

MICA (NATURAL), SCRAP AND FLAKE¹

(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 109,000 metric tons in 1996. North Carolina accounted for about 68% of U.S. production. The remaining output came from Georgia, New Mexico, South Carolina, and South Dakota. Scrap mica was recovered principally from mica and sericite schist and from feldspar, kaolin, and lithium beneficiation. The majority of domestic production was processed into small particle-size mica by wet and dry grinding. Primary uses were joint compound, paint, roofing, oil well drilling additives, and rubber products. The value of 1996 scrap mica production was estimated at \$6.6 million. Ground mica sales were valued at \$30 million. There were nine domestic producers of scrap and flake mica.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996^e
Production: ^{2,3} Mine	85	88	110	108	109
Ground	84	92	95	98	100
Imports, mica powder and mica waste	12	14	18	16	18
Exports, mica powder and mica waste	4	5	6	7	8
Consumption, apparent ⁴	95	105	97	112	119
Price, average, dollars per ton, reported:					
Scrap and flake	51	51	66	52	61
Ground:					
Wet	745	838	1,007	974	1,000
Dry	168	152	151	174	170
Stocks, producer, yearend ^e	7	7	14	13	10
Employment, mine, ^{e,5} number	80	80	364	360	NA
Net import reliance ⁶ as a percent of apparent consumption	12	12	1	5	8

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (1992-95): Canada, 69%; India, 25%; Finland, 2%; Japan, 1%; and other, 3%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Most favored nation (MFN) 12/31/96	Non-MFN⁷ 12/31/96
Mica powder	2525.20.0000	1.4% ad val.	20% ad val.
Mica waste	2525.30.0000	Free	8.8¢/ kg.

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

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Production of ground mica in the United States increased for the fifth consecutive year. The increase is a reflection of a continued improvement in construction activity. Part of this demand is attributable to an increase in hurricane and flood damage, especially in the southeastern United States. The United States remained the major producer of scrap and flake mica in 1996. Imported mica scrap and flake is used primarily for making mica paper and as a filler and reinforcer in plastics.

The principal environmental impact of mica mining was the land disturbance commonly associated with surface mining.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Mine production		Reserves ⁸	Reserve base ⁸
	1995	1996 ^e		
United States ²	108	109	Large	Large
Brazil	7	7	Large	Large
Canada	18	18	Large	Large
India	1	1	Large	Large
Korea, Republic of	44	45	Large	Large
Russia	23	23	Large	Large
Other countries	<u>41</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>Large</u>	<u>Large</u>
World total	242	243	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.

^eEstimated.

¹See also Mica (Natural), Sheet.

²Sold or used by producing companies.

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

⁴Based on ground mica.

⁵Total employment at mines and mills where mica was produced and processed, including byproduct production. Employees were not assigned to specific commodities in calculating employment.

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

⁷See Appendix B.

⁸See Appendix C for definitions.