

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN NOVEMBER 2016

U.S. natural soda ash production in November was 990,000 metric tons (t), slightly less than the previous month's production but slightly more than that of November 2015 (table 1).

Ending inventories for November 2016 were 365,000 t, 10% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in November 2016 was 1.55 million metric tons, slightly less than that of October 2016 and 3% more than that of November 2015.

Exports of soda ash in October 2016 were 560,000 t, about 22% more than those of October 2015. Imports of soda ash in October 2016 were 1,120 t, about one-third those of October 2015.

Production of natural soda ash in October 2016 was 7% higher and apparent consumption decreased by 18% as compared with those of October 2015. The significant increase in exports and the decrease in imports contributed to the large change in apparent consumption which is not reflected in reported consumption as discussed below.

Table 5 provides reported consumption statistics for the third quarter of 2016. During the third quarter, 629,000 t (48%) went to glassmaking and 361,000 t (29%) was consumed for

chemicals. Total consumption for the third quarter of 2016 was slightly higher than that of the third quarter of 2015.

For the first 9 months of 2016, total reported consumption was up by 3% compared with that of the same period in 2015, based on data submitted by domestic soda ash producers. A review for the period shows a 6% increase in consumption for the overall glass segment with increases reported for container, fiber, and flat glass. Consumption in the chemicals and detergent and soaps segments decreased slightly. In the considerably smaller markets for water treatment, consumption increased by 22%, but soda ash for the pulp and paper category decreased by 24% for the period.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2015:			
January–November	10,600	348	16,200 ^r
November	973	348	1,510
December	952	285	1,450
January–December	11,600	285	17,600
2016:			
January	956	326	1,570
February	909	310	1,460
March	1,010	315	1,240
April	955	301	1,450
May	987	280	1,420
June	989	306	1,380
July	1,060	357	1,470
August	984	314	1,460
September	961	342	1,560
October	995	405	1,560
November	990	365	1,550
January–November	10,800	365	16,100

^rRevised.

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 2016^{1, 2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October			January–October		
										Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	13,100	62	24,000	16,200	22,000	6,660	2,150	--	18,700	17,500	\$3,740	\$214	120,000	2	\$25,500
Australia	--	31,900	--	35,200	35,000	--	--	61,000	--	35,000	6,910	197	198,000	4	37,000
Brazil	92,200	71,700	52,500	112,000	99,900	96,200	76,400	74,900	85,400	88,100	17,400	198	849,000	15	170,000
Canada	17,300	21,900	19,200	21,300	16,300	17,900	15,600	17,600	19,200	16,800	3,250	193	183,000	3	35,100
Chile	9,180	36,200	37,200	25,600	36,200	--	43,200	35,500	38,400	22,500	4,890	217	284,000	5	61,000
China	41	41	35,000	82	34,200	41	--	45	41	30,600	5,170	169	100,000	2	15,200
Colombia	5,000	16,900	--	6,160	18,000	13,700	15,500	19,200	2,030	11,000	1,650	150	107,000	2	20,700
El Salvador	--	6,000	--	--	6,150	--	--	3,000	--	--	--	--	15,100	(4)	3,130
France	5,940	--	9,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	14,900	(4)	2,440
Guatemala	--	6,320	--	5,000	--	6,400	--	--	7,000	--	--	--	24,700	(4)	5,290
Indonesia	52,700	61,500	31,700	59,400	61,100	55,400	61,500	97,700	15,000	27,800	5,240	188	524,000	9	98,500
Japan	30,500	14,100	39,000	19,100	31,500	27,500	--	17,000	31,500	30,500	5,230	171	241,000	4	42,800
Korea, Republic of	24,600	21,600	6,000	29,100	21,500	24,100	13,000	30,100	25	21,900	3,720	170	192,000	3	34,000
Malaysia	16,100	11,000	--	--	9,500	12,000	10,500	10,000	14,000	10,000	1,960	196	93,100	2	18,200
Mexico	96,800	91,900	74,400	102,000	107,000	121,000	94,400	116,000	77,000	88,100	19,300	220	968,000	17	212,000
Netherlands	16,100	--	19,200	80	20,500	30	20,600	20,500	--	10,000	1,460	146	107,000	2	17,000
New Zealand	--	7,000	--	--	--	24	--	7,000	--	--	--	--	14,000	(4)	2,700
Philippines	6,700	12,000	--	11,000	--	--	11,000	--	10,600	--	--	--	51,300	1	9,710
Saudi Arabia	1,210	17,500	18,500	--	15,500	15,000	22,500	23,000	16,000	20,500	3,460	169	150,000	3	25,500
South Africa	12,500	7,480	--	--	7,520	14,900	7,500	9,930	--	19,500	3,290	169	79,300	1	13,400
Taiwan	6,950	26,400	--	19,400	10,000	26,000	18,500	22,500	5,000	17,000	2,950	174	152,000	3	26,400
Thailand	29,000	23,300	37,100	12,000	22,000	18,600	39,200	26,300	27,000	13,800	2,960	214	248,000	4	46,300
United Arab Emirates	15	6,500	12,000	--	6,500	16,000	15,500	5,000	9,000	11,000	1,960	179	81,500	1	13,800
United Kingdom	20,100	20,000	24,000	19,900	26,900	20,000	4,970	26,300	--	35,900	7,330	204	198,000	4	38,300
Venezuela	--	8,890	--	11,300	15,400	--	18,400	4,010	9,370	--	--	--	67,300	1	16,000
Vietnam	26,500	14,400	11,000	32,000	23,800	--	10,800	21,000	13,500	--	--	--	153,000	3	29,700
Other	792	12,700	87,000	476	51,900	36,700	30,100	21,400	53,800	33,000	5,980	181	328,000	6	57,500
Total	483,000	547,000	537,000	537,000	699,000	528,000	531,000	668,000	453,000	560,000	108,000	192	5,540,000	100	1,080,000

