

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## IRON ORE IN JULY 2019

U.S. mine production and shipments of iron ore in July 2019 were 4.34 million metric tons (Mt) and 5.50 Mt, respectively (fig. 1, table 1). Average daily production of iron ore was 140,000 metric tons (t), a 3% increase from that of June and a slight decrease from that of July 2018. Average daily shipments of iron ore were 177,000 t, a slight increase from those in June and a 3% decrease from those in July 2018. Mine stocks were 10.9 Mt at the end of July 2019, an 11% decrease from those held at the end of June 2019 and July 2018 (fig. 1, table 1).

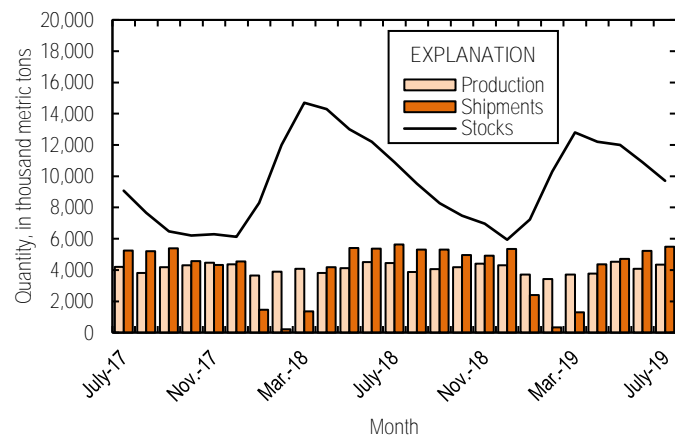


Figure 1. Monthly domestic production, shipments, and stocks of iron ore from July 2017 through July 2019.

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 1.15 Mt in July 2019, a 14% decrease from those in June and a 25% decrease from those in July 2018 (fig. 2, table 3, 6). U.S. imports of iron ore were 521,000 t in July 2019, an 11% increase from those in June and a 65% increase from those in July 2018 (fig. 2, table 4, 6). The spot price for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight, at Tianjin Port, China, was \$120.24 per dry metric

ton in July 2019, a 10% increase from \$108.94 per dry metric ton in June and nearly twice as much as \$64.56 per dry metric ton in July 2018 (fig. 2).

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 in Sault Ste. Marie, MI, which are used to transport iron ore in the Great Lakes region through the St. Lawrence Seaway.

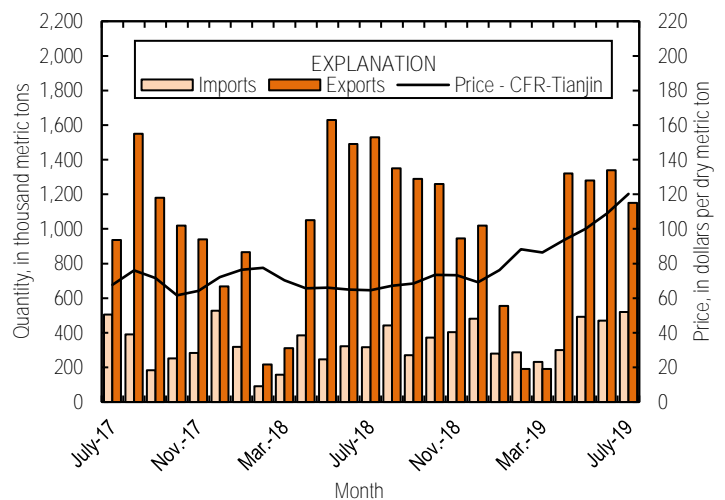


Figure 2. Monthly domestic imports and exports of iron ore and spot prices for imported iron ore fines, 62% iron content, cost and freight (CFR), at Tianjin Port, China, from July 2017 through July 2019. Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Index Mundi, undated.

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TABLE 1  
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE<sup>1,2</sup>  
(Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more of manganese)

(Thousand metric tons, usable ore)

Period	Production		Shipments <sup>3</sup>		Stocks
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	End of Month
2018:					
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
November	4,400	45,000	4,910	44,100	6,970
December	4,310	49,300	5,340	49,500	5,940
2019:					
January	3,710	3,710	2,410	2,410	7,240
February	3,430	7,130	326	2,740	10,300
March	3,710	10,800	1,300	4,040	12,800
April	3,780	14,600	4,360	8,400	12,200
May	4,540	19,200	4,710	13,100	12,000
June	4,090	23,300	5,230	18,300	10,900
July	4,340	27,600	5,500	23,800	9,700

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

<sup>2</sup>Excludes byproduct ores and iron metallica.

