

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN JUNE 2020

The ongoing worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has weakened demand for soda ash, which has resulted in reductions in production and exports, and increases in stocks. U.S. natural soda ash production in June was an estimated 628,000 metric tons (t), a 15% decrease compared with that of the previous month and 34% less than that of June 2019. Soda ash production for the first 6 months of 2020 was 5.1 million metric tons (Mt), a 12% decrease compared with that of the same period of 2019 (tables 1, 4).

Ending stocks in June increased to 454,000 t, 19% more than those of the preceding month. Stocks have increased for 5 consecutive months after decreasing in January to 275,000 t.

Wyoming trona production in June 2020 was 1.04 Mt, 8% less than that of May 2020 and 36% less than that of June 2019. Trona production for the first 6 months of 2020 was 7.87 Mt, a 15% decrease compared with that of the same period of 2019.

Exports of soda ash in June 2020 were 298,000 t, 30% less than those of May 2020 and 51% less than those of June 2019. Exports for the first 6 months of 2020 were 2.94 Mt, a 17% decrease compared with that of the same period of 2019 (tables 2, 4).

June 2020 imports of soda ash were 561 t, 16% less than those of May 2020 and 98% less than those of June 2019. Soda

ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages (tables 3, 4).

Apparent consumption for June 2020 was an estimated 260,000 t, a slight decrease from that of May 2020 and 28% less than that of June 2019. Apparent consumption for the first six months of 2020 was 2.04 Mt, 14% less than that of the same period of 2019. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to variation in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year (table 4).

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

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TABLE 1  
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production <sup>2</sup>	Stocks, end of period	
2019:			
January–June	5,800	281 <sup>r</sup>	9,220 <sup>r</sup>
June	946	281	1,610
July	972	246	1,630
August	929	229	1,490
September	977	304	1,550
October	1,010	329	1,520
November	1,010	336	1,430
December	1,030	289	1,540
January–December	11,700	289	18,400
2020:			
January	954	275	1,570
February	944 <sup>e</sup>	306	1,360 <sup>r,e</sup>
March	1,020 <sup>e</sup>	326	1,430 <sup>r,e</sup>
April	823 <sup>e</sup>	333	1,340 <sup>r,e</sup>
May	739 <sup>e</sup>	383	1,130 <sup>r,e</sup>
June	628 <sup>e</sup>	454 <sup>e</sup>	1,040 <sup>e</sup>
January–June	5,100 <sup>e</sup>	454 <sup>e</sup>	7,870 <sup>r,e</sup>

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</sup>Revised.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production 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 OR LOCALITY, IN 2020<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	7,000	25,400	60	--	7,520	12,800	\$2,920	\$229	52,700	2	\$18,500
Australia	35,000	--	34,200	--	30,500	32,000	6,430	201	132,000	4	28,400
Brazil	116,000	83,000	66,800	85,800	36,300	13,000	2,510	193	401,000	14	74,300
Canada	17,300	13,800	19,600	15,100	14,000	12,700	2,810	221	92,500	3	20,800
Chile	43,300	75,400	45,200	--	76,400	5,560	952	171	246,000	8	56,200
China	35,500	50,000	40,000	25,000	--	--	--	--	151,000	5	16,500
Colombia	4,000	20,000	10,000	13,000	--	--	--	--	47,000	2	9,710
Guatemala	--	12,000	6,600	4,000	--	--	--	--	22,600	1	4,720
India	--	32,600	--	11,900	--	22,000	3,640	165	66,500	2	10,900
Indonesia	63,300	63,200	40,000	36,800	65,600	40	10	259	269,000	9	53,700
Japan	20,500	--	29,500	18,000	20,200	22,000	3,910	178	110,000	4	20,000
Korea, Republic of	22,100	19,600	14,200	35,300	27,500	19,100	3,430	179	138,000	5	25,500
Malaysia	19,200	47,500	17,300	32,700	--	10,500	1,800	171	127,000	4	24,900
Mexico	111,000	104,000	110,000	66,900	37,700	86,800	20,500	236	516,000	18	123,000
Netherlands	10,900	16,000	--	10,000	--	--	--	--	36,900	1	6,560
Philippines	7,000	--	18,000	--	8,500	--	--	--	33,500	1	6,820
Saudi Arabia	20,300	--	45,000	80	--	13,800	2,410	175	79,200	3	13,600
Taiwan	8,500	11,500	--	21,200	24,500	19,900	3,890	196	85,600	3	17,000
Thailand	35,700	--	57,300	25,700	11,500	6,320	985	156	137,000	5	27,700
United Arab Emirates	7,500	--	8,500	--	20,000	9,000	1,620	181	45,000	2	7,810
Vietnam	181	9,640	20,000	6,220	40,200	10,100	2,580	257	86,300	3	17,800
Others	835	52,400	1,310	6,500	4,980	2,260	266	118	68,300	2	12,700
Total	585,000	636,000	584,000	414,000	425,000	298,000	60,600	204	2,940,000	100	597,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2020<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June			January–June		
						Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
China	62	29	20	80	65	28	\$17	\$615	284	1	\$175
France	21	64	71	23	51	--	--	--	230	1	353
Mexico	175	209	192	97	233	136	52	38	1,040	3	387
Russia	--	--	--	--	99	267	86	32	366	1	127
Turkey	25	36,100	--	--	--	--	--	--	36,100	92	6,140
United Kingdom	108	36	201	127	202	108	49	46	781	2	430
Others	54	16	126	10	16 <sup>r</sup>	23	47	204	245	1	365
Total	444	36,500	610	336	666	561	252	45	39,000	100	7,980

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption <sup>2</sup>
				Increase	Decrease	
2019:						
January–December	11,700,000	7,020,000	115,000	--	8,100	4,830,000
January–June	5,800,000	3,530,000	73,900	--	16,800 <sup>†</sup>	2,360,000 <sup>†</sup>
June	946,000	614,000	36,200	7,410	--	361,000
July	972,000	558,000	1,190	--	34,200	450,000
August	929,000	618,000	1,180	--	17,600	330,000
September	977,000	452,000	36,300	75,200	--	486,000
October	1,010,000	549,000	890	24,700	--	433,000
November	1,010,000	609,000	778	7,800	--	392,000
December	1,030,000	701,000	1,260	--	47,100	376,000
2020:						
January–June	5,100,000 <sup>°</sup>	2,940,000	39,000	165,000	--	2,000,000
January	954,000	585,000	444	--	14,100	383,000
February	944,000 <sup>°</sup>	636,000	36,500	30,900	--	314,000 <sup>°</sup>
March	1,020,000 <sup>°</sup>	584,000	610	19,900	--	412,000 <sup>°</sup>
April	823,000 <sup>°</sup>	414,000	336	6,580	--	403,000 <sup>°</sup>
May	739,000 <sup>°</sup>	425,000	666	50,500	--	264,000 <sup>°</sup>
June	628,000 <sup>°</sup>	298,000	561	71,000 <sup>°</sup>	--	260,000 <sup>°</sup>

<sup>°</sup>Estimated. <sup>†</sup>Revised. -- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.