

PUMICE AND PUMICITE

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: In 2014, domestic production of pumice and pumicite was estimated to be 285,000 tons with an estimated processed value of about \$9.98 million, f.o.b. plant. Production took place at 10 operations in 6 States. Pumice and pumicite were mined in Idaho, Oregon, California, New Mexico, Kansas, and Oklahoma, in descending order of production. About 56% of mined pumice was used in the production of construction building block; horticulture consumed 18%; concrete admixture and aggregate, 12%; abrasives, 10%; and the remaining 4% was used for absorbent, filtration, laundry stone washing, and other applications.

<u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014^e</u>
Production, mine ¹	241	343	338	269	285
Imports for consumption	34	23	67	72	57
Exports ^e	13	14	12	12	15
Consumption, apparent	262	352	393	329	327
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine or mill	28.00	30.60	31.90	34.60	35.00
Employment, mine and mill, number	145	140	140	140	140
Net import reliance ² as a percentage of apparent consumption	8	3	14	18	13

Recycling: Not available.

Import Sources (2010–13): Greece, 93%; Iceland, 4%; Mexico, 2%; and other, 1%.

<u>Tariff: Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Normal Trade Relations</u> <u>12–31–14</u>
Pumice, crude or in irregular pieces, including crushed	2513.10.0010	Free.
Pumice, other	2513.10.0080	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 5% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

PUMICE AND PUMICITE

Events, Trends, and Issues: The amount of domestically produced pumice and pumicite sold or used in 2014 increased to 285,000 tons, compared with 269,000 tons in 2013. Exports increased and imports decreased compared with those of 2013. Approximately 99% of pumice imports originated from Greece and Mexico in 2014, and primarily supplied markets in the eastern and gulf coast regions of the United States. Turkey and Italy are the leading producers of pumice and pumicite.

Although pumice and pumicite are plentiful in the Western United States, legal challenges and public land designations could limit access to known deposits. Pumice and pumicite production is sensitive to mining and transportation costs. An increase in fuel prices would likely lead to increases in production expenditures; imports and competing materials could become attractive substitutes for domestic products.

All known domestic pumice and pumicite mining in 2014 was accomplished through open pit methods, generally in remote areas where land-use conflicts were not severe. Although the generation and disposal of reject fines in mining and milling resulted in local dust issues at some operations, the environmental impact was restricted to a relatively small geographic area.

World Mine Production and Reserves:

	Mine production		Reserves ³
	2013	2014 ^e	
United States ¹	269	285	Large in the United States. Quantitative estimates of reserves for most countries are not available.
Algeria ⁴	338	350	
Cameroon ⁴	500	600	
Chile ⁴	830	830	
Ecuador ⁴	675	675	
Ethiopia	300	300	
France ⁴	276	280	
Greece ⁴	420	450	
Guadaloupe	200	200	
Italy ⁴	3,030	3,000	
Saudi Arabia ⁴	1,000	1,100	
Spain	195	200	
Syria ⁴	500	1,000	
Turkey	5,700	5,700	
Other countries ⁴	<u>2,400</u>	<u>2,400</u>	
World total (rounded)	16,600	17,400	

World Resources: The identified U.S. resources of pumice and pumicite are concentrated in the Western States and estimated to be more than 25 million tons. The estimated total resources (identified and undiscovered) in the Western and Great Plains States are at least 250 million tons and may total more than 1 billion tons. Large resources of pumice and pumicite have been identified on all continents.

Substitutes: The costs of transportation determine the maximum economic distance pumice and pumicite can be shipped and still remain competitive with alternative materials. Competitive resources that may be substituted for pumice and pumicite include crushed aggregates, diatomite, expanded shale and clay, and vermiculite.

^eEstimated.

¹Quantity sold and used by producers.

²Defined as imports – exports.

³See [Appendix C](#) for resource/reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

⁴Includes pozzolan and (or) volcanic tuff.