USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service
www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

Contact Us

November 5, 2015

Contents

The next release is November 12, 2015

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Grain Inspections Recede

For the week ending October 29, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, soybeans) for export from all major export regions reached 3.28 million metric tons (mmt), down 6 percent from the past week, 6 percent below last year, and 11 percent above the 3-year average. Total inspections of corn increased 15 percent from the past week, but wheat and soybean inspections dropped 46 and 4 percent, respectively, for the same period. Pacific Northwest inspections increased 8 percent, but the Mississippi Gulf inspections decreased 22 percent. Texas Gulf grain inspections were the highest since early November due to a large jump in soybean inspections. Current outstanding (unshipped) export sales were up from the previous week for wheat and corn, but down for soybeans.

Grain Vessel Loading Activity Continued to be Strong

For the week ending October 29, ocean-going vessel grain loading activity in the U.S. Gulf continued to be strong with 74 vessels due in within the next 10 days. For the week ending October 22, the 4-week average for vessels loaded per week was 43, and the vessels due in within next 10 days was 64. For the week ending September 24, the 4-week average for vessels loaded per week was 39, and the vessels due in within next 10 days was 56. Meanwhile, ocean freight rates remained low during the week ending October 29. Ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was $30.75 per metric ton (mt), and the rate for shipping from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $17 per mt.

Deadline for Positive Train Control Extended

On October 29, Congress passed and President Obama later signed a short-term transportation bill, which includes extending the deadline for Positive Train Control (PTC) until December 31, 2018. Mandated in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, PTC requires railroads to implement and integrate new safety technology on lines used to transport inter-city rail passengers, commuter passengers, or any amount of toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials. Given challenges faced in the full implementation and testing of PTC, many railroads and shippers expressed concerns about possible significant service disruptions with the original deadline of December 31, 2015.

Rail Cars Aplenty

Rail car loadings of grain have been above the 5-year trend for the past 6 weeks. Car loadings of grain for the week ending October 24 were 25,301, which is 10 percent above the 5-year average. Weekly car loadings since mid-September have been 13 percent above the 5-year average. Looking at the 5-year trend, car loadings began to increase in mid-September, leveled-off in mid- to late-October, and stayed relatively high through the end of the year. This year's car loadings have followed a similar trend, but increased to higher levels than the 5-year trend, and have begun to level-off. Coupled with low rail car auction prices, these trends imply that rail car supply has increased relative to the past 5 years.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

During the week ending October 22, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 31 mmt, down 30 percent from the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** of .550 mmt were up 54 percent from the previous week. Net **corn export sales** were .709 mmt, up 186 percent from the previous week, and net **soybean export sales** of 1.90 mmt were down 5 percent from the past week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 25,301 **carloads of grain** for the week ending October 24, unchanged from last week, up 13 percent from last year, and up 19 percent from the 3-year average.

For the week ending October 29, average November shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers** per car were $252 below tariff, down $85 from last week, and $1,227 lower than last year. Non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers were $92 below tariff, down $19 from last week, and $1,192 lower than last year.

Barge

For the week ending October 31, **barge grain movements** totaled 890,526 tons, up 16 percent from last week, and up 6 percent from the same period last year.

For the week ending October 31, 566 grain barges **moved down river**, up 17 percent from last week; 727 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 20 percent from the previous week.

Fuel

During the week ending November 2, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** decreased 1 cent from the previous week to $2.49 per gallon—down $1.14 from the same week last year.

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Feature Article/Calendar

Current Harvest Progress Implications on Transportation

The national corn, soybean, and sorghum harvest is nearing completion and at a pace that is ahead of the average of the past 5 years. Although there has been an accelerated pace of harvest, the short-term demand for transportation has been lower as many farmers seem to be influenced by current market conditions to store grain after harvest. This article examines the current harvest pace and transportation issues impacting the marketing of this year's crops.

Year-to-date barge tonnages on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Arkansas Rivers have been 4 percent higher than last year. During September and October, barge tonnage averaged 572 thousand per week, higher than last year's weekly average of 468 thousand tons when the harvest pace was slower. Further, railcar loadings from September to October averaged 22,801 per week, higher than last year's slower harvest when loadings were 19,736 per week.

Corn. As of November 1, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reports that 85 percent of the U.S. corn crop is harvested, 10 percentage points more than last week (*see figures 1 and 2*). Coupled with NASS' October forecast for corn production of 13.6 billion bushels, an estimated 11.5 billion bushels have been harvested as of November 1. The pace of the corn harvest in North Dakota and South Dakota each advanced 19 percentage points over the past week, followed by Nebraska (18) and Washington (17).

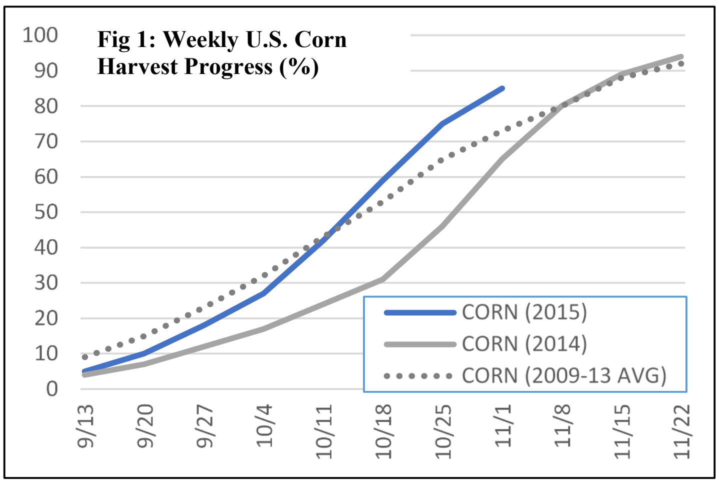


Fig 1: Weekly U.S. Corn Harvest Progress (%)

Source: NASS.

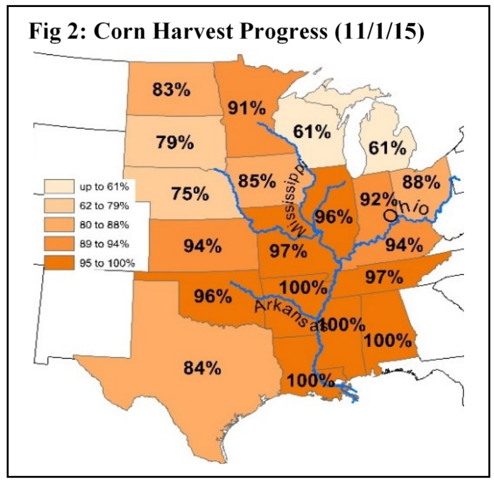


Fig 2: Corn Harvest Progress (11/1/15)

Source: NASS.

Soybeans. The soybean harvest is 92 percent complete, progressing 5 percentage points more than last week and representing an estimated 3.6 billion bushels so far (*see figures 3 and 4*). The largest week-to-week changes occurred in Oklahoma (16 percentage points), followed by Kansas (14), Virginia (14), Missouri (13), and New York (13).

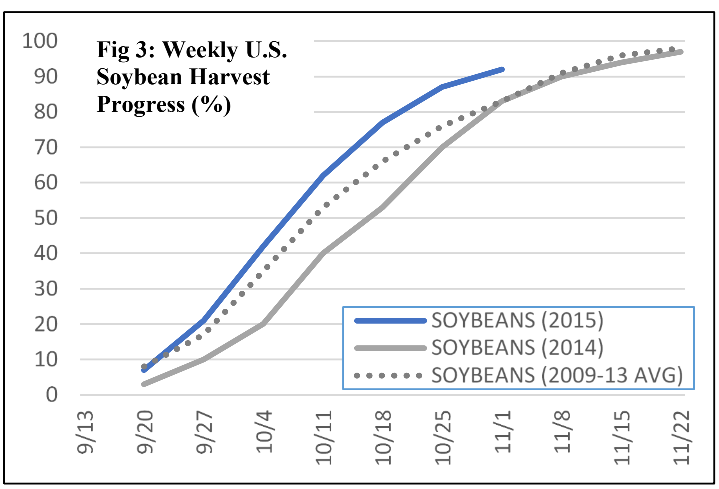


Fig 3: Weekly U.S. Soybean Harvest Progress (%)

Source: NASS.

