

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN MAY 2008

U.S. natural soda ash production in May was 987,000 metric tons (t), 11% higher than the previous month's production of 890,000 t, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Ending inventories for May 2008 were 210,000 t, 28% higher than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in May was 1.5 million metric tons. Total production of chemical caustic soda was withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

Apparent consumption of soda ash in April 2008 was 491,000 t, virtually the same as in April 2007, and ending stocks were 21% lower.

Exports and imports of soda ash in April 2008 were 430,000 t and 204 t, respectively.

Cumulative soda ash statistics from January through April 2008, compared with those of January through April 2007, were as follows: production was slightly higher; imports were 90% higher (an unusually high increase for the 4 month period); exports, 5% higher; and apparent consumption, 3% lower.

All percentages in this report were computed using unrounded data.

TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Ending stocks	
2007:			
January-May	4,540	XX	7,330
May	950	242	1,460
June	926	198	1,310
July	985	207	1,500
August	971	213	1,490
September	890	251	1,110
October	920	203	1,450
November	903	158	1,450
December	936	206	1,510
January-December	11,100	XX	17,200
2008:			
January	922	221	1,510
February	878	190	1,370
March	955	194	1,510
April	890	164	1,530
May	987	210	1,490
January-May	4,630	XX	7,410

XX Not applicable.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production data include soda ash equivalent from soda liquors only. Soda ash equivalent from mine water is not included. Soda liquors are withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 2
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN APRIL 2008^{1,2}

Country	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)	Unit value
Mexico	88,500	\$14,600	\$165
Brazil	50,200	8,160	163
Belgium	38,600	6,260	162
Japan	35,500	5,820	164
Canada	33,400	4,890	146
Korea, Republic of	24,100	4,780	199
Taiwan	21,000	3,100	147
Lithuania	17,400	2,390	138
Indonesia	16,200	3,310	205
Thailand	16,000	2,750	172
Chile	13,500	2,430	180
Saudi Arabia	13,000	2,260	174
Philippines	11,000	2,060	188
South Africa	10,500	1,700	163
Other	41,000	7,180	175
Total or average	430,000	71,700	167

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2008^{1,2}

(Metric tons)

Country	January	February	March	April	Total	% of total
Angola	--	6	--	--	6	(3)
Argentina	14,000	--	17,000	58	31,000	2
Aruba	--	8	--	--	8	(3)
Australia	9,000	4,970	28,500	--	42,500	2
Bahrain	--	195	--	--	195	(3)
Belgium	17,600	10,600	19,900	38,600	86,700	5
Belize	--	2	--	--	2	(3)
Brazil	53,200	61,800	35,000	50,200	200,000	11
Cameroon	--	20	20	--	40	(3)
Canada	39,900	38,600	41,400	33,400	153,000	9
Chile	14,000	32,400	28,400	13,500	88,300	5
China	--	--	--	38	38	(3)
Colombia	8,500	5,500	23,800	--	37,800	2
Costa Rica	--	5,980	196	--	6,180	(3)
Dominican Republic	--	--	53	--	53	(3)
Ecuador	--	4,740	--	--	4,740	(3)
Finland	--	--	--	17	17	(3)
France	--	154	15,000	--	15,200	1
Germany	--	--	147	--	147	(3)
Guatemala	8,500	--	--	9,000	17,500	1
Indonesia	53,400	36,100	17,000	16,200	123,000	7
Ireland	--	223	--	614	837	(3)
Jamaica	7	--	--	18	25	(3)
Japan	--	24,700	--	35,500	60,200	3
Korea, Republic of	--	27,600	--	24,100	51,700	3
Lithuania	--	17,000	--	17,400	34,400	2
Malaysia	--	18,200	--	--	18,200	1
Mexico	84,600	71,500	81,500	88,500	326,000	19
Netherlands	--	176	21,100	176	21,500	1
New Zealand	5,250	--	4,820	6,000	16,100	1
Oman	--	--	--	100	100	(3)
Pakistan	--	--	1	--	1	(3)
Panama	--	7,490	1,540	--	9,030	1
Peru	--	8,080	--	--	8,080	(3)
Philippines	--	13,100	--	11,000	24,100	1
Portugal	--	9,090	10,000	--	19,100	1
Saudi Arabia	15,200	--	18,000	13,000	46,200	3
Slovakia	--	--	--	18	18	(3)
South Africa	6,580	21,400	6,480	10,500	44,900	3
Spain	--	15,400	9,800	10,000	35,200	2
Taiwan	--	34,300	9,950	21,000	65,300	4
Thailand	13,000	19,000	--	16,000	48,000	3
United Arab Emirates	11,800	--	16,000	10,000	37,800	2
Venezuela	32,400	17,900	23,200	5,000	78,600	4
Vietnam	--	7,000	--	--	7,000	(3)
Total	387,000	513,000	429,000	430,000	1,760,000	100

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH^{1,2}

Period	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)
2007:		
January-April	2,140	687
May	1,200	418
June	405	118
July	1,150	262
August	610	200
September	855	316
October	1,910	423
November	412	152
December	465	184
January-December	9,140	2,760
2008:		
January	1,870	326
February	774	203
March	1,210	222
April	895	204
January-April	4,750	955

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May 2008 data were not available at time of publication.

³Cost, insurance, and freight value at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Imports	Exports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2007:						
January-April	3,590,000	2,140	1,680,000	--	81,600	1,990,000
May	950,000	1,200	431,000	33,900	--	487,000
June	926,000	405	378,000	--	43,600	592,000
July	985,000	1,150	521,000	9,030	--	456,000
August	971,000	610	398,000	6,160	--	568,000
September	890,000	855	394,000	37,700	--	459,000
October	920,000	1,910	425,000	--	47,700	545,000
November	903,000	412	513,000	--	45,100	436,000
December	936,000	465	392,000	47,800	--	497,000
January-December	11,100,000	9,140	5,130,000	--	83,400	6,030,000
2008:						
January	922,000	1,870	387,000	14,500	--	523,000
February	878,000	774	513,000	--	30,100	396,000
March	955,000	1,210	429,000	3,820	--	524,000
April	890,000	204	430,000	--	30,300	491,000
May	987,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
January-April	3,650,000	4,060	1,760,000	--	42,100	1,930,000

NA Not available. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.