

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN SEPTEMBER 2019

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in September 2019 were 3.90 million metric tons (Mt) and 4.99 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 130,000 metric tons (t), a slight decrease from that of August and a 4% decrease from that of September 2018. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 166,000 t, a 5% decrease from those in August and a 6% decrease from those in September 2018. Mine stocks were 7.3 Mt at the end of September 2019, a 13% decrease from those held at the end of August 2019 and a 12% decrease from those held in September 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

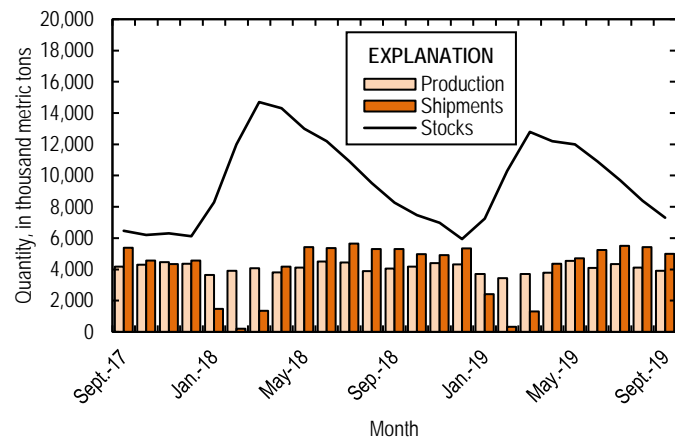


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from September 2017 through September 2019.

Monthly iron ore data are reported as gross weight unless otherwise noted and do not include iron metallics such as pig iron, direct-reduced iron, hot-briquetted iron, or iron nuggets.

U.S. exports of iron ore were 1.17 Mt in September 2019, a 9% decrease from those in August 2019 and September 2018 (fig. 2, table 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 154,000 t in September 2019, nearly one-half of those in August and a 43% decrease from those in September 2018 (fig. 2, table 4, 6). The

spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$93.08 per dry metric ton in September 2019, essentially unchanged from \$93.07 per dry metric ton in August (fig. 2).

Seasonal variations of exports, imports, shipments, and stocks during the winter months are attributed to freezing of waterways and the closing of the Soo Locks in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, which are used to transport iron ore in the Great Lakes region through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

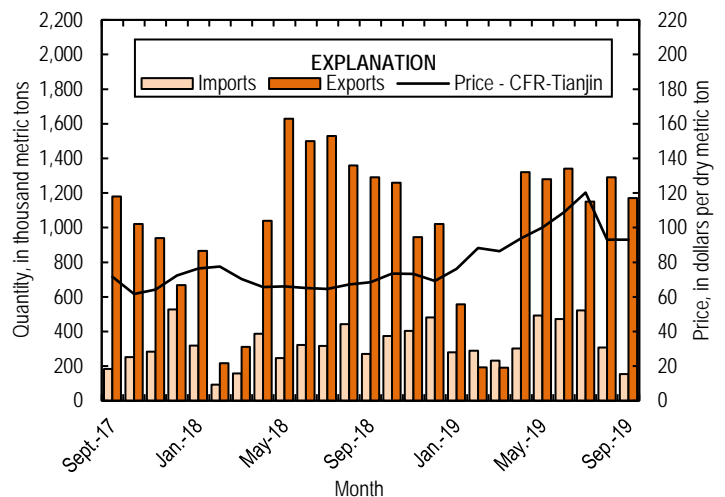


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from September 2017 through September 2019. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE^{1, 2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more of manganese)

(Thousand metric tons, usable ore)

Period	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	End of Month
2018:					
September	4,050	36,400	5,300	34,300	8,270
October	4,180	40,600	4,970	39,200	7,480
November	4,400	45,000	4,910	44,100	6,970
December	4,310	49,300	5,340	49,500	5,940
2019:					
January	3,710	3,710	2,410	2,410	7,240
February	3,430	7,130	326	2,740	10,300
March	3,710	10,800	1,300	4,040	12,800
April	3,780	14,600	4,360	8,400	12,200
May	4,540	19,200	4,710	13,100	12,000
June	4,090	23,300	5,230	18,300	10,900
July	4,340	27,600	5,500	23,800	9,700
August	4,120	31,700	5,430	29,300	8,400
September	3,900	35,600	4,990	34,300	7,310

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallics.