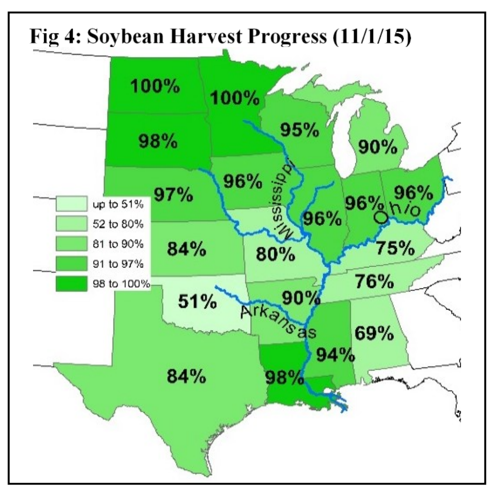
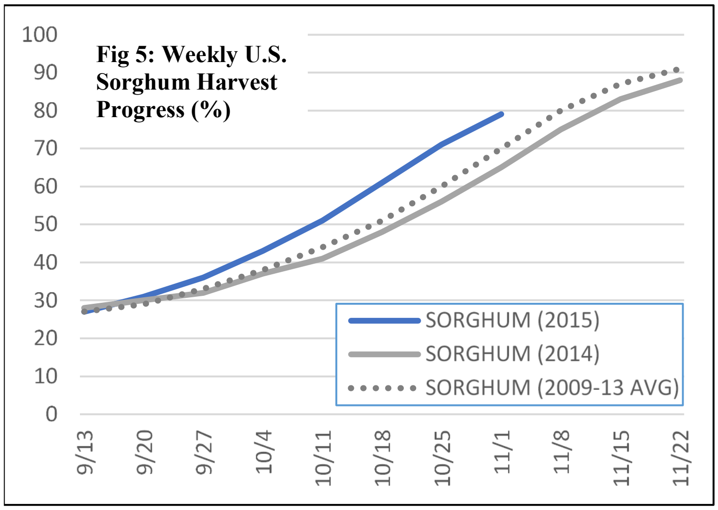


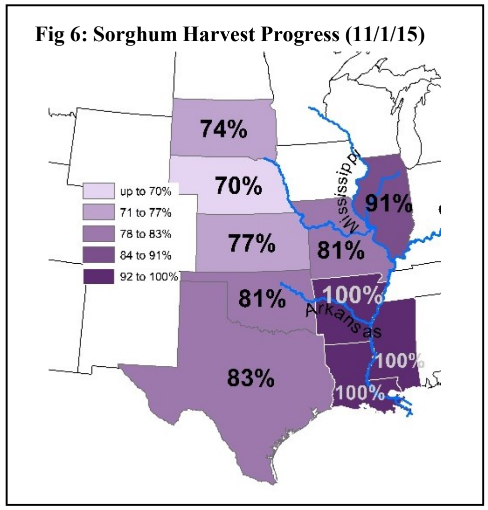
Fig 4: Soybean Harvest Progress (11/1/15)

Source: NASS.

Grain Sorghum. Sorghum, a crop that can grow under a variety of soil and climatic conditions, is used in food and feed products. China began importing sorghum from the U.S. in 2013; by 2014 it was the top importer of U.S. sorghum exports. China imported 6.4 million metric tons in 2014 and 6.8 million metric tons through September of this year, according to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Sorghum typically provides a cheaper alternative to feed ingredients and it does not face the Chinese trade restrictions other grains sometimes encounter. Seventy-nine percent of the national sorghum crop is harvested, 9 percentage points more than last week (*see figure 5*). Sorghum harvest in the major growing states of Kansas, Texas, Arkansas, and Nebraska are 77, 83, 100, and 70 percent complete, respectively (*see figure 6)*. Nebraska and Oklahoma each harvested 15 percent of its grain sorghum acres over the past week.



Source: NASS.



Source: NASS.

Transportation

According to the October *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates* report, foreign competition and currency exchange situations are making the U.S. grain exports less competitive in the foreign market. Relatively low grain prices have encouraged farmers to store their crops rather than sell during harvest. If prices rally later in the year there could be a boost in transportation demand. Currently, the transportation sector appears to have plenty of capacity available with relatively low rates to move the grain that is selling through the end of the year.

Barge. Since the beginning of September, 6,728 grain barges have been unloaded in the New Orleans area, about 3 percent higher than the 3-year average. Throughout the river system, barge supply has been adequate and freight rates have declined since late October despite the adverse navigation circumstances (see below for more detail). As of November 3, the St. Louis barge rate for export grain was 265 percent of tariff ($10.57 per ton), 53 percent lower than the 5-year average.

A low water safety advisory has been issued for the lower Mississippi River near Lake Providence, LA. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is dredging the area, and there may be intermittent closures during dredging operations. The Corps reports minor delays at locks on the Mississippi, Illinois, and Ohio Rivers. Delays are substantially shorter than earlier in the harvest when unscheduled repairs at Ohio River Locks and Dam 52 (near Brookport, IL) had tows waiting multiple days to transit that facility. Elsewhere on the river system, there are reports of low water conditions, however, low water is normal during this time of year and can last throughout the winter.

Rail. This year's harvest season has seen much improved rail service and lower prices for shippers compared to the past 2 years. For example, during the month of October, the number of backlogged grain cars were over 73 percent lower in 2015 than in 2014. The backlog currently stands at 2,930 cars as of October 24, a decrease of 1,234 compared to last week and 14,715 lower than last year. Further, as an indication of adequate rail capacity, bids/offers during the months of September and October in the secondary market for shuttle service in October averaged $401, a decrease of 90 percent compared to the same time last year. For more on transportation, see next week's feature article. GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
For the week ending		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
11/04/15	167	268	208	201	138	121
10/28/15	168	251	201	233	135	121

[1]Indicator: Base year 2000 = 100; Weekly updates include truck = diesel ($/gallon); rail = near-month secondary rail market bid and monthly tariff rat with fuel surcharge ($/car); barge = Illinois River barge rate (index = percent of tariff rate); and ocean = routes to Japan ($/metric ton)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2

Market Update: U.S. Origins to Export Position Price Spreads ($/bushel)

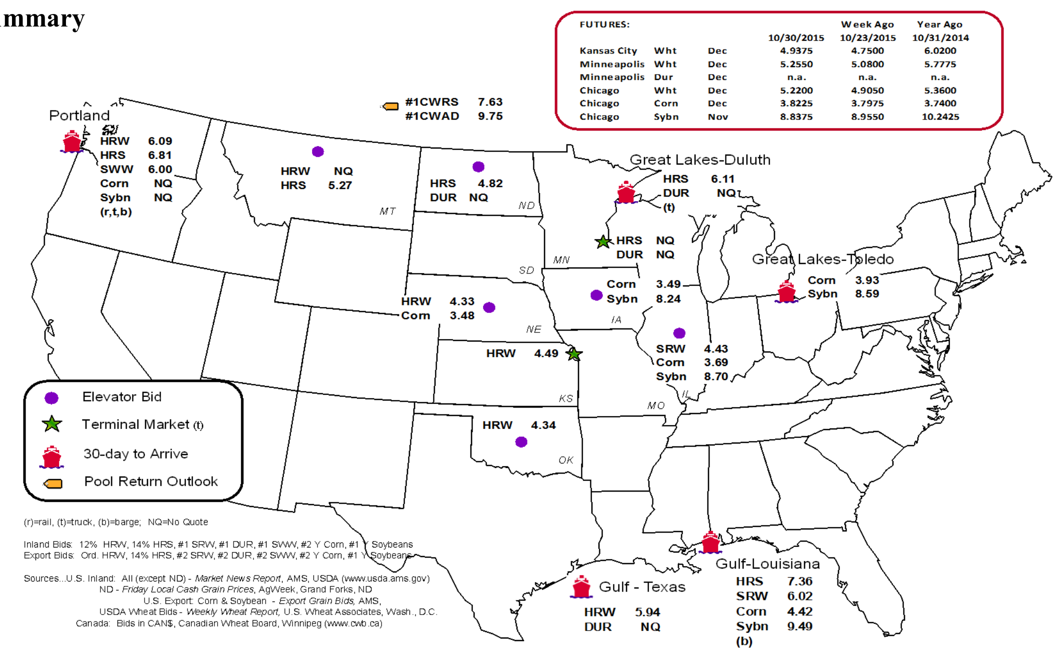
Commodity	Origin--Destination	10/30/2015	10/23/2015
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.73	-0.72
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.94	-0.95
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.25	-1.37
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.45	-1.45
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.99	-1.98

Note: nq = no quote
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **grain bid summary** illustrates the market relationships for commodities. Positive and negative adjustments in differential between terminal and futures markets, and the relationship to inland market points, are indicators of changes in fundamental market supply and demand. The map may be used to monitor market and time differentials.

Figure 1

Grain bid Summary



Rail Transportation

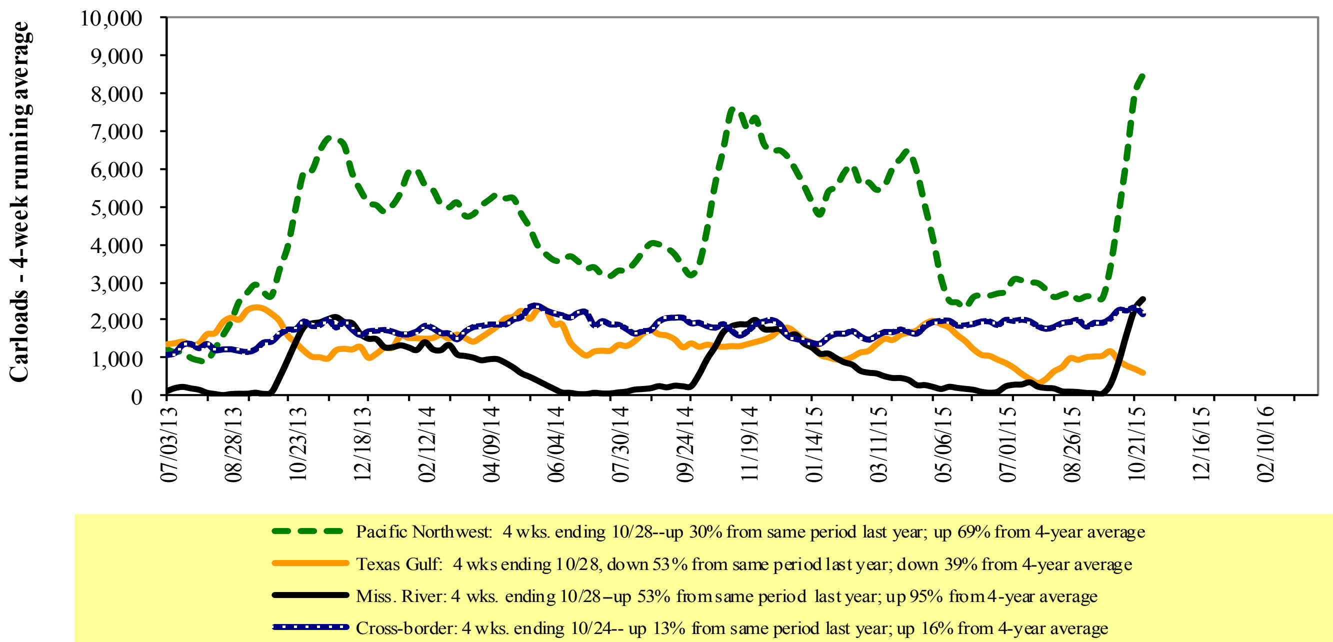
Table 3
Rail Deliveries to Port (carloads)[1]

