

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN JANUARY 2021

In January, soda ash production was 952,000 metric tons (t), a 3% increase compared with the previous month's revised production but essentially unchanged from that of January 2020. Ending stocks in January decreased to 301,000 t, slightly less than those of the revised preceding month (tables 1, 4).

Wyoming trona production in January 2021 was 1.51 Mt, 4% more than that of December 2020 but 4% less than that of January 2020 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash increased in January 2021 to 575,000 t, 15% more than those of December 2020 but slightly less than those of January 2020 (tables 2, 4).

January 2021 imports of soda ash were 364 t, 55% less than those of December 2020 and 18% less than those of January 2020. 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 January 2021 was 381,000 t, 11% less than that of December 2020 but essentially unchanged from that of January 2020. 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).

Table 5 provides reported soda ash consumption statistics for the fourth quarter of 2020. Reported consumption for the fourth quarter was 1.16 Mt, a slight decrease compared with consumption for the fourth quarter of 2019. During the fourth quarter of 2020, 554,000 t (48%) went to glassmaking and 334,000 t (29%) was consumed in the production of chemicals. Reported consumption for 2020 was 4.44 Mt, 6% less than consumption for 2019.

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	
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	519	935
July	717	276	712
August	846	342	993
September	747	232	1,140
October	937	293	1,450
November	838	307	1,390
December	927	305 <sup>r</sup>	1,450
January–December	9,990	305 <sup>r</sup>	14,800
2021, January	952	301	1,510

<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 2021<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January			
	Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Percent of total quantity
Australia	35,000	\$7,960	\$227	6
Brazil	88,900	13,400	151	15
Canada	14,600	3,650	250	3
Chile	40,600	8,240	203	7
India	15,000	3,000	200	3
Indonesia	35,000	5,850	167	6
Malaysia	30,000	4,720	157	5
Mexico	111,000	32,000	289	19
Peru	10,200	2,070	204	2
Saudi Arabia	47,100	7,250	154	8
Thailand	64,800	11,000	170	11
United Arab Emirates	29,400	4,760	162	5
Vietnam	26,800	4,930	183	5
Others	26,600	5,890	222	5
Total	575,000	115,000	200	100

<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 2021<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January			
	Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Percent of total quantity
China	93	\$53	\$577	26
France	60	27	448	17
Mexico	116	45	383	32
United Kingdom	93	52	559	25
Others	2	27	14,500	1
Total	363	204	561	100

<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	
2020:						
January–December	9,990,000	5,590,000	98,100 <sup>e</sup>	15,900 <sup>r</sup>	--	4,480,000 <sup>r,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	298,000	27,800 <sup>e</sup>	136,000	--	205,000 <sup>e</sup>
July	717,000	386,000	421	--	243,000	574,000
August	846,000	363,000	687	66,300	--	418,000
September	747,000	471,000	28,900 <sup>e</sup>	--	110,000	415,000 <sup>e</sup>
October	937,000	487,000	465	60,700	--	390,000
November	838,000	442,000	556	14,600	--	382,000
December	927,000	500,000	808	-- <sup>r</sup>	2,160	429,000 <sup>r</sup>
2021, January	952,000	575,000	363	--	4,370	381,000

<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.

TABLE 5  
REPORTED CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH IN THE UNITED STATES, BY END USE, BY QUARTER<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons)

NAICS <sup>2</sup> code	End use	2019					2020				
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter	1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter– 4th quarter
3272	Glass:										
327213	Container	250	250	255	250	1,010	250	259	253	254	1,020
327211	Flat	228	234	239	253	954	225	169	241	239	874
327993	Fiber	39	41	44	42	166	40	36	41	43	160
327212	Other	27	23	23	22	95	22	12	22	18	74
	Total	545	548	562	566	2,220	537	476	557	554	2,120
32518	Chemicals	335	358	333	343	1,370	314	291	304	334	1,240
325611	Soaps and detergents	69	67	71	65	272	70	64	62	59	255
322	Pulp and paper	10	10	9	10	39	9	10	9	10	38
221310	Water treatment <sup>3</sup>	10	11	10	10	41	10	9	11	10	40
56221	Flue gas desulfurization	47	38	39	38	162	33	30	42	44	149
4246	Distributors	71	61	68	61	261	66	59	59	57	241
	Other	84	74	108	88	354	87	77	95	88	347
	Total domestic consumption <sup>4</sup>	1,170	1,170	1,200	1,180	4,720	1,130	1,020	1,140	1,160	4,440
	Exports <sup>5</sup>	1,710	1,760	1,780	1,790	7,040	1,740	1,080 <sup>r</sup>	1,220	1,400	5,430
	Canada	44	49	43	42	178	48	40	40	44	172
	Total industry sales <sup>6</sup>	2,880	2,920	2,980	2,970	11,800	2,860	2,090	2,360	2,550	9,860
	Total sales from plants	2,890	2,970	2,990	3,030	11,900	2,920	1,960	2,320 <sup>r</sup>	2,670	9,870
	Total production	2,860	2,940	2,880	3,040	11,700	2,910	2,070 <sup>r</sup>	2,310 <sup>r</sup>	2,700	9,990

<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>North American Industry Classification System.

<sup>3</sup>Includes soda ash equivalent from soda liquors and purge liquors sold to power plants for water treatment. Sales of mine water are excluded.

<sup>4</sup>Imports reported by the producer/importer have been distributed into appropriate end-use categories listed above.

<sup>5</sup>As reported by producers; includes Canada. Data may not necessarily agree with those reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the same periods.

<sup>6</sup>Represents soda ash from domestic origin (production and inventory changes) and imports and exports. Includes soda ash sold by coproducers and distributed by purchasers into appropriate end-use categories.