

## PUMICE AND PUMICITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

**Domestic Production and Use:** The estimated value of pumice and pumicite sold or used in 1996 was \$10.8 million. Domestic output came from 14 producers in 6 States. The principal producing States were New Mexico and Oregon, with combined production accounting for about 72% of the national total. The remaining production was from Arizona, California, Idaho, and Kansas. About 60% of the pumice was consumed for building blocks and the remainder was used in abrasives, concrete, laundries, and many other uses.

<b><u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u></b>	<b><u>1992</u></b>	<b><u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>1994</u></b>	<b><u>1995</u></b>	<b><u>1996<sup>e</sup></u></b>
Production, mine <sup>1</sup>	481	469	490	529	465
Imports for consumption	257	143	143	238	200
Exports <sup>e</sup>	11	18	18	16	15
Consumption, apparent	727	594	615	751	650
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine or mill	30.99	25.68	24.08	24.99	22.96
Stocks, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill, number	50	50	50	60	60
Net import reliance <sup>2</sup> as a percent of apparent consumption	34	21	20	30	28

**Recycling:** Not available.

**Import Sources (1992-95):** Greece, 85%; Ecuador, 7%; Turkey, 6%; and other, 2%.

<b><u>Tariff: Item</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Most favored nation (MFN)</u></b> <b><u>12/31/96</u></b>	<b><u>Non-MFN<sup>3</sup></u></b> <b><u>12/31/96</u></b>
Crude or in irregular pieces, including crushed pumice	2513.11.0000	Free	Free.
Other	2513.19.0000	0.2¢/kg	1.7¢/kg.

**Depletion Allowance:** 5% (Domestic), 5% (Foreign).

**Government Stockpile:** None.

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**Events, Trends, and Issues:** The apparent consumption of 650,000 tons in 1996 was 13% less than 1995's apparent consumption. The decrease in consumption was due to decreased demand for pumice, particularly in the southwestern United States. Secondly, pumice sales and production were down due to litigation concerning pumice mining on public lands.

It is estimated that in 1997 domestic mine production of pumice and pumicite will be about 500,000 tons, with U.S. apparent consumption at approximately 700,000 tons. Imports, mainly from Greece, continue to maintain markets on the East Coast and Gulf Coast States of the United States.

Although pumice and pumicite were plentiful in the Western United States, changes in laws and public land designations could make many deposits decreasingly accessible to mining. Pumice and pumicite were sensitive to mining cost and should domestic production cost increase, it was expected that imports and competing materials might replace domestic pumice in many markets.

All domestic mining of pumice in 1996 was by open pit methods and generally occurred in relatively remote areas where land use conflicts were not severe. Although the generation and disposal of reject fines in mining and milling resulted in a dust problem at some operations, the environmental impact was restricted to a small geographical area.

### **World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:**

	Mine production		Reserves <sup>4</sup>	Reserve base <sup>4</sup>
	1995	1996 <sup>e</sup>		
United States <sup>1</sup>	529	465	Large	Large
Chile	450	450	NA	NA
France	500	525	NA	NA
Germany	625	650	NA	NA
Greece	900	900	NA	NA
Italy	4,650	4,500	NA	NA
Spain	600	600	NA	NA
Turkey	1,200	1,200	NA	NA
Other countries	1,350	1,350	NA	NA
World total (rounded)	10,800	10,700	NA	NA

**World Resources:** The identified U.S. domestic resources of pumice and pumicite in the West are estimated to be at least 25 million tons. The estimated resources in the Western and Great Plains States are 250 million to 450 million tons.

**Substitutes:** Transportation cost determines the maximum distance that pumice and pumicite can be shipped and remain competitive with alternate materials. Competitive materials that can be substituted for pumice and pumicite for several end uses include expanded shale and clay, diatomite, and crushed aggregates.

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Quantity sold and used by producers.

<sup>2</sup>Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix C for definitions.