For the Week Ending	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border Mexico[3]
10/28/2015[p]	2,081	718	7,605	1,085	11,489	10/24/2015	1,680
10/21/2015[r]	2,638	874	9,594	1,108	14,214	10/17/2015	2,247
2015 YTD[r]	24,129	48,011	186,929	19,551	278,620	2015 YTD	79,469
2014 YTD[r]	27,327	68,055	191,065	21,680	308,127	2014 YTD	81,259
2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	88	71	98	90	90	% change YTD	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014[2]	153	47	130	103	121	Last 4wks % 2014	113
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	195	61	169	101	146	Last 4wks % 4 yr	116
Total 2014	44,617	83,674	256,670	32,107	417,068	Total 2014	96,467
Total 2013	31,550	71,388	168,826	25,176	296,940	Total 2013	71,397

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided
[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2013 and prior 4-year average.
[3] Cross- border weekly data is aproximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect switching between KCSM and FerroMex.
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 24 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

Figure 2
Rail Deliveries to Port



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 4

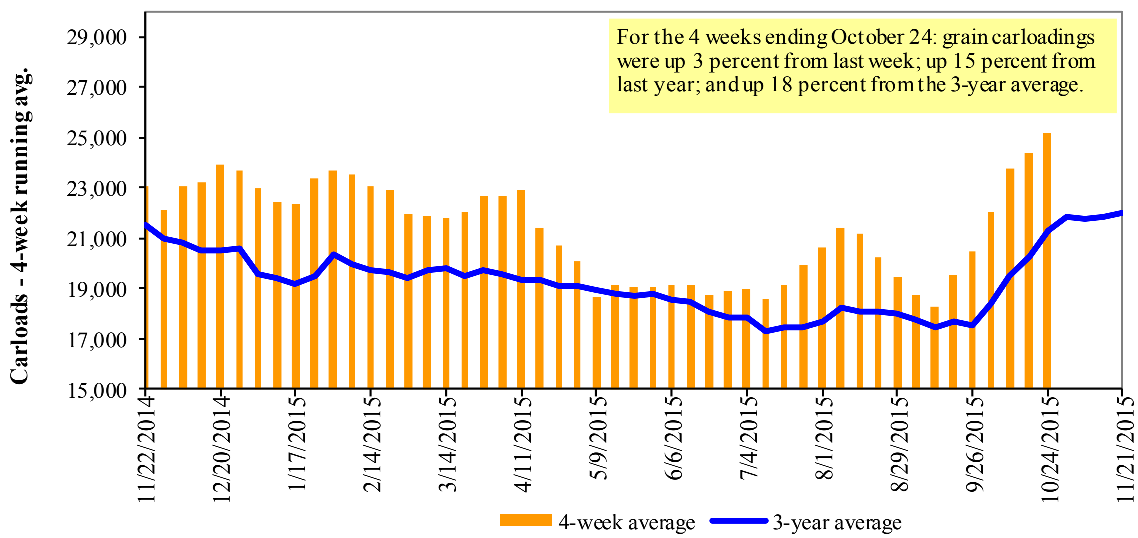
Class I Rail Carrier Grain Car Bulletin (grain carloads originated)

For the week ending: 10/24/2015	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	2,503	3,496	12,164	706	6,432	25,301	4,938	4,340
This week last year	2,528	3,065	10,216	1,144	5,408	22,361	5,548	5,368
2015 YTD	85,041	121,769	424,908	37,850	217,515	887,083	169,197	187,115
2014 YTD	76,805	117,646	370,781	36,906	234,194	836,332	188,078	221,651
2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	111	104	115	103	93	106	90	84
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014[1]	119	111	124	85	107	115	89	82
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.[2]	128	98	118	103	119	116	95	78
Total 2014	103,331	153,771	482,431	47,510	297,969	1,085,012	242,616	276,322

[1]The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.
[2]The past 4 weeks as a percent of the same period from the prior 3-year average. YTD = year-to-date.

Figure 3

Total Weekly U.S. Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings



Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 5

Railcar Auction Offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

For the week ending: 10/29/2015	Delivery period							
	Nov-15	Nov-14	Dec-15	Dec-14	Jan-16	Jan-15	Feb-16	Feb-15
BNSF[3]								
COT grain units	10 . . 100	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer
COT grain single-car[5]	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer
UP[4]								
GCAS/Region 1	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a

[1]Auction offerings are for single-car and unit train shipments only.
[2]Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction
[3]BNSF - COT = Certificate of Transportation; north grain and south grain bids were combined effective the week ending 6/24/06.
[4]UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

Region 1 includes: AR, IL, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX, WI, and Duluth, MN.

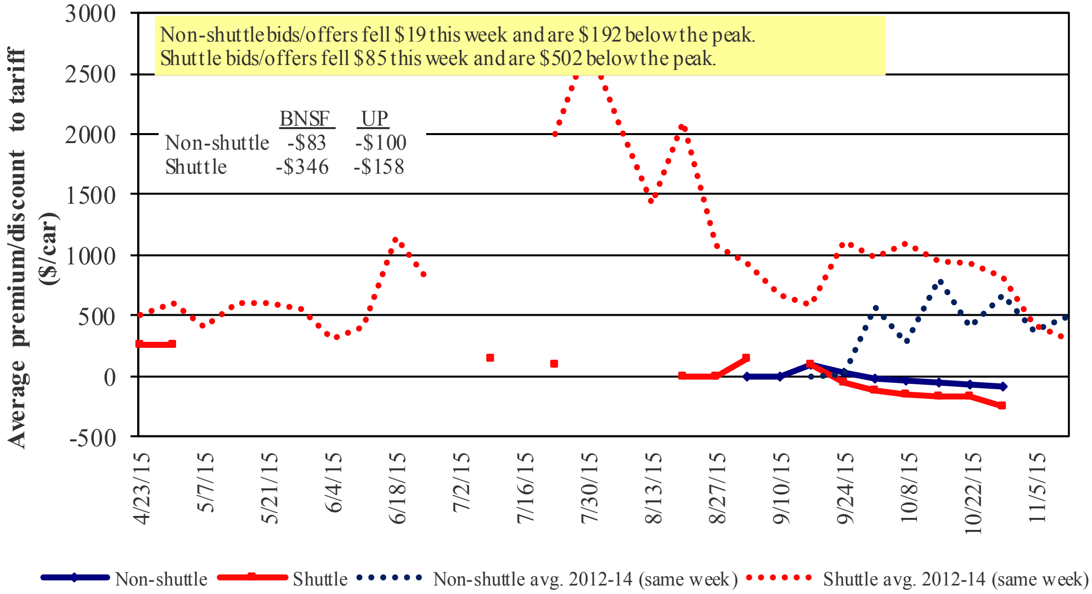
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

[5]Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA.

The **secondary rail market** information reflects trade values for service that was originally purchased from the railroad carrier as some form of guaranteed freight. The **auction and secondary rail** values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/ supply.

Figure 4

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in November 2015, Secondary Market

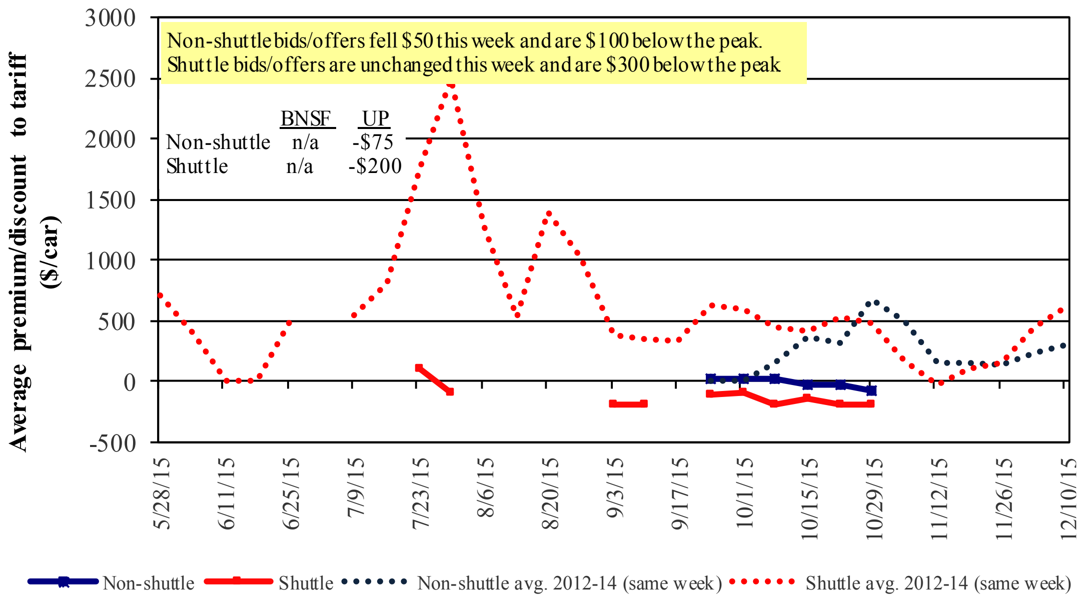


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in December 2015, Secondary Market

