

DIATOMITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The estimated value of processed diatomite, f.o.b. plant, was \$182 million in 1998. Production was from 6 companies with 12 processing facilities in 4 States. Three companies produced more than 75% of the total. California and Nevada were the principal producing States. Estimated end uses of diatomite were filter aids, 64%; absorbents, 13%; fillers, 12%; and other (mostly cement manufacture), 11%.

<u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998^e</u>
Production ¹	646	722	729	773	767
Imports for consumption	(2)	(2)	2	2	2
Exports	157	144	143	140	140
Consumption, apparent	489	578	588	635	629
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. plant	236	238	242	244	237
Stocks, producer, yearend	36	36	36	36	36
Employment, mine and plant, number ^e	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Net import reliance ³ as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	E	E	E

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (1994-97): France, 85%; Mexico, 5%; and other, 10%.

<u>Tariff: Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Normal Trade Relations (NTR)</u>	<u>Non-NTR⁴</u>
		<u>12/31/98</u>	<u>12/31/98</u>
Diatomite, crude or processed	2512.00.0000	Free	Free.

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

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: The United States remained the largest producer and consumer of diatomite and exported processed diatomite to about 70 countries, primarily for filtration use.

In the United States, diatomite use in filtration applications appears to be stabilizing with cost a factor in preventing further growth of ceramic, polymeric, and carbon membrane technologies. Applications as an absorbent continue to grow.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁵	Reserve base ⁵
	1997	1998 ^e		
United States ¹	773	767	250,000	500,000
China	150	150		NA
Denmark ⁶	96	95		NA
France	85	85	Other	2,000
Germany	50	50	countries:	NA
Japan	194	200	550,000	NA
Korea, Republic of	70	70		NA
Mexico	50	50		2,000
Spain	40	40		NA
Former Soviet Union ⁷	90	90		NA
Other countries	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>		<u>NA</u>
World total (may be rounded)	1,800	1,800	<u>800,000</u>	<u>Large</u>

World Resources: World resources of crude diatomite are adequate for the foreseeable future, but the need for diatomite to be near markets encourages development of new sources for the material.

Substitutes: Many materials can be substituted for diatomite. However, the unique properties of diatomite assure its continuing use for many applications. Expanded perlite, and silica sand compete for filtration purposes, other filtration technologies utilize ceramic, polymeric, or carbon membrane. Alternate filler materials include talc, ground silica sand, ground mica, clay, perlite, vermiculite, and ground limestone. For thermal insulation, materials such as various clays and special brick, mineral wool, expanded perlite, and exfoliated vermiculite can be used.

^eEstimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

¹Processed ore sold and used by producers.

²Less than ½ unit.

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

⁴See Appendix B.

⁵See Appendix D for definitions.

⁶Includes sales of molar production.

⁷As constituted before December 1991.