

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2020

U.S. mine and plant production data for 14 selected mineral commodities are provided monthly (or quarterly) by the U.S. Geological Survey to the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System (FRS), for use in preparing its index of industrial production and the related capacity indexes and capacity utilization rates. These measures cover manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities, and they are among the key economic indicators monitored by the FRS for guidance in determining national monetary policy.

### Construction Materials

The combined production of construction-related mineral commodities (cement, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum) in the first quarter of 2020 decreased by 22% compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2019, although the combined production of construction-related materials was 3% higher than that in the first quarter of 2019 (tables 1, 2). Production of cement was 6% higher, construction sand and gravel was 6% higher, crushed stone was slightly higher, and gypsum was 3% higher in the first quarter of 2020 as compared with the first quarter of 2019 (fig. 1, table 1).

### Base Metals

Production of most selected base metals, except copper, increased in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2019 (fig. 2, table 1). Copper production was 22% lower in the first quarter of 2020 than that in the fourth quarter of 2019 and was 23% lower than that in the first quarter of 2019. Secondary aluminum production was slightly higher in the first quarter of 2020 than that in the fourth quarter of 2019 and in the first quarter of 2019. Zinc production was 5% higher in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that of the fourth quarter of 2019 and was 15% higher in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that of the first quarter of 2019. Lead production was 15% higher in the first quarter of 2020 than that in the fourth quarter of 2019 and 13% higher than that in the first

quarter of 2019. Iron ore production increased by 5% in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2019 and was 8% higher than that in the first quarter of 2019 (fig. 2, table 1).

### Precious Metals

During the first quarter of 2020, gold production decreased slightly and silver production increased slightly compared with production in the fourth quarter of 2019. Gold and silver production in the first quarter of 2020 were essentially unchanged and 6% higher, respectively, than production in the first quarter of 2019 (fig. 3, table 1).

### Other Mineral Materials

In the first quarter of 2020, production of molybdenum increased, but phosphate rock and soda ash production decreased compared with those in the fourth quarter of 2019. Molybdenum production was 14% higher in the first quarter of 2020 than that in the fourth quarter of 2019 and 29% higher than that in the first quarter of 2019. Phosphate rock production was 5% lower in the first quarter of 2020 than that in the fourth quarter of 2019 but was 6% higher than that in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that of the fourth quarter of 2019 but was slightly higher in the first quarter of 2020 compared with that of the first quarter of 2019 (table 1).

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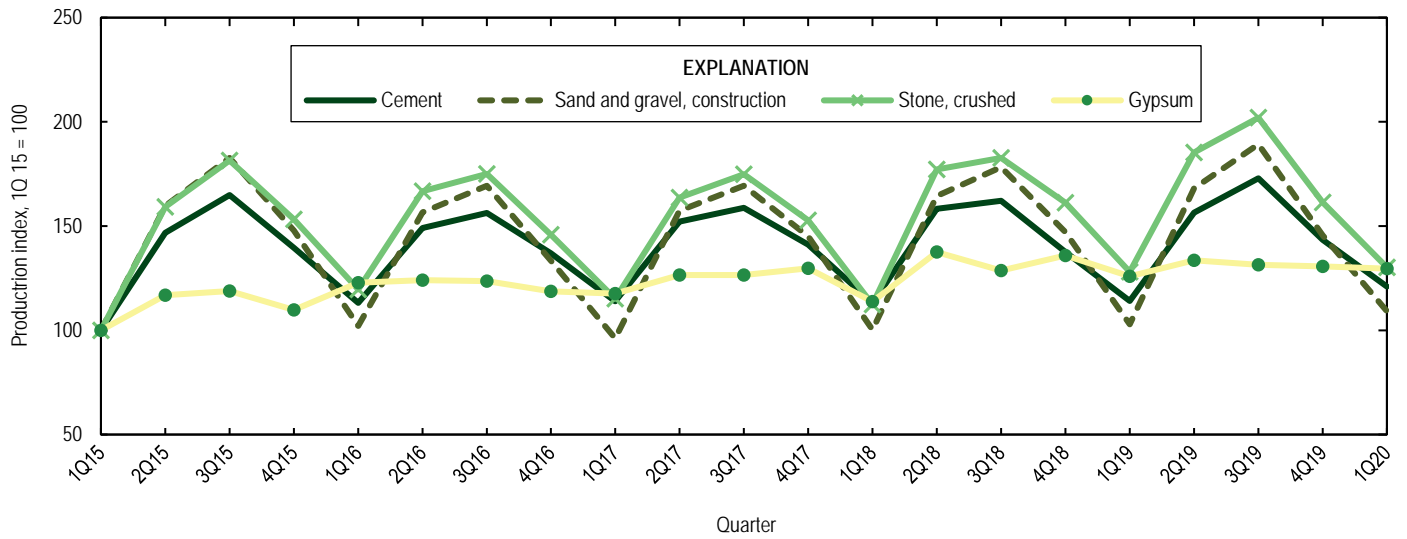


Figure 1. U.S. production of selected construction-related mineral commodities from the first quarter of 2015 through the first quarter of 2020, indexed to the first quarter of 2015.

