

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JANUARY 2016

U.S. natural soda ash production in January was 956,000 metric tons (t), essentially unchanged from the previous month's production and 5% less than that of January 2015.

Ending inventories for January 2016 were 325,000 t, 14% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in January 2016 was 1.57 million metric tons (Mt), 8% more than that of December 2015 but 20% less than that of January 2015.

Exports and imports of soda ash in December 2015 were 571,000 t and 2,280 t, respectively.

The changes in soda ash statistics for December 2015, compared with those of December 2014, were as follows: production was 6% lower, exports were 7% lower, imports were 18% lower, and apparent consumption was 7% lower. Soda ash import tonnages can differ widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Table 5 provides U.S. consumption statistics of domestically produced soda ash for the fourth quarter of 2015. During the fourth quarter, 603,000 t (48%) went to glassmaking and

391,000 t (31%) was consumed for chemicals. Consumption increased in every glass end use segment except flat glass, which decreased by 5% compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2014. Consumption for chemicals increased slightly and soaps and detergent consumption decreased by 5%. Total consumption decreased by 3% compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2014.

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: ^p			
January	1,010	346	1,980
February	925	365	1,450
March	1,010	361	1,540
April	983	283	1,400
May	920	342	1,440
June	980	292	1,500
July	1,010	307	1,510
August	971	284	1,480
September	915	278	1,460
October	927	295	1,280
November	973	348	1,510
December	952	285	1,450
January–December	11,600	285	18,000
2016, January	956	325	1,570

^pPreliminary.

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 2015^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			January–December		
												Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	--	13,800	--	15,500	15,800	--	13,000	--	41	13,600	--	17,700	\$3,640	\$206	89,400	1	\$18,300
Australia	33,000	27,100	32,500	--	35,100	--	28,500	--	35,000	67,500	--	33,900	6,540	193	293,000	5	58,600
Belgium	15,600	13,600	10,500	3,980	21,100	--	15,100	6,030	13,200	90	5,550	10,600	1,270	120	115,000	2	15,800
Brazil	109,000	86,700	74,100	75,100	103,000	59,500	113,000	91,700	57,900	71,200	112,000	79,800	17,300	217	1,030,000	16	214,000
Canada	20,500	19,700	23,800	21,500	19,500	21,900	24,900	20,200	20,400	21,400	20,700	18,400	3,790	206	253,000	4	52,600
Chile	--	30,200	25,000	33,700	15,200	45,900	21,500	36,900	23,700	10,500	22,000	36,600	7,680	210	301,000	5	64,600
Colombia	--	17,400	14,200	14,000	--	15,300	19,400	7,970	17,400	11,700	9,470	20,100	4,010	200	147,000	2	29,500
France	15,000	--	15,000	28	49	28	--	9,970	--	--	4,940	--	--	--	45,000	1	7,960
Indonesia	76,500	36,000	108,000	55,800	31,500	56,000	58,000	37,000	63,500	17,500	48,500	52,700	11,200	213	641,000	10	135,000
Japan	3,000	51,500	--	25,800	24,000	23,200	34,400	--	32,000	25,700	31,500	4,000	740	185	255,000	4	46,300
Korea, Republic of	15,900	31,100	--	31,500	25	30,400	13,600	17,600	19,500	7,310	19,700	14,800	2,800	189	201,000	3	38,800
Malaysia	7,500	--	16,000	--	6,500	11,000	11,000	5,500	--	22,500	--	--	--	--	80,000	1	16,700
Mexico	83,900	75,300	86,500	81,800	73,700	95,500	98,000	80,200	65,100	66,500	90,900	83,000	20,000	241	980,000	15	231,000
Netherlands	15,300	21,800	12,700	10,000	10,000	81	10,000	10,100	10	--	20,100	100	24	238	110,000	2	18,000
Philippines	10,000	--	8,500	7,500	--	--	8,500	7,000	7,200	--	--	6,000	1,180	197	54,700	1	11,200
Saudi Arabia	15,000	--	16,000	15,000	--	19,000	16,000	16,500	17,500	22,000	14,000	16,000	2,960	185	167,000	3	30,700
South Africa	12,200	--	5,420	7,500	10,300	--	5,040	15,000	19,700	10,600	--	5,040	952	189	90,900	1	17,500
Taiwan	29,100	10,100	15,700	36,700	24,200	10,900	15,500	27,900	12,200	--	21,400	23,000	4,280	186	227,000	4	43,500
Thailand	10,000	13,500	19,500	23,200	27,100	13,500	18,000	26,000	--	28,500	--	11,000	2,330	212	190,000	3	39,600
Tunisia	15,500	--	19,900	--	--	27,000	20,000	--	--	24,900	--	14,200	5,870	413	122,000	2	25,200
United Arab Emirates	13,500	--	9,000	32,000	--	40,700	11,000	8,000	11,300	8,000	14,000	35,000	6,370	182	183,000	3	34,700
United Kingdom	24,600	5,470	22,500	23,500	--	22,000	24,100	24,000	--	--	22,000	22,000	4,060	184	190,000	3	39,400
Venezuela	5,930	21,800	11,900	19,600	12,200	15,200	--	12,500	24,600	--	12,000	14,000	3,270	235	150,000	2	34,900
Vietnam	26,500	--	8,000	24,300	2,500	8,000	6,500	10,600	11,000	--	21,000	6,500	1,250	192	125,000	2	27,100
Other	7,280	29,000	9,890	71,100	15,300	11,700	39,000	43,100	29,900	29,000	18,100	46,500	8,430	181	350,000	5	69,200
Total	565,000	504,000	565,000	629,000	447,000	527,000	624,000	514,000	481,000	458,000	507,000	571,000	120,000	210	6,390,000	100	1,320,000

