MICA (NATURAL), SCRAP AND FLAKE[1]

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Scrap and flake mica production, excluding low-quality sericite, was estimated to be 110,000 metric tons in 2000. North Carolina accounted for about 50% of U.S. production. The remaining output came from Arizona, Georgia, New Mexico, South Carolina, and South Dakota. Scrap mica was recovered principally from mica and sericite schist and as a byproduct from feldspar, kaolin, and industrial sand beneficiation. The majority of domestic production was processed into small particle-size mica by either wet or dry grinding. Primary uses were joint compound, paint, roofing, oil well drilling additives, and rubber products. The value of 2000 scrap mica production was estimated at $17 million. Ground mica sales in 1999 were valued at $36.7 million. There were 10 domestic producers of scrap and flake mica.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000[e]
Production:[2 3] Mine	97	114	87	104	110
Ground	103	110	104	111	105
Imports, mica powder and mica waste	18	23	23	26	29
Exports, mica powder and mica waste	8	8	8	11	10
Consumption, apparent[4]	107	122	137	125	133
Price, average, dollars per ton, reported:					
Scrap and flake	81	83	87	95	100
Ground:					
Wet	1,032	1,080	909	849	1,000
Dry	182	176	179	192	200
Stocks, producer, yearend[e]	7	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine, number[5]	NA	347	367	NA	NA
Net import reliance[6] as a percent of apparent consumption	4	9	24	17	17

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (1996-99): Canada, 68%; India, 22%; Finland, 4%; Japan, 2%; and other, 4%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12/31/00
Mica powder	2525.20.0000	Free.
Mica waste	2525.30.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 22% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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MICA (NATURAL), SCRAP AND FLAKE

Events, Trends, and Issues: Domestic production of ground mica increased in 2000. The increase primarily resulted from increased production in Georgia and at a new operation in Arizona. Mining operators at a mine near Black Canyon, AZ, completed the initial test phase of production and development. At midyear, pilot-plant production of a wet-ground muscovite sample product for the cosmetic and paint industries was initiated. A new mica mine is under development at Bear Creek, NC. The United States remained a major world producer of scrap and flake mica. Imported mica scrap and flake is primarily used for making mica paper and as a filler and reinforcer in plastics.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves[7]	Reserve base[7]
	1999	2000[e]		
United States[2]	104	110	Large	Large
Brazil	2	2	Large	Large
Canada	17	17	Large	Large
India	2	2	Large	Large
Korea, Republic of	39	39	Large	Large
Russia	100	100	Large	Large
Other countries	40	30	Large	Large
World total	304	300	Large	Large

World Resources: Resources of scrap and flake mica are available in granite, pegmatite, schist, and clay deposits and are considered more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand in the foreseeable future.

Substitutes: Some of the lightweight aggregates, such as diatomite, vermiculite, and perlite, may be substituted for ground mica when used as a filler. Ground synthetic fluorophlogopite, a fluorine-rich mica, may replace natural ground mica for uses that require the thermal and electrical properties of mica.

[e]Estimated. NA Not available.

[1]See also Mica (Natural), Sheet.

[2]Sold or used by producing companies.

[3]Excludes low-quality sericite used primarily for brick manufacturing.

[4]Based on ground mica.

[5]Total employment at mines and mills where mica was produced and processed, excluding feldspar companies with byproduct production. Employees were not assigned to specific commodities in calculating employment.

[6]Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

[7]See Appendix C for definitions.