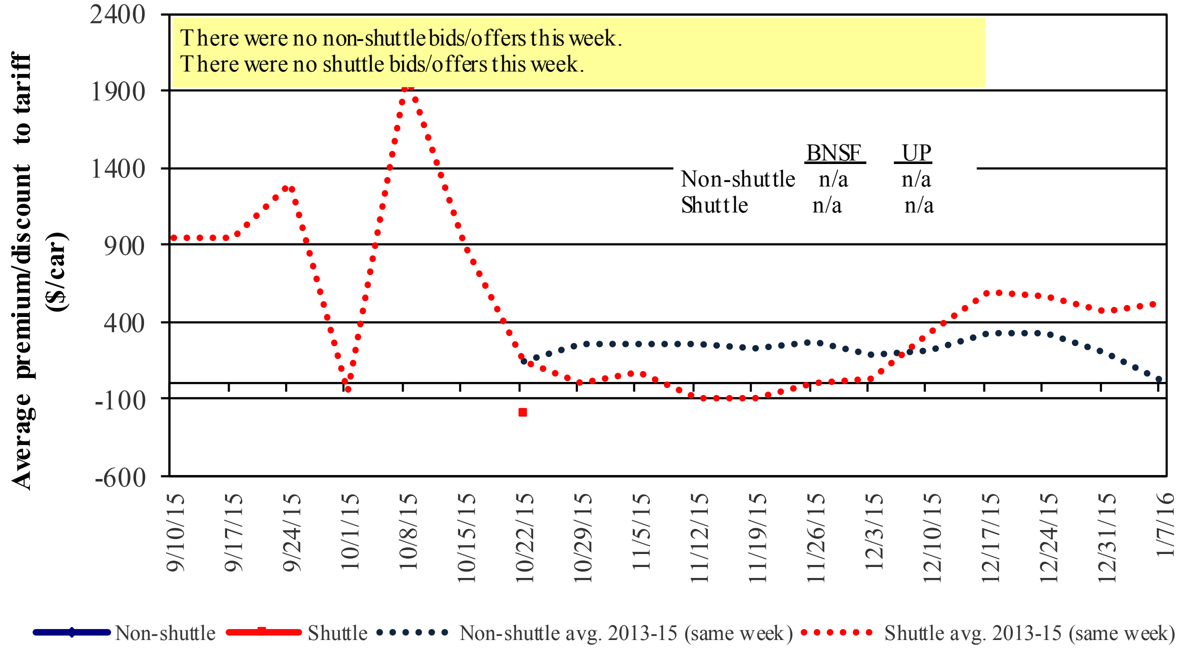


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in January 2016, Secondary Market



Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 6

Weekly Secondary Railcar Market ($/car)[1]

For the week ending: 10/29/2015	Delivery period					
	Nov-15	**Dec-15**	**Jan-16**	**Feb-16**	**Mar-16**	**Apr-16**
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	(83)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(25)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(1,583)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(100)	(75)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(12)	(50)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(800)	(775)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle[2]						
BNSF-GF	(346)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(118)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(1,796)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(158)	(200)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(52)	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(658)	(1,050)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

[1]Average premium/discount to tariff, $/car-last week

[2]Shuttle bids are a new data series; prior to this we provided only non-shuttle rates.

Note: Bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices,
n/a = not available; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool

Sources: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA
Data from James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

The **tariff rail rate** is the base price of freight rail service, and together with **fuel surcharges** and any **auction and secondary rail** values constitute the full cost of shipping by rail. Typically, auction and secondary rail values are a small fraction of the full cost of shipping by rail relative to the tariff rate. High auction and secondary rail values, during times of high rail demand or short supply, can exceed the cost of the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Table 7

Tariff Rail Rates for Unit and Shuttle Train Shipments[1]

Effective date: 11/1/2015	Origin region*	Destination region*	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[2]	Percent change Y/Y[3]
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	$3,605	$455	$40.32	$1.10	14
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,563	$3	$35.41	$0.96	-3
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$6,950	$15	$69.17	$1.88	3
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,243	$801	$50.09	$1.36	17
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,486	$13	$64.53	$1.76	4
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,511	$878	$53.51	$1.46	17
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$4,710	$1,221	$58.90	$1.60	20
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,328	$905	$42.04	$1.07	15
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,061	$0	$60.19	$1.53	15
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,168	$192	$23.43	$0.60	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$5,004	$0	$49.69	$1.26	11
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$4,311	$0	$42.81	$1.09	14
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,444	$563	$39.80	$1.01	14
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,052	$1,641	$66.46	$1.69	12
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,559	$52	$35.86	$0.98	-11
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$5,051	$0	$50.16	$1.37	24
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$6,178	$0	$61.35	$1.67	16
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$4,529	$0	$44.98	$1.22	23
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,974	$905	$48.45	$1.32	13
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,953	$9	$39.34	$1.07	0
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,919	$7	$38.99	$1.06	6
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$5,492	$0	$54.54	$1.48	22
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,611	$15	$55.87	$1.52	-1
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,532	$16	$65.02	$1.77	-1
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$5,478	$1,439	$68.69	$1.87	19
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,000	$19	$49.84	$1.27	-11
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,960	$17	$49.42	$1.26	-10
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,147	$905	$40.24	$1.02	16
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,600	$10	$35.85	$0.91	-6
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,795	$708	$44.72	$1.14	14
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,000	$18	$49.83	$1.27	-10
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,640	$19	$46.27	$1.18	-7
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,490	$17	$54.69	$1.49	-9
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,510	$19	$54.90	$1.49	-10
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,380	$15	$53.58	$1.46	-9
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,425	$1,044	$54.31	$1.48	13
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,226	$0	$41.97	$1.14	30
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,360	$1,473	$67.86	$1.85	15

[1] A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of 75-120 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

[2] Approximate load per car = 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons): corn 56 lbs./bu., wheat & soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

[3] Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.uprr.com

*Regional economic areas defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

Table 8

Tariff Rail Rates for U.S. Bulk Grain Shipments to Mexico

Effective date: 11/1/2015				Fuel			Percent
	Origin		Tariff	surcharge	Tariff plus surcharge per:		change
Commodity	**state**	**Destination region**	**rate/car[1]**	**per car[2]**	**metric ton[3]**	**bushel[3]**	**Y/Y[4]**
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,459	$16	$76.38	$2.08	3
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,514	$20	$66.75	$1.81	-8
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$6,995	$19	$71.66	$1.95	-9
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,142	$7	$42.39	$1.15	1
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,427	$22	$86.33	$2.19	-4
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,840	$21	$80.32	$2.04	-6
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$7,879	$20	$80.71	$2.05	-4
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,545	$16	$67.04	$1.70	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,238	$19	$74.15	$1.88	-3
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,240	$18	$74.16	$1.88	-1
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,578	$19	$87.83	$2.39	-2
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$9,142	$21	$93.62	$2.55	-1
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,470	$21	$96.97	$2.64	-1
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,439	$13	$76.14	$2.07	0
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,404	$19	$75.84	$1.92	-6
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$7,563	$12	$77.39	$1.96	5
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,168	$14	$63.16	$1.60	4
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,827	$16	$69.92	$1.77	0

[1]Rates are based upon published tariff rates for high-capacity shuttle trains. Shuttle trains are available for qualified shipments of 75--110 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

[2]Fuel surcharge adjusted to reflect the change in Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V railroad fuel surcharge policy as of 10/01/2009

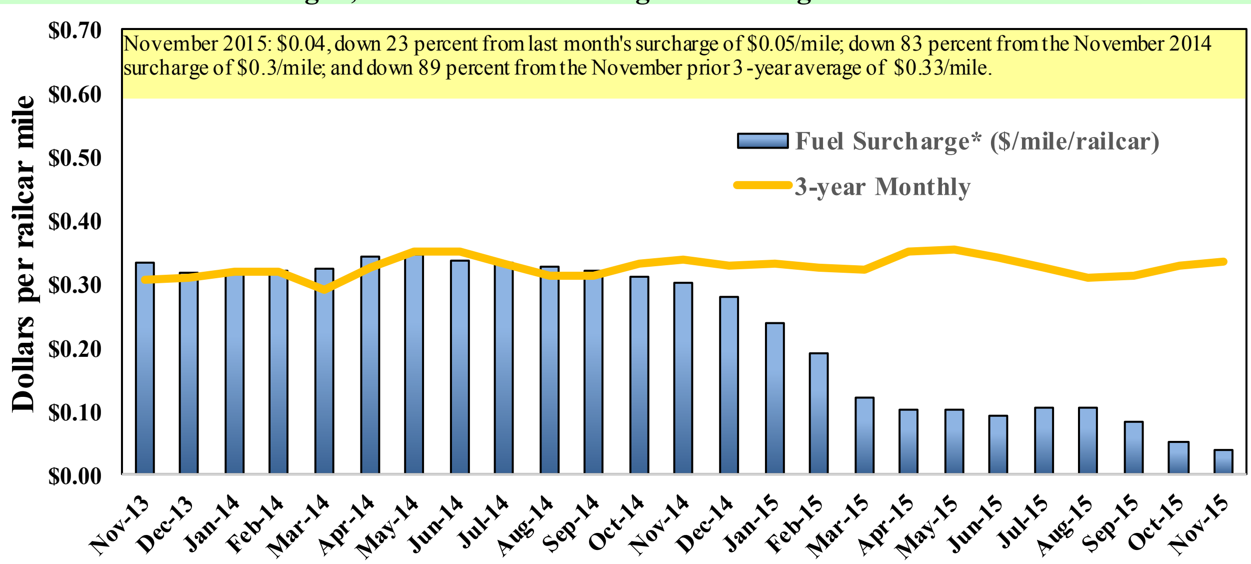
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

[4]Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.uprr.com, www.kcsouthern.com

Figure 7

Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average[1]



[1] Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.

* Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

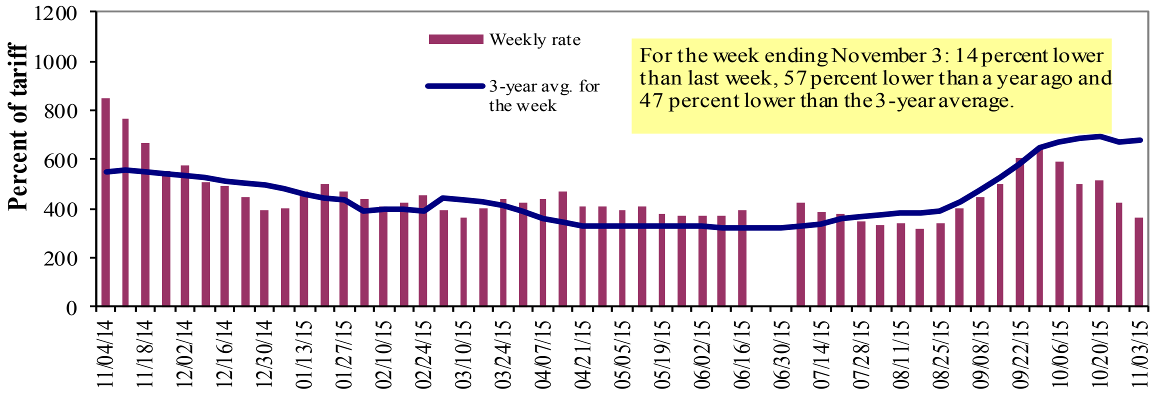
**CSX strike price changed from $2.00/gal. to $3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.kcsi.com, www.nscorp.com, www.uprr.com

Barge Transportation

Figure 8

Illinois River Barge Freight Rate[1,2]



[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average of the 3-year average.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 9

Weekly Barge Freight Rates: Southbound Only

		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate[1]	11/3/2015	417	365	362	265	350	350	222
	10/27/2015	495	428	420	335	415	415	300
$/ton	11/3/2015	25.81	19.42	16.80	10.57	16.42	14.14	6.97
	10/27/2015	30.64	22.77	19.49	13.37	19.46	16.77	9.42
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-43	-58	-57	-63	-61	-61	-65
	3-year avg. [2]	-35	-46	-47	-58	-49	-49	-61
Rate[1]	December	-	-	373	257	322	322	222
	February	-	-	383	253	322	322	222

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; missing data due to winter closure

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

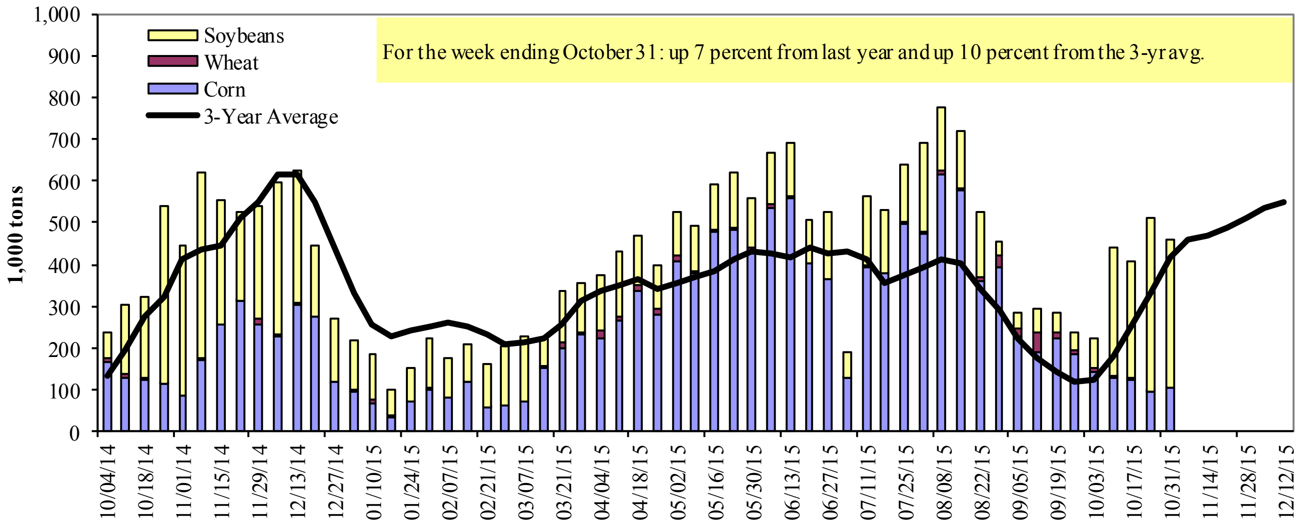
Figure 9
Benchmark tariff rates

Calculating barge rate per ton:
(Rate * 1976 tariff benchmark rate per ton)/100

Select applicable index from market quotes included in tables on this page. The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map.

Figure 10

Barge Movements on the Mississippi River[1] (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)



[1] The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

For the week ending 10/31/2015	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	20	0	215	2	236
Winfield, MO (L25)	28	0	321	9	358
Alton, IL (L26)	87	0	377	9	473
Granite City, IL (L27)	103	0	355	9	468
Illinois River (L8)	45	0	65	0	110
Ohio River (L52)	64	2	286	2	353
Arkansas River (L1)	0	6	55	10	70
Weekly total - 2015	166	8	696	21	891
Weekly total - 2014	120	9	691	19	838
2015 YTD[1]	16,899	1,676	9,330	258	28,164
2014 YTD	17,824	2,079	7,024	212	27,138
2015 as % of 2014 YTD	95	81	133	122	104
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014[2]	109	127	118	160	116
Total 2014	20,693	2,181	11,813	258	34,946

[1] Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

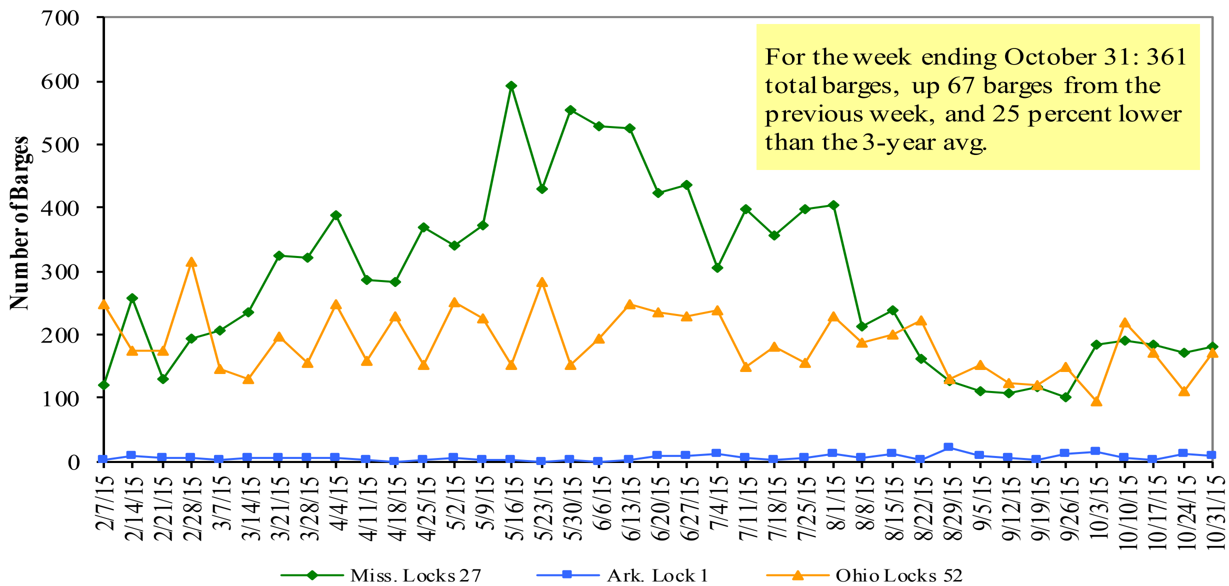
[2] As a percent of same period in 2014.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11