-- Zero.

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

²January 2016 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 2015^{1, 2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December			January–December		
												Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	--	126	--	--	--	--	--	17	--	--	--	--	--	--	143	(4)	\$26
China	26	236	5	--	5	243	31	71	--	--	--	--	--	--	618	2	208
Germany	1,660	1,870	1,860	1,640	1,790	1,670	3,260	2,010	1,610	1,700	1,470	1,740	\$247	\$142	22,300	56	3,220
India	--	--	--	3	4	1,330	2	--	--	3	--	3	4	1,760	1,340	3	197
Italy	40	494	969	722	457	760	515	77	37	941	--	18	10	572	5,030	13	819
Japan	--	--	154	39	--	2	1	193	--	--	151	--	--	--	539	1	109
Mexico	253	161	97	219	356	180	61	218	80	103	82	99	41	413	1,910	5	699
United Kingdom	498	146	530	735	991	821	826	845	589	892	35	256	50	196	7,160	18	1,210
Other	--	1	9	7	12	20	291	62	17	186	68	160	55	344	831	2	268
Total	2,480	3,030	3,630	3,370	3,610	5,030	4,980	3,490	2,340	3,830	1,800	2,280	407	179	39,800	100	6,760

-- Zero.

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

²January 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	
2014:						
January–December	11,700,000	6,670,000	39,200	--	77,600	5,100,000
December	1,020,000	614,000	2,760	--	75,100	481,000
2015:						
January–December	11,600,000	6,390,000	39,900	14,600	--	5,200,000
January	1,010,000	565,000	2,480	75,600	--	368,000
February	925,000	504,000	3,030	18,700	--	405,000
March	1,010,000	565,000	3,630	--	4,080	452,000
April	983,000	629,000	3,370	--	78,100	435,000
May	920,000	447,000	3,610	59,500	--	418,000
June	980,000	527,000	5,030	--	50,500	509,000
July	1,010,000	624,000	4,980	15,200	--	372,000
August	971,000	514,000	3,490	--	22,400	483,000
September	915,000	481,000	2,340	--	6,790	443,000
October	927,000	458,000	3,830	17,600	--	456,000
November	973,000	507,000	1,800	52,600	--	415,000
December	952,000	571,000	2,280	--	62,700	446,000
2016, January	956,000	NA	NA	40,300	--	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.

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

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2014		2015				
		4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter
3272	Glass:							
327213	Container	276	1,150	265	296	294	282	1,140
327211	Flat	258	978	225	248	251	246	970
327993	Fiber	36	151	34	36	39	41	150
327212	Other	34	131	34	35	31	34	134
	Total	604	2,410	558	616	615	603	2,390
32518	Chemicals	386	1,540	351	382	368	391	1,490
325611	Soaps and detergents	88	352	83	77	84	84	328
322	Pulp and paper	15	64	15	17	14	13	59
221310	Water treatment ³	13	55	17	15	17	16	65
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	55	231	49	55	66	51	221
422	Distributors	68	284	74	71	73	68	286
	Other	65	228	44	40	30	28	142
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,290	5,170	1,190	1,270	1,270	1,250	4,990
	Exports ⁵	1,790	6,550	1,640	1,660	1,560	1,590	6,440
	Canada	56	229	58	59	57	56	230
	Total industry sales ⁶	3,090	11,700	2,830	2,930	2,820	2,840	11,400
	Total sales from plants	3,050	11,900	2,870	2,940	2,900	2,850	11,600
	Total production	3,000	11,700	2,940	2,880	2,890	2,850	11,600

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 powerplants 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.