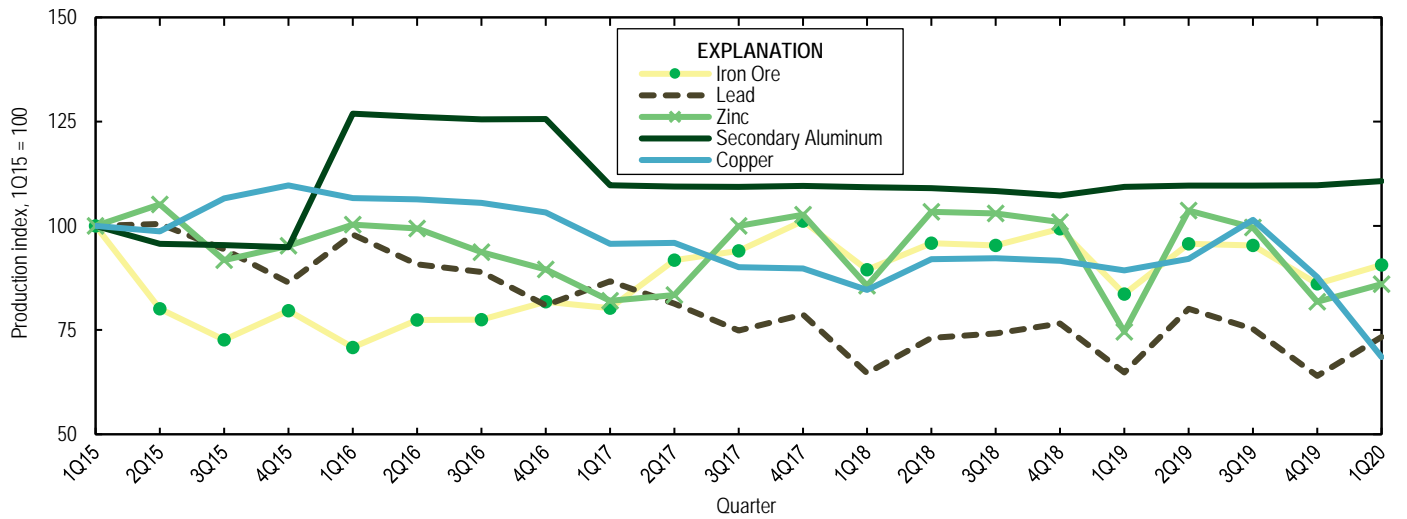


Figure 2. U.S. production of selected base metals from the first quarter of 2015 through the first quarter of 2020, indexed to the first quarter of 2015.

