

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN DECEMBER 2020

In December, soda ash production was 927,000 metric tons (t), an 11% increase compared with the previous month's revised production but 10% less than that of December 2019. Soda ash production for 2020 was 9.99 million metric tons (Mt), a 15% decrease compared with that of 2019. The ongoing worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has weakened global demand for soda ash. Ending stocks in December increased to 317,000 t, 3% more than those of the preceding month (tables 1, 4).

Wyoming trona production in December 2020 was 1.45 Mt, 4% more than that of November 2020 but 6% less than that of December 2019. Trona production for 2020 was 14.8 Mt, a 20% decrease compared with that of 2019 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash increased in December 2020 to 500,000 t, 13% more than those of November 2020 but 29% less than those of December 2019. Exports for 2020 were 5.59 Mt, a 20% decrease compared with those of 2019 (tables 2, 4).

December 2020 imports of soda ash were 808 t compared with a revised 556 t imported in November 2020. Imports for 2020 were an estimated 98,100 t, 15% less than 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 December 2020 was 418,000 t, 9% more than that of November 2020 and 11% more than that of December 2019. Apparent consumption for 2020 was 4.47 Mt, 7% less than that 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. Year to date apparent consumption was consistently lower in 2020 compared with that of 2019 because of the global pandemic (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:			
December	1,030	289	1,540
January–December	11,700	289	18,400
2020:			
January	954	275	1,570
February	927	306	1,340
March	1,030	326	1,440
April	784	333	1,300
May	679	383	1,060
June	611 <sup>r</sup>	519 <sup>r</sup>	935
July	717 <sup>r</sup>	276 <sup>r</sup>	712
August	846 <sup>r</sup>	342 <sup>r</sup>	993
September	747 <sup>r</sup>	232 <sup>r</sup>	1,140
October	937 <sup>r</sup>	293 <sup>r</sup>	1,450
November	838 <sup>r</sup>	307 <sup>r</sup>	1,390
December	927	317	1,450
January–December	9,990	317	14,800

<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	July	August	September	October	November	December		January–December			
												Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	
Argentina	7,000	25,400	60	--	7,520	12,800	8,270	--	--	27,000	14,800	11,500	\$2,280	\$198	114,000	2	\$33,200
Australia	35,000	--	34,200	--	30,500	32,000	--	34,600	29,000	--	--	35,000	7,190	205	230,000	4	48,900
Brazil	116,000	83,000	66,800	85,800	36,300	13,000	55,000	47,900	29,600	72,900	67,700	32,200	5,640	175	707,000	13	128,000
Canada	17,300	13,800	19,600	15,100	14,000	12,700	15,600	14,200	13,600	13,600	17,200	16,900	3,900	231	184,000	3	42,100
Chile	43,300	75,400	45,200	--	76,400	5,560	32,800	41,500	39,200	--	46,100	36,400	8,730	240	442,000	8	102,000
China	35,500	50,000	40,000	25,000	--	--	192	--	50,000	--	428	--	--	--	201,000	4	23,600
Colombia	4,000	20,000	10,000	13,000	--	--	24,700	12,100	10,000	14,000	20,000	21,700	4,670	215	150,000	3	31,600
Guatemala	--	12,000	6,600	4,000	--	--	7,400	--	2,930	6,400	4,000	--	--	--	43,300	1	9,330
India	--	32,600	--	11,900	--	22,000	33,500	12,600	10,100	30,200	27,000	121	13	110	180,000	3	29,600
Indonesia	63,300	63,200	40,000	36,800	65,600	40	47,000	14,000	19,300	43,500	20,500	53,900	9,520	177	467,000	8	89,800
Japan	20,500	--	29,500	18,000	20,200	22,000	61	10,100	9,500	16,500	--	33,700	6,610	196	180,000	3	33,600
Korea, Republic of	22,100	19,600	14,200	35,300	27,500	19,100	391	19,100	16,800	24,500	15,300	49,100	9,170	187	263,000	5	48,200
Malaysia	19,200	47,500	17,300	32,700	--	10,500	--	18,500	48,100	34,700	34,600	26,000	4,900	188	289,000	5	55,200
Mexico	111,000	104,000	110,000	66,900	37,700	86,800	131,000	80,900	89,400	97,800	93,100	116,000	35,500	306	1,120,000	20	277,000
Netherlands	10,900	16,000	--	10,000	--	--	--	--	--	70	--	--	--	--	37,000	1	6,570
Peru	--	10,600	75	75	--	75	7,750	14,100	--	11,600	13,600	13,600	2,950	217	71,400	1	15,400
Philippines	7,000	--	18,000	--	8,500	--	4	--	11,500	12,000	--	9,420	1,720	183	66,400	1	13,100
Saudi Arabia	20,300	--	45,000	80	--	13,800	54	--	79	12,500	--	--	--	--	91,800	2	15,800
Taiwan	8,500	11,500	--	21,200	24,500	19,900	102	--	18,500	10,500	15,500	13,400	2,690	201	144,000	3	28,500
Thailand	35,700	--	57,300	25,700	11,500	6,320	15,100	18,600	45,800	16,500	16,500	7,140	1,430	200	256,000	5	47,800
United Arab Emirates	7,500	--	8,500	--	20,000	9,000	--	8,680	--	8,500	--	--	--	--	62,200	1	10,700
Vietnam	181	9,640	20,000	6,220	40,200	10,100	1,490	--	20,600	25,000	22,800	10,800	1,990	185	167,000	3	32,600
Others	835	41,800	1,230	6,420	4,980	2,180	5,840	15,700	6,760	8,980	13,100	13,700	2,560	187	121,000	2	22,800
Total	585,000	636,000	584,000	414,000	425,000	298,000	386,000	363,000	471,000	487,000	442,000	500,000	111,000	223	5,590,000	100	1,150,000