<sup>3</sup>Includes rail and vessel.

TABLE 2  
U.S. PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL, BY TYPE OF FURNACE<sup>1</sup>

(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
2018:						
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
November	2,030	22,000	2,380	25,200	5,020	53,900
December	2,100	24,100	2,490	27,700	4,990	58,900
2019:						
January	1,880	1,880	2,330	2,330	5,190	5,190
February	1,840	3,720	2,140	4,470	4,810	10,000
March	2,080	5,800	2,390	6,870	5,290	15,300
April	1,860	7,670	2,170	9,040	5,190	20,500
May	1,930	9,600	2,430	11,500	5,120	25,600
June	1,900	11,500	2,380	13,900	4,870	30,500
July	1,830	13,300	2,190	16,000	5,230	35,700

<sup>1</sup>Data 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 <sup>1,2</sup>  
 (Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality and type of product	2018		2019			
	January–July Quantity (thousand metric tons)	July		January–July		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Value <sup>3</sup> (dollars per ton)
Canada	5,520 <sup>r</sup>	1,010	93,200	4,600	413,000	89.77
Japan	1,110	434	26,800	1,430	88,100	61.60
Mexico	360 <sup>r</sup>	(4)	38	78	6,070	77.82
Other	116 <sup>r</sup>	7	1,370	214	38,000	177.72
Total	7,100	1,450	121,000	6,320	545,000	86.24
Concentrates	54 <sup>r</sup>	2	296	135	36,300	269.24
Fine ores	(4)	8	1,380	8	1,490	9.25
Pellets	6,950 <sup>r</sup>	1,440	120,000	6,040	502,000	83.14
Other	98	--	--	137	5,050	36.88
Total	7,100	1,450	121,000	6,320	545,000	86.24

<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>All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of exports per month included in "Other."

<sup>3</sup>Free alongside ship (FAS) value.

<sup>4</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4  
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY AND TYPE<sup>1,2</sup>  
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country or locality of origin and type of product	2018		2019			
	January–July Quantity (thousand metric tons)	July		January–July		
		Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value <sup>3</sup> (thousand dollars)	Value <sup>3</sup> (dollars per ton)
Brazil	1,260	334	36,900	1,320	161,000	122.02
Canada	306	146	21,300	668	87,100	130.34
Chile	37	--	--	102	10,300	100.75
Russia	--	--	--	261	38,300	146.66
Sweden	116	13	1,280	75	6,700	89.33
Other	118 <sup>r</sup>	28	1,340	158	9,610	60.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>60,800</b>	<b>2,590</b>	<b>313,000</b>	<b>121.08</b>
Concentrates	417	166	10,000	636	48,400	76.13
Fine Ores	172	7	678	93	5,330	22.00
Pellets	1,250	348	50,100	1,850	259,000	139.91
Other	1	--	--	6	273	45.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>60,800</b>	<b>2,590</b>	<b>313,000</b>	<b>121.08</b>

<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>All countries with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

<sup>3</sup>Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5  
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT<sup>1,2</sup>  
 (Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	Pellets			Total, all products		
	January–July		July	January–July		July
	2018	2019	2019	2018	2019	2019
Chicago, IL (39)	28	31	16	318	344	127
Columbia -Snake (OR (29)	--	--	--	42	42	--
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	(3)	--	--	125	160	55
Los Angeles, CA (27)	--	11	--	--	12	--
Mobile, AL (19)	--	21	--	--	21	--
New Orleans, LA (20)	1,220	1,790	332	1,350	1,990	332
Other	--	--	--	9 <sup>r</sup>	16	7
Total	1,250	1,850	348	1,840	2,590	521

<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>Customs Districts with less than 5,000 metric tons of imports per month included in "Other."

<sup>3</sup>Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6  
U.S. IRON ORE TRADE SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Exports		Imports	
	Quantity	Value <sup>2</sup>	Quantity	Value <sup>3</sup>
2018:				
January–July	7,100	505,000	1,840	192,000
July	1,530	103,000	316	29,600
August	1,350	107,000	442	49,400
September	1,290	103,000	271	23,100
October	1,260	100,000	373	35,200
November	946	77,200	403	38,500
December	1,020	82,900	482	50,400
January–December	12,900	975,000	3,810	388,000
2019:				
January	556	48,600	280	33,300
February	192	14,400	288	38,700
March	191	16,200	231	32,100
April	1,320	108,000	301	37,300
May	1,280	128,000	493	61,500
June	1,340	109,000	471	49,200
July	1,150	121,000	521	60,800
January–July	6,020	545,000	2,590	313,000

<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 (FAS) value.

<sup>3</sup>Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.