

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN MAY 2012

U.S. natural soda ash production in May was 833,000 metric tons (t), 3% lower than the previous month's production of 861,000 t.

Ending inventories for May 2012 were 243,000 t, 18% lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in May 2012 was 1.33 Mt.

Exports and imports of soda ash in April 2012 were 473,000 t and 1,460 t, respectively.

The changes in soda ash statistics for April 2012, compared with those of April 2011, were as follows: production was 5% higher; imports were about 29% higher; exports were 9% higher; and apparent consumption was 3% 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 STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2011:			
January–May	4,310	205	6,960
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
May	833	243	1,330
January–May	4,420	243	7,210

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 2012^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	Quantity	April	Unit value	January–April		
					Value ³ (thousand dollars)		Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	--	--	21,500	--	--	--	21,500	1	3,920
Australia	12,300	14,500	5,800	12,000	2,880	240	44,600	2	9,990
Belgium	13,800	11,100	12,000	--	--	--	36,900	2	4,810
Brazil	36,900	46,500	98,900	30,200	6,420	212	213,000	11	43,200
Canada	24,600	24,300	25,200	19,700	3,770	191	93,800	5	18,100
Chile	52,000	9,990	41,300	8,850	1,990	225	112,000	6	24,700
Colombia	6,710	11,000	10,200	29,400	5,010	171	57,300	3	10,100
France	15,200	--	--	16,000	2,390	150	31,200	2	4,680
India	--	--	22,000	--	--	--	22,000	1	3,670
Indonesia	17,000	74,500	16,500	74,500	16,500	222	183,000	9	40,200
Japan	31,600	13,400	19,100	24,900	5,320	214	89,000	5	17,300
Korea, Republic of	15,000	29,700	24,500	11,800	2,670	227	81,000	4	19,400
Lithuania	15,100	--	--	--	--	--	15,100	1	1,230
Mexico	81,700	86,800	101,000	78,700	17,800	226	348,000	18	79,200
Netherlands	22,700	14,300	26,500	23,000	3,330	145	86,500	4	14,400
New Zealand	--	--	14,500	--	--	--	14,500	1	3,310
Peru	3,840	17,100	7,500	5,000	1,250	249	33,400	2	7,350
Philippines	--	8,500	--	11,500	2,590	225	20,000	1	4,450
Portugal	5,500	--	5,000	--	--	--	10,500	1	1,640
Saudi Arabia	--	15,000	18,000	--	--	--	33,000	2	6,820
South Africa	15,000	--	14,000	37,400	5,970	159	66,400	3	9,940
Spain	10,200	--	16,000	7,950	1,610	203	34,200	2	5,900
Taiwan	15,700	68	28,800	26,100	5,600	215	70,600	4	15,300
Thailand	21,000	--	404	22,500	5,050	224	43,900	2	9,750
Tunisia	25,100	--	12,200	--	--	--	37,300	2	6,420
United Arab Emirates	--	10,800	7,000	--	--	--	17,800	1	3,680
Venezuela	4,810	--	37,600	--	--	--	42,400	2	11,200
Other	8,210	15,000	16,900	33,100	6,790	205	73,100	4	15,600
Total	454,000	403,000	602,000	473,000	97,000	205	1,930,000	100	396,000

-- Zero.

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

²May 2012 data were not available at time of publication.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2012^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	Quantity	April		January–April		
					Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Canada ⁴	(5)	1	425	874	97	\$111	1,300	26	166
China	--	--	229	8	8	1,000	237	5	105
Dominican Republic ⁴	--	225	252	--	--	--	477	10	74
France	208	1	1	--	--	--	211	4	49
Germany	1	210	3	(5)	6	15	213	4	93
Greece ⁴	60	--	--	--	--	--	60	1	23
Hong Kong	--	--	--	(5)	3	11	(5)	(5)	3
Italy	701	54	760	36	18	500	1,550	31	363
Japan	--	--	--	346	45	130	346	7	45
Korea, Republic of	--	--	4	--	--	--	4	(5)	3
Mexico	19	19	--	51	16	314	89	2	29
Poland	22	22	--	--	--	--	44	1	18
United Kingdom	108	90	57	145	80	552	400	8	228
Total	1,120	622	1,730	1,460	273	187	4,930	100	1,200

-- Zero.

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

²May 2012 data were not available at time of publication.

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

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

⁵Less than ½ unit.

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	
2011:						
January–December	10,700,000	26,900	5,470,000	61,800	--	5,220,000
January–April	3,430,000	2,450	1,700,000	--	38,600	1,770,000
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–April	3,590,000	4,930	1,930,000	16,000	--	1,640,000
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	1,460	473,000	--	19,100	409,000
May	833,000	NA	NA	--	55,000	NA

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.