

Mineral Industry Surveys

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SODA ASH IN SEPTEMBER 2021

In September, soda ash production was an estimated 1.02 million metric tons (Mt), a 16% increase compared with the previous month's production and 36% more than that of September 2020. For the first 9 months of 2021, soda ash production was an estimated 8.72 Mt, 20% more than the revised total for the same period of 2020. Ending stocks in September decreased to an estimated 230,000 metric tons (t), slightly less than those of the preceding month (tables 1, 4). In recent months, demand for soda ash nearly returned to levels seen before the global COVID-19 pandemic began. As a result, apparent consumption, exports, and production reported for the first 9 months of the year increased substantially.

Wyoming trona production in September 2021 was 1.45 Mt, 6% less than the revised production of August 2021 but 27% more than that of September 2020. For the first 9 months of 2021, trona production was 12.9 Mt, 21% more than the revised total for the same period of 2020 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash increased in September 2021 to 613,000 t, 36% more than those of August 2021 and 30% more than those of September 2020. For the first 9 months of 2021, exports were 5.11 Mt, 23% more than the revised amount for the same period of 2020 (table 2, 4).

Imports of soda ash in September 2021 were 623 t compared with 792 t in August 2021. For the first 9 months of 2021, imports were 48,300 t, 50% 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 September 2021 was an estimated 409,000 t, 10% less than that of August 2021 and slightly less than the estimated total for September 2020. For the first 9 months of 2021, apparent consumption was an estimated 3.73 Mt, 14% more than the 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.

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TABLE 1
SALIENT SODA ASH STATISTICS¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Soda ash		Wyoming trona production
	Production ²	Stocks, end of period	
2020:			
January–September	7,290 ^r	232 ^r	10,700 ^r
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	287	1,240
March	969	229	1,440
April	922	276	1,150
May	938	268	1,430
June	966	225	1,510
July	980	261	1,660
August	878	236	1,550 ^r
September	1,020 ^e	230 ^e	1,450 ^e
January–September	8,720 ^e	230 ^e	12,900 ^e

^eEstimated. ^rRevised.

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

²Production 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 2021¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September			January–September		
									Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)
Argentina	60	18,400	9,520	--	14,000	38,800	40	17,700	--	--	--	98,500	2	\$20,500
Australia	35,000	--	29,500	21,000	14,000	36,700	26,000	--	13,000	\$2,700	\$208	175,000	3	38,900
Brazil	88,900	60,000	87,100	6,900	84,600	74,200	--	97,300	50,200	8,120	162	549,000	11	84,600
Canada	14,600	14,900	16,700	16,500	15,300	14,300	16,700	15,100	14,100	3,480	246	138,000	3	33,800
Chile	40,600	32,800	46,500	7,100	79,800	37,200	46,200	37,700	36,200	8,380	231	364,000	7	84,300
China	11	133	18	--	51,700	21,400	15,200	7,520	39,300	7,840	199	135,000	3	23,900
Colombia	7,000	10,100	28,000	--	22,800	40,500	13,700	--	22,000	4,920	224	144,000	3	29,100
Guatemala	7,000	--	10,600	--	--	12,500	7,000	--	--	--	--	37,100	1	7,820
India	15,000	42	40,200	--	25	20,000	--	150	76	8	110	75,600	1	14,400
Indonesia	35,000	38,500	24,800	91,900	60,500	36,500	39,700	44,800	108,000	20,300	189	479,000	9	89,600
Japan	--	30,500	225	29,700	892	35,800	34,800	200	32,400	5,780	178	165,000	3	29,600
Korea, Republic of	168	25,600	16,700	19,800	18,100	26,000	50,700	25	28,300	5,440	192	186,000	4	31,100
Malaysia	30,000	36,200	95,300	39,500	36,000	46,800	12,700	53,500	26,600	4,680	176	377,000	7	64,700
Mexico	111,000	109,000	184,000	110,000	105,000	130,000	121,000	112,000	143,000	31,500	220	1,130,000	22	285,000
Peru	10,200	--	11,600	3	16,000	14,000	4,000	108	--	--	--	55,800	1	10,600
Saudi Arabia	47,100	99	13,700	--	18,000	13,000	101	--	--	--	--	92,000	2	14,200
Taiwan	--	13,000	18,900	22,200	22,900	7,000	25,500	400	9,700	1,690	175	120,000	2	21,000
Thailand	64,800	10,600	23,500	26,400	68,000	8,840	9,420	20,500	49,900	9,870	198	282,000	6	49,800
United Arab Emirates	29,400	--	10,500	--	14,500	11,100	--	--	--	--	--	65,500	1	10,100
Vietnam	26,800	59,500	21,100	62,400	20,300	7,190	63,900	43,300	25,400	4,660	184	330,000	6	58,500
Other	12,300	1,310	30,600	9,810	14,000	14,400	20,000	1,250	15,300	3,390	221	119,000	2	24,100
Total	575,000	460,000	719,000	463,000	676,000	646,000	507,000	452,000	613,000	123,000	200	5,110,000	100	1,030,000

-- Zero.

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

²Free 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 2021¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September			January–September		
									Quantity	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total	Value ² (thousand dollars)
China	93	46	121	64	134	72	17	6	--	--	--	552	1	--
France	60	103	100	99	139	140	--	160	120	\$114	\$950	920	2	114
Mexico	116	194	233	233	175	59	99	368	282	103	365	1,760	4	103
Turkey	--	--	20,000 ^e	--	--	23,000 ^e	--	--	--	--	--	43,000 ^e	89	7,740 ^e
United Kingdom	93	201	35	229	140	181	145	162	110	81	736	1,300	3	81
Other	2	107	59	61	200	51	111	96	111	128	1,150	798	2	128
Total	363	651	20,500 ^e	686	788	23,500 ^e	373	792	623	426	684	48,300 ^e	100	8,170 ^e

^eEstimated. -- Zero.

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

²Cost, insurance, and freight values at U.S. ports.

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

TABLE 4
U.S. APPARENT CONSUMPTION OF SODA ASH¹

(Metric tons)

Period	Production	Exports	Imports	Net stock		Apparent consumption ²
				Increase	Decrease	
2020:						
January–December	9,990,000	5,590,000	98,100 ^e	15,900	--	4,480,000 ^e
January–September	7,290,000 ^r	4,160,000 ^r	96,200 ^r	--	57,138 ^r	3,280,000 ^r
September	747,000	471,000	28,900 ^e	--	110,000	415,000 ^e
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–September	8,720,000 ^e	5,110,000	48,300 ^e	--	74,700	3,730,000 ^e
January	952,000	575,000	363	--	4,370	381,000
February	1,100,000	460,000	651	--	13,400	651,000
March	969,000	719,000	20,500 ^e	--	58,300	329,000 ^e
April	922,000	463,000	686	46,700	--	412,000
May	938,000	676,000	788	--	8,040	270,000
June	966,000	646,000	23,500 ^e	--	42,500	386,000 ^e
July	980,000	507,000	373	36,000	--	437,000
August	878,000	452,000	792	--	25,400	453,000
September	1,020,000 ^e	613,000	623	--	5,480	409,000 ^e

^eEstimated. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Production plus imports minus exports plus or minus stock changes.