

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN MARCH 2021

In March, soda ash production was 969,000 metric tons (t), a 12% decrease compared with the previous month's revised production and 5% less than that of March 2020. Production for the first three months of 2021 was 3.02 million metric tons (Mt), 4% more than that of the same period of 2020. Ending stocks in March decreased for the fourth consecutive month to 229,000 t, 20% less than those of the preceding month (tables 1, 4).

Wyoming trona production in March 2021 was 1.44 Mt, 16% more than the revised production of February 2021 but 6% less than that of March 2020. Trona production for the first three months of 2021 was 4.19 Mt, 8% less than the revised production for the same period of 2020 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash increased in March 2021 to 719,000 t, 56% more than those of February 2021 and 23% more than those of March 2020. Exports for the first three months of 2021 were 1.75 Mt, 3% less than the total for the same period of 2020 (tables 2, 4).

March 2021 imports of soda ash were 548 t, 16% less than those of February 2021 and 10% less than those of March 2020. Imports for the first three months of 2021 were 1,560 t, 96% less than the revised total for the same period of 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 March 2021 was 309,000 t, 53% less than the revised total for February 2021 and 27% less than the total for March 2020. Apparent consumption for the first three months of 2021 was 1.34 Mt, 22% more than the revised total for the same period of 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).

All percentages in this report were calculated using unrounded data.

**Note:** The annual average value of U.S. soda ash production for 2020 was \$132.15 per short ton (\$145.67 per metric ton), a 5% decrease compared with the 2019 average value of \$139.02 per short ton (\$153.24 per metric ton).

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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–March	2,910	326	4,530 <sup>r</sup>
March	1,030	326	1,530
April	784	333	1,300
May	679	383	1,060
June	611	519	935
July	717	276	712
August	846	342	1,010
September	747	232	1,150
October	937	293	1,460
November	838	307	1,370
December	927	305	1,450
January–December	9,990	305	15,000
2021:			
January	952	301	1,510
February	1,100 <sup>r</sup>	287	1,240 <sup>r</sup>
March	969	229	1,440
January–March	3,020	229	4,190

<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	February	March			January–March		
			Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	60	18,400	9,520	\$1,910	\$201	27,900	2	\$5,950
Australia	35,000	--	29,500	6,000	203	64,500	4	14,000
Brazil	88,900	60,000	87,100	10,900	125	236,000	13	33,200
Canada	14,600	14,900	16,700	4,040	242	46,200	3	11,300
Chile	40,600	32,800	46,500	11,300	244	120,000	7	27,100
Colombia	7,000	10,100	28,000	5,350	191	45,100	3	8,930
Guatemala	7,000	--	10,600	2,340	220	17,600	1	3,940
India	15,000	42	40,200	7,170	178	55,300	3	10,200
Indonesia	35,000	38,500	24,800	5,310	214	98,300	6	18,000
Japan	--	30,500	225	25	110	30,700	2	5,700
Korea, Republic of	168	25,600	16,700	2,530	152	42,500	2	6,880
Malaysia	30,000	36,200	95,300	14,400	152	162,000	9	25,400
Mexico	111,000	109,000	184,000	39,200	213	404,000	23	102,000
Peru	10,200	--	11,600	2,250	194	21,700	1	4,320
Saudi Arabia	47,100	99	13,700	2,700	198	60,900	3	9,990
Taiwan	--	13,000	18,900	3,260	173	31,900	2	5,480
Thailand	64,800	10,600	23,500	3,640	155	98,900	6	16,600
United Arab Emirates	29,400	--	10,500	1,850	176	39,900	2	6,610
Vietnam	26,800	59,500	21,100	3,730	177	107,000	6	17,800
Other	12,300	1,450	30,600	5,710	187	44,400	3	8,710
Total	575,000	460,000	719,000	134,000	186	1,750,000	100	342,000

-- 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 2021<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	Quantity	March		January–March		
				Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>2</sup> (thousand dollars)
China	93	46	121	\$76	\$629	259	17	\$153
France	60	103	100	118	1,180	263	17	239
Mexico	116	194	233	79	341	544	35	194
United Kingdom	93	201	35	15	421	329	21	178
Other	2	107	59	45	761	168	11	183
Total	363	651	548	333	609	1,560	100	948

<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	--	4,480,000 <sup>e</sup>
January–March	2,910,000	1,800,000	37,500 <sup>r</sup>	36,700	--	1,100,000 <sup>r</sup>
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	--	2,160	429,000
2021:						
January–March	3,020,000	1,750,000	1,560	--	76,000	1,340,000
January	952,000	575,000	363	--	4,370	381,000
February	1,100,000 <sup>r</sup>	460,000	651	--	13,400	651,000 <sup>r</sup>
March	969,000	719,000	548	--	58,300	309,000

<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.