

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## SODA ASH IN OCTOBER 2018

U.S. natural soda ash production in October was 1.03 million metric tons (Mt), 4% more than the previous month's production but slightly less than that of October 2017. Ending stocks were 292,000 metric tons (t), 8% less than the preceding month's inventories. Wyoming trona production in October 2018 was 1.51 Mt, 14% more than that of September 2018 and virtually unchanged from that of October 2017 (table 1).

Exports of soda ash in September 2018 were 530,000 t, slightly less than those of August 2018 and 11% less than those of September 2017 (tables 2, 4). September 2018 imports of soda ash were 1,510 t, 47% more than those of August 2018 and 68% more than those of September 2017 (tables 3, 4). Soda ash import tonnages can differ significantly from month to month, but generally are much smaller than soda ash export tonnages.

Apparent consumption for September 2018 was 484,000 t, a 27% increase from that of August 2018 and a 24% increase

from that of September 2017. Apparent consumption can change significantly from month to month mostly owing to changes in the quantity of exports but usually stabilizes over the course of the year. For the first 9 months of 2018, apparent consumption was 3.72 Mt, slightly less than that of the same period of 2017 (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	
2017:			
January–October	9,860	237	14,900
October	1,040	237	1,510
November	1,000	259	1,400
December	1,100	293	1,710
January–December	12,000	293	18,000
2018:			
January	992	309	1,630
February	945	307	1,490
March	1,020	317	1,620
April	958	318	1,480
May	952	310	1,450
June	961	299	1,420
July	1,070	333	1,490
August	930	340	1,180
September	988 <sup>r</sup>	316	1,320 <sup>r</sup>
October	1,030	292	1,510
January–October	9,850	292	14,600

<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 2018<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September			January–September		
									Quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Argentina	78	20	18,700	8,520	17,200	11,700	6,560	--	6,060	\$1,240	\$204	68,800	1	\$15,300
Australia	40,000	--	28,300	--	33,000	33,000	26,500	--	41,500	9,560	230	202,000	4	42,400
Belgium	213	--	126	189	822	108	502	339	218	24	110	2,520	(4)	277
Brazil	102,000	68,400	62,100	117,000	30,200	81,700	65,200	74,100	23,000	4,450	193	623,000	12	122,000
Canada	18,100	17,900	17,900	19,400	21,300	13,200	17,000	14,200	17,600	4,000	228	156,000	3	32,300
Chile	39,600	8,100	45,900	59,400	34,600	38,400	49,400	--	51,800	11,200	217	327,000	6	71,400
China	--	50,100	60	47,100	60	10,100	--	40,100	47,100	8,210	175	194,000	4	33,400
Colombia	27,500	12,000	21,500	18,700	5,060	21,500	--	22,100	--	--	--	128,000	3	26,000
Costa Rica	5,000	--	5,000	--	--	5,000	--	5,500	--	--	--	20,500	(4)	4,530
Ecuador	6,000	--	4,000	--	7,150	--	--	8,200	--	--	--	25,400	(4)	4,890
El Salvador	--	--	5,000	--	--	3,000	5,000	--	--	--	--	13,000	(4)	2,600
Guatemala	3,500	--	8,620	--	8,860	5,000	7,700	--	--	--	--	33,700	1	7,410
India	29,000	--	28,500	--	--	--	16,000	--	10,000	1,400	140	83,500	2	12,600
Indonesia	23,500	112,000	45,000	53,200	48,900	18,700	68,500	15,700	67,300	14,900	222	453,000	9	97,300
Ireland	101	--	262	108	40	69	22	100	--	--	--	701	(4)	172
Japan	40,100	21,500	30,500	3,500	26,000	32,300	22,800	21,900	6,780	1,490	220	205,000	4	37,400
Korea, Republic of	17,000	15,000	18,700	21,500	27,700	18,000	31,700	34,100	39,100	8,560	219	223,000	4	43,500
Malaysia	3,000	31,000	34,200	35,500	28,100	23,000	46,000	45,000	14,000	2,820	202	260,000	5	53,900
Mexico	99,300	83,800	114,000	98,400	109,000	130,000	118,000	109,000	111,000	26,700	241	974,000	19	226,000
Netherlands	--	--	12,000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12,000	(4)	2,400
New Zealand	--	--	6,000	--	--	--	7,600	--	--	--	--	13,600	(4)	2,340
Nigeria	--	--	10,000	8,000	134	--	8,000	--	--	--	--	26,100	1	8,080
Peru	15,000	--	13,500	75	22,200	75	75	15,100	75	8	110	66,100	1	14,500
Philippines	7,000	--	8,000	--	9,000	--	--	9,500	11,000	2,380	216	44,500	1	9,630
Saudi Arabia	857	11,100	11,600	98	59	23,500	--	271	4,500	679	151	51,900	1	8,010
South Africa	7,530	11,200	14,900	8,460	--	7,480	--	7,580	7,830	1,270	162	65,000	1	13,100
Spain	--	--	45	742	--	136	45	--	--	--	--	968	(4)	106
Taiwan	22,500	6,000	27,300	5,500	28,000	--	25,000	14,300	17,500	3,930	225	146,000	3	30,200
Thailand	33,000	25,500	18,400	21,000	42,100	17,000	24,000	34,900	36,900	8,220	223	253,000	5	55,400
Tunisia	--	--	--	25,000	--	--	27,000	--	--	--	--	52,000	1	11,500
United Arab Emirates	10,000	16,000	19,500	--	--	18,500	--	--	10,500	1,580	151	74,500	1	12,000
United Kingdom	8,520	5,070	16,100	--	15,400	--	14,200	--	--	--	--	59,400	1	11,400

