

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN MAY 2022

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

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in May 2022 were estimated to be 4.1 million metric tons (Mt) and 5.4 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 133,000 metric tons (t), a 4% increase from that in April and a 6% decrease from that in May 2021. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 175,000 t, a 13% increase from those in April and a 3% decrease from those in May 2021. Mine stocks were estimated to be 5.6 Mt at the end of May 2022, a 19% decrease from those held at the end of April 2022, and a 44% decrease from those held at the end of May 2021 (fig. 1, table 1).

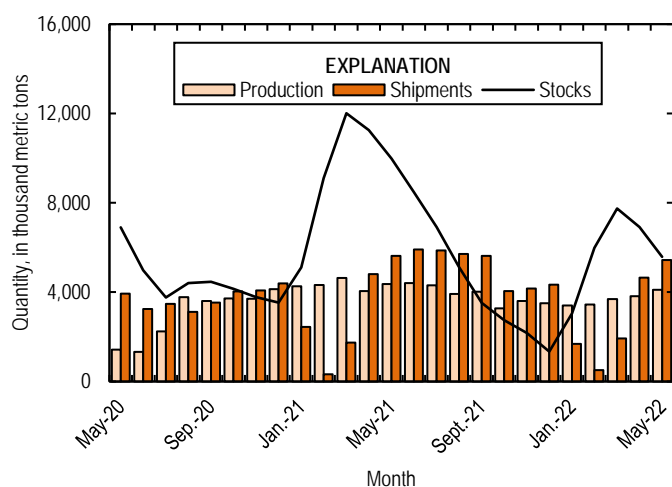


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from May 2020 through May 2022.

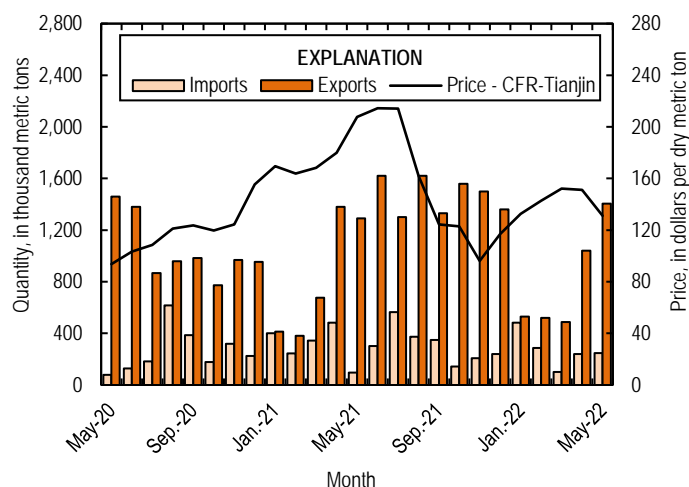


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from May 2020 through May 2022. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and IndexMundi, undated.

U.S. exports of iron ore were 1.4 Mt in May 2022, a 35% increase from those in April and a 9% increase from those in May 2021 (fig. 2, tables 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 248,000 t in May 2022, a 4% increase from those in April and more than double those in May 2021 (fig. 2, tables 4, 6). The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$131.21 per dry metric ton in May 2022, a 13% decrease from \$151.25 per dry metric ton in April 2022 (fig. 2).

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TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE^{1, 2}

(Thousand metric tons, usable ore)

Period	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	End of Month
2021:					
May	4,360	21,600	5,630	14,900	9,980
June	4,400	26,000	5,910	20,900	8,470
July	4,310	30,300	5,870	26,700	6,910
August	3,920	34,300	5,710	32,400	5,120
September	4,020	38,300	5,620	38,100	3,520
October	3,270	41,600	4,050	42,100	2,740
November	3,600	45,200	4,170	46,300	2,170
December	3,510	48,700	4,340	50,600	1,340
2022:					
January	3,400	3,400	1,690	1,690	3,050
February	3,440	6,840	510	2,200	5,980
March	3,690	10,500	1,930	4,130	7,740
April	3,820	14,400	4,650	8,780	6,910
May	4,110	18,500	5,440	14,200	5,580

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

²Data are estimated based on publicly reported data, employment hours, and historical ratios. Excludes 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 ²		Raw steel production	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2021:				
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
August	2,050	15,600	7,520	57,100
September	1,950	17,500	7,150	64,200
October	2,010	19,500	7,380	71,600
November	1,930	21,500	7,100	78,700
December	1,940	23,400	7,100	85,800
2022:				
January	1,740	1,740	6,970	6,970
February	1,640	3,380	6,370	13,300
March	1,820	5,200	6,870	20,200
April	1,840	7,040	6,950	27,200
May	1,850	8,890	7,120	34,300

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

²Pig iron data are estimated based on historical ratios.

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute, U.S. Geological Survey estimates.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY AND TYPE ^{1,2}

Country or locality and type of product	2021	2022				
	January–May	May		January–May		
	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)
Austria	36	47	5,690	83	9,930	119.66
Canada	1,870	882	83,700	2,090	189,000	90.77
China	629 ^r	154	23,600	604	76,200	120.11
France	--	77	4,850	77	4,850	63.00
Japan	447 ^r	126	2,810	363	9,110	25.09
Norway	--	10	1,200	10	1,200	120.00
Spain	181	59	3,700	261	17,000	65.20
United Kingdom	162	51	1,770	100	3,500	34.97
Other	833 ^r	(4)	139	407	62,800	154.31
Total	4,160 ^r	1,410	127,000	3,990	374,000	93.69
Concentrates	666 ^r	205	31,000	822	130,000	158.35
Fine ores	(4)	(4)	26	1	283	283.00
Pellets	3,260 ^r	1,150	94,700	3,030	239,000	78.79
Other	239 ^r	51	1,770	139	4,920	35.40
Total	4,160 ^r	1,410	127,000	3,990	374,000	93.69

^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}

Country or locality of origin and type of product	2021	2022				
	January–May	May		January–May		
	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	1,010	159	33,200	713	145,000	203.03
Canada	256	81	12,900	391	83,700	214.00
Netherlands	1	7	1,400	7	1,550	221.57
Other	303 [†]	(4)	50	245	48,700	198.60
Total	1,570	248	47,500	1,360	279,000	205.34
Concentrates	36	--	--	61	6,680	109.51
Fine Ores	105	7	1,450	35	6,810	194.69
Pellets	1,420	241	46,000	1,260	265,000	210.28
Other	10	--	--	1	201	201.00
Total	1,570	248	47,500	1,360	279,000	205.34

[†]Revised. -- 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}

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	Pellets			Total, all products		
	January–May		May 2022	January–May		May 2022
	2021	2022		2021	2022	
Charleston, SC (16)	--	--	--	(3)	7	7
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	60	43	5	70	43	5
New Orleans, LA (20)	1,360	1,220	236	1,450	1,310	236
Other	--	--	--	46	2	(3)
Total	1,420	1,260	241	1,570	1,360	248

-- 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
2021:				
January–May	4,160 ^r	361,000	1,570	252,000
May	1,290	109,000	95	19,300
June	1,620	138,000	302	58,700
July	1,300	132,000	564	123,000
August	1,620	152,000	374	91,800
September	1,330	139,000	348	91,600
October	1,560	138,000	142	31,800
November	1,500	114,000	207	45,900
December	1,360	115,000	239	55,700
January–December	14,400	1,290,000	3,740	750,000
2022:				
January	531	48,200	484	112,000
February	521	66,800	286	58,100
March	489	45,900	101	19,800
April	1,040	85,600	239	41,500
May	1,410	127,000	248	47,500
January–May	3,990	374,000	1,360	279,000

^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.