

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN JULY 2016

U.S. natural soda ash production in July was 1.06 million metric tons (Mt), 7% more than the previous month's production and 6% more than that of July 2015 (table 1).

Ending inventories for July 2016 were 357,000 metric tons (t), 17% more than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in July 2016 was 1.47 Mt, 6% more than that of June 2016 and 3% less than that of July 2015.

Exports of soda ash in June 2016 were 528,000 t, about the same as those of June 2015. Imports of soda ash in June 2016 were 3,090 t, 38% lower than those of June 2015. Production of natural soda ash in June 2016 was slightly higher, and apparent consumption decreased by 14% as compared with that of June 2015. Soda ash import tonnages can differ widely from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the second quarter of 2016. During the second quarter, 650,000 t (51%) went to glassmaking and 361,000 t (28%) was consumed for chemicals. Total consumption for the second quarter of 2016 was slightly higher than that of the second quarter of 2015.

For the first 6 months of 2016, total reported consumption was up by 3% compared to the same period in 2015 based on data submitted by domestic soda ash producers. A review for the period shows an 8% increase in consumption for the overall glass segment with increases reported for container, fiber, and flat glass. Consumption in the chemical, detergent and soaps segments was down slightly. The considerably smaller markets for water treatment increased consumption by 21%, but soda ash consumption in the pulp and paper category was down by 22% for the period.

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2015: ^p			
January–July	6,830	307	10,500 ^r
July	1,010	307	1,510
August	971	284	1,480
September	915	278	1,460
October	927	295	1,280
November	973	348	1,510
December	952	285	1,450
January–December	11,600	285	17,600
2016:			
January	956	325	1,570
February	909	309	1,460
March	1,010	315	1,240
April	955	301	1,450
May	987	280	1,420
June	989	306	1,380
July	1,060	357	1,470
January–July	6,870	357	9,990

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

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 2016^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
Argentina	13,100	62	24,000	16,200	22,000	6,660	\$1,360	\$204	82,000	2	\$17,400
Australia	--	31,900	--	35,200	35,000	--	--	--	102,000	3	18,000
Brazil	92,200	71,700	52,500	112,000	99,900	96,200	19,500	203	524,000	16	105,000
Canada	17,300	21,900	19,200	21,300	16,300	17,900	3,400	190	114,000	3	21,700
Chile	9,180	36,200	37,200	25,600	36,200	--	--	--	144,000	4	30,900
China	41	41	35,000	82	34,200	41	10	233	69,400	2	9,970
Colombia	5,000	16,900	--	6,160	18,000	13,700	2,790	204	59,800	2	11,900
El Salvador	--	6,000	--	--	6,150	--	--	--	12,100	(4)	2,510
France	5,940	--	9,000	--	--	--	--	--	14,900	(4)	2,440
Guatemala	--	6,320	--	5,000	--	6,400	1,330	208	17,700	1	3,780
Indonesia	52,700	61,500	31,700	59,400	61,100	55,400	10,700	194	322,000	10	61,000
Japan	30,500	14,100	39,000	19,100	31,500	27,500	4,800	175	162,000	5	29,000
Korea, Republic of	24,600	21,600	6,000	29,100	21,500	24,100	4,110	170	127,000	4	22,700
Malaysia	16,100	11,000	--	--	9,500	12,000	2,260	189	48,600	1	9,630
Mexico	96,800	91,900	74,400	102,000	107,000	121,000	25,300	209	593,000	18	131,000
Netherlands	16,100	--	19,200	80	20,500	30	3	110	55,900	2	8,890
New Zealand	--	7,000	--	--	--	24	3	110	7,020	(4)	1,350
Philippines	6,700	12,000	--	11,000	--	--	--	--	29,700	1	5,710
Saudi Arabia	1,210	17,500	18,500	--	15,500	15,000	2,520	168	67,700	2	11,400
South Africa	12,500	7,480	--	--	7,520	14,900	2,530	169	42,400	1	7,170
Taiwan	6,950	26,400	--	19,400	10,000	26,000	4,460	172	88,700	3	15,400
Thailand	29,000	23,300	37,100	12,000	22,000	18,600	3,700	200	142,000	4	26,600
United Arab Emirates	15	6,500	12,000	--	6,500	16,000	2,650	166	41,000	1	6,830
United Kingdom	20,100	20,000	24,000	19,900	26,900	20,000	3,490	174	131,000	4	24,800
Venezuela	--	8,890	--	11,300	15,400	--	--	--	35,600	1	8,440
Vietnam	26,500	14,400	11,000	32,000	23,800	--	--	--	108,000	3	20,800
Other	792	12,700	87,000	476	51,900	36,700	6,270	171	190,000	6	33,800
Total	483,000	547,000	537,000	537,000	699,000	528,000	101,000	192	3,330,000	100	648,000

