

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN SEPTEMBER 2009

U.S. natural soda ash production in September 2009 was 814,000 metric tons (t), 2% lower than the previous month's production of 827,000 t, and 13% lower than that of September 2008 according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Ending inventories for September 2009 were 204,000 t, 6% lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in September was 1,250,000 t. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in August 2009 was 443,000 t, 13% lower than that of August 2008, and ending stocks were 3% lower.

Exports and imports of soda ash in August 2009 were 388,000 t and 307 t, respectively.

The trends in soda ash statistics for August 2009, compared with those of August 2008, were as follows: production was 15% lower; imports were 71% lower; exports were 6% lower; and apparent consumption, 13% lower. Global economic problems have reduced world soda ash consumption, which in turn has reduced U.S. soda ash exports. To avoid an oversupply of soda ash inventories, domestic soda ash production has been cut back intentionally, but is expected to begin to increase because the export market is forecast to improve in the next few months.

All percentages in this report were computed using unrounded data.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

| Period | Soda ash | | Wyoming trona production |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Production ² | Ending stocks | |
| 2008: | | | |
| January-September | 8,390 ^r | XX | 13,200 ^r |
| August | 976 | 222 | 1,630 |
| September | 935 | 265 | 1,490 |
| October | 996 | 247 | 1,560 |
| November | 965 | 262 | 1,530 |
| December | 917 | 259 | 1,510 |
| January-December | 11,300 | XX | 17,800 |
| 2009: | | | |
| January | 806 | 258 | 1,160 |
| February | 670 | 273 | 2,020 |
| March | 732 | 280 | 983 |
| April | 664 | 239 | 1,080 |
| May | 780 | 271 | 1,180 |
| June | 731 | 249 | 1,140 |
| July | 794 | 219 | 971 |
| August | 827 | 216 | 1,220 |
| September | 814 | 204 | 1,250 |
| January-September | 6,820 | XX | 11,000 |

^rRevised. XX Not applicable.

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

²Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2009^{1, 2}

| Country | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | | | Year to date | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|---------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|---|
| | | | | | | | | Quantity (metric tons) | Value ³ (thousand dollars) | Unit Value | Quantity (metric tons) | % of total | Value ³ (thousand dollars) |
| Argentina | -- | 17,800 | -- | -- | 13,000 | -- | -- | 11,500 | \$2,680 | \$234 | 42,300 | 2 | \$11,200 |
| Australia | 7,000 | 7,000 | 10,600 | -- | 7,030 | 7,000 | -- | 7,000 | 1,260 | 180 | 45,600 | 2 | 10,400 |
| Belgium | 47,600 | 32,400 | 9,200 | 23,000 | 10,800 | 35,200 | -- | 6,000 | 960 | 160 | 164,000 | 6 | 27,300 |
| Brazil | 50,200 | 28,200 | 35,000 | 41,200 | 40,000 | 29,200 | 46,000 | 48,100 | 9,270 | 193 | 318,000 | 12 | 66,800 |
| Canada | 21,800 | 21,100 | 25,800 | 17,700 | 19,600 | 21,100 | 24,400 | 23,600 | 4,970 | 211 | 175,000 | 7 | 35,900 |
| Chile | 19,800 | 10,000 | 14,300 | 15,800 | 8,100 | 15,200 | 13,500 | -- | -- | -- | 96,700 | 4 | 20,500 |
| China | -- | -- | -- | -- | 10,000 | 11,500 | 10,000 | -- | -- | -- | 31,500 | 1 | 2,070 |
| Colombia | 19,500 | 6,770 | 8,100 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 11,500 | 2,850 | 248 | 45,900 | 2 | 10,200 |
| Costa Rica | 4,500 | 4,920 | -- | -- | 4,500 | -- | 3,150 | -- | -- | -- | 17,100 | 1 | 4,650 |
| Ecuador | -- | 5,770 | -- | -- | -- | 5,070 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 10,800 | (4) | 3,130 |
| Egypt | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 5,680 | 605 | 107 | 5,680 | (4) | 605 |
| France | 15,000 | -- | -- | 14,900 | -- | -- | 10,000 | 5,000 | 528 | 106 | 44,900 | 2 | 6,760 |
| Guatemala | -- | -- | 2,500 | -- | -- | -- | 2,850 | -- | -- | -- | 5,350 | (4) | 1,380 |
| India | -- | -- | -- | -- | 620 | 1,240 | 620 | 620 | 132 | 213 | 3,100 | (4) | 660 |
| Indonesia | 9,600 | -- | 20,500 | -- | 31,100 | 23,100 | 13,000 | 49,500 | 9,160 | 185 | 147,000 | 5 | 25,500 |
| Japan | 6,000 | 20,500 | 19,500 | -- | 38,400 | -- | 4,000 | 31,600 | 16,900 | 535 | 120,000 | 4 | 27,400 |
| Korea, Republic of | 16,000 | 13,100 | 100 | 20,100 | 100 | 19,500 | 15,000 | 11,100 | 2,140 | 193 | 95,000 | 4 | 18,500 |
| Lithuania | -- | -- | -- | -- | 36,400 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 36,400 | 1 | 5,180 |
| Malaysia | -- | -- | 4,000 | -- | 8,000 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 12,000 | (4) | 2,600 |
| Mexico | 57,000 | 56,300 | 67,000 | 63,000 | 60,200 | 57,800 | 70,800 | 59,700 | 13,800 | 231 | 492,000 | 18 | 110,000 |
| Netherlands | 23,800 | 11,100 | 20,200 | 17,500 | -- | 10,700 | 19,900 | 17,000 | 2,740 | 161 | 120,000 | 4 | 21,300 |
| New Zealand | -- | 7,000 | 6,000 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 13,000 | (4) | 2,870 |
| Panama | 2,110 | -- | -- | 2,540 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 4,650 | (4) | 1,350 |
| Peru | 8,550 | -- | -- | 4,500 | 5,770 | -- | 7,500 | -- | -- | -- | 26,300 | 1 | 5,970 |
| Philippines | 5,000 | -- | 14,100 | -- | 5,000 | -- | -- | 5,000 | 788 | 158 | 29,100 | 1 | 4,510 |
| Portugal | 13,500 | 6,000 | -- | 11,000 | -- | -- | 12,000 | -- | -- | -- | 42,500 | 2 | 5,250 |
| Saudi Arabia | 17,500 | -- | 13,700 | 15,000 | -- | -- | 10,500 | 20,500 | 2,960 | 145 | 77,200 | 3 | 14,600 |
| Singapore | -- | 185 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 128 | 149 | 16 | 107 | 462 | (4) | 51 |
| South Africa | 22,500 | 6,460 | -- | -- | -- | 16,600 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 45,600 | 2 | 8,960 |
| Spain | 28,200 | -- | 28,700 | 5,500 | -- | 13,600 | -- | 6,150 | 786 | 128 | 82,300 | 3 | 13,100 |
| Taiwan | 14,500 | -- | 12,500 | 8,550 | 10,500 | -- | 16,600 | 20,000 | 3,910 | 196 | 82,600 | 3 | 12,900 |
| Thailand | -- | 17,500 | -- | -- | 20,600 | 21,000 | -- | 24,500 | 4,660 | 190 | 83,500 | 3 | 16,800 |
| United Arab Emirates | 7,520 | -- | 11,500 | 3,500 | -- | -- | 14,500 | 7,500 | 1,230 | 164 | 44,600 | 2 | 9,350 |
| Venezuela | 4,000 | 12,400 | 6,000 | 30,900 | -- | 3,500 | 31,300 | 16,600 | 3,840 | 231 | 105,000 | 4 | 25,400 |
| Vietnam | -- | -- | -- | -- | 6,000 | -- | 24 | 24 | 3 | 125 | 6,020 | (4) | 821 |
| Other (8 countries) | 1,980 ^r | 2,030 ^r | 113 ^r | -- | 17 | 844 ^r | 5,000 ^r | 10 | 4 | 400 | 10,000 | (4) | 2,270 |
| Total | 423,000 | 287,000 | 329,000 | 295,000 | 336,000 | 292,000 | 331,000 | 388,000 | 86,200 | 222 | 2,680,000 | 99 | 536,000 |