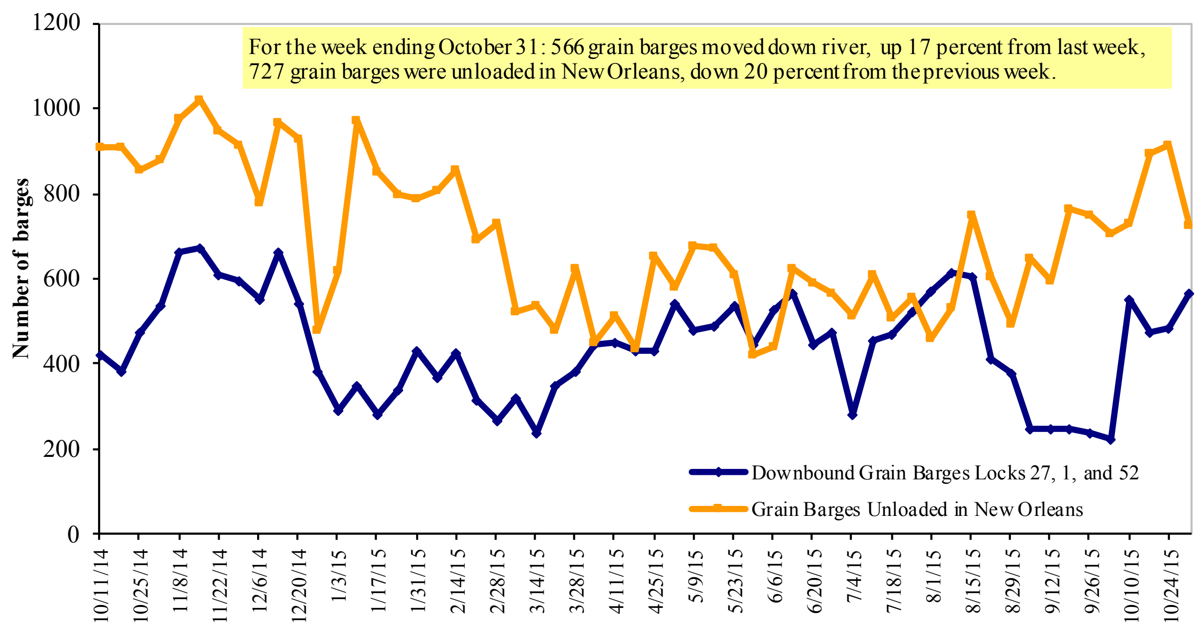
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 12

Grain Barges for Export in New Orleans Region



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and GIPSA

Truck Transportation

The **weekly diesel price** provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates as diesel fuel is a significant expense for truck grain movements.

Table 11

Retail on-Highway Diesel Prices[1], Week Ending 11/02/2015 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	2.492	-0.007	-1.105
	New England	2.546	-0.007	-1.141
	Central Atlantic	2.604	-0.016	-1.051
	Lower Atlantic	2.396	0.000	-1.137
II	Midwest[2]	2.516	-0.024	-1.108
III	Gulf Coast[3]	2.290	-0.009	-1.242
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.497	-0.011	-1.216
V	West Coast	2.697	-0.006	-1.092
	West Coast less California	2.549	-0.018	-1.155
	California	2.817	0.004	-1.044
Total	U.S.	2.485	-0.013	-1.138

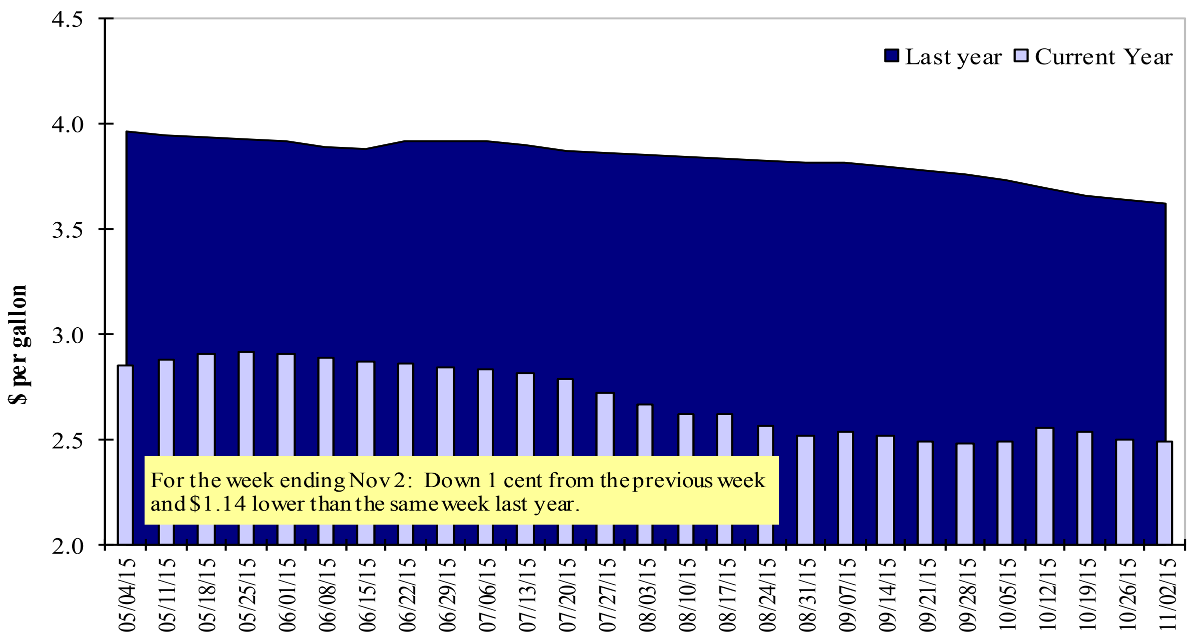
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[2]Same as North Central [3]Same as South Central

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Figure 13

Weekly Diesel Fuel Prices, U.S. Average



Source: Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices, Energy Information Administration, Dept. of Energy

Grain Exports

Table 12

U.S. Export Balances and Cumulative Exports (1,000 metric tons)

For the week ending	Wheat HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
10/22/2015	1,115	601	1,532	875	91	4,214	7,966	18,424	30,604
This week year ago	1,559	929	1,351	794	84	4,717	12,279	26,581	43,577
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2015/16 YTD	2,372	1,596	2,637	1,480	452	8,536	4,623	8,854	22,013
2014/15 YTD	3,351	1,876	3,314	1,646	235	10,421	6,463	7,414	24,298
YTD 2015/16 as % of 2014/15	71	85	80	90	192	82	72	119	91
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2014/15	67	62	105	99	146	84	64	72	71
2014/15 Total	7,009	3,654	7,250	3,758	665	22,336	32,194	46,619	101,149
2013/14 Total	11,465	7,307	6,338	4,367	486	29,963	46,868	44,478	121,309

[1] Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales to date

[2] Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year now in effect for corn and soybeans

Note: YTD = year-to-date. Marketing Year: wheat = 6/01-5/31, corn & soybeans = 9/01-8/31

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service/USDA (www.fas.usda.gov)

Table 13

Top 5 Importers[1] of U.S. Corn

For the week ending 10/22/2015	Total Commitments[2] 2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2011-2013
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	1,904	3,281	(42)	10,079
Mexico	5,673	5,015	13	8,145
Korea	126	549	(77)	2,965
Colombia	1,135	1,575	(28)	3,461
Taiwan	233	295	(21)	1,238
Top 5 Importers	**9,070**	**10,715**	**(15)**	**25,887**
Total US corn export sales	**12,589**	**18,742**	**(33)**	**34,445**
% of Projected	27%	40%		
Change from prior week	**709**	**490**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	72%	57%		75%
USDA forecast, October 2015	**47,074**	**47,430**	(1)	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, October 2015	**133,350**	**132,258**	**1**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/

[3]FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - http://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myrkaug.htm; 3-yr average

Table 14

Top 5 Importers[1] of U.S. Soybeans

For the week ending 10/22/2015	Total Commitments[2] 2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg. 2011-13
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	13,860	20,590	(33)	24,211
Mexico	1,408	1,212	16	2,971
Indonesia	340	716	(53)	1,895
Japan	868	687	26	1,750
Taiwan	415	794	(48)	1,055
Top 5 importers	**16,890**	**23,998**	**(30)**	**31,882**
Total US soybean export sales	**27,277**	**33,995**	**(20)**	**39,169**
% of Projected	60%	68%		
Change from prior week	1,897	1,262		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	62%	71%		**81%**
USDA forecast, October 2015	**45,640**	**50,218**	**(9)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 15

Top 10 Importers[1] of All U.S. Wheat

For the week ending 10/22/2015	Total Commitments[2] 2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg 2012-2014
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	1,258	1,701	(26)	3,113
Mexico	1,241	1,650	(25)	2,807
Nigeria	1,033	1,652	(37)	2,512
Philippines	1,350	1,306	3	2,105
Brazil	310	1,495	(79)	2,091
Korea	798	860	(7)	1,273
Taiwan	512	591	(13)	1,007
Indonesia	193	349	(45)	751
Colombia	415	394	5	662
Thailand	270	165		618
Top 10 importers	**7,110**	**9,996**	(29)	**16,939**
Total US wheat export sales	**12,750**	**15,138**	**(16)**	**26,361**
% of Projected	55%	65%		
Change from prior week	550	445		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	56%	66%		64%
USDA forecast, October 2015	**23,161**	**23,270**	**(0)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31.

[2] Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm.

