United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

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

Contact Us

May 31, 2018

Contents

The next release is June 7, 2018

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Maritime Regulatory Reform

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) is seeking public input on how existing Federal government requirements affecting the maritime sector can be modified or repealed to: (1) increase efficiency; (2) reduce or eliminate unnecessary regulatory burdens; or (3) simplify regulatory compliance while continuing to meet statutory missions. Interested persons are encouraged to submit comments, identified by "Maritime Regulatory Reform RFI," through the Federal Rulemaking Portal: http://www.regulations.gov, or by email: OMB.DeregulatoryRFI@OMB.eop.gov. Emailed comments should include "Maritime Regulatory Reform RFI" in the subject line of the message. Written comments and information are requested on or before July 16, 2018. OIRA will make all submissions publicly available on www.regulations.gov.

Grain Inspections Down Slightly

For the week ending May 24, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 2.74 million metric tons (mmt), down 2 percent from the previous week, up 26 percent from last year, and 48 percent above the 3-year average. Total inspections of wheat and corn increased 23 and 10 percent, respectively, from the past week, however, the increase could not offset the 32 percent drop in soybean inspections. Grain inspections were down 6 percent from the previous week in the Pacific Northwest (PNW), but up 14 percent in the Mississippi Gulf. Current outstanding (unshipped) export sales continued to fall for corn, wheat, and soybeans.

Navigation Conditions Improving on Inland Waterways

For most of 2018, high water conditions have disrupted barge traffic on the Mississippi, Ohio, Illinois, and Arkansas rivers. High water and fast currents have caused barge companies to reduce the size of tows, increase horsepower requirements of towboats, and in certain areas, restrict barge traffic to daylight operations. However, as of May 30, barge operators have reported that navigation conditions have improved on much of the inland waterways. Without future significant rainfall in the central U.S., barge operators expect barge operations to be near normal by early June. As of May 26, total down-bound grain barge movements (year-to-date) on the locking portions on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Arkansas rivers were 13.2 million tons, 17 percent lower than the same period last year and 9 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

For the week ending May 17, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 29.5 mmt, up 30 percent from the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** were .112 mmt, up 78 percent from the previous week. Net **corn export sales** were .854 mmt, down 13 percent from the previous week. Net **soybean export sales** were negative .139 mmt.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 22,225 **grain carloads** for the week ending May 19, down 8 percent from the previous week and 7 percent from last year, but up 5 percent from the 3-year average.

Average June shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers per car were $300 above tariff for the week ending May 24, up $34 from last week, and $7 lower than last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were $178 above tariff, down $159 from last week, and $218 higher than last year.

Barge

For the week ending May 26, **barge grain movements** totaled 737,826 tons, 19 percent lower than the previous week and down 6 percent from the same period last year.

For the week ending May 26, 460 grain barges **moved down river**, 107 barges less than the previous week. There were 707 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, 1 percent higher than the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending May 24, 31 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, unchanged from the same period last year. Thirty-eight vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 38 percent less than the same period last year.

For the week ending May 24, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was $43.50 per metric ton, 1 percent less than the previous week. The cost of shipping from the PNW to Japan was $24.25 per metric ton, 1 percent less than the previous week.

Fuel

For the week ending May 28, the U.S. average **diesel fuel price** increased 1 cent from the previous week to $3.29 per gallon, 72 cents higher than the same week last year.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 31, 2018.
Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-31-2018**

Feature Article/Calendar

June 5-7	Fourth Annual Rail Insights Railway Age Conference and Expo	Chicago, IL	https://www.railwayage.com/insights/
June 11-13	International Fuel Ethanol Workshop/Expo	Omaha, NE	866-746-8385
June 12-15	USA Rice Millers Association Convention	White Sulphur Springs, WV	https://www.usarice.com/about/meetings
June 12 -15	30th Annual AgTC Meeting	Tacoma, WA	https://agtrans.org/events/
June 27-29	Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Assn.	Cle Elum, WA	http://www.pnwgfa.org/events/
July 12-14	Florida Feed Association Annual Meeting	Palm Beach, FL	863-533-1535
July 16-17	251st Meeting of the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers	Lake Geneva, WI	https://www.mwrailshippers.com/events/meeting-registratior
July 16-20	251st meeting of the Midwest Association of Rail Shippers	Lake Geneva, Wisconsin	https://www.mwrailshippers.com/
July 22-25	AGRO's 2018 Annual Conference	Sioux Falls, SD	http://puc.sd.gov/agro/default.aspx
July 24-26	NGFA/GJ CONVEY '18 Conference	Omaha, NE	202-289-0873
July 25-26	USDA/NGFA/Soy Transportation Coalition: Ag Transportation Summit	Arlington, VA	https://www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/transportation-summit/
Aug. 28 - 30	Global Soy & Specialty Grains Conference	Kansas City, MO	https://www.grainconference.org/
Sept 12-14	National Waterway Conference Annual Meeting	New Orleans, LA	https://waterways.org/
Sept. 17-19	NGFA-PFI Feed & Pet Food Joint Conference	St. Louis, MO	http://feed.ngfa.org/joint-feedpet-food-conference/
Sept. 30 - Oct. 2	IAOM - Southeast Asia Region Conference	Pasay City, Manila	https://www.iaom.info/southeastasia/
Oct. 22-24	Inland Distribution Conference	Oak Brook, IL	https://events.joc.com/inland-2018
Oct. 22-24	Export Exchange 2018	Minneapolis, MN	http://www.exportexchange.org/
Oct. 22-25	IAOM - Mideast & Africa Region Conference/Expo	Nairobi, Kenya	968-2471-2338
Nov. 8	AgTC Workshop	Riverside, MO	https://agtrans.org/events/
Nov. 9	AgTC Workshop	Atlanta, GA	https://agtrans.org/events/
Nov. 14-15	Kansas Agri Business Expo	Wichita, KS	http://www.ksabe.org/
Nov. 14-16	Waterways Council Annual Meeting and 15th Annual Symposium	Chicago, IL	http://waterwayscouncil.org/
Dec. 2-4	NGFACountry Elevator Conference and Trade Show	St. Louis, MO	https://www.ngfa.org/country-elevator-conference/
Dec. 5	AgTC Workshop	Minneapolis, MN	https://agtrans.org/events/

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

For the week ending	Truck	Rail: Unit Train	Rail: Shuttle	Barge	Ocean: Gulf	Ocean: Pacific
05/30/18	221	284	227	272	195	172
05/23/18	220	293	225	268	197	174

[1]Indicator: Base year 2000 = 100; Weekly updates include truck = diesel ($/gallon); rail = near-month secondary rail market bid and monthly tariff rate with fuel surcharge ($/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	5/25/2018	5/18/2018
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.84	-0.83
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.91	-0.92
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.29	-1.24
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.80	-1.75
HRS	ND--Portland	-2.00	-2.11