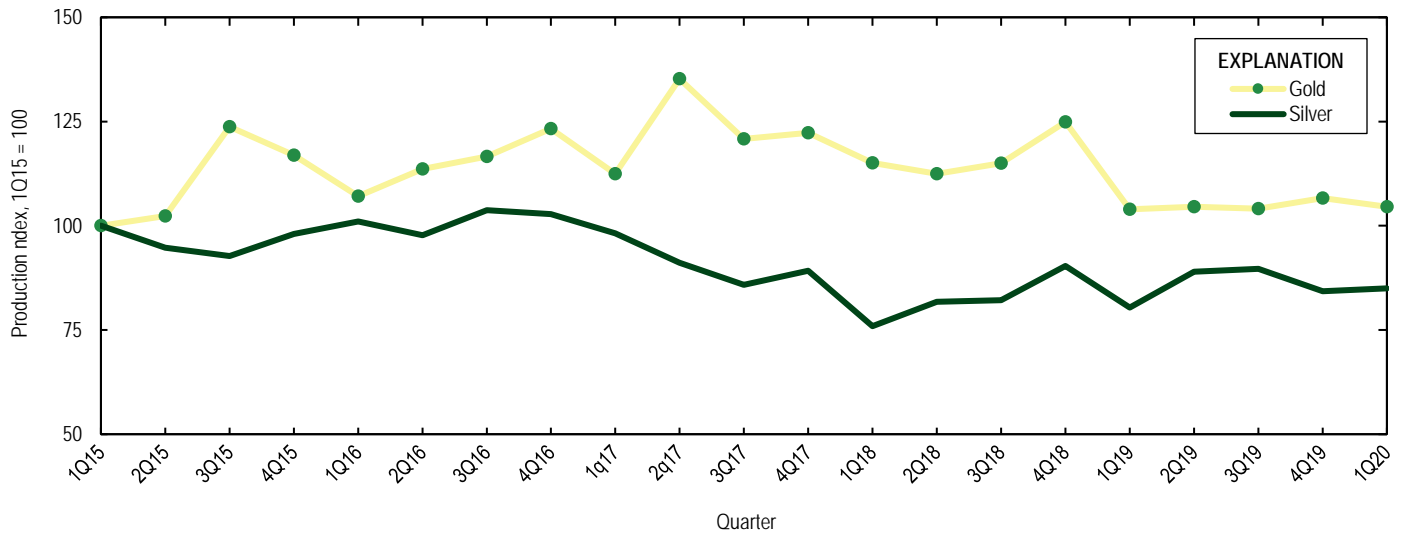


Figure 3. U.S. mine production of gold and silver from the first quarter of 2015 through the first quarter of 2020, indexed to the first quarter of 2015.

TABLE 1  
 PRODUCTION TRENDS FOR SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES<sup>1</sup>

Mineral commodity	Percent change, 1st quarter 2020 vs. 4th quarter 2019	Percent change, 1st quarter 2020 vs. 1st quarter 2019
Aluminum (secondary)	1	1
Cement	-16	6
Copper	-22	-23
Gold	-2	(2)
Gypsum	-1	3
Iron ore	5	8
Lead	15	13
Molybdenum	14	29
Phosphate rock	-5	6
Sand and gravel, construction	-25	6
Silver	1	6
Soda ash	-4	2
Stone, crushed	-19	2
Zinc	5	15

-- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Based on data available through June 1, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Less than 0.5 percent.

TABLE 2  
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER<sup>1,2</sup>

Commodity		2019					2020 1st quarter	1st quarter	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter		2019	2020
Aluminum <sup>e,3</sup>	thousand metric tons	209	210	210	210	838	212	209	212
Cement <sup>4</sup>	million metric tons	17.0	23.3	25.7	21.3	87.3	18.0	17.0	18.0
Copper <sup>5</sup>	thousand metric tons	303	312	344	297 <sup>f</sup>	1,260 <sup>f</sup>	232	303	232
Gold <sup>3</sup>	metric tons	50.2	50.4	50.2	51.4	202	50.4	50.2	50.4
Gypsum <sup>6</sup>	million metric tons	4.2	4.5	4.4	4.4	17.5	4.4	4.2	4.4
Iron ore <sup>7</sup>	do.	10.8	12.4	12.4	11.2	46.8	11.8	10.8	11.8
Lead <sup>8</sup>	thousand metric tons	60.7	75.1	70.6	60.0	266	68.8	60.7	68.8
Molybdenum <sup>5</sup>	do.	10.3 <sup>f</sup>	11.4 <sup>f</sup>	9.5 <sup>f</sup>	11.7 <sup>f</sup>	42.9 <sup>f</sup>	13.3	10.3 <sup>f</sup>	13.3
Phosphate rock, marketable	million metric tons	5.4 <sup>f</sup>	6.0	6.0	6.0	23.3	5.7	5.4 <sup>f</sup>	5.7
Sand and gravel, construction <sup>8</sup>	do.	163 <sup>f</sup>	267	301 <sup>f</sup>	231 <sup>f</sup>	962 <sup>f</sup>	173	163 <sup>f</sup>	173
Silver <sup>5</sup>	metric tons	227	252	254	238	971	240	227	240
Soda ash <sup>3</sup>	million metric tons	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0 <sup>f</sup>	11.7	2.9 <sup>e</sup>	2.9	2.9 <sup>e</sup>
Stone, crushed <sup>8</sup>	do.	286 <sup>f</sup>	414 <sup>f</sup>	451 <sup>f</sup>	360	1,510	291	286 <sup>f</sup>	291
Zinc <sup>5</sup>	thousand metric tons	152	211	203	166 <sup>f</sup>	731 <sup>f</sup>	175	152	175

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>f</sup>Revised. do. Ditto.

<sup>1</sup>Based on data available through June 1, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>3</sup>Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States, less primary aluminum consumed, primary silicon consumed, and other alloying ingredients consumed.

<sup>4</sup>Shipments of domestically produced portland and blended cement, including cement made from imported clinker, as a proxy for actual domestic cement production.

<sup>5</sup>Recoverable mine production.

<sup>6</sup>Calcined production.

<sup>7</sup>Mine production.

<sup>8</sup>Sold or used; quarterly survey based on sample survey. Includes all 50 States.