

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN DECEMBER 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in December was 1.1 million metric tons (Mt), 9% more than the previous month's production and 8% more than that of December 2016 (table 1). For 2017, total production of soda ash of 12 Mt was slightly more than that of 2016 and represents the highest production ever recorded in the United States.

Ending inventories for December 2017 were 293,000 metric tons (t), 13% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in December 2017 was 1.7 Mt, 22% more than that of November 2017 and 5% more than that of December 2016.

Exports of soda ash in November 2017 were 612,000 t, 4% more than those of October 2017 and 12% more than those of November 2016 (table 4). For the first 11 months of 2017, exports increased by 5% compared with those during the same period in 2016. November 2017 imports of soda ash were 658 t, 49% less than those of October 2017 and 25% less than those of November 2016. Soda ash import tonnages can differ

significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for November 2017 was 370,000 t, a decrease of 20% compared with that of October 2017 and 24% less than that of November 2016. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to changes in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year. For the first 11 months of 2017, apparent consumption was slightly less than that for the first 11 months of 2016.

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	
2016:			
December	1,010	336	1,620
January–December	11,800	336	17,700
2017:			
January	929	265	1,560
February	897	293	1,340
March	1,030	257	1,610
April	947	301	1,420
May	993	291	1,530
June	1,020	306	1,410
July	1,020	237	1,530
August	997	244	1,510
September	989	251	1,490
October	1,040	237	1,510
November	1,000	259	1,400
December	1,100	293	1,710
January–December	12,000	293	18,000

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 OR LOCALITY, IN 2017^{1, 2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November			January–November		
											Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	6,000	27,300	25,900	40	22,100	16,900	5,000	16,800	4,000	34,200	--	--	--	158,000	2	\$32,600
Australia	7,110	29,000	33,600	32,000	--	34,100	35,000	--	34,500	28,000	7,000	\$1,400	\$200	240,000	4	48,700
Belgium	1,260	14,900	10,100	14,400	35,200	4,060	12,600	399	21,500	22,300	187	21	110	137,000	2	31,200
Brazil	38,300	47,900	132,000	59,400	70,500	47,200	92,400	88,700	74,700	53,400	83,800	15,500	185	788,000	12	150,000
Canada	17,200	18,200	23,900	17,400	18,200	16,500	21,400	18,900	18,700	18,200	16,800	3,290	196	205,000	3	39,500
Chile	38,400	21,000	10,700	62,500	--	52,600	11,000	48,200	22,500	45,600	32,700	7,020	215	345,000	5	73,500
China	62	66,600	35,000	--	--	--	--	62	--	30,500	60	15	256	132,000	2	22,000
Colombia	9,000	14,000	8,000	16,500	4,640	14,900	16,700	--	9,630	21,000	24,000	4,810	200	138,000	2	27,000
Guatemala	--	6,500	--	12,000	--	--	8,000	--	13,500	--	3,500	774	221	43,500	1	9,770
India	--	--	--	33,000	44	28,000	--	46,000	74	10,100	--	--	--	117,000	2	17,700
Indonesia	71,200	28,300	72,600	29,200	66,400	37,000	55,600	67,200	87,300	28,500	82,000	16,500	201	625,000	10	124,000
Japan	22,600	17,000	4,000	45,300	--	35,500	32,400	16,700	35,000	--	23,100	3,840	166	232,000	4	39,300
Korea, Republic of	26,400	23,100	18,000	17,800	38,700	15,000	20,100	27,200	20,100	18,200	32,000	7,200	225	257,000	4	47,000
Malaysia	34,500	15,000	7,000	35,100	57,400	--	23,300	37,300	8,000	12,300	69,700	13,200	190	299,000	5	56,500
Mexico	82,400	83,300	114,000	79,400	96,700	93,400	100,000	95,200	106,000	91,200	115,000	23,600	205	1,060,000	17	238,000
Netherlands	22,800	--	8,050	--	4,000	4,000	--	--	4,000	4,000	10,100	1,790	178	56,900	1	11,500
Nigeria	5,900	--	7,970	--	7,940	--	10,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	31,800	(4)	7,910
Peru	6,580	--	75	19,100	75	75	7,500	5,070	12,200	6,080	8,280	1,980	240	65,000	1	14,300
Philippines	8,500	--	8,000	--	7,500	--	8,500	--	10,000	--	4,800	989	206	47,300	1	9,750
Saudi Arabia	16,000	--	--	--	17,000	--	18,000	--	--	2,000	--	--	--	53,000	1	8,500
South Africa	7,490	--	5,320	12,200	--	15,100	--	7,450	25,300	--	--	--	--	72,800	1	12,300
Spain	25,800	28,600	136	20,100	17,100	11,600	12,900	136	5,080	24,400	--	--	--	146,000	2	32,800
Taiwan	11,400	20,500	15,500	17,700	11,700	12,500	33,700	15,000	6,650	12,300	19,000	3,860	204	176,000	3	32,700
Thailand	38,000	25,900	21,300	33,100	18,800	20,200	27,000	29,100	16,800	24,800	25,700	5,440	212	280,000	4	54,400
Tunisia	9,900	--	--	--	18,100	12,100	--	--	21,700	24,100	--	--	--	85,800	1	17,600
United Arab Emirates	9,000	--	--	--	17,500	--	29,500	--	--	19,000	--	--	--	75,000	1	12,000
United Kingdom	31,400	10,000	--	15,100	70	20,200	13,600	--	17,500	9,960	5,580	1,010	180	123,000	2	23,000
Venezuela	5,000	--	8,400	12,500	--	10,300	4,400	2	4,300	2,950	--	--	--	47,900	1	11,300
Vietnam	27,500	--	31,500	12,000	27,500	4,000	16,100	47,000	7,500	39,400	35,800	7,410	207	248,000	4	51,000
Other	2,530	13,000	3,720	13,700	165	5,090	21,700	370	6,160	8,580	13,000	2,860	219	88,100	1	18,100
Total	582,000	510,000	604,000	610,000	557,000	510,000	637,000	567,000	593,000	591,000	612,000	122,000	200	6,370,000	100	1,270,000