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 2—Continued.  
U.S. EXPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September			January–September		
									Quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Venezuela	--	5,170	--	12,300	--	--	--	11,100	5,070	1,260	249	33,600	1	8,720
Vietnam	--	35,400	25,000	24,100	29,000	--	21,500	59,000	--	--	--	194,000	4	41,500
Other	216	127	100	69	506	77	160	409	802	157	196	2,470	(4)	599
Total	559,000	536,000	671,000	588,000	544,000	512,000	609,000	542,000	530,000	114,000	215	5,090,000	100	1,060,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>October 2018 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Free alongside ship values at U.S. ports.

<sup>4</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS OF SODA ASH BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY, IN 2018<sup>1,2</sup>

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Country or locality	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Quantity	September		January–September		
										Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Unit value	Quantity	Percent of total quantity	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)
Bulgaria	342	342	738	451	342	126	612	324	450	\$164	\$366	3,730	31	\$1,300
China	57	257	336	228	241	76	100	93	152	95	625	1,540	13	973
France	--	62	69	69	19	19	69	19	--	--	--	325	3	189
Germany	1	3	1	4	61	3	2	--	1	18	23,600	76	1	285
Italy	190	342	190	21	398	791	604	--	17	10	568	2,550	21	458
Mexico	72	182	267	470	136	132	36	422	497	164	329	2,220	18	807
Poland	--	--	--	--	116	--	58	57	152	64	418	383	3	164
United Kingdom	94	91	94	286	86	73	70	92	161	95	593	1,050	9	697
Other	21	3	14	15	21	11	10	15	75	41	556	185	2	266
Total	776	1,280	1,710	1,550	1,420	1,230	1,560	1,020	1,510	651	433	12,100	100	5,140

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>October 2018 data were not available at time of publication.

<sup>3</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	
2017:						
January–December	12,000,000	6,990,000	19,100	--	42,700	5,040,000
January–September	8,820,000	5,170,000	16,700	--	85,000	3,760,000
September	989,000	593,000	898	7,080	--	390,000
October	1,040,000	591,000	1,290	--	14,400	462,000
November	1,000,000	612,000	658	22,500	--	370,000
December	1,100,000	615,000	481	34,300	--	449,000
2018:						
January–September	8,820,000	5,090,000	12,100	22,300	--	3,720,000
January	992,000	559,000	776	15,700	--	419,000
February	945,000	536,000	1,280	--	1,710	412,000
March	1,020,000	671,000	1,710	9,160	--	342,000
April	958,000	588,000	1,550	1,580	--	371,000
May	952,000	544,000	1,420	--	8,440	417,000
June	961,000	512,000	1,230	--	10,400	461,000
July	1,070,000	609,000	1,560	34,000	--	428,000
August	930,000	542,000	1,020	7,160	--	381,000
September	988,000 <sup>r</sup>	530,000	1,510	--	24,700	484,000
October	1,030,000	NA	NA	--	24,200	NA

<sup>r</sup>Revised. NA Not available. -- 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.