³Includes rail and vessel.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL, BY TYPE OF FURNACE¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Pig iron production		Raw steel production			
	Blast furnace		Basic oxygen furnace		Electric furnace	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2018:						
September	2,010	17,900	2,350	20,500	4,910	43,700
October	2,060	19,900	2,360	22,800	5,190	48,900
November	2,030	22,000	2,380	25,200	5,020	53,900
December	2,100	24,100	2,490	27,700	4,990	58,900
2019:						
January	1,880	1,880	2,330	2,330	5,190	5,190
February	1,840	3,720	2,140	4,470	4,810	10,000
March	2,080	5,800	2,390	6,870	5,290	15,300
April	1,860	7,670	2,170	9,040	5,190	20,500
May	1,930	9,600	2,430	11,500	5,120	25,600
June	1,900	11,500	2,380	13,900	4,870	30,500
July	1,830	13,300	2,190	16,000	5,230	35,700
August	1,840	15,200	2,180	18,200	5,220	40,900
September	1,870	17,000	2,150	20,400	4,850	45,800

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 3
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY AND TYPE ^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality and type of product	2018		2019			
	January–September	September		January–September		
	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Canada	7,470 ^f	964	91,900	6,330	575,000	90.80
Japan	1,710	202	12,500	2,090	129,000	61.62
Other	575 ^f	(4)	71	355	48,900	137.65
Total	9,750 ^f	1,170	105,000	8,780	752,000	85.73
Concentrates	60 ^f	2	683	172	40,700	236.72
Fine ores	1	(4)	15	38	3,060	9.25
Pellets	9,550 ^f	1,170	104,000	8,430	703,000	83.47
Other	140	--	--	137	5,060	36.91
Total	9,750 ^f	1,170	105,000	8,780	752,000	85.73

^fRevised. -- Zero.

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

²All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of exports per month included in "Other."

³Free alongside ship (FAS) value.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY AND TYPE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality of origin and type of product	2018			2019		
	January–September Quantity (thousand metric tons)	September		January–September		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Brazil	1,620 ^r	128	16,400	1,580	193,000	122.15
Canada	475	16	1,350	750	98,900	131.87
Other	450 ^r	10	3,110	719	77,900	108.34
Total	2,550	154	20,900	3,050	370,000	121.31
Concentrates	659 ^r	54	5,440	783	62,900	80.33
Fine Ores	213	10	3,040	184	14,700	22.00
Pellets	1,680	90	12,400	2,070	292,000	141.06
Other	1	(4)	30	6	303	50.50
Total	2,550	154	20,900	3,050	370,000	121.31

^rRevised.

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

²All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	Pellets			Total, all products		
	January–September		September	January–September		September
	2018	2019	2019	2018	2019	2019
Chicago, IL (39)	28	45	15	496	469	43
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	(3)	9	4	128 ^r	205	30
New Orleans, LA (20)	1,650	1,990	71	1,830	2,280	81
Other	--	32	--	91 ^r	91	(3)
Total	1,680	2,070	90	2,550	3,050	154

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Customs Districts with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. IRON ORE TRADE SUMMARY¹

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Exports		Imports	
	Quantity	Value ²	Quantity	Value ³
2018:				
January–September	8,440	612,000	2,280	241,000
September	1,290	103,000	271	23,100
October	1,260	100,000	373	35,200
November	946	77,200	403	38,500
December	1,020	82,900	482	50,400
January–December	11,700	872,000	3,540	365,000
2019:				
January	556	48,600	280	33,300
February	192	14,400	288	38,700
March	191	16,200	231	32,100
April	1,320	108,000	301	37,300
May	1,280	128,000	493	61,500
June	1,340	109,000	471	49,200
July	1,150	121,000	521	60,800
August	1,290	103,000	307	35,900
September	1,170	105,000	154	20,900
January–September	8,480	752,000	3,050	370,000

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

²Free alongside ship (FAS) value.

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.