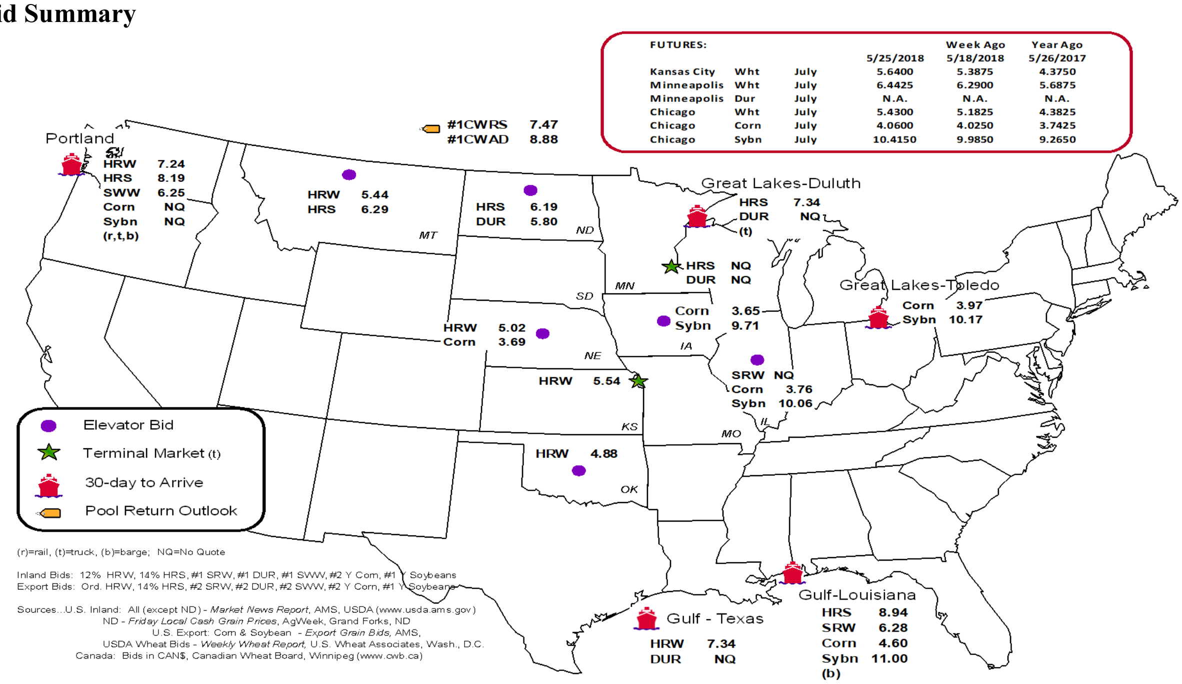
Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available

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]
05/23/2018[p]	890	442	6,731	359	8,422	5/19/2018	2,684
05/16/2018[r]	219	456	7,032	787	8,494	5/12/2018	3,227
2018 YTD[r]	8,980	28,710	137,373	9,418	184,481	2018 YTD	42,989
2017 YTD[r]	13,382	40,295	127,932	10,670	192,279	2017 YTD	46,414
2018 YTD as % of 2017 YTD	67	71	107	88	96	% change YTD	93
Last 4 weeks as % of 2017[2]	185	31	124	265	109	Last 4wks % 2017	119
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	214	33	181	251	144	Last 4wks % 4 yr	133
Total 2017	28,796	76,545	289,178	21,999	416,518	Total 2017	119,661
Total 2016	36,925	88,035	299,604	29,007	453,571	Total 2016	92,982

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2017 and prior 4-year average.

[3] Cross-border weekly data is approximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads' reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect switching between KCSM and Grupo Mexico.

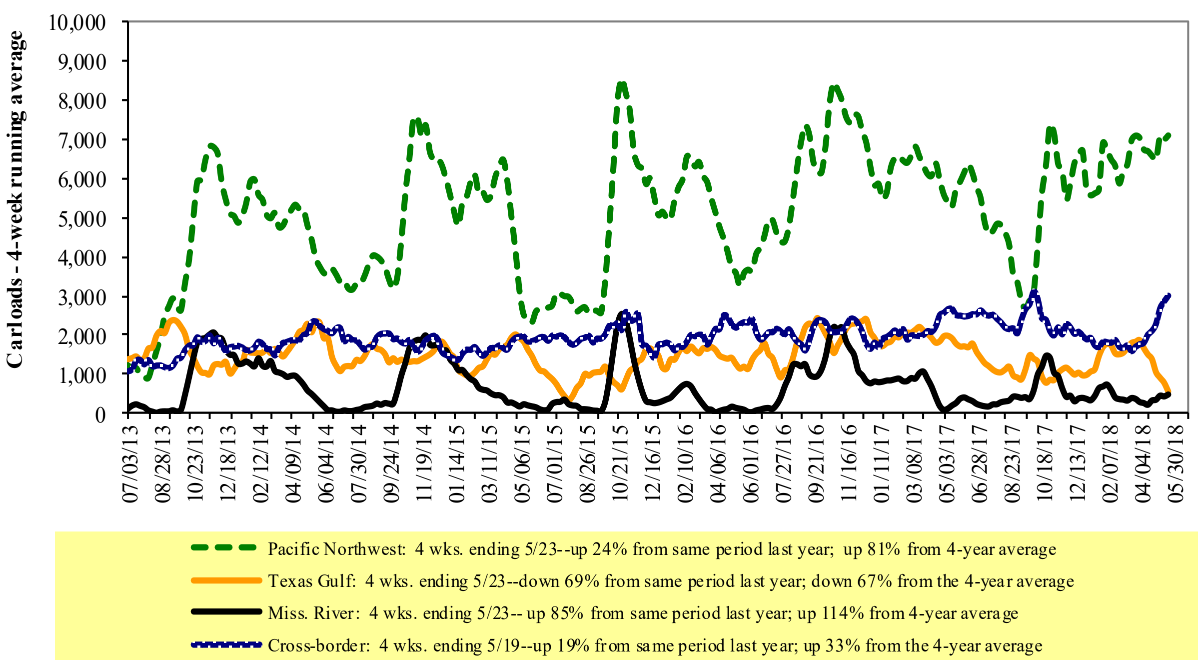
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

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:	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
5/19/2018	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,615	2,217	11,540	887	5,966	22,225	4,092	4,467
This week last year	1,536	2,816	13,033	892	5,604	23,881	3,994	4,728
2018 YTD	38,601	49,219	246,698	18,778	106,319	459,615	75,065	90,260
2017 YTD	36,507	55,704	229,777	19,460	121,771	463,219	79,358	86,995
2018 YTD as % of 2017 YTD	106	88	107	96	87	99	95	104
Last 4 weeks as % of 2017*	132	99	102	102	99	103	110	111
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.**	113	92	131	106	108	117	112	118
Total 2017	89,465	142,713	578,964	50,223	289,574	1,150,939	198,624	244,766

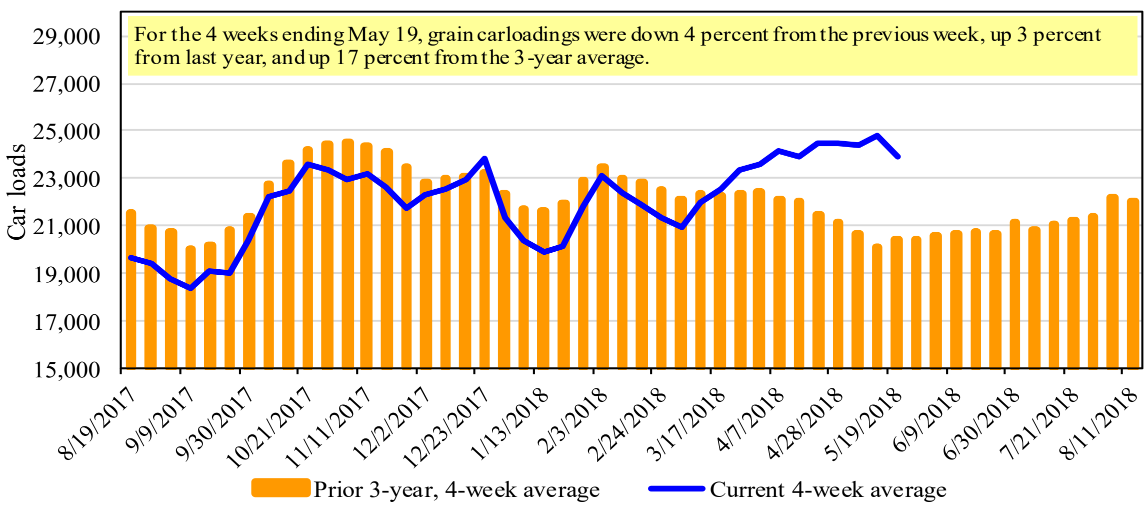
*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

**The past 4 weeks as a percent of the same period from the prior 3-year average. YTD = year-to-date.

Source: Association of American Railroads (www.aar.org)

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: 5/24/2018		Jun-18	Jun-17	Jul-18	Jul-17	Aug-18	Aug-17	Sep-18	Sep-17
		Delivery period							
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	no offer	no bids	0	no bids	0	no bids	0	no bids
	COT grain single-car[5]	no offer	0	117	no offer	0	0	117	0
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	10	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.

