

## DIATOMITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

**Domestic Production and Use:** The estimated value of processed diatomite, f.o.b. plant, was \$174 million in 1996. Six companies with 12 processing facilities in 4 States produced diatomite. California and Nevada were the principal producing States. End uses of diatomite were filter aid, 70%; fillers, 11%; and other, 19%.

<b><u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u></b>	<b><u>1992</u></b>	<b><u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>1994</u></b>	<b><u>1995</u></b>	<b><u>1996<sup>e</sup></u></b>
Production <sup>1</sup>	595	599	613	687	700
Imports for consumption	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Exports	163	165	157	144	137
Consumption, apparent	432	436	456	543	563
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. plant	237	251	248	249	249
Stocks, producer, yearend	36	36	36	36	36
Employment, mine and plant <sup>e</sup> , number	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Net import reliance <sup>3</sup> as a percent of apparent consumption	E	E	E	E	E

**Recycling:** None.

**Import Sources (1992-95):** Mexico, 56%; France, 31%; and other, 13%.

<b><u>Tariff:</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Most favored nation (MFN)</u></b>	<b><u>Non-MFN<sup>4</sup></u></b>
			<b><u>12/31/96</u></b>	<b><u>12/31/96</u></b>
	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 75 countries, primarily for filtration use.

Diatomite is finding new applications in biotechnology, particularly in pharmaceutical applications, in toxic liquid waste thickening, and other environmental cleanup technologies.

**World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:**

	Mine production		Reserves <sup>5</sup>	Reserve base <sup>5</sup>
	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996<sup>e</sup></u>		
United States <sup>1</sup>	687	700	250,000	500,000
Denmark <sup>6</sup>	96	96		NA
France	100	110	Other	2,000
Germany	50	50	countries:	NA
Korea, Republic of	80	80	550,000	NA
Mexico	47	50		2,000
Spain	36	40		NA
Former Soviet Union <sup>7</sup>	110	120		NA
Other countries	<u>164</u>	<u>165</u>		<u>NA</u>
World total (may be rounded)	1,370	1,410	<u>800,000</u>	Large

**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 alternate materials can be substituted for diatomite. However, the unique properties of diatomite assure its continuing use for many applications. Expanded perlite, asbestos, 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 brick, clay, asbestos, mineral wool, expanded perlite, and exfoliated vermiculite can be used.

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. E Net exporter. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Processed ore sold and used by producers.

<sup>2</sup>Less than ½ unit.

<sup>3</sup>Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>5</sup>See Appendix C for definitions.

<sup>6</sup>Includes sales of molar production.

<sup>7</sup>As constituted before Dec. 1991.