-- Zero.

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

²December 2017 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 OR LOCALITY, IN 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November			January–November		
											Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	236	403	195	68	36	449	481	44	204	160	136	\$70	\$519	2,410	13	\$779
France	236	40	20	20	40	50	30	40	80	50	--	--	--	606	3	225
Germany	251	303	1	549	93	264	1	(4)	--	--	2	26	12,800	1,460	8	307
Italy	--	17	--	836	1,080	418	--	171	551	684	--	--	--	3,760	20	518
Japan	1	(4)	--	120	190	1	152	2	2	19	--	--	--	487	3	138
Korea, Republic of	206	514	617	411	800	297	495	198	18	--	--	--	--	3,550	19	436
Mexico	232	58	369	136	95	423	172	387	(4)	207	246	95	385	2,330	12	931
Poland	106	160	58	--	--	58	136	--	--	--	--	--	--	517	3	182
Turkey	106	--	--	106	--	8	8	8	8	8	--	--	--	250	1	55
United Kingdom	359	472	490	198	403	233	213	335	35	164	92	69	753	3,000	16	851
Other	1	1	7	3	7	8	38	5	--	1	182	70	382	253	1	146
Total	1,730	1,970	1,760	2,450	2,750	2,210	1,730	1,190	898	1,290	658	330	501	18,600	100	4,570

-- Zero.

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

²December 2017 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	
2016:						
January–December	11,800,000	6,780,000	35,300	50,900	--	5,010,000
January–November	10,800,000	6,090,000	34,400	79,700	--	4,660,000
November	990,000	547,000	876	--	39,800	484,000
December	1,010,000	693,000	952	--	28,800	349,000
2017:						
January–November	10,900,000	6,370,000	18,600	--	77,000	4,590,000
January	929,000	582,000	1,730	--	70,800	419,000
February	897,000	510,000	1,970	27,700	--	361,000
March	1,030,000	604,000	1,760	--	35,700	464,000
April	947,000	610,000	2,450	44,000	--	296,000
May	993,000	557,000	2,750	--	10,600	449,000
June	1,020,000	510,000	2,210	15,000	--	500,000
July	1,020,000	637,000	1,730	--	68,600	452,000
August	997,000	567,000	1,190	6,830	--	425,000
September	989,000	593,000	898	7,080	--	390,000
October	1,040,000	591,000	1,290	--	14400	462,000
November	1,000,000	612,000	658	22,500	--	370,000
December	1,100,000	NA	NA	34,300	--	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.