-- Zero.

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

²July 2016 data were not available at time of publication.

³Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY, IN 2016^{1,2}

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ³ (thousand dollars)
China	7	144	3	21	86	130	\$26	\$199	392	2	\$123
France	153	--	--	--	--	1	5	9,320	154	1	74
Germany	632	2,080	2,330	1,630	3,030	1,290	176	137	11,000	53	1,640
Italy	--	571	1,370	1,310	190	950	208	219	4,390	21	984
Japan	2	1	--	226	120	3	6	2,160	353	2	62
Taiwan	117	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	117	1	17
Turkey	8	95	245	--	8	8	6	787	363	2	93
United Kingdom	513	752	705	518	602	270	60	221	3,360	16	585
Other	6	22	60	39	235	441	120	272	802	4	239
Total	1,440	3,670	4,710	3,740	4,270	3,090	607	197	20,900	100	3,810

-- Zero.

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

²July 2016 data were not available at time of publication.

³Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2015:						
January–December	11,600,000	6,390,000	39,800	14,600	--	5,200,000
January–June	5,820,000	3,240,000	21,100	21,000 ^f	--	2,590,000
June	980,000	527,000	5,030	--	50,500	509,000
July	1,010,000	624,000	4,980	15,200	--	371,000
August	971,000	514,000	3,490	--	22,400	483,000
September	915,000	481,000	2,340	--	6,790	443,000
October	927,000	458,000	3,830	17,600	--	455,000
November	973,000	507,000	1,800	52,600	--	415,000
December	952,000	571,000	2,280	--	62,700	446,000
2016:						
January–June	5,810,000	3,330,000	20,900	20,500	--	2,470,000
January	956,000	483,000	1,440	40,300	--	434,000
February	909,000	547,000	3,670	--	15,600	381,000
March	1,010,000	537,000	4,710	5,020	--	472,000
April	955,000	537,000	3,740	--	14,000	436,000
May	987,000	699,000	4,270	--	21,100	314,000
June	989,000	528,000	3,090	25,900	--	439,000
July	1,060,000	NA	NA	51,300	--	NA

^fRevised. 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.

TABLE 5
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER¹

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS ² code	End use	2015				2016		
		2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	1st quarter- 2d quarter
3272	Glass:							
327213	Container	296	294	282	1,140	300 ^r	312	612
327211	Flat	248	251	246	970	249	265	514
327993	Fiber	36	39	41	150	41	41	81
327212	Other	35	31	34	134	32	33	65
	Total	616	615	603	2,390	622 ^r	650	1,270
32518	Chemicals	382	368	391	1,490	361	361	722
325611	Soaps and detergents	77	84	84	328	79	80	159
322	Pulp and paper	17	14	13	59	13	12	25
221310	Water treatment ³	15	17	16	65	18	20	39
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	55	66	51	221	48	52	101
4246	Distributors	71	73	68	286	76	68	144
	Other	40	30	28	142	43	42	85
	Total domestic consumption ⁴	1,270	1,270	1,250	4,990	1,260 ^r	1,280	2,550
	Exports ⁵	1,660	1,560	1,590	6,440	1,580 ^r	1,690	3,260
	Canada	59	57	56	230	54 ^r	49	104
	Total industry sales ⁶	2,930	2,820	2,840	11,400	2,840	2,970	5,810
	Total sales from plants	2,940	2,900	2,850	11,600	2,850	2,980	5,830
	Total production	2,880	2,890	2,850	11,600	2,870	2,930	5,810

^rRevised.

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

²North American Industry Classification System.

³Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

⁴Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

⁵As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

⁶Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.