-- 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	July	August	September	October	November	December		January–December			
												Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	
China	62	29	20	80	65	28	74	159	54	23	40	54	\$36	\$668	687	1	\$422
Mexico	175	209	192	97	233	136	194	118	38	39	130	428	140	327	1,990	2	744
Russia	--	--	--	--	99	267	--	144	--	72	--	--	--	--	582	1	208
Turkey	25	36,100	--	--	--	27,200 <sup>e</sup>	--	--	28,500 <sup>e</sup>	--	--	--	--	--	91,800 <sup>e</sup>	94	16,100 <sup>e</sup>
United Kingdom	108	36	201	127	202	108	72	145	108	53	148	159	73	462	1,460	1	790
Others	74	81	197	32	67	23	80	122	196	278	239	167	104	625	1,560	2	1,780
Total	444	36,400	610	336	666	27,800 <sup>e</sup>	421 <sup>r</sup>	687 <sup>r</sup>	28,900 <sup>e</sup>	465	556 <sup>r</sup>	808	354	438	98,100 <sup>e</sup>	100	20,000 <sup>e</sup>

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>r</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>Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau adjusted by U.S. Geological Survey.

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	--	8,000	4,830,000
December	1,030,000	701,000	1,270	--	47,100	376,000
2020:						
January–December	9,990,000	5,590,000	98,100 <sup>e</sup>	27,400	--	4,470,000 <sup>e</sup>
January	954,000	585,000	444	--	14,100	383,000
February	927,000	636,000	36,400	30,900	--	296,000
March	1,030,000	584,000	610	19,900	--	422,000
April	784,000	414,000	336	6,580	--	363,000
May	679,000	425,000	666	50,500	--	204,000
June	611,000 <sup>r</sup>	298,000	27,800 <sup>e</sup>	136,000 <sup>r</sup>	--	205,000 <sup>r,e</sup>
July	717,000 <sup>r</sup>	386,000	421 <sup>r</sup>	--	243,000 <sup>r</sup>	574,000 <sup>r</sup>
August	846,000 <sup>r</sup>	363,000	687 <sup>r</sup>	66,300 <sup>r</sup>	--	418,000 <sup>r</sup>
September	747,000 <sup>r</sup>	471,000	28,900 <sup>e</sup>	--	110,000 <sup>r</sup>	415,000 <sup>r,e</sup>
October	937,000 <sup>r</sup>	487,000	465	60,700 <sup>r</sup>	--	390,000 <sup>r</sup>
November	838,000 <sup>r</sup>	442,000	556 <sup>r</sup>	14,600 <sup>r</sup>	--	382,000 <sup>r</sup>
December	927,000	500,000	808	9,320	--	418,000

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau adjusted by U.S Geological Survey.