Table 16

Grain Inspections for Export by U.S. Port Region (1,000 metric tons)

Port regions	For the Week Ending 10/29/15	Previous Week[1]	Current Week as % of Previous	2015 YTD[1]	2014 YTD[1]	2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of 2014	Last 4-weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.	Total[1] 2014
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	98	180	54	9,304	10,792	86	68	109	12,436
Corn	28	0	n/a	7,085	7,459	95	99	346	7,781
Soybeans	988	850	116	7,621	6,381	119	179	149	12,887
Total	**1,114**	**1,030**	**108**	**24,010**	**24,631**	**97**	**139**	**144**	**33,104**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	80	64	124	3,867	4,153	93	77	53	4,495
Corn	306	275	112	23,721	26,611	89	50	67	30,912
Soybeans	1,088	1,551	70	19,579	16,467	119	120	125	29,087
Total	**1,474**	**1,890**	**78**	**47,167**	**47,231**	**100**	**93**	**104**	**64,495**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	0	35	0	3,123	5,472	57	20	22	6,120
Corn	23	0	n/a	624	509	123	n/a	0	580
Soybeans	171	32	541	413	328	126	322	69	949
Total	**194**	**67**	**292**	**4,160**	**6,308**	**66**	**77**	**57**	**7,649**
Interior									
Wheat	2	22	9	1,198	1,193	100	86	80	1,400
Corn	108	81	135	5,225	4,826	108	55	101	5,677
Soybeans	141	153	92	2,994	2,914	103	62	105	4,312
Total	**251**	**256**	**98**	**9,417**	**8,933**	**105**	**89**	**102**	**11,389**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	32	0	831	631	132	41	62	935
Corn	0	14	0	447	268	167	73	191	288
Soybeans	122	152	80	466	241	194	200	140	988
Total	**122**	**198**	**61**	**1,745**	**1,140**	**153**	**131**	**125**	**2,211**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	420	550	76	3	13	553
Corn	0	35	1	275	811	34	58	113	816
Soybeans	124	12	1,042	1,128	1,060	106	259	107	2,119
Total	**125**	**47**	**265**	**1,823**	**2,422**	**75**	**86**	**101**	**3,487**
U.S. total from ports[2]									
Wheat	180	334	54	18,743	22,790	82	55	68	25,939
Corn	466	405	115	37,377	40,484	92	62	85	46,054
Soybeans	2,633	2,749	96	32,201	27,391	118	141	129	50,342
Total	**3,280**	**3,487**	**94**	**88,322**	**90,666**	**97**	**106**	**112**	**122,335**

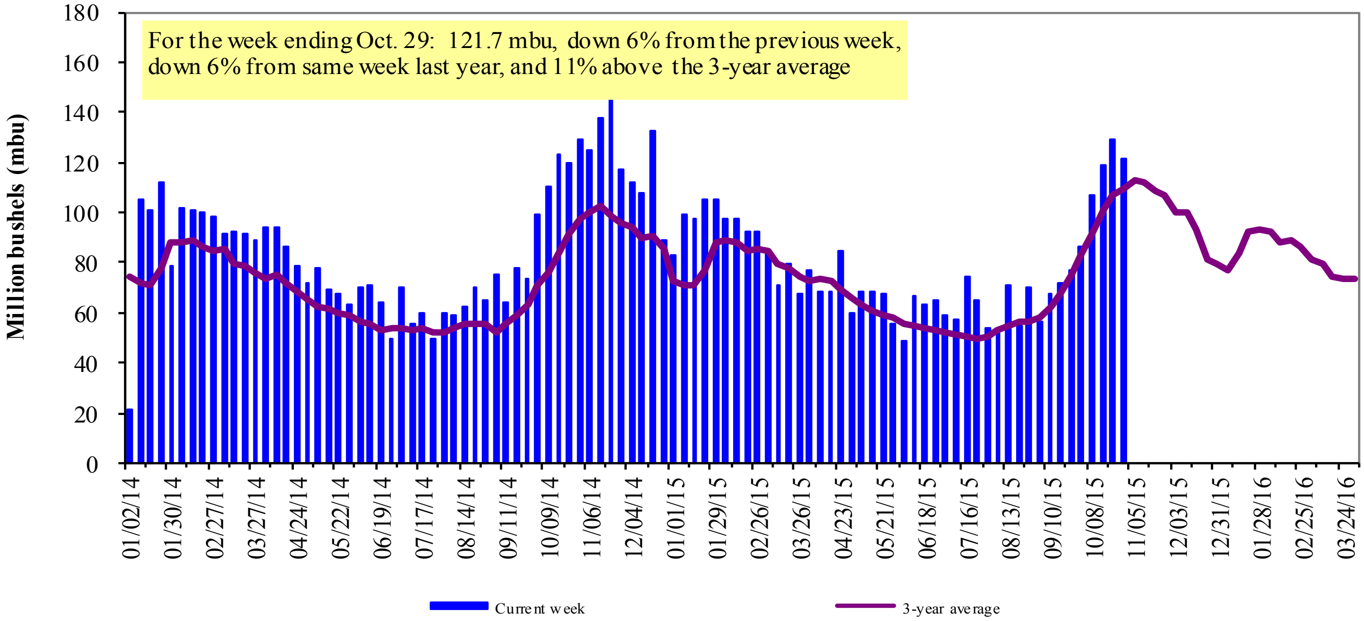
[1] Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov); YTD= year-to-date; n/a = not applicable

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, this includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 35 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Approximately 59 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2014.

Figure 14

U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)

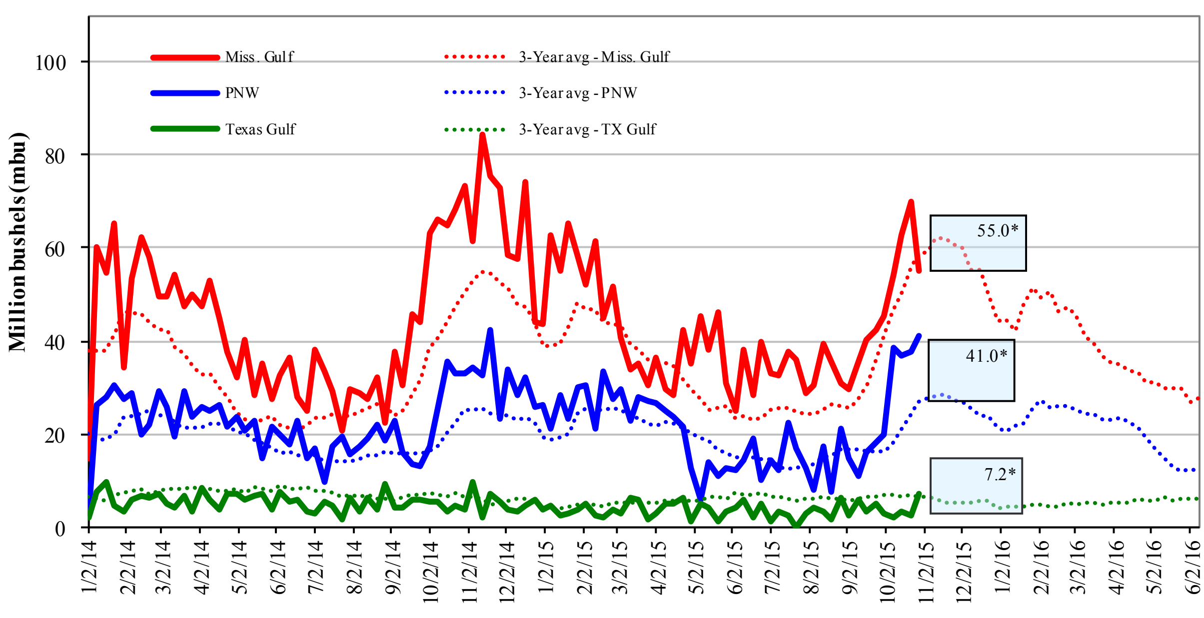


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average

Figure 15

U.S. Grain Inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW[1] (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov); *mbu, this week.

October 29: % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	down 22	up 195	down 14	up 8
Last year (same week)	down 25	up 87	down 19	up 24
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.	down 6	up 133	down 4	up 49

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

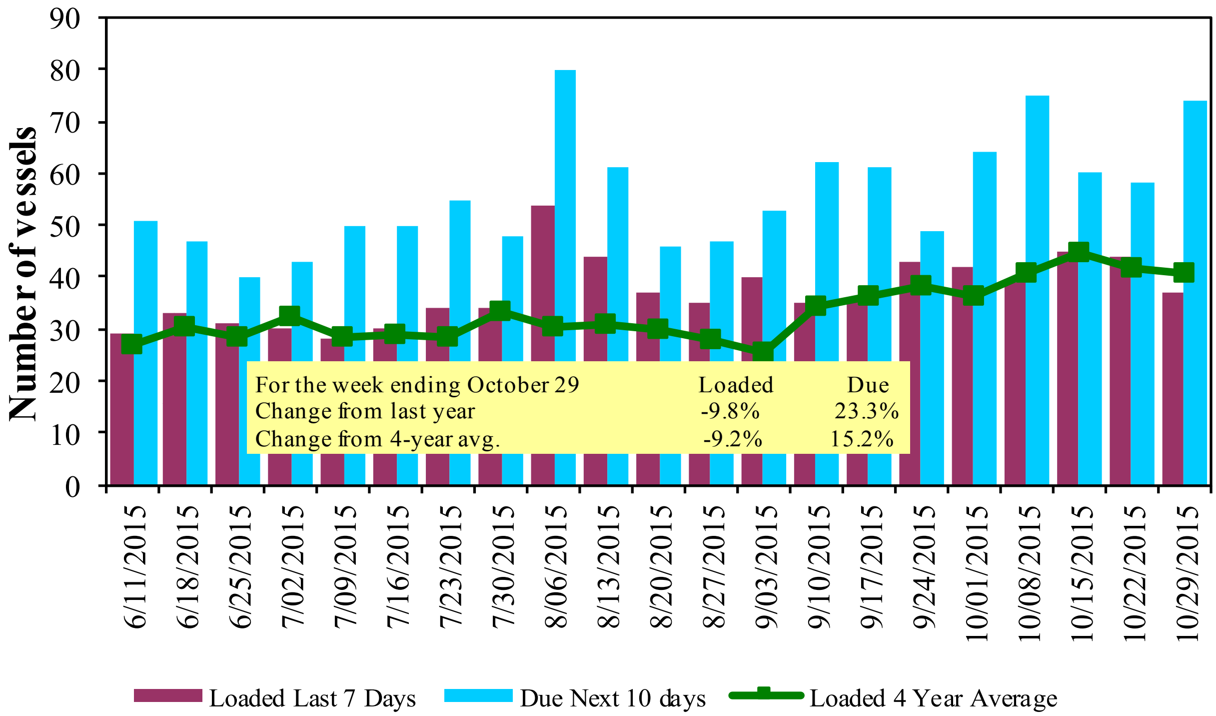
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
10/29/2015	45	37	74	11	n/a
10/22/2015	51	44	58	17	n/a
2014 range	(18..88)	(24..52)	(27..97)	(6..26)	n/a
2014 avg.	47	39	60	15	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

