

FELDSPAR

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: U.S. feldspar production in 2005 had an estimated value of about \$44 million. The three leading producers accounted for about two-thirds of the production, with six other companies supplying the remainder. Operations in North Carolina provided more than 40% of the output; facilities in Virginia, California, Oklahoma, Georgia, Idaho, and South Dakota, in estimated descending order of production, produced the remainder. Feldspar processors reported coproduct recovery of mica and silica sand.

Feldspar is ground to about 20 mesh for glassmaking and to 200 mesh or finer for most ceramic and filler applications. It was estimated that feldspar shipments went to at least 30 States and to foreign destinations, including Canada and Mexico. In pottery and glass, feldspar functions as a flux. The estimated 2005 end-use distribution of domestic feldspar was glass, 65%, and pottery and other, 35%.

| <u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u> | <u>2001</u> | <u>2002</u> | <u>2003</u> | <u>2004</u> | <u>2005^e</u> |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Production, marketable ^e | 800 | 790 | 800 | 770 | 760 |
| Imports for consumption | 6 | 5 | 8 | 21 | 25 |
| Exports | 5 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 12 |
| Consumption, apparent ^e | 801 | 785 | 799 | 781 | 773 |
| Price, average value, marketable production, dollars per ton ^e | 55 | 54 | 54 | 57 | 58 |
| Stocks, producer, yearend ¹ | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Employment, mine and preparation plant, number ^e | 400 | 400 | 400 | 400 | 400 |
| Net import reliance ² as a percentage of apparent consumption | (3) | E | E | 1 | 2 |

Recycling: There is no recycling of feldspar by producers; however, glass container producers use cullet (recycled glass), thereby reducing feldspar consumption.

Import Sources (2001-04): Mexico, 58%; Turkey, 41%; and other, 1%.

| <u>Tariff: Item</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Normal Trade Relations</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Feldspar | 2529.10.0000 | <u>12-31-05</u> Free. |

Depletion Allowance: 14% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

FELDSPAR

Events, Trends, and Issues: Glass, including beverage containers and insulation for housing and building construction, continued to be the leading end use of feldspar in the United States. U.S. shipments of glass containers in the first 8 months were about the same as in the comparable period of 2004, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Feldspar use in tile and vitreous sanitaryware was reflected in housing construction. U.S. housing starts for the first 8 months were about 6% higher than in the same period of 2004, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

China has had major growth in the production of tile, sanitaryware, and tableware and has had significant impact on world markets in the last several years. Other countries in Europe or in neighboring Asian countries which directly compete in this sector, especially in lower cost products, have experienced loss of market share. Countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka have been seeking state protection, such as tariff increases.⁴

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

| | Mine production | | Reserves and reserve base ⁵ |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|
| | 2004 | 2005 ^e | |
| United States ^e | 770 | 760 | Quantitative estimates of reserves and reserve base are not available. |
| Colombia | 100 | 100 | |
| Czech Republic | 400 | 450 | |
| Egypt | 350 | 350 | |
| France | 650 | 650 | |
| Germany | 450 | 500 | |
| India | 150 | 150 | |
| Iran | 200 | 200 | |
| Italy | 2,500 | 2,500 | |
| Korea, Republic of | 480 | 550 | |
| Mexico | 350 | 370 | |
| Poland | 300 | 320 | |
| Portugal | 120 | 120 | |
| Spain | 450 | 450 | |
| Thailand | 825 | 1,000 | |
| Turkey | 1,900 | 2,000 | |
| Venezuela | 150 | 175 | |
| Other countries | 955 | 900 | |
| World total (rounded) | 11,100 | 11,500 | |

World Resources: Identified and hypothetical resources of feldspar are more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand. Quantitative data on resources of feldspar existing in feldspathic sands, granites, and pegmatites generally have not been compiled. There is ample geologic evidence that resources are large, although not always conveniently accessible to the principal centers of consumption.

Substitutes: Feldspar can be replaced in some of its end uses by clays, electric furnace slag, feldspar-silica mixtures, pyrophyllite, spodumene, or talc. Imported nepheline syenite, however, was the major alternative material.

^eEstimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

¹Change in stocks assumed to be zero for apparent consumption and net import reliance calculations.

²Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

³Less than ½ unit.

⁴King, Laura, 2005, Asian Ceramics: Industrial Minerals, no. 452, May, p. 49-51.

⁵[See Appendix C for definitions.](#)