SALT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Domestic production of salt increased slightly in 2005. The total value was estimated to be $1.2 billion. Twenty-nine companies operated 64 plants in 15 States. The estimated percentage of salt sold or used, by type, was salt in brine, 46%; rock salt, 39%; vacuum pan, 8%; and solar salt, 7%.

The chemical industry consumed nearly 39% of total salt sales, with salt in brine representing about 90% of the type of salt used for feedstock. The chlorine and caustic soda manufacturing sector was the main consumer within the chemical industry. Salt for highway deicing accounted for 37% of U.S. demand. The remaining markets for salt, in declining order, were distributors, 8%; industrial, 7%; agricultural, 3%; food, 3%; water treatment, 2%; and other combined with exports, 1%.

Salient Statistics—United States:[1]	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005[e]
Production	44,800	40,300	43,700	46,500	45,900
Sold or used by producers	42,200	37,700	41,100	45,000	42,600
Imports for consumption	12,900	8,160	12,900	11,900	12,000
Exports	1,120	689	718	1,110	1,000
Consumption:					
Reported	48,700	43,600	50,200	51,500	53,600
Apparent	54,000	45,100	53,200	55,800	53,600
Price, average value of bulk, pellets and packaged salt, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine and plant:					
Vacuum and open pan salt	120.02	120.02	124.24	128.39	130.00
Solar salt	52.33	53.93	53.42	49.25	52.00
Rock salt	21.84	21.62	23.11	25.83	25.00
Salt in brine	6.26	5.89	7.21	7.01	7.00
Stocks, producer, yearend[e, 2]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and plant, number	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100
Net import reliance[3] as a percentage of apparent consumption	22	17	23	19	21

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2001-04): Canada, 36%; Chile, 28%; Mexico, 10%; The Bahamas, 8%; and other, 18%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12-31-05
Iodized salt	2501.00.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 10% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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SALT

Events, Trends, and Issues: Despite the heavy devastation in Louisiana caused by Hurricane Katrina in August, the rock salt producers were undamaged. The storm, however, did affect the region's truck and barge transportation system that ships rock salt to northern markets. Combined with the high cost of fuel and delivery fees, it was uncertain what the total effect would be on the price of rock salt for the upcoming winter.

A large salt deposit with proven reserves of 14.5 billion tons was discovered in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of northwest China. A new salt mine known as the Qiao'erhe Salt Mine was constructed in the deposit 50 kilometers southwest of Baicheng, Aksu Prefecture. Aksu ranked first in total salt reserves in China, but total production in the area was relatively low. Many industrial projects in China depend on salt as feedstock, and the discovery of this deposit may alleviate some of the supply shortages within the country. China has become the second ranked salt producer in the world.

Domestic consumption of salt in 2006 is expected to be similar to that of 2005. No supply shortage of rock salt is anticipated for the winter of 2005-06.

World Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Production		Reserves and reserve base[4]
	2004	2005[e]	
United States[1]	46,500	45,900	Large. Economic and subeconomic deposits of salt are substantial in principal salt-producing countries. The oceans contain an inexhaustible supply of salt.
Australia	11,200	10,000	
Brazil	6,500	6,100	
Canada	14,100	13,300	
Chile	6,000	5,000	
China	37,100	38,000	
Egypt	2,400	2,400.	
France	7,000	7,000	
Germany	16,000	18,700	
India	15,000	15,500	
Iran	2,000	1,600	
Italy	3,600	3,600	
Mexico	8,200	8,200	
Netherlands	5,000	5,000	
Poland	1,500	2,000	
Romania	2,450	2,550	
Russia	2,800	2,800	
Spain	3,200	3,200	
Turkey	2,250	2,200	
Ukraine	2,300	2,500	
United Kingdom	5,800	5,800	
Other countries	7,100	9,000	
World total (rounded)	208,000	210,000	

World Resources: World continental resources of salt are practically unlimited, and the salt content in the oceans is virtually inexhaustible. Domestic resources of rock salt and salt from brine are in the Northeast, Central Western, and southern Gulf Coast States. Saline lakes and solar evaporation salt facilities are near populated regions in the Western United States. Almost every country in the world has salt deposits or solar evaporation operations of various sizes.

Substitutes: There are no economic substitutes or alternates for salt. Calcium chloride and calcium magnesium acetate, hydrochloric acid, and potassium chloride can be substituted for salt in deicing, certain chemical processes, and food flavoring, but at a higher cost.

[e]Estimated. NA Not available.
[1]Excludes Puerto Rico production.
[2]Reported stock data are incomplete. For apparent consumption and net import reliance calculations, changes in annual stock totals are assumed to be the difference between salt produced and salt sold or used.
[3]Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.
[4]See Appendix C for definitions.