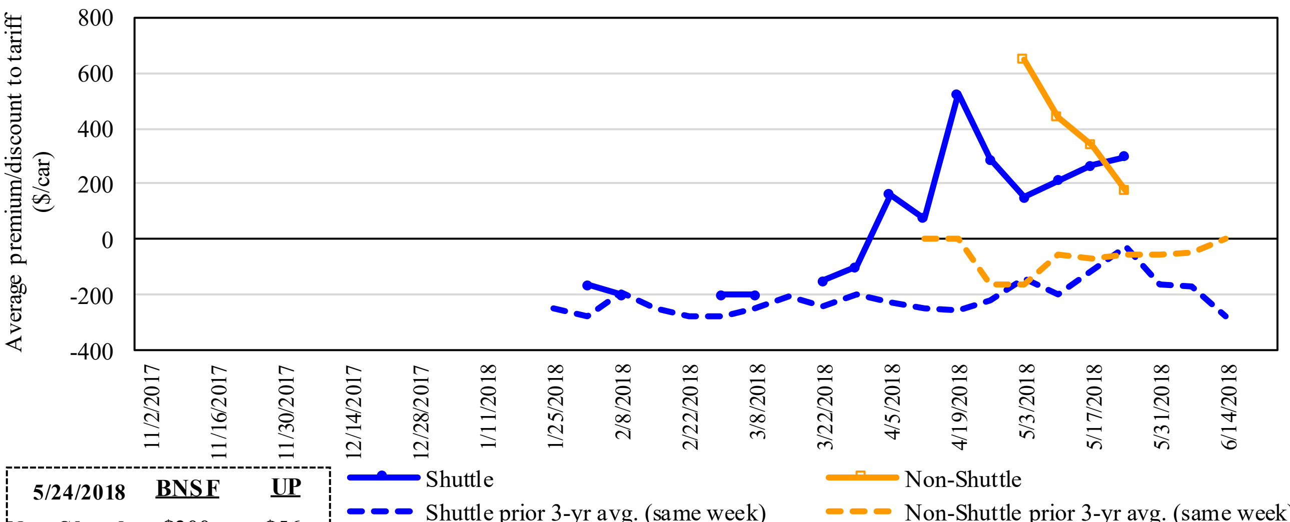
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

[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 June 2018, Secondary Market

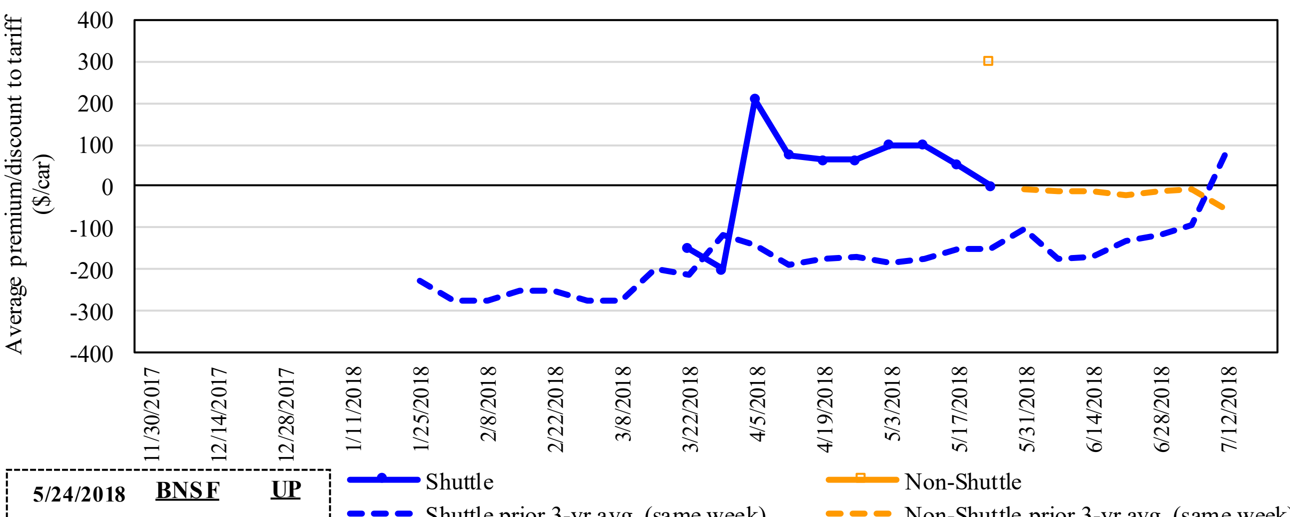


5/24/2018	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$300	$56
Shuttle	$650	-$50

Average Non-shuttle bids/offers fell $159 this week, and are $472 below the peak.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $34 this week and are $225 below the peak.

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 July 2018, Secondary Market



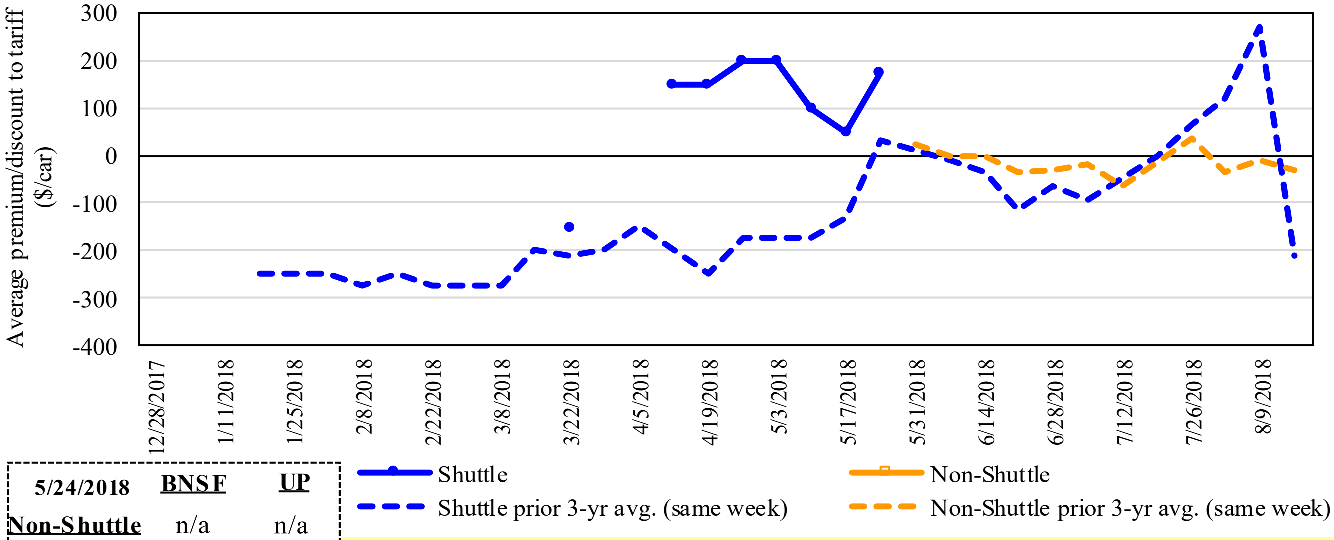
5/24/2018	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$300	n/a
Shuttle	n/a	$0

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers last week. Average Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week are at the peak.
Average Shuttle bids/offers fell $50 this week and are $208 below the peak.

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 August 2018, Secondary Market



5/24/2018	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$350	$0

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $125 this week and are $25 below the peak.

