

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN MARCH 2017

U.S. natural soda ash production in March was 1.03 million metric tons (Mt), 15% more than the previous month's production and slightly more than that of March 2016 (table 1). Ending inventories for March 2017 were 257,000 metric tons (t), 12% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in March 2017 was 1.61Mt, 21% more than that of February 2017 and 30% more than that of March 2016.

Exports of soda ash in February 2017 were 510,000 t, 12% less than those of January 2017 and 7% less than those of February 2016 (table 4). Imports of soda ash in February 2017 were 1,970 t, 14% more than those of January 2017 and 46% less than those of February 2016. Soda ash import tonnages can differ widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for February 2017 was 361,000 t, a decrease of 14% compared with that of January 2017 and 5% less than that of February 2016.

During the first quarter of 2017, total production was 2.86 Mt, essentially unchanged from the first quarter of 2016. Trona production in the first quarter of 2017 was 4.51 Mt, 6% more than trona production in the first quarter 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:			
January–March	2,870	315	4,280
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
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
January–March	2,860	257	4,510

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 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February			January–February		
		Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	6,000	27,300	\$5,650	\$207	33,300	3	\$6,860
Australia	7,110	29,000	6,010	207	36,100	3	7,380
Belgium	1,260	14,900	3,440	230	16,200	1	4,640
Brazil	38,300	47,900	9,360	196	86,200	8	16,700
Canada	17,200	18,200	3,700	203	35,400	3	7,130
Chile	38,400	21,000	4,440	212	59,300	5	12,400
China	62	66,600	11,100	167	66,600	6	11,100
Colombia	9,000	14,000	2,850	204	23,000	2	4,560
Costa Rica	--	4,000	870	218	4,000	(4)	870
El Salvador	--	3,000	578	193	3,000	(4)	578
Guatemala	--	6,500	1,420	219	6,500	1	1,420
Indonesia	71,200	28,300	5,620	199	99,500	9	19,200
Japan	22,600	17,000	2,550	150	39,600	4	6,530
Korea, Republic of	26,400	23,100	4,090	177	49,500	5	8,800
Malaysia	34,500	15,000	2,880	192	49,500	5	9,390
Mexico	82,400	83,300	19,000	228	166,000	15	38,200
Netherlands	22,800	--	--	--	22,800	2	4,400
New Zealand	--	6,000	1,120	187	6,000	1	1,120
Nigeria	5,900	--	--	--	5,900	1	1,330
Peru	6,580	--	--	--	6,580	1	981
Philippines	8,500	--	--	--	8,500	1	1,470
Saudi Arabia	16,000	--	--	--	16,000	1	2,760
South Africa	7,490	--	--	--	7,490	1	1,270
Spain	25,800	28,600	6,230	218	54,300	5	11,800
Taiwan	11,400	20,500	3,310	162	31,900	3	5,430
Thailand	38,000	25,900	4,970	192	63,900	6	12,000
Tunisia	9,900	--	--	--	9,900	1	2,030
United Arab Emirates	9,000	--	--	--	9,000	1	1,480
United Kingdom	31,400	10,000	2,350	234	41,400	4	8,240
Venezuela	5,000	--	--	--	5,000	(4)	1,160
Vietnam	27,500	--	--	--	27,500	3	5,360
Other	2,530	2	3	1,730	2,540	(4)	440
Total	582,000	510,000	102,000	199	1,090,000	100	217,000

-- Zero.

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

²March 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, IN 2017^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February			January–February		
		Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	236	403	\$61	\$152	638	17	\$638
France	236	40	21	527	276	7	276
Germany	251	303	37	121	554	15	554
Korea, Republic of	206	514	62	120	719	19	719
Mexico	232	58	26	451	290	8	290
Poland	106	160	55	346	266	7	266
Turkey	106	--	--	--	106	3	106
United Kingdom	359	472	82	174	831	22	831
Other	2	21	19	911	23	1	28
Total	1,730	1,970	363	184	3,700	100	3,710

-- Zero.

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

²March 2017 data were not available at time of publication.

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

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–February	1,860,000	1,030,000	5,110	24,800 ^r	--	814,000 ^r
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	547,000	876	--	39,800	484,000
December	1,010,000	693,000	952	--	28,800	349,000
2017:						
January–February	1,830,000	1,090,000	3,700	--	43,100	780,000
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	NA	NA	--	35,700	NA

^rRevised. 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.