

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN DECEMBER 2008

U.S. natural soda ash production in December was 917,000 metric tons (t), 5% lower than the previous month's production of 965,000 t, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Ending inventories for December 2008 were 259,000 t, slightly lower than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in December 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 November 2008 was 385,000 t, 12% lower than that of November 2007, and ending stocks were 66% higher.

Exports and imports of soda ash in November 2008 were 525,000 t and 615 t, respectively.

Cumulative soda ash statistics from January through November 2008, compared with those of January through November 2007, were as follows: production was slightly higher; imports were 29% higher; exports were 4% higher; and apparent consumption, 3% lower. Although imports have risen dramatically in 2008 compared with those of 2007, they represent only 2% of the apparent consumption.

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:			
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
June	935	211	1,480
July	905	166	1,200
August	976	222	1,620
September	935	265	1,470
October ^f	996	247	1,540
November	965	262	1,510
December	917	259	1,510
January-December	11,300	XX	17,700

^fRevised. 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 NOVEMBER 2008^{1, 2}

Country	Quantity (metric tons)	Value ³ (thousands)	Unit value
Mexico	70,600	\$12,800	\$181
Venezuela	70,200	12,400	177
Japan	36,600	5,460	149
Taiwan	33,400	5,370	161
Brazil	32,400	5,950	184
Lithuania	31,900	4,730	148
Argentina	31,700	7,210	228
Chile	27,000	5,210	193
Canada	21,500	3,430	159
Colombia	20,000	3,550	178
Belgium	19,800	2,820	142
Thailand	19,100	4,060	212
Indonesia	18,500	3,340	181
Korea, Republic of	16,500	4,140	251
France	16,000	2,020	126
Other	59,800	11,800	197
Total or average	525,000	94,200	180