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: 5/24/2018		Delivery period					
		Jun-18	**Jul-18**	**Aug-18**	**Sep-18**	**Oct-18**	**Nov-18**
Non-shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**300**	**300**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2017	280	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**56**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	(369)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2017	156	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**650**	**n/a**	**350**	**400**	**700**	**350**
	Change from last week	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
	Change from same week 2017	(89)	n/a	238	231	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**(50)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**450**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	19	(50)	(50)	(50)	50	n/a
	Change from same week 2017	75	150	n/a	n/a	(200)	n/a

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

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]

May, 2018	Origin region[3]	Destination region[3]	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[2]	Percent change Y/Y[4]
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	$3,883	$91	$39.46	$1.07	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$4,143	$0	$41.14	$1.12	0
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$7,050	$0	$70.01	$1.91	1
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,540	$160	$46.68	$1.27	5
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,786	$0	$67.39	$1.83	1
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,816	$176	$49.57	$1.35	5
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,021	$244	$52.29	$1.42	5
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,931	$181	$40.83	$1.04	9
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,344	$0	$63.00	$1.60	5
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,258	$38	$22.80	$0.58	1
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$5,446	$0	$54.08	$1.37	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$4,540	$0	$45.08	$1.15	5
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,609	$113	$36.96	$0.94	3
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,327	$328	$56.16	$1.43	5
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$4,131	$171	$42.72	$1.16	16
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$5,287	$0	$52.50	$1.43	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$6,460	$0	$64.15	$1.75	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$4,764	$0	$47.31	$1.29	5
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,745	$181	$48.92	$1.33	7
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,953	$0	$39.26	$1.07	0
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,171	$0	$41.42	$1.13	2
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$5,663	$0	$56.24	$1.53	3
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,611	$0	$55.72	$1.52	0
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,931	$0	$58.90	$1.60	0
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$5,812	$288	$60.57	$1.65	5
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,000	$0	$49.65	$1.26	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,960	$0	$49.26	$1.25	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,731	$181	$38.85	$0.99	9
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,700	$0	$36.74	$0.93	0
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,970	$142	$40.83	$1.04	3
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,000	$0	$49.65	$1.26	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,820	$0	$47.86	$1.22	2
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,600	$0	$55.61	$1.51	0
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,650	$0	$56.11	$1.53	0
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,500	$0	$54.62	$1.49	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,775	$209	$49.49	$1.35	7
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,352	$0	$43.22	$1.18	3
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,710	$295	$59.63	$1.62	7

[1]A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are generally 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 and soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

[3]Regional economic areas are defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

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

Table 8

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

Date: May, 2018				Fuel			Percent
	Origin		Tariff	surcharge	Tariff plus surcharge per:		change[4]
Commodity	**state**	**Destination region**	**rate/car[1]**	**per car[2]**	**metric ton[3]**	**bushel[3]**	**Y/Y**
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,459	$0	$76.21	$2.07	0
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,631	$125	$69.03	$1.88	1
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,309	$321	$77.95	$2.12	3
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,292	$77	$44.64	$1.21	2
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,313	$287	$87.87	$2.23	2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,700	$0	$78.68	$2.00	2
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,013	$265	$84.58	$2.15	3
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,743	$0	$68.90	$1.75	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,379	$258	$78.03	$1.98	3
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,300	$0	$74.59	$1.89	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,134	$268	$85.84	$2.33	-5
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$8,692	$292	$91.79	$2.50	-2
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$8,960	$0	$91.55	$2.49	0
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,489	$213	$78.69	$2.14	1
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,345	$265	$77.75	$1.97	3
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$7,819	$157	$81.49	$2.07	4
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,452	$126	$67.20	$1.71	5
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,790	$205	$71.47	$1.81	4

[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

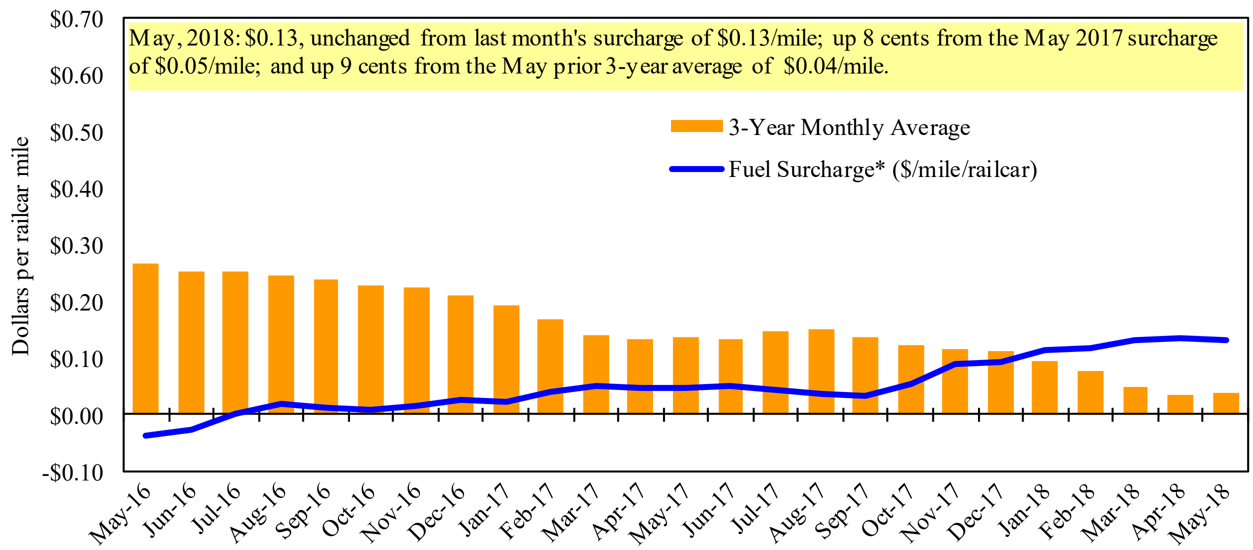
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

[4]Percentage change 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]

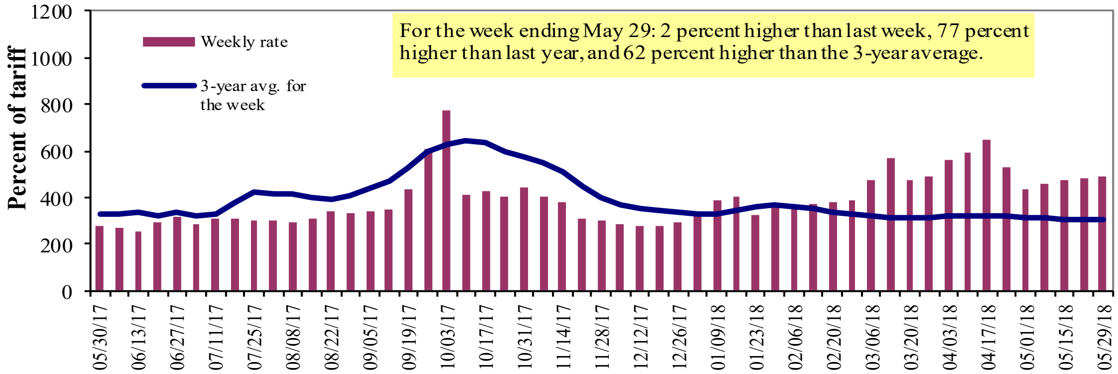


[1] Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.
* Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.
**CSX strike price changed from $2.00/gal. to $3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.
Sources: 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]	5/29/2018	533	497	490	343	345	345	292
	5/22/2018	502	486	482	332	318	323	288
$/ton	5/29/2018	32.99	26.44	22.74	13.69	16.18	13.94	9.17
	5/22/2018	31.07	25.86	22.36	13.25	14.91	13.05	9.04
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	60	73	77	72	62	62	69
	3-year avg. [2]	47	60	62	65	68	68	53
Rate[1]	June	520	485	475	340	338	338	295
	August	488	468	446	336	363	363	308

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; "-" = no quote

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.

