

FELDSPAR

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: U.S. feldspar production in 2000 had an estimated value of about \$42 million. The three largest producers accounted for about 70% of the output, with six other companies supplying the remainder. Operations in North Carolina provided about 45% of the output, and facilities in six other States contributed smaller quantities. Feldspar processors reported coproduct recovery of mica and silica sand.

Feldspar is ground for industry use to about 20 mesh for glassmaking and to 200 mesh or finer for most ceramic and filler applications. It was estimated that feldspar shipments went to at least 30 States and to foreign destinations, including Canada and Mexico. In pottery and glass, feldspar functions as a flux. Estimated 2000 end-use distribution of domestic feldspar was glass, 68%, and pottery and other, 32%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>^e
Production, marketable	890	^e 900	^e 820	^e 875	850
Imports for consumption	7	9	7	7	7
Exports	10	7	13	10	14
Consumption, apparent	887	^e 900	^e 814	^e 872	843
Price, average value, marketable production, dollars per ton	44.27	^e 47.00	^e 50.00	^e 49.00	48.91
Stocks, producer, yearend ²	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and preparation plant, number	400	400	400	400	400
Net import reliance ³ as a percent of apparent consumption	E	(4)	E	E	E

Recycling: Insignificant.

Import Sources (1996-99): Mexico, 95%; and other, 5%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations <u>12/31/00</u>
Feldspar	2529.10.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 14% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Glass, including glass containers and glass fiber for insulation, continued to be the largest end use of feldspar (68% by tonnage) in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, total shipments of glass containers during the first 8 months of 2000 were about 171 million gross, or 2% less than in the corresponding period of 1999. Recycled glass (cullet) and competition from metal, paper, and plastic containers have affected growth in usage of glass containers.

Pottery, including whiteware such as dinnerware, sanitaryware, and tile, continued to be the second largest end use of feldspar. Ceramic tile use in housing construction has done well in recent years against other products, such as carpets and hardwood flooring. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, housing starts during the first 9 months of 2000 were about 1.23 million housing units, or a decrease of 4% (+/- 2%) compared with the same period in 1999. According to the Tile Council of America, new housing construction in 2000 could decrease by 7% compared with that of the previous year.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves and reserve base ⁵
	1999	2000 ^e	
United States	^e 875	850	Significant in the United States and assumed to be similar in other countries.
Argentina	80	80	
Brazil	230	240	
Colombia	55	60	
France	600	600	
Germany	460	470	
Greece	65	70	
India	105	110	
Italy	2,600	2,600	
Japan	52	60	
Korea, Republic of	250	260	
Mexico	210	220	
Norway	75	80	
Portugal	120	130	
Spain	425	430	
Thailand	500	520	
Turkey	1,100	1,100	
Uzbekistan	70	80	
Venezuela	160	170	
Other countries	<u>948</u>	<u>970</u>	
World total	8,980	9,100	

World Resources: Identified and hypothetical resources of feldspar are more than adequate to meet anticipated world demand. Quantitative data on resources of feldspar existing in granites, pegmatites, and feldspathic sands generally have not been compiled. There is ample geologic evidence that resources are large, although not always conveniently accessible to the principal centers of consumption.

Substitutes: Feldspar can be replaced in some of its end uses by feldspar-silica mixtures, clays, talc, pyrophyllite, spodumene, or electric-furnace slag. Imported nepheline syenite, however, was the major alternative material.

^eEstimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

¹Rounded

²Change in stocks assumed to be zero for apparent consumption and net import reliance calculations.

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

⁴Negligible.

⁵See Appendix C for definitions.