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

²December 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	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	Total	% of tot
Andorra, Principality of	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	179	--	--	--	179	(3)
Angola	--	6	--	--	177	4	--	--	--	--	--	187	(3)
Argentina	14,000	--	17,000	58	17,400	--	14,200	--	16,000	--	31,700	110,000	2
Aruba	--	8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	(3)
Australia	9,000	4,970	28,500	--	--	12,200	4,380	23,600	7,230	18,100	14,400	122,000	2
Bahrain	--	195	--	--	159	195	--	195	351	--	--	1,100	(3)
Belgium	17,600	10,600	19,900	38,600	11,000	21,900	21,100	1,930	23,000	51	19,800	185,000	4
Belize	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	(3)
Brazil	53,200	61,800	35,000	50,200	49,800	45,200	37,300	24,000	44,900	106,000	32,400	540,000	11
Cameroon	--	20	20	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	40	(3)
Canada	39,900	38,600	41,400	33,400	30,900	30,600	30,100	32,400	29,200	31,900	21,500	360,000	7
Chile	14,000	32,400	28,400	13,500	35,900	30,900	20,700	25,800	18,000	25,200	27,000	272,000	6
China	--	--	--	38	--	2	84	--	68	--	--	192	(3)
Colombia	8,500	5,500	23,800	--	10,300	10,300	7,900	10,100	23,200	--	20,000	120,000	2
Costa Rica	--	5,980	196	--	7,330	4,230	--	--	--	7,310	--	25,000	(3)
Dominican Republic	--	--	53	--	--	--	4,420	--	--	--	--	4,470	(3)
Ecuador	--	4,740	--	--	--	3,500	100	100	--	9,000	--	17,400	(3)
El Salvador	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7,600	--	7,600	(3)
Finland	--	--	--	17	--	--	--	--	--	--	54	71	(3)
France	--	154	15,000	--	--	10,000	17,300	97	--	--	16,000	58,600	1
Germany	--	--	147	--	--	117	103	15	162	84	20	648	(3)
Guatemala	8,500	--	--	9,000	--	19	9,080	47	4,500	10,500	8,900	50,600	1
Indonesia	53,400	36,100	17,000	16,200	40,300	19,000	40,000	27,400	15,500	26,600	18,500	310,000	6
Italy	--	--	--	--	19	535	38	--	--	--	--	592	(3)
Ireland	--	223	--	614	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	837	(3)
Jamaica	7	--	--	18	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	25	(3)
Japan	--	24,700	--	35,500	--	40,500	6,000	26,500	9,000	12,000	36,600	191,000	4
Korea, Republic of	--	27,600	--	24,100	--	18,500	10,000	9,000	17,100	17,000	16,500	140,000	3
Lithuania	--	17,000	--	17,400	--	17,500	--	17,500	--	--	31,900	101,000	2
Malaysia	--	18,200	--	--	8,500	5,100	7,500	--	11,500	12,400	12,300	75,400	2
Mexico	84,600	71,500	81,500	88,500	79,300	84,900	75,600	93,500	109,000	75,500	70,600	914,000	19
Morocco	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1,350	--	--	1,350	(3)
Netherlands	--	176	21,100	176	--	37,000	11,100	11,000	58	11,000	10,700	102,000	2
New Zealand	5,250	--	4,820	6,000	99	163	--	3,280	--	3,260	4,800	27,700	1
Nicaragua	--	--	--	--	--	--	54	--	--	--	--	54	(3)
Nigeria	--	--	--	--	--	--	11	--	--	--	--	11	(3)
Oman	--	--	--	100	439	301	100	--	--	--	--	940	(3)
Pakistan	--	--	1	--	1	12	1	--	--	--	--	15	(3)
Panama	--	7,490	1,540	--	--	1,920	--	--	34	--	1,920	12,900	(3)
Peru	--	8,080	--	--	5,700	8,500	--	9,000	--	8,500	--	39,800	1
Philippines	--	13,100	--	11,000	--	10,000	--	--	6,880	12,800	--	53,800	1
Portugal	--	9,090	10,000	--	--	10,000	--	--	--	--	--	29,100	1
Qatar	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	--	6	(3)
Saudi Arabia	15,200	--	18,000	13,000	13,700	--	16,000	11,000	19,000	16,000	--	122,000	2
Senegal	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	27	--	27	(3)
Sierra Leone	--	--	--	--	35	--	--	--	--	--	--	35	(3)
Singapore	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	93	93	(3)
Slovakia	--	--	--	18	39	--	--	--	--	--	--	57	(3)
South Africa	6,580	21,400	6,480	10,500	7,840	10,700	5,360	--	--	6,510	6,530	81,900	2
Spain	--	15,400	9,800	10,000	--	17,100	--	9,800	22,600	--	57	84,700	2
Taiwan	--	34,300	9,950	21,000	--	33,700	22,800	38,500	--	18,500	33,400	212,000	4
Thailand	13,000	19,000	--	16,000	18,800	--	22,500	--	--	18,500	19,100	127,000	3
Trinidad	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7	--	--	7	(3)
United Arab Emirates	11,800	--	16,000	10,000	9,660	57	12,000	12,000	12,000	14,000	--	97,500	2
United Kingdom	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2	10	--	--	12	(3)
Venezuela	32,400	17,900	23,200	5,000	35,800	37,900	20,900	27,000	26,800	--	70,200	297,000	6
Vietnam	--	7,000	--	--	--	8,000	--	--	--	--	--	15,000	(3)
Total	387,000	513,000	429,000	430,000	383,000	531,000	417,000	414,000	417,000	468,000	525,000	4,910,000	##

See footnotes at end of table.

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

-- Zero.

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

²December 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-November	8,680	\$2,580
December	465	184
January-December	9,140	2,760
2008:		
January	1,870	326
February	774	203
March	1,210	222
April	895	204
May	906	308
June	1,130	360
July	632	214
August	1,070	407
September	658	282
October	1,410	530
November	615	211
January-November	11,200	3,270

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

²December 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-November	10,100,000	8,680	4,740,000	--	131,000	5,530,000
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	895	430,000	--	30,300	492,000
May	987,000	906	383,000	45,600	--	559,000
June	935,000	1,130	531,000	1,550	--	405,000
July	905,000	632	417,000	--	45,000	534,000
August	976,000	1,070	414,000	55,700	--	508,000
September	935,000	658	417,000	43,200	--	475,000
October	996,000 ^r	1,410	468,000	--	18,000 ^r	547,000 ^r
November	965,000	615	525,000	56,000	--	385,000
December	917,000	NA	NA	--	2,750	NA
January-November	10,300,000	11,200	4,910,000	96,900	--	5,350,000

^rRevised. 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.