DIATOMITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The estimated value of processed diatomite, f.o.b. plant, was $174 million in 1995. Six companies with 12 processing facilities in 4 States produced diatomite. California and Nevada were the principal producing States. End uses of diatomite were filter aid, 73%; fillers, 14%; and other, 13%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995[e]
Production[1]	610	595	599	613	670
Imports for consumption	1	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Exports	152	163	165	157	145
Consumption, apparent	458	432	436	456	525
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. plant	229	237	251	248	259
Stocks, producer, yearend	36	36	36	36	36
Employment, mine and plant[e]	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Net import reliance[3] as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	E	E	E

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (1991-94): Mexico, 60%; France, 22%; Canada, 5%; and other, 13%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Most favored nation (MFN) 12/31/95	Non-MFN[4] 12/31/95
Diatomite, crude or processed	2512.00.0000	Free	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 14% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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DIATOMITE

Events, Trends, and Issues: The United States remained the largest producer and consumer of diatomite and exported processed diatomite to more than 50 countries, primarily for filtration use.

All domestic mining is by open pit, and challenging land use problems exist. Control of dust in mining is assisted by the high moisture content of the crude ore. Effective control of silica dust in processing is facilitated by enclosure of the process.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves[5]	Reserve base[5]
	1994	1995[e]		
United States[1]	613	670	250,000	500,000
Denmark[6]	96	95		NA
France	250	250	Other	2,000
Germany	52	50	countries:	NA
Korea, South	70	70	550,000	NA
Mexico	46	50		2,000
Spain	36	40		NA
Former Soviet Union[7]	120	120		NA
Other countries	157	160		NA
World total (may be rounded)	1,440	1,500	800,000	Large

World Resources: World resources of crude diatomite are adequate for the foreseeable future, but the need for diatomite to be near markets encourages development of new sources for the material.

Substitutes: Many alternate materials can be substituted for diatomite. However, the unique properties of diatomite assure its continuing use for many applications. Expanded perlite, asbestos, and silica sand compete for filtration purposes, although, in most instances, diatomite is a superior material. Alternate filler materials include talc, ground silica sand, ground mica, clay, perlite, vermiculite, and ground limestone. For thermal insulation, materials such as brick, clay, asbestos, mineral wool, expanded perlite, and exfoliated vermiculite can be used.

[e]Estimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

[1]Processed ore sold and used by producers.

[2]Less than ½ unit.

[3]Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

[4]See Appendix B.

[5]See Appendix C for definitions.

[6]Includes sales of moler production.

[7]As constituted before Dec. 1991.