-- Zero.

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

²November 2016 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 BY COUNTRY, IN 2016^{1, 2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Quantity	October		January–October		
											Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	7	144	3	21	86	130	21	98	33	--	--	--	544	2	\$173
France	153	--	--	--	--	1	--	166	283	--	--	--	603	2	146
Germany	632	2,080	2,330	1,630	3,030	1,290	2,110	2,940	1,130	171	\$24	\$138	17,400	52	2,570
Italy	--	571	1,370	1,310	190	950	1,330	209	190	568	126	221	6,680	20	1,510
Japan	2	1	--	226	120	3	120	120	--	--	--	--	593	2	95
Taiwan	117	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	117	(4)	17
Turkey	8	95	245	--	8	8	8	65	--	8	6	787	442	1	132
United Kingdom	513	752	705	518	602	270	270	253	396	144	35	243	4,420	13	814
Other	6	22	60	39	235	441	561	598	543	233	94	404	2,740	8	768
Total	1,440	3,670	4,710	3,740	4,270	3,090	4,420	4,450	2,580	1,120	284	253	33,500	100	6,220

--Zero.

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

²November 2016 data were not available at time of publication.

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

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2015:						
January–December	11,600,000	6,400,000	39,900	14,600	--	5,200,000
January–October	9,640,000	5,320,000	35,800	24,600 ^r	--	4,340,000 ^r
October	927,000	458,000	3,350	17,600	--	455,000
November	973,000	507,000	1,800	52,600	--	415,000
December	952,000	571,000	2,280	--	62,700	446,000
2016:						
January–October	9,810,000	5,540,000	33,500	119,000	--	4,180,000
January	956,000	483,000	1,440	40,400	--	434,000
February	909,000	547,000	3,670	--	15,600	381,000
March	1,010,000	537,000	4,710	4,920	--	472,000
April	955,000	537,000	3,740	--	13,900	436,000
May	987,000	699,000	4,270	--	21,100	314,000
June	989,000	528,000	3,090	25,800	--	439,000
July	1,060,000	531,000	4,420	51,300	--	484,000
August	984,000	668,000	4,450	--	42,700	363,000
September	961,000	453,000	2,580	28,100	--	482,000
October	995,000	560,000	1,120	62,200	--	373,000
November	990,000	NA	NA	--	39,800	NA

[†]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.

TABLE 5
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER¹

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2015			2016			
		3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	1st quarter– 3d quarter
3272	Glass:							
327213	Container	294	282	1,140	300	312	306	918
327211	Flat	251	246	970	249	265	252	766
327993	Fiber	39	41	150	41	41	40	121
327212	Other	31	34	134	32	33	31	95
	Total	615	603	2,390	622	650	629	1,900
32518	Chemicals	368	391	1,490	361	361	374	1,100
325611	Soaps and detergents	84	84	328	79	80	78	238
322	Pulp and paper	14	13	59	13	12	10	35
221310	Water treatment ³	17	16	65	18	20	21	60
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	66	51	221	48	49 ^r	59	157
4246	Distributors	73	68	286	76	68	71	215
	Other	30	28	142	43	42	55	139
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,270	1,250	4,990	1,260	1,280	1,300	3,840
	Exports ⁵	1,560	1,590	6,440	1,580	1,690	1,620	4,890
	Canada	57	56	230	54	49	49	153
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,820	2,840	11,400	2,840	2,970 ^r	2,920	8,730
	Total sales from plants	2,900	2,850	11,600	2,850	2,980	2,980	8,810
	Total production	2,890	2,850	11,600	2,870	2,930	3,010	8,810

^rRevised.

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

²North American Industry Classification System.

³Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁴Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁵As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁶Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.