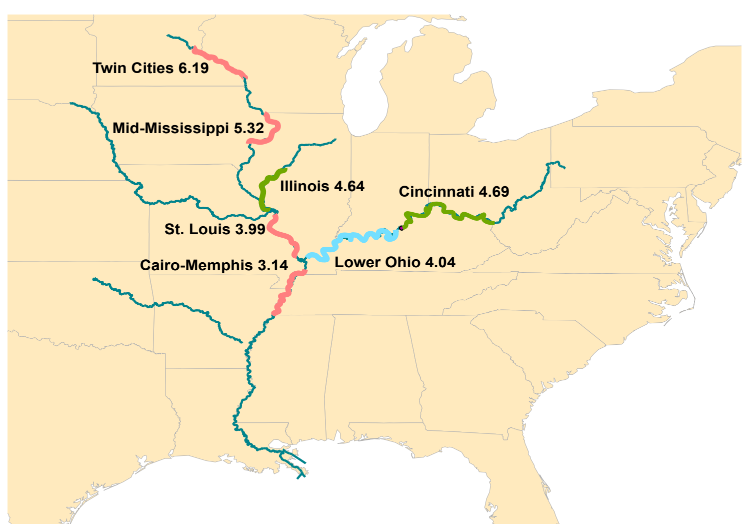
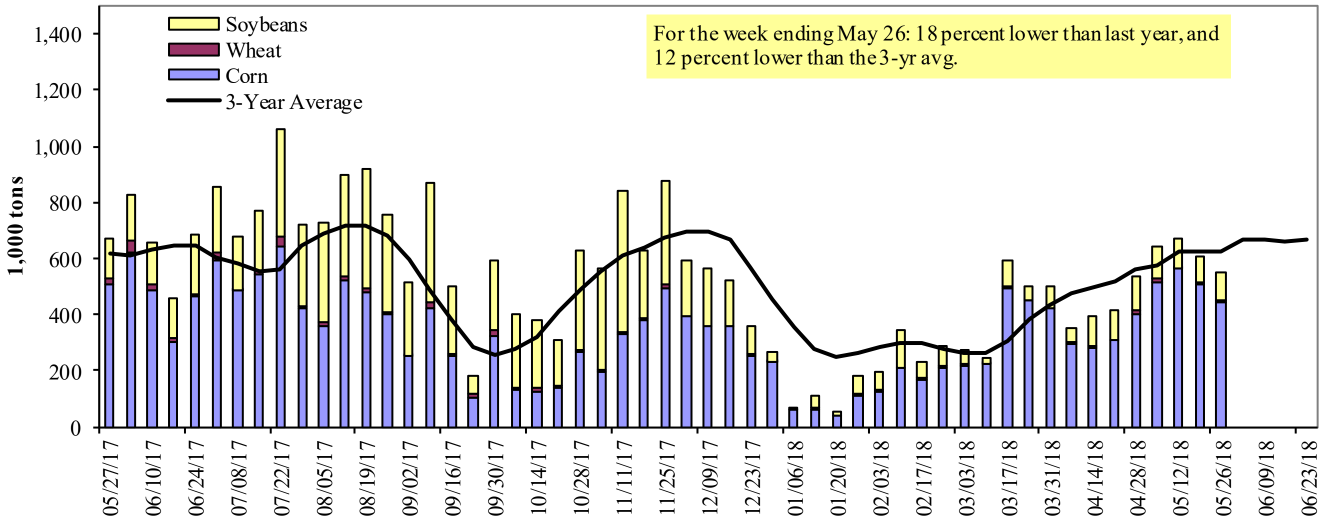


Figure 10

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 05/26/2018	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	192	2	41	3	238
Winfield, MO (L25)	197	5	75	2	279
Alton, IL (L26)	495	5	106	2	607
Granite City, IL (L27)	447	5	99	2	553
Illinois River (L8)	244	0	44	0	288
Ohio River (L52)	86	14	41	0	141
Arkansas River (L1)	4	11	28	0	43
Weekly total - 2018	537	30	169	2	738
Weekly total - 2017	554	29	194	10	785
2018 YTD[1]	8,268	621	4,267	58	13,214
2017 YTD	9,989	858	4,989	146	15,983
2018 as % of 2017 YTD	83	72	86	40	83
Last 4 weeks as % of 2017[2]	128	102	112	41	122
Total 2017	22,242	2,210	16,123	360	40,936

[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.

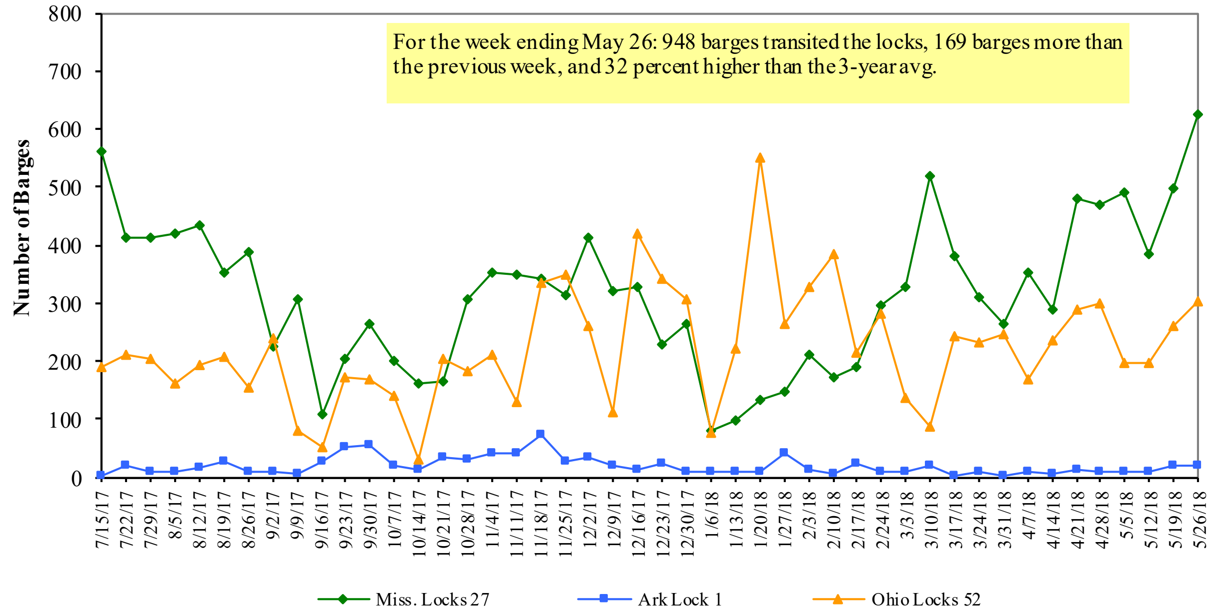
[2] As a percent of same period in 2017.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11

