

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN NOVEMBER 2019

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in November 2019 were 4.03 million metric tons (Mt) and 4.59 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 134,000 metric tons (t), a 29% increase from that of October and a 8% decrease from that of November 2018. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 153,000 t, an 22% increase from those in October and a 6% decrease from those in November 2018. Mine stocks were 6.1 Mt at the end of November 2019, a 9% decrease from those held at the end of October 2019 and a 13% decrease from those held in November 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

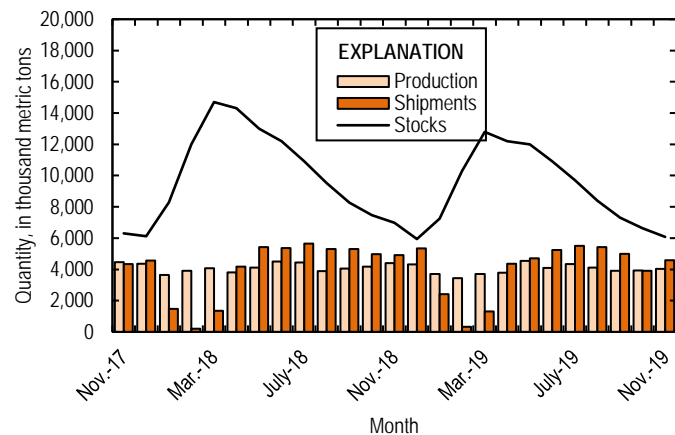


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from November 2017 through November 2019.

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 942,000 t in November 2019, a 5% increase from those in October 2019 and essentially unchanged from November 2018 (fig. 2, tables 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 213,000 t in November 2019, a 27% decrease in October and a 47% decrease from those in

November 2018 (fig. 2, tables 4, 6). The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$84.98 per dry metric ton in November 2019, a 4% decrease from \$88.53 per dry metric ton in October (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.

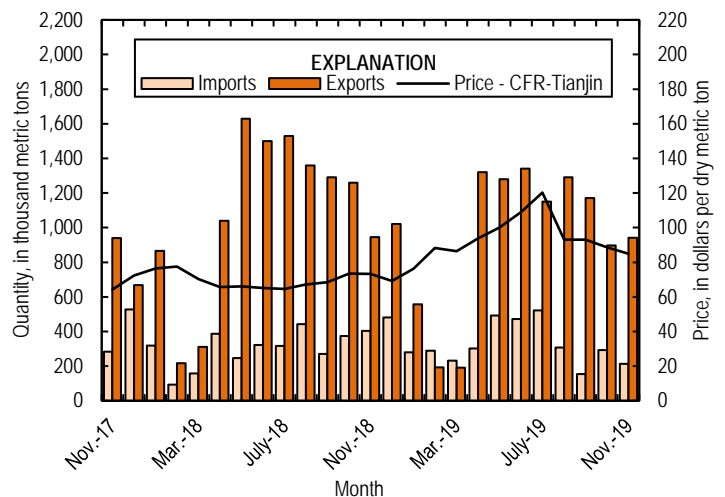


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from November 2017 through November 2019. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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:					
November	4,400	45,000	4,910	44,100	4,120 ^r
December	4,310	49,300	5,340	49,500	3,100 ^r
2019:					
January	3,710	3,710	2,410	2,410	4,390 ^r
February	3,430	7,130	326	2,740	7,490 ^r
March	3,710	10,800	1,300	4,040	9,910 ^r
April	3,780	14,600	4,360	8,400	9,330 ^r
May	4,540	19,200	4,710	13,100	9,150 ^r
June	4,090	23,300	5,230	18,300	8,020 ^r
July	4,340	27,600	5,500	23,800	6,850 ^r
August	4,120	31,700	5,430	29,300	5,550 ^r
September	3,900	35,600	4,990	34,300	4,460 ^r
October	3,240	38,900	3,900	38,200	3,800 ^r
November	4,030	42,900	4,590	42,700	3,230

^rRevised.

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			
	Basic oxygen furnace		Blast furnace		Electric furnace	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2018:						
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
October	1,700	18,700	2,120	22,500	5,130	50,900
November	1,720	20,500	1,970	24,500	5,120	56,000

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–November Quantity (thousand metric tons)	November		January–November		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)
Canada	9,160 ^f	771	70,400	7,820	717,000	91.72
Japan	2,080	121	7,320	2,360	145,000	61.58
Other	726 ^f	50	1,800	431	52,700	122.24
Total	12,000 ^f	942	79,500	10,600	915,000	86.25
Concentrates	62 ^f	(4)	17	198	42,900	216.44
Fine ores	1	(4)	35	38	3,130	9.25
Pellets	11,700 ^f	892	77,700	10,200	863,000	84.65
Other	230 ^f	50	1,750	187	6,820	36.47
Total	12,000 ^f	942	79,500	10,600	915,000	86.25

^fRevised.

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–November	November		January–November		
	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)
Brazil	2,050 ^r	117	15,000	1,880	235,000	124.69
Canada	720	1	117	830	112,000	134.58
Other	550 ^r	95	12,800	842	94,400	112.13
Total	3,320 ^r	213	27,900	3,550	441,000	124.02
Concentrates	949 ^r	63	6,000	908	75,800	83.47
Fine Ores	229	7	2,210	191	16,900	22.00
Pellets	2,130	143	19,700	2,450	348,000	142.02
Other	13	--	--	6	303	50.50
Total	3,320 ^r	213	27,900	3,550	441,000	124.02

^rRevised. -- 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 imports per month included in "Other."

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

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–November		November	January–November		November
	2018	2019	2019	2018	2019	2019
Chicago, IL (39)	28	45	--	785	582	57
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	(3)	9	--	131	211	1
New Orleans, LA (20)	2,100	2,360	143	2,300	2,670	156
Other	--	32	--	104 [†]	91	(3)
Total	2,130	2,450	143	3,320 [†]	3,550	213

[†]Revised. -- 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–November	12,000 ^r	889,000	3,320 ^r	338,000
November	946	77,200	403	38,500
December	1,020	82,900	482	50,400
January–December	13,000	972,000	3,810	388,000
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	1,450	121,000	521	60,800
August	1,290	103,000	307	35,900
September	1,170	105,000	154	20,900
October	897	83,700	293	42,900
November	942	79,500	213	27,900
January–November	10,600	915,000	3,550	441,000

^rRevised.

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.