

TALC AND PYROPHYLLITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The total estimated crude ore value of 1997 domestic production was \$33 million. There were 17 talc-producing mines in 8 States in 1997. Companies in Montana, New York, Texas, and Vermont accounted for most of the domestic production. Ground talc was consumed in ceramics, 34%; paper, 23%; paint, 19%; plastics, 5%; roofing, 5%; cosmetics, 2%; and other, 12%. Two firms in North Carolina and one firm in California accounted for 100% of domestic pyrophyllite production, which increased slightly from that of 1996. Consumption was in ceramics, refractories, and insecticides, in decreasing order of tonnage.

Salient Statistics—United States: ¹	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997^e
Production, mine	968	935	1,060	994	1,060
Sold by producers	900	923	901	909	968
Imports for consumption	100	155	146	187	92
Exports	135	154	183	192	197
Shipments from Government stockpile excesses	—	—	—	—	(²)
Consumption, apparent	933	936	1,020	989	955
Price, average, processed dollars per ton	116	126	111	111	122
Stocks, producer, yearend	80	80	80	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	800	750	750	750	750
Net import reliance ³ as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	E	E	E

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (1993-96): China, 39%; Japan, 23%; Canada, 19%; and other, 19%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Most favored nation (MFN) 12/31/97	Non-MFN⁴ 12/31/97
Crude, not ground	2526.10.0000	0.02¢/kg	0.6¢/kg.
Ground, washed, powdered	2526.20.0000	1% ad val.	35.0% ad val.
Cut or sawed	6815.99.2000	Free	2.2¢/kg.

Depletion Allowance: Block steatite talc: 22% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign). Other: 14% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile:

Material	Stockpile Status—9-30-97⁵ (Metric tons)				
	Uncommitted inventory	Committed inventory	Authorized for disposal	Disposal plan FY 1997	Disposals FY 1997
Talc, block and lump	911	—	911	911	64
Talc, ground	988	—	988	988	—

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Production and sales increased 7% and 6%, respectively, from those of 1996. Apparent consumption decreased 4% and exports increased 3% from those of 1996. Canada was the major importer of U.S. talc. Imports for consumption decreased slightly from those of 1996. Although imports in 1996 were reported to be 187,000 tons, actual imports were estimated to be near 100,000 tons. Canada, China, and Japan supplied approximately 74% of the imported talc.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁶	Reserve base ⁶
	1996	1997 ^e		
United States ¹	994	1,060	136,000	544,000
Brazil	510	520	14,000	54,000
China	2,400	2,400	Large	Large
India	580	600	4,000	9,000
Japan	965	965	132,000	200,000
Korea, Republic of	820	820	14,000	18,000
Other countries	<u>1,920</u>	<u>1,900</u>	<u>Large</u>	<u>Large</u>
World total (may be rounded)	8,190	8,270	Large	Large

World Resources: The United States is self-sufficient in most grades of talc and related minerals. Domestic and world resources are estimated to be approximately five times the quantity of reserves.

Substitutes: The major substitutes for talc are clay and pyrophyllite in ceramics; calcium carbonate, diatomite, kaolin, and mica in paint; calcium carbonate and kaolin in paper; clays, feldspar, mica, silica, and wollastonite in plastics; and calcium carbonate, kaolin, and silica in rubber.

^eEstimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

¹Excludes pyrophyllite.

²Less than ½ unit.

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

⁴See Appendix B.

⁵See Appendix C for definitions.

⁶See Appendix D for definitions.