

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN APRIL 2009

U.S. natural soda ash production in April was 664,000 metric tons (t), 9% lower than the previous month's production of 732,000 t, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The continued downturn in production was because of poor economic conditions affecting domestic and export sales.

Ending inventories for April 2009 were 239,000 t, 15% lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in April was 1,080,000 t. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in March 2009 was 397,000 t, 24% lower than that of March 2008, and ending stocks were 44% higher.

Exports and imports of soda ash in March 2009 were 329,000 t and 666 t, respectively.

The trends in soda ash statistics for March 2009, compared with those of March 2008, were as follows: production was 23% lower; imports were 45% lower; exports were 23% lower; and apparent consumption, 24% lower.

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-April	3,650	XX	5,920
April	890	164	1,530
May	987	210	1,490
June	935	211	1,480
July	912	169	1,200
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
January-April	2,870	XX	5,240

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			Year to date		
			Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit Value	Quantity (metric tons)	% of total	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	--	17,800	--	--	--	17,800	2	\$4,720
Australia	7,000	7,000	10,600	\$2,410	\$228	24,600	2	5,890
Belgium	47,600	32,400	9,200	1,900	206	89,200	9	16,200
Brazil	50,200	28,200	35,000	6,420	183	113,000	11	22,000
Cameroon	--	--	60	20	333	60	(4)	20
Canada	21,800	21,100	25,800	5,220	203	68,700	7	13,400
Chile	19,800	10,000	14,300	3,130	219	44,100	4	9,520
Colombia	19,500	6,770	8,100	1,440	178	34,400	3	7,320
Costa Rica	4,500	4,920	--	--	--	9,420	1	2,500
Dominican Republic	1,980	2,000	--	--	--	3,980	(4)	1,160
Ecuador	--	5,770	--	--	--	5,770	1	1,710
France	15,000	--	--	--	--	15,000	1	2,480
Germany	--	--	39	21	538	39	(4)	21
Guatemala	--	--	2,500	728	291	2,500	(4)	728
Indonesia	9,600	--	20,500	3,730	182	30,100	3	5,810
Japan	6,000	20,500	19,500	2,240	115	46,000	4	5,720
Korea, Republic of	16,000	13,100	100	46	460	29,200	3	6,120
Malaysia	--	--	4,000	957	239	4,000	(4)	957
Mexico	57,000	56,300	67,000	14,400	214	180,000	17	38,500
Netherlands	23,800	11,100	20,200	4,170	207	55,100	5	11,000
New Zealand	--	7,000	6,000	1,580	263	13,000	1	2,870
Panama	2,110	--	--	--	--	2,110	(4)	632
Peru	8,550	--	--	--	--	8,550	1	1,870
Philippines	5,000	--	14,100	2,270	162	19,100	2	2,950
Portugal	13,500	6,000	--	--	--	19,500	2	2,830
Saudi Arabia	17,500	--	13,700	4,540	331	31,200	3	6,840
Singapore	--	185	--	--	--	185	(4)	20
South Africa	22,500	6,460	--	--	--	28,900	3	6,480
Spain	28,200	--	28,700	4,990	174	57,000	5	9,640
Taiwan	14,500	--	12,500	1,910	153	27,000	3	3,700
Thailand	--	17,500	--	--	--	17,500	2	3,580
Turkey	--	25	--	--	--	25	(4)	17
United Arab Emirates	7,520	--	11,500	3,950	342	19,100	2	4,940
Venezuela	4,000	12,400	6,000	1,530	256	22,400	2	5,530
Other	--	--	14	15	1,070	14	(4)	15
Total	423,000	287,000	329,000	67,600	205	1,040,000	100	208,000

-- Zero.

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

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

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

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

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

Period	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)
2008:		
January-March	3,850	\$751
March	1,210	222
April	895	204
May	906	308
June	1,130	360
July	632	214
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
January-March	1,330	586

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

²April 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-April	3,650,000	4,750	1,760,000	--	42,100	1,930,000
March	955,000	1,210	429,000	3,820	--	524,000
April	890,000	895	430,000	--	30,300	492,000
May	987,000	906	383,000	45,600	--	559,000
June	935,000	1,130	531,000	1,550	--	405,000
July	912,000	632	417,000	--	41,900	538,000
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	NA	NA	--	40,400	NA
January-March	2,210,000	1,330	1,040,000	20,500	--	1,150,000

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.