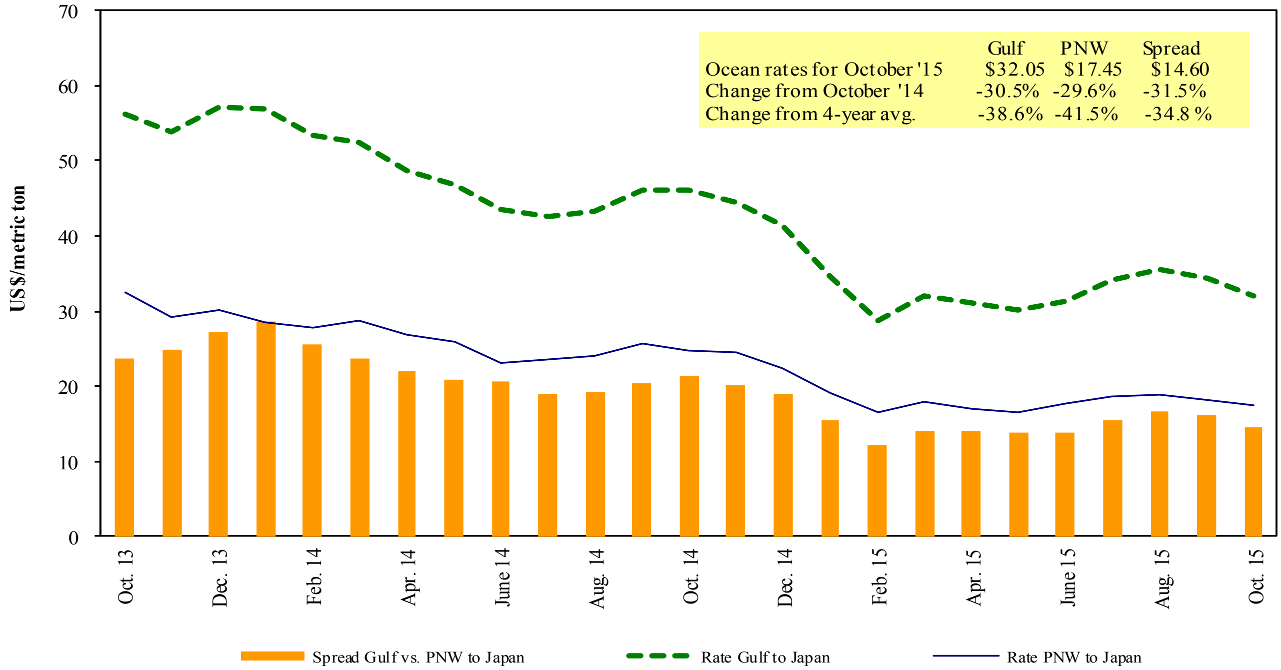
U.S. Gulf[1] Vessel Loading Activity



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA
[1]U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.

Figure 17

Grain Vessel Rates, U.S. to Japan



Data Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean Freight Rates For Selected Shipments, Week Ending 10/31/2015

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 5/15	60,000	29.40
U.S. Gulf	China	Grain	Nov 1/10	60,000	30.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Grain	Nov 1/10	66,000	27.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 25/30	55,000	30.50
U.S.Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 22/31	58,000	32.25
U.S.Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 22/31	58,000	31.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 15/24	55,000	32.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 1/30	55,000	34.50
U.S. Gulf	Guatemala	Soybean Meal	Nov 20/30	18,000	17.75
U.S Gulf	Guatemala	Corn	Nov 20/30	6,000	17.75
U.S. Gulf	Guatemala[1]	Corn	Nov 5/15	24,000	58.35
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Grain	Dec 1/20	55,000	29.50
PNW	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 1/10	60,000	16.10
PNW	Yemen	Heavy Grain	Oct 1/20	55,000	26.00
Australia	Yemen	Heavy Grain	Oct 1/20	55,000	18.00
Brazil	Egypt	Grain	Nov 8/12	60,000	11.75
Bulgaria	Amsterdam	Sunflower Seed	Oct 18/22	25,000	17.75

Rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicates; op = option

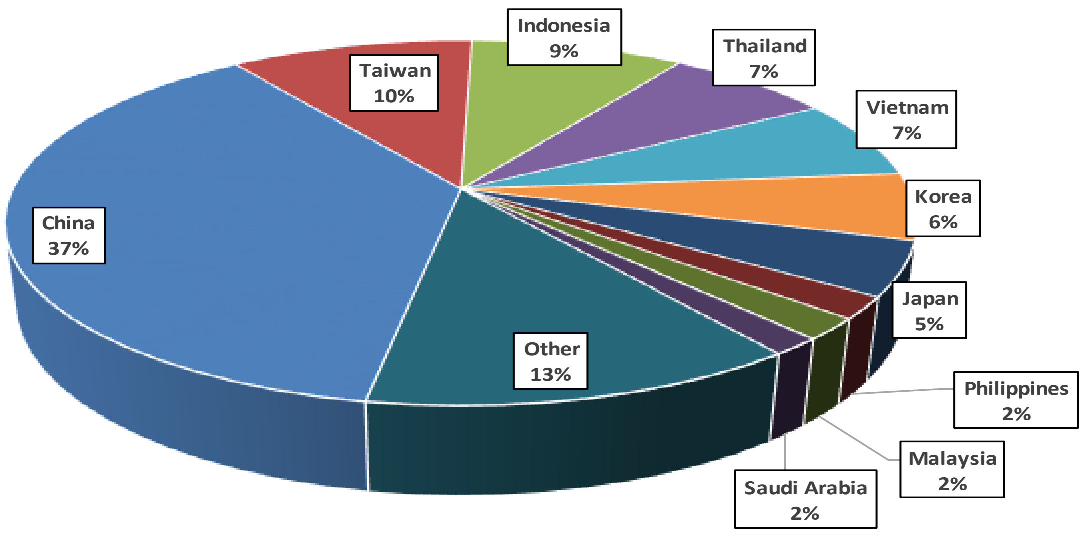
[1]50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

Source: Maritime Research Inc. (www.maritime-research.com)

In 2014, containers were used to transport 7 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 63 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2014 went to Asia, of which 11 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 95 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, January-July 2015

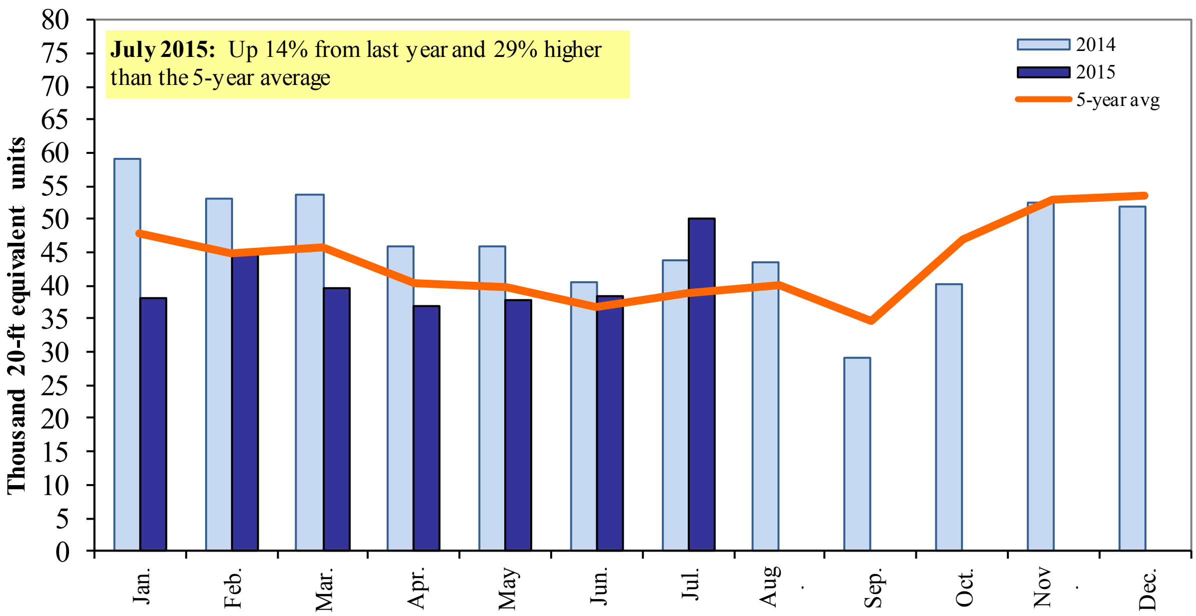


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 100190, 100200, 100300, 100400, 100590, 100700, 110100, 230310, 110220, 110290, 120100, 230210, 230990, 230330, and 120810.

Figure 19

Monthly Shipments of Containerized Grain to Asia



Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data.

Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 100190, 100200, 100300, 100400, 100590, 100700, 110100, 230310, 110220, 110290, 120100, 230210, 230990, 230330, and 120810.

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