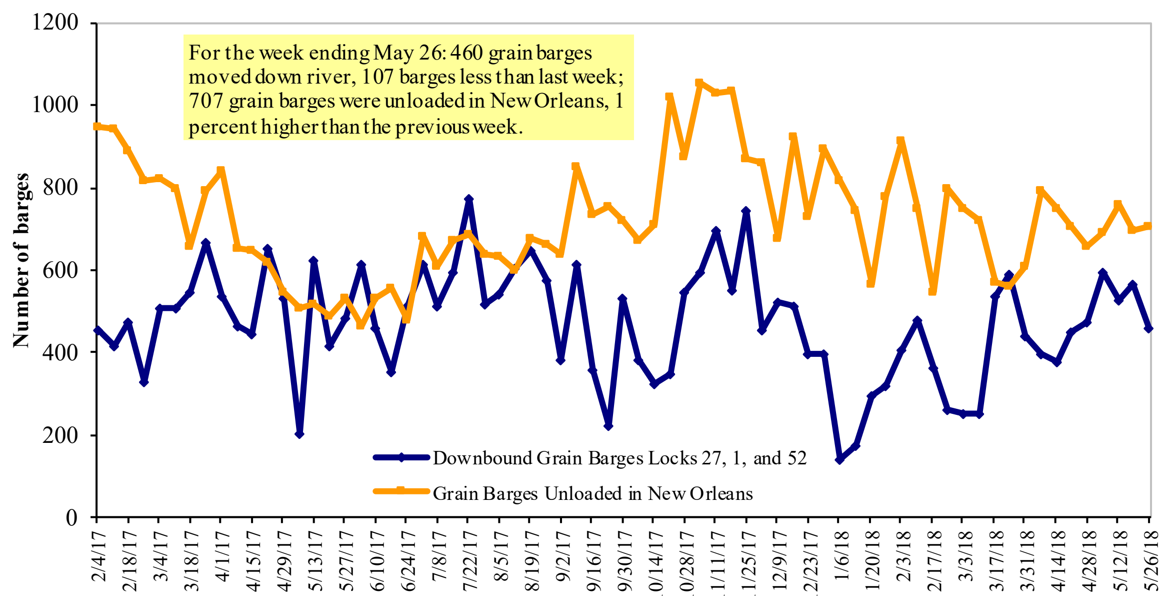
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



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, Week Ending 5/28/2018 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.287	0.016	0.679
	New England	3.307	0.025	0.685
	Central Atlantic	3.443	0.023	0.692
	Lower Atlantic	3.174	0.011	0.669
II	Midwest[2]	3.230	0.012	0.718
III	Gulf Coast[3]	3.054	-0.001	0.631
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.353	0.005	0.692
V	West Coast	3.784	0.019	0.941
	West Coast less California	3.514	0.011	0.779
	California	3.997	0.024	1.066
Total	U.S.	3.288	0.011	0.717

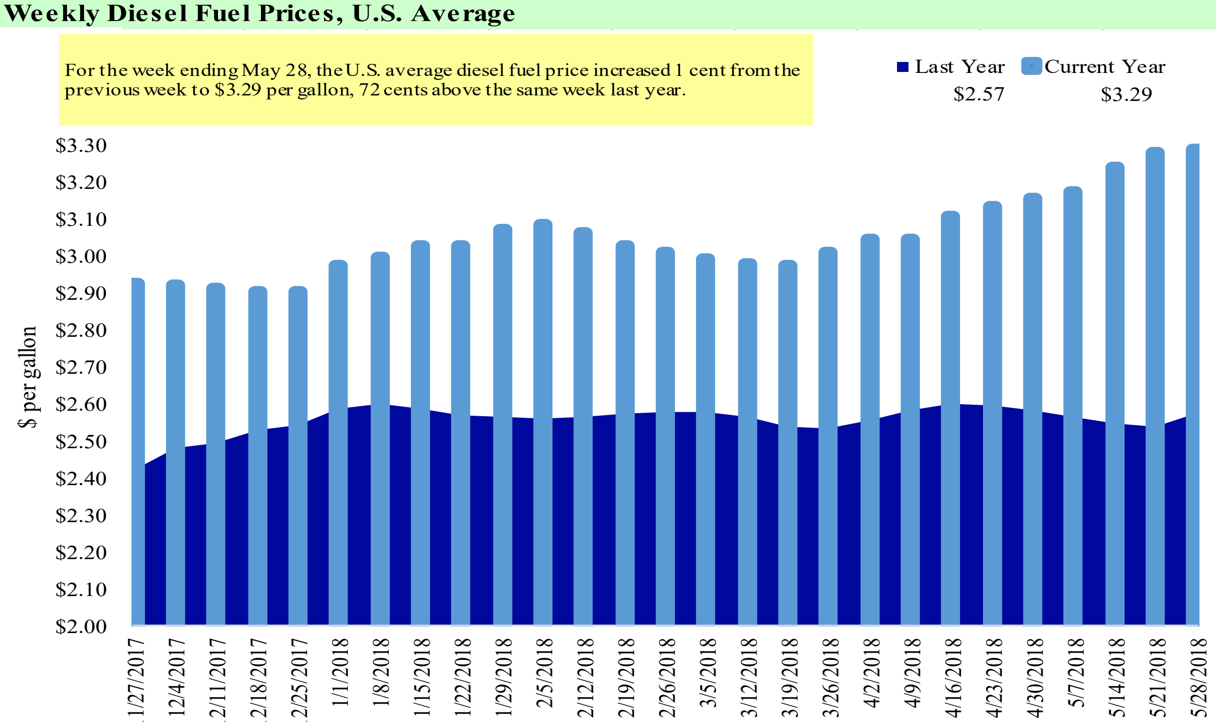
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[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	Wheat SRW	Wheat HRS	Wheat SWW	Wheat DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
5/17/2018	396	289	731	532	22	1,969	17,809	9,752	29,529
This week year ago	999	306	853	699	83	2,940	12,724	7,018	22,682
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2017/18 YTD	8,896	2,249	5,432	4,784	384	21,745	35,663	45,440	102,848
2016/17 YTD	10,923	2,241	7,718	4,134	442	25,458	40,532	50,810	116,800
YTD 2017/18 as % of 2016/17	81	100	70	116	87	85	88	89	88
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2016/17	56	114	98	91	26	82	148	153	141
2016/17 Total	11,096	2,285	7,923	4,254	484	26,042	41,864	51,156	119,062
2015/16 Total	5,538	3,057	6,285	3,551	670	19,101	45,564	49,821	114,486

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

[2] Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year now in effect for wheat, 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 5/17/2018	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Next MY	2017/18 Current MY	2016/17 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2014-2016
		- 1,000 mt -			
Mexico	1,435	13,371	12,663	6	12,297
Japan	702	10,165	10,582	(4)	11,450
Korea	0	4,539	5,589	(19)	4,494
Colombia	0	4,051	3,966	2	4,179
Peru	20	2,725	2,779	(2)	2,693
Top 5 Importers	**2,157**	**34,851**	**35,579**	**(2)**	**35,113**
Total US corn export sales	**2,504**	**53,472**	**53,256**	**0**	**49,308**
% of Projected		94%	91%		
Change from prior week[2]	**273**	**854**	**457**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	86%	65%	67%		71%
USDA forecast, May 2018	**53,435**	**56,616**	**58,346**	**(3)**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, May 2018	**142,875**	**141,605**	**137,973**	**3**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2016/17 - 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/. Total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales.

[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 5/17/2018	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Next MY	2017/18 Current MY	2016/17 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg. 2014-2016
		- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	1,020	28,682	36,059	(20)	31,881
Mexico	505	4,183	3,455	21	3,452
Indonesia	55	2,124	1,928	10	1,987
Japan	118	1,930	2,032	(5)	2,067
Netherlands	0	1,524	1,553	(2)	2,098
Top 5 importers	**1,697**	**38,442**	**45,027**	**(15)**	**41,486**
Total US soybean export sales	**5,556**	**55,192**	**57,828**	**(5)**	**52,919**
% of Projected	9%	98%	98%		
Change from prior week[2]	**7**	**(139)**	**473**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	31%	70%	78%		**78%**
USDA forecast, May 2018	**62,398**	**56,267**	**59,237**	**95**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2016/17 - 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/. The total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include reivisions from previous week's outstanding sales and/or accumulated sales

[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 5/17/2018	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Next MY	2017/18 Current MY	2016/17 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg 2014-2016
		- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	280	2,928	2,831	3	2,620
Mexico	291	2,955	3,334	(11)	2,743
Philippines	264	2,604	2,687	(3)	2,395
Brazil	0	128	1,215	(89)	862
Nigeria	110	1,201	1,632	(26)	1,254
Korea	281	1,538	1,398	10	1,104
China	0	900	1,583	(43)	1,623
Taiwan	155	1,138	1,097	4	768
Indonesia	100	1,141	1,204	(5)	726
Colombia	16	669	858	(22)	635
Top 10 importers	**1,496**	**15,203**	**17,838**	(15)	**14,729**
Total US wheat export sales	**2,398**	**23,714**	**28,398**	**(16)**	**22,804**
% of Projected	10%	96%	99%		
Change from prior week[2]	**340**	**112**	**202**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	62%	64%	63%		65%
USDA forecast, May 2018	**25,204**	**24,796**	**28,747**	**(14)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2016/17 - 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/. Total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from the previous week's outstanding and/or accumulated sales

