

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN OCTOBER 2018

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in October 2018 were 4.18 million metric tons (Mt) and 4.97 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 135,000 metric tons (t), essentially unchanged from that of September and 3% less than that of October 2017. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 160,000 t, 9% less than those in September and 9% more than those in October 2017. Mine stocks at the end of October 2018 were 10% less than those held at the end of September and 20% more than those held at the end of October 2017 (fig. 1, table 1).

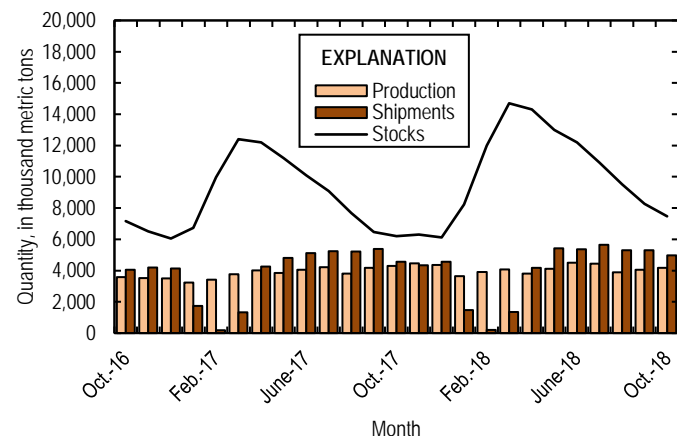


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from October 2016 through October 2018.

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 1.26 Mt in October 2018, slightly less than those in September and 21% more than those in October 2017 (fig. 2, table 3). U.S. imports of iron ore were

373,000 t in October 2018, 38% more than those in September and 48% more than those in October 2017 (fig. 2, table 4).

Seasonal variations of exports, imports, shipments, and stocks during the winter months are attributed to freezing of waterways and the closing of the Soo Locks, which are used to transport iron ore in the Great Lakes region through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

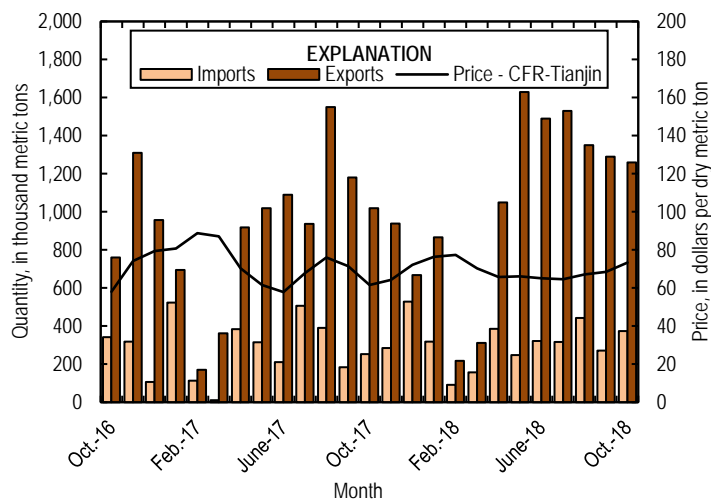


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from October 2016 through October 2018. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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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
2017:					
October	4,300	38,800	4,570	37,800	6,210
November	4,470	43,300	4,330	42,200	6,300
December	4,360	47,600	4,560	46,700	6,120
2018:					
January	3,640	3,640	1,470	1,470	8,290
February	3,900	7,540	214	1,680	12,000
March	4,070	11,600	1,360	3,050	14,700
April	3,810	15,400	4,180	7,230	14,300
May	4,120	19,500	5,420	12,600	13,000
June	4,510	24,000	5,370	18,000	12,200
July	4,440	28,500	5,640	23,700	10,900
August	3,880	32,400	5,310	29,000	9,520
September	4,050	36,400	5,300	34,300	8,270
October	4,180	40,600	4,970	39,200	7,480

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

²Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallics.

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
2017:						
October	1,690	18,800	2,000	21,700	4,860	46,500
November	1,770	20,600	1,980	23,700	4,660	51,200
December	1,840	22,400	2,120	25,800	4,620	55,800
2018:						
January	1,920	1,920	2,240	2,240	4,650	4,650
February	1,790	3,710	1,980	4,210	4,620	9,270
March	1,970	5,680	2,270	6,490	5,060	14,300
April	1,930	7,600	2,200	8,690	4,720	19,000
May	2,070	9,680	2,400	11,100	4,860	23,900
June	2,060	11,700	2,330	13,400	4,730	28,600
July	2,100	13,800	2,370	15,800	5,010	33,700
August	2,030	15,900	2,340	18,100	5,140	38,800
September	2,010	17,900	2,350	20,500	4,910	43,700
October	2,060	19,900	2,360	22,800	5,190	48,900

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	2017	2018				
	January–October	October		January–October		
	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)
Canada	6,510 ^r	1,010	85,200	8,430	641,000	76.00
Germany	39	45	1,610	129	4,640	35.96
Japan	1,990 ^r	168	9,930	1,880	114,000	60.77
Mexico	140	29	3,160	485	48,700	100.34
Other	273 ^r	(4)	41	36	3,470	96.38
Total	8,950 ^r	1,260	100,000	11,000	812,000	74.06
Concentrates	83 ^r	2	341	63	9,130	144.84
Fine ores	31	(4)	33	1	221	221.00
Pellets	8,720	1,210	98,000	10,700	795,000	74.20
Other	116	45	1,640	185	7,590	41.01
Total	8,950 ^r	1,260	100,000	11,000	812,000	74.06

^rRevised.

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	2017	2018		2018		
	January–October	October		January–October		
	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	1,650	344	33,400	1,970	212,000	107.31
Canada	493	28	1,680	504	43,900	87.01
Other	744 ^r	(4)	49	450	44,100	98.04
Total	2,890 ^r	373	35,200	2,930	300,000	102.39
Concentrates	970 ^r	145	6,890	809	52,300	64.61
Fine Ores	153	1	157	213	18,500	87.08
Pellets	1,740 ^r	227	28,100	1,900	229,000	120.18
Other	25	--	--	1	67	67.00
Total	2,890 ^r	373	35,200	2,930	300,000	102.39

^rRevised. -- 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–October		October 2018	January–October		October 2018
	2017	2018		2017	2018	
Chicago, IL (39)	28	28	--	648	639	142
Houston–Galveston, TX (53)	33	(3)	--	165	136	3
New Orleans, LA (20)	1,680	1,880	227	1,980	2,060	227
Other	--	--	--	98 ^r	93	1
Total	1,740 ^r	1,900	227	2,890 ^r	2,930	373

^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.