 ^r | 10,610 |
| May | 3,950 | 18,800 | 4,720 | 12,300 ^r | 9,840 |
| June | 3,990 | 22,800 | 4,960 | 17,300 ^r | 8,870 |
| July | 4,230 | 27,100 | 5,160 | 22,400 | 7,940 |

⁶Estimated. ^rRevised. XX Not applicable.

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

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallics.

³Includes rail and vessel.

⁴Total for 2020 as reported by mines may vary from monthly production totals.

⁵Data are estimated based on reported employment hours and historical ratios.

⁶Monthly stock adjustment for January based on 2020 annual reporting total.

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

(Thousand metric tons)

| Period | Pig iron production ² | | Raw steel production | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| | Monthly | Year to date | Monthly | Year to date |
| 2020: | | | | |
| July | 1,310 | 10,000 | 5,420 | 41,800 |
| August | 1,520 | 11,600 | 5,930 | 47,700 |
| September | 1,610 | 13,200 | 5,980 | 53,700 |
| October | 1,700 | 14,900 | 6,230 | 59,900 |
| November | 1,700 | 16,600 | 6,300 | 66,200 |
| December ^c | 1,660 | 18,200 | 6,470 | 72,700 |
| 2021: ^c | | | | |
| January | 1,870 | 1,870 | 6,970 | 6,970 |
| February | 1,760 | 3,630 | 6,320 | 13,300 |
| March | 1,950 | 5,580 | 7,100 | 20,400 |
| April | 1,920 | 7,500 | 7,130 | 27,500 |
| May | 2,020 | 9,520 | 7,370 | 34,900 |
| June | 1,970 | 11,500 | 7,170 | 42,100 |
| July | 2,040 | 13,500 | 7,480 | 49,500 |

^cEstimated.

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

²Pig iron data are estimated based on historical ratios. In 2021, market consolidation resulted in the need to withhold reported information to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

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 | 2020 | 2021 | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | January–July | July | | January–July | | |
| | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Unit value ³ (dollars per ton) |
| Belgium | -- | 75 | 4,710 | 75 | 4,710 | 62.84 |
| Canada | 3,790 | 788 | 74,200 | 3,560 | 325,000 | 91.24 |
| China | (4) | 142 | 27,500 | 994 | 133,000 | 134.09 |
| Germany | -- | 35 | 6,720 | 35 | 6,720 | 192.00 |
| Japan | 1,250 | 142 | 8,370 | 818 | 48,300 | 59.02 |
| Mexico | -- | 44 | 4,350 | 474 | 27,900 | 58.91 |
| Netherlands | -- | 17 | 587 | 223 | 15,000 | 67.08 |
| Spain | -- | 54 | 5,380 | 311 | 31,100 | 100.01 |
| Other | 727 ^r | (4) | 9 | 571 | 39,100 | 68.44 |
| Total | 5,770 | 1,300 | 132,000 | 7,060 | 631,000 | 89.36 |
| Concentrates | 1 | 177 | 34,300 | 1,070 | 146,000 | 136.87 |
| Fine ores | 1 | (4) | 23 | 1 | 250 | 250.00 |
| Pellets | 5,600 | 1,060 | 92,600 | 5,640 | 468,000 | 82.94 |
| Other | 163 | 60 | 4,890 | 351 | 16,800 | 47.81 |
| Total | 5,770 | 1,300 | 132,000 | 7,060 | 631,000 | 89.36 |

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²All countries receiving less than 5,000 metric tons of U.S. 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 | 2020 | 2021 | | 2021 | | Unit value ³ (dollars per ton) |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | January–July | July | | January–July | | |
| | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Quantity (thousand metric tons) | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | |
| Brazil | 629 | 370 | 80,600 | 1,510 | 269,000 | 177.84 |
| Canada | 385 | 160 | 36,100 | 509 | 94,100 | 184.85 |
| Sweden | 149 | 33 | 6,130 | 200 | 36,100 | 180.33 |
| Other | 356 ^r | 1 | 186 | 214 | 34,300 | 160.32 |
| Total | 1,520 | 564 | 123,000 | 2,440 | 433,000 | 177.97 |
| Concentrates | 33 | 29 | 4,520 | 115 | 15,900 | 138.36 |
| Fine Ores | 188 ^r | 26 | 4,760 | 132 | 18,000 | 136.17 |
| Pellets | 1,290 | 502 | 112,000 | 2,170 | 397,000 | 182.94 |
| Other | 12 | 7 | 1,340 | 17 | 2,320 | 136.24 |
| Total | 1,520 | 564 | 123,000 | 2,440 | 433,000 | 177.97 |

^rRevised.

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

²All countries shipping less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month to the United States included in “Other.”

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

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–July | | July 2021 | January–July | | July 2021 |
| | 2020 | 2021 | | 2020 | 2021 | |
| Chicago, IL (39) | -- | -- | -- | 27 | 79 | 29 |
| Houston-Galveston, TX (53) | 154 | 89 | 15 | 177 ^r | 100 | 15 |
| New Orleans, LA (20) | 1,110 | 2,080 | 488 | 1,230 | 2,200 | 514 |
| Tampa, FL (18) | -- | -- | -- | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Other | 26 | -- | -- | 80 ^r | 46 | (3) |
| Total | 1,290 | 2,170 | 502 | 1,520 | 2,440 | 564 |

^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 |
| 2020: | | | | |
| January–July | 5,770 | 447,000 | 1,520 | 180,000 |
| 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 |
| December | 953 | 88,000 | 225 | 30,200 |
| January–December | 10,400 | 842,000 | 3,240 | 389,000 |
| 2021: | | | | |
| January | 414 | 37,400 | 400 | 53,300 |
| February | 382 | 44,200 | 246 | 39,900 |
| March | 676 | 61,400 | 345 | 56,500 |
| April | 1,380 | 109,000 | 482 | 82,700 |
| May | 1,290 | 109,000 | 95 | 19,300 |
| June | 1,620 | 138,000 | 302 | 58,700 |
| July | 1,300 | 132,000 | 564 | 123,000 |
| January–July | 7,060 | 631,000 | 2,440 | 433,000 |

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.