

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN APRIL 2012

U.S. natural soda ash production in April was 861,000 metric tons (t), 11% lower than the previous month's production of 964,000 t.

Ending inventories for April 2012 were 298,000 t, 6% lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in April 2012 was 1.38 Mt.

Exports and imports of soda ash in March 2012 were 602,000 t, which was a record high, and 1,730 t, respectively.

The changes in soda ash statistics for March 2012, compared with those of March 2011, were as follows: production was 7% higher; imports were about 123% higher; exports were 28% higher; and apparent consumption was 18% lower. Imports fluctuate widely and are insignificant relative to exports.

All percentages in this report were computed using unrounded data.

TABLE 1  
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production <sup>2</sup>	Stocks, end of period	
2011:			
January–April	3,430 <sup>r</sup>	182 <sup>r</sup>	5,670
April	824	182	1,270
May	881	205	1,290
June	899	204	1,370
July	918	269	1,130
August	970	275	1,450
September	849	267	1,300
October	941	279	1,480
November	864	256	1,360
December	975	282	1,420
January–December	10,700	282	16,500
2012:			
January	929	341	1,520
February	833	306	1,410
March	964	317	1,560
April	861	298	1,380
January–April	3,590	298	5,880

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production 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 2012<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	Quantity	March	Unit value	January–March		
				Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)		Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	--	--	21,500	3,920	\$182	21,500	1	3,920
Australia	12,300	14,500	5,800	1,360	235	32,600	2	7,110
Belgium	13,800	11,100	12,000	1,440	120	36,900	3	4,810
Brazil	36,900	46,500	98,900	21,300	215	182,000	12	36,800
Canada	24,600	24,300	25,200	4,880	193	74,100	5	14,300
Chile	52,000	9,990	41,300	8,860	215	103,000	7	22,700
Colombia	6,710	11,000	10,200	1,720	169	27,900	2	5,130
France	15,200	--	--	--	--	15,200	1	2,290
India	--	--	22,000	3,670	167	22,000	2	3,670
Indonesia	17,000	74,500	16,500	3,660	222	108,000	7	23,600
Japan	31,600	13,400	19,100	3,870	203	64,100	4	12,000
Korea, Republic of	15,000	29,700	24,500	7,080	289	69,200	5	16,700
Lithuania	15,100	--	--	--	--	15,100	1	1,230
Mexico	81,700	86,800	101,000	22,600	224	269,000	18	61,400
Netherlands	22,700	14,300	26,500	4,590	173	63,500	4	11,000
New Zealand	--	--	14,500	3,310	229	14,500	1	3,310
Peru	3,840	17,100	7,500	1,650	220	28,400	2	6,100
Philippines	--	8,500	--	--	--	8,500	1	1,860
Portugal	5,500	--	5,000	788	158	10,500	1	1,640
Saudi Arabia	--	15,000	18,000	3,720	207	33,000	2	6,820
South Africa	15,000	--	14,000	1,900	136	29,000	2	3,970
Spain	10,200	--	16,000	2,750	172	26,200	2	4,280
Taiwan	15,700	68	28,800	6,430	223	44,500	3	9,730
Thailand	21,000	--	404	108	267	21,400	1	4,710
Tunisia	25,100	--	12,200	2,090	171	37,300	3	6,420
United Arab Emirates	--	10,800	7,000	1,450	207	17,800	1	3,680
Venezuela	4,810	--	37,600	10,200	271	42,400	3	11,200
Other	8,210 <sup>r</sup>	15,000 <sup>r</sup>	16,900	3,620	215	40,100	3	8,820
Total	454,000	403,000	602,000	127,000	211	1,460,000	100	299,000

<sup>r</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>April 2012 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2012<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	Quantity	March	Unit value	January–March		
				Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)		Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Canada <sup>4</sup>	(5)	1	425	46	\$108	426	12	69
China	--	--	229	97	424	229	7	97
Dominican Republic <sup>4</sup>	--	225	252	36	143	477	14	74
France	208	1	1	11	11,000	211	6	49
Germany	1	210	3	28	9,330	213	6	86
Greece <sup>4</sup>	60	--	--	--	--	60	2	23
Italy	701	54	760	163	214	1,520	44	345
Korea, Republic of	--	--	4	3	750	4	(5)	3
Mexico	19	19	--	--	--	38	1	12
Poland	22	22	--	--	--	44	1	18
United Kingdom	108	90	57	43	754	255	7	148
Total	1,120	622	1,730	427	247	3,470	100	924

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>April 2012 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

<sup>4</sup>Not a soda-ash-producing country, material transshipped or possible erroneous data, according to the Journal of Commerce PIERS trade data.

<sup>5</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Imports	Exports	Net stock		Apparent consumption <sup>2</sup>
				Increase	Decrease	
2011:						
January–December	10,700,000	26,900	5,470,000	61,800	--	5,220,000
January–March	2,600,000	1,320	1,270,000	--	8,250	1,340,000
March	904,000	777	469,000	4,150	--	431,000
April	824,000	1,130	433,000	--	30,400	422,000
May	881,000	815	369,000	23,600	--	490,000
June	899,000	2,760	511,000	--	1,630	392,000
July	918,000	4,070	420,000	65,200	--	437,000
August	970,000	4,150	464,000	6,510	--	504,000
September	849,000	6,410	478,000	--	8,350	386,000
October	941,000	3,570	502,000	11,800	--	430,000
November	864,000	1,120	507,000	--	22,800	381,000
December	975,000	1,560	517,000	26,100	--	434,000
2012:						
January–March	2,730,000	3,470	1,460,000	24,000	--	1,250,000
January	929,000	1,120	454,000	58,600	--	418,000
February	833,000	622	403,000	--	34,600	465,000
March	964,000	1,730	602,000	11,100	--	352,000
April	861,000	NA	NA	--	19,100	NA

NA Not available. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.