-- Zero.

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

²September 2009 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH^{1,2}

| Period | Quantity (metric tons) | Value ³ (thousands) |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2008: | | |
| January-August | 8,490 | \$2,240 |
| August | 1,070 | 407 |
| September | 658 | 282 |
| October | 1,410 | 530 |
| November | 615 | 211 |
| December | 1,730 | 553 |
| January-December | 12,900 | 3,820 |
| 2009: | | |
| January | 169 | 108 |
| February | 495 | 241 |
| March | 666 | 238 |
| April | 513 | 214 |
| May | 482 | 170 |
| June | 200 | 129 |
| July | 309 | 156 |
| August | 307 | 182 |
| January-August | 3,140 | 1,440 |

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

²September 2009 data were not available at time of publication.

³Cost, insurance, and freight value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

| Period | Production | Imports | Exports | Net stock | | Apparent consumption ² |
|------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | Increase | Decrease | |
| 2008: | | | | | | |
| January-August | 7,460,000 [†] | 8,490 | 3,500,000 | 15,800 | -- | 3,950,000 [†] |
| August | 976,000 | 1,070 | 414,000 | 52,600 | -- | 511,000 |
| September | 935,000 | 658 | 417,000 | 43,200 | -- | 475,000 |
| October | 996,000 | 1,410 | 468,000 | -- | 18,000 | 547,000 |
| November | 965,000 | 615 | 525,000 | 15,000 | -- | 426,000 |
| December | 917,000 | 1,730 | 455,000 | -- | 2,750 | 466,000 |
| January-December | 11,300,000 | 12,900 | 5,370,000 | 53,200 | -- | 5,860,000 |
| 2009: | | | | | | |
| January | 806,000 | 169 | 423,000 | -- | 1,160 | 384,000 |
| February | 670,000 | 495 | 287,000 | 14,900 | -- | 369,000 |
| March | 732,000 | 666 | 329,000 | 6,750 | -- | 397,000 |
| April | 664,000 | 513 | 295,000 | -- | 40,400 | 411,000 |
| May | 780,000 | 482 | 336,000 | 31,700 | -- | 413,000 |
| June | 731,000 | 200 | 292,000 | -- | 22,300 | 462,000 |
| July | 794,000 | 309 | 331,000 | -- | 30,100 | 494,000 |
| August | 827,000 | 307 | 388,000 | -- | 3,050 | 443,000 |
| September | 814,000 | NA | NA | -- | 11,600 | NA |
| January-August | 6,010,000 | 3,140 | 2,680,000 | -- | 43,700 | 3,370,000 |

[†]Revised. NA Not available. -- Zero.

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

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.