

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN AUGUST 2020

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in August 2020 were 3.8 million metric tons (Mt) and 3.12 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 122,000 metric tons (t), a 68% increase from that of July 2020 and an 8% decrease from that of August 2019. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 101,000 t, a 10% decrease from those in July and a 43% decrease from those in August 2019. Mine stocks were 4.41 Mt at the end of August 2020, a 17% increase from stocks held at the end of July and a 20% decrease from those held in August 2019 (fig. 1, table 1).

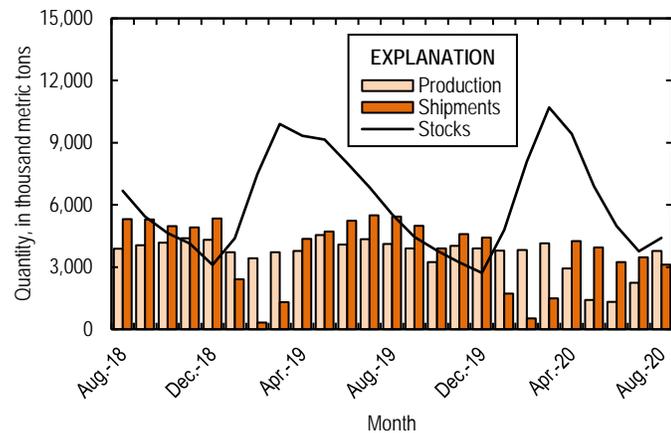


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from August 2018 through August 2020.

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 960,000 t in August 2020, an 11% increase from those in July and a 25% decrease from those in August 2019 (fig. 2, tables 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 617,000 t in August 2020, more than triple those in July 2020 and more than double those in August 2019 (fig. 2, tables

4, 6). The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$121.07 per dry metric ton in August 2020, a 12% increase from \$108.52 per dry metric ton in July 2020 (fig. 2).

Significant decreases in production, shipments, and trade, compared with those during the same period in 2019, were owing to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in lower steel production and consumption globally.

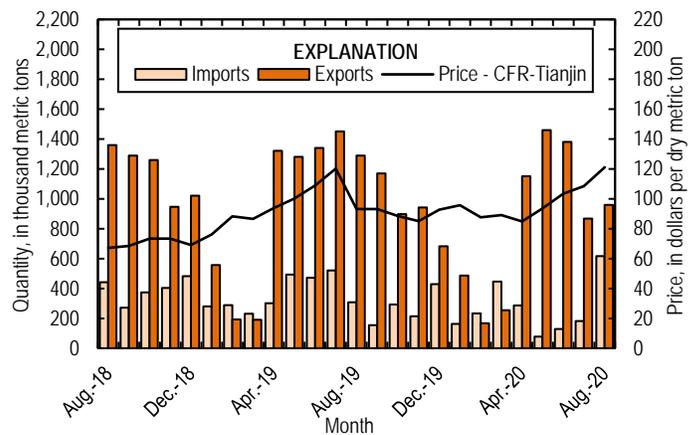


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from August 2018 through August 2020. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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
2019:					
August	4,120	31,700	5,430	29,300	5,550
September	3,900	35,600	4,990	34,300	4,460
October	3,240	38,900	3,900	38,200	3,800
November	4,030	42,900	4,590	42,700	3,230
December	3,900	46,800	4,420	47,200	2,720
2020:					
January	3,790	3,790	1,720	1,720	4,790
February	3,830	7,620	520	2,240	8,100
March	4,140	11,800	1,490	3,720	10,700
April	2,930	14,700	4,250	7,980	9,430
May	1,420	16,100	3,940	11,900	6,900
June	1,320	17,400	3,240	15,200	4,980
July	2,250 ^r	19,700 ^r	3,470 ^r	18,600 ^r	3,760 ^r
August	3,780	23,400	3,120	21,700	4,410

^rRevised.

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

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallica.

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
2019:						
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
December	1,850	22,300	2,140	26,600	5,160	61,200
2020:						
January	1,680	1,680	2,270	2,270	5,380	5,380
February	1,920	3,600	2,270	4,540	4,800	10,200
March	1,910	5,510	2,230	6,770	4,770	14,900
April	1,110	6,620	1,240	8,010	3,580	18,500
May	949	7,570	1,100	9,110	3,820	22,300
June	1,170	8,740	1,230	10,300	3,690	26,000
July	1,310	10,000	1,500	11,800	3,930	30,000
August	1,520	11,600	1,710	13,500	4,220	34,200

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	2019		2020			
	January–August	August		January–August		
	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	--	1	548	1	632	632.00
Canada	5,370 ^f	612	50,100	4,400	368,000	83.71
Japan	1,900 ^f	133	9,170	1,380	93,500	67.54
Slovakia	--	170	11,700	665	43,100	64.87
United Kingdom	80	45	1,580	208	7,270	34.96
Other	315 ^f	(4)	65	72	7,800	108.32
Total	7,660 ^f	961	73,200	6,730	520,000	77.34
Concentrates	170	2	617	3	1,030	341.67
Fine ores	31 ^f	(4)	20	1	303	303.00
Pellets	7,280 ^f	914	71,000	6,520	512,000	78.53
Other	183 ^f	45	1,600	208	7,360	35.37
Total	7,660 ^f	960	73,200	6,730	520,000	77.34

^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	2019		2020			
	January–August	August		January–August		
	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	1,450	201	23,100	829	101,000	121.36
Canada	733 [†]	226	28,000	612	72,800	118.95
South Africa	28	28	3,720	34	4,200	123.56
Sweden	78	95	10,900	244	26,900	110.05
Turkey	28	67	2,260	67	2,260	33.69
Other	574 [†]	(4)	22	348	41,500	119.22
Total	2,890	617	67,900	2,130	248,000	116.36
Concentrates	728 [†]	141	10,100	174	12,800	73.39
Fine Ores	173	22	1,890	207	21,000	101.54
Pellets	1,980	453	56,000	1,740	213,000	122.58
Other	6	--	--	12	1,130	94.08
Total	2,890	617	67,900	2,130	248,000	116.36

[†]Revised. -- 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.

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–August		August	January–August		August
	2019	2020	2020	2019	2020	2020
Baltimore, MD (13)	--	--	--	7	9	9
Charleston, SC (16)	--	--	--	(3)	31	13
Chicago, IL (39)	31	--	--	426	169	141
New Orleans, LA (20)	1,920	1,560	453	2,200	1,680	453
Other	36 ^r	180	--	258 ^r	245	(3)
Total	1,980	1,740	453	2,890	2,130	617

^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
2019:				
January–August	7,660 ^r	648,000	2,890	349,000
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
December	682	67,600	428	58,500
January–December	11,350 ^r	983,000	3,980	499,000
2020:				
January	486	45,900	162	21,500
February	168	11,200	233	32,700
March	254	18,800	446	52,300
April	1,150	89,000	286	29,400
May	1,460	110,000	78	7,150
June	1,380	101,000	129	15,700
July	867	72,000	183	21,500
August	960	73,200	617	67,900
January–August	6,730	520,000	2,130	248,000

^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.