[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 05/24/18	Previous Week*	Current Week as % of Previous	2018 YTD*	2017 YTD*	2018 YTD as % of 2017 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last Year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	2017 Total*
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	276	251	110	4,921	6,226	79	63	91	14,805
Corn	444	556	80	8,720	6,545	133	145	228	10,928
Soybeans	234	212	111	4,546	4,159	109	298	822	13,246
Total	**954**	**1,018**	**94**	**18,187**	**16,931**	**107**	**117**	**181**	**38,978**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	32	38	84	1,761	2,038	86	64	76	4,198
Corn	977	634	154	13,996	15,179	92	150	128	28,690
Soybeans	245	432	57	9,882	10,797	92	190	215	32,911
Total	**1,254**	**1,105**	**114**	**25,639**	**28,014**	**92**	**147**	**138**	**65,800**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	56	32	177	1,683	2,832	59	30	45	6,354
Corn	0	49	0	265	347	76	161	115	733
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	292
Total	**56**	**80**	**69**	**1,947**	**3,179**	**61**	**37**	**53**	**7,379**
Interior									
Wheat	46	47	96	635	736	86	100	143	1,727
Corn	223	266	84	3,458	3,289	105	121	146	8,758
Soybeans	115	173	66	2,587	2,097	123	146	200	5,508
Total	**383**	**487**	**79**	**6,680**	**6,122**	**109**	**126**	**160**	**15,993**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	44	0	n/a	204	209	98	86	91	711
Corn	16	0	n/a	109	45	244	186	204	192
Soybeans	0	52	0	52	97	53	117	121	890
Total	**61**	**52**	**117**	**365**	**350**	**104**	**113**	**121**	**1,793**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	64	37	174	n/a	0	46
Corn	15	15	99	67	5	n/a	n/a	588	32
Soybeans	13	24	53	954	850	112	267	315	2,001
Total	**27**	**39**	**71**	**1,085**	**891**	**122**	**321**	**278**	**2,079**
U.S. total from ports*									
Wheat	454	368	123	9,268	12,079	77	60	82	27,841
Corn	1,675	1,520	110	26,616	25,409	105	145	154	49,333
Soybeans	606	892	68	18,020	17,999	100	197	258	54,847
Total	**2,735**	**2,781**	**98**	**53,904**	**55,487**	**97**	**126**	**149**	**132,021**

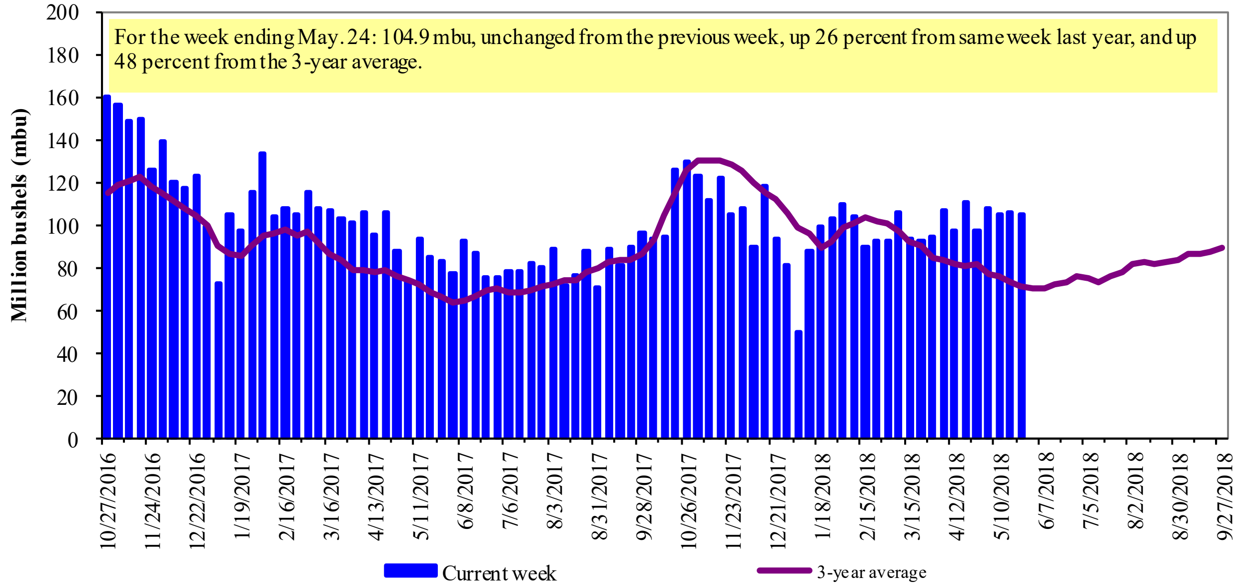
*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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, 50 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Approximately 55 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2017.

Figure 14

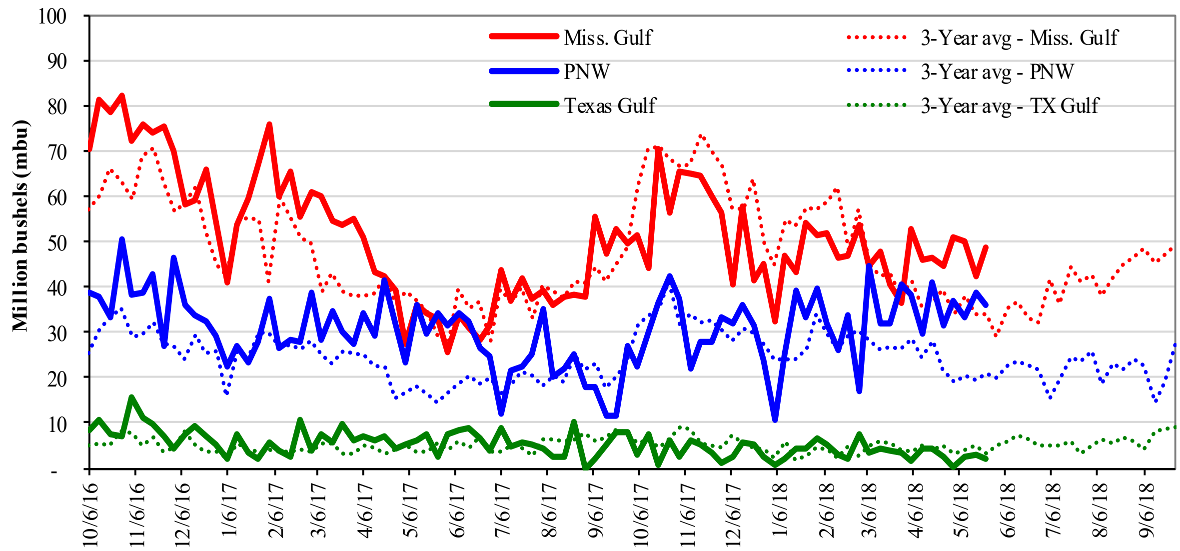
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



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)



Week ending 05/24/18 inspections (mbu):		Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf:	48.7	Last Week:	up 15	down 33	up 12	down 7
PNW:	36.2	Last Year (same week):	up 48	down 22	up 43	up 6
Texas Gulf:	2.0	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	up 39	down 47	up 30	up 82

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

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

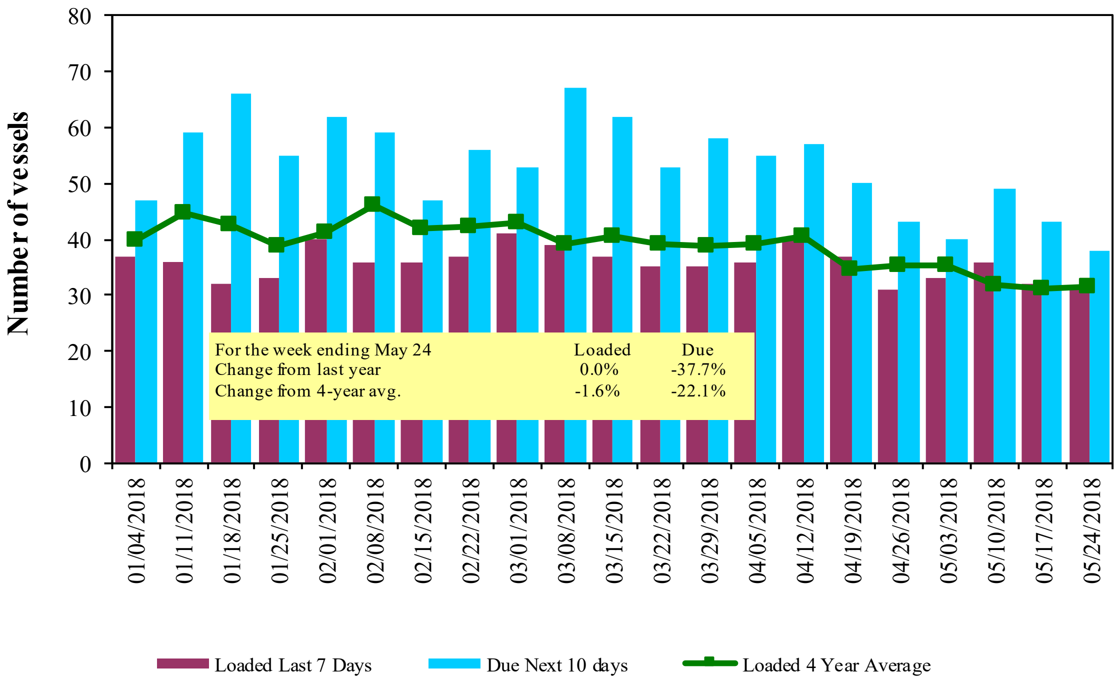
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port
5/24/2018	40	31	38	18
5/17/2018	39	32	43	27
2017 range	(25..66)	(28..54)	(37..87)	(5..44)
2017 avg.	46	38	56	20

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

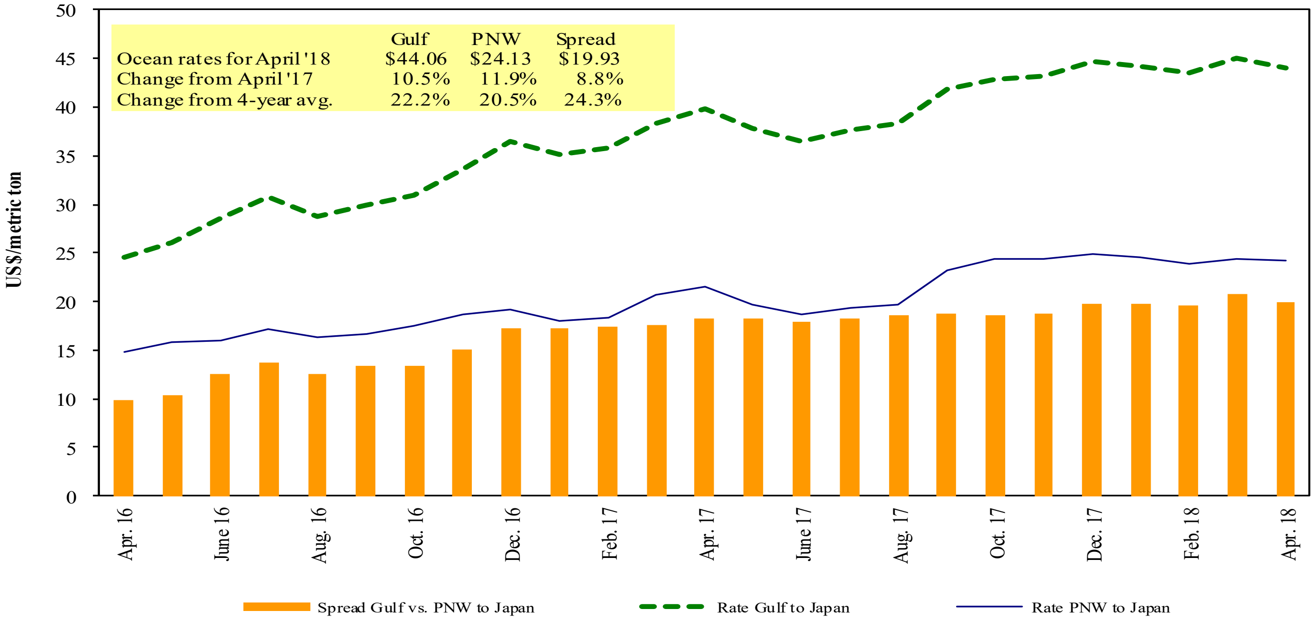
U.S. Gulf Vessel Loading Activity



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 05/26/2018

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti	Sorghum	Apr 16/26	18,200	69.87*
U.S. Gulf	Rotterdam	Heavy Grain	Apr 17/30	65,000	21.00
U.S. Gulf	Somalia	Sorghum	Apr 16/26	40,000	130.77*
PNW	Bangladesh	Wheat	Apr 6/16	43,500	63.35*
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 22/30	60,000	33.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 12/20	66,000	30.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 26/Jun 2	66,000	31.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 20/30	60,000	30.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 3/31	60,000	35.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 25/30	60,000	35.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 20/30	60,000	34.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 3/12	66,000	36.25

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

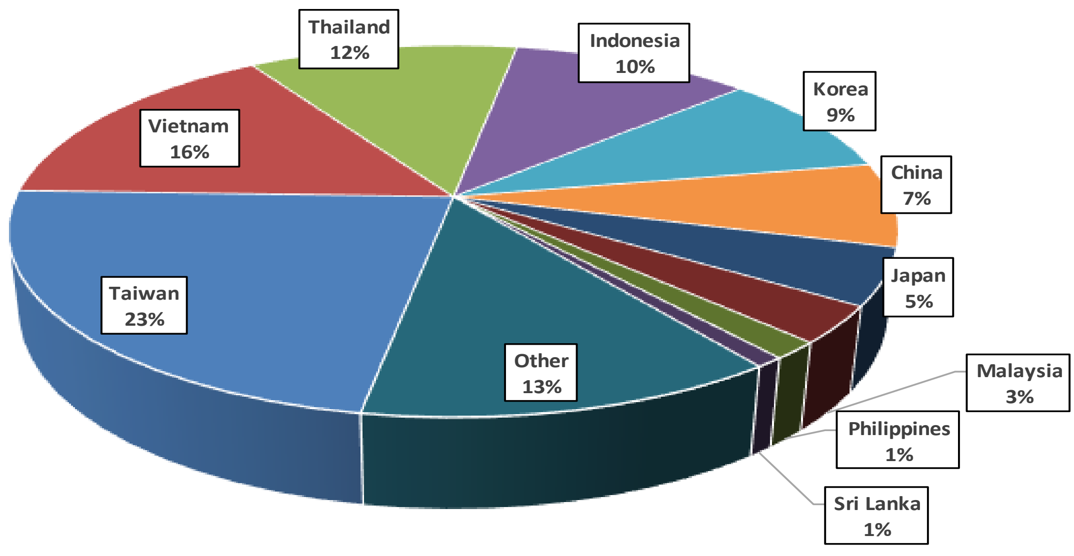
*50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

In 2017, containers were used to transport 7 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 62 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2017 went to Asia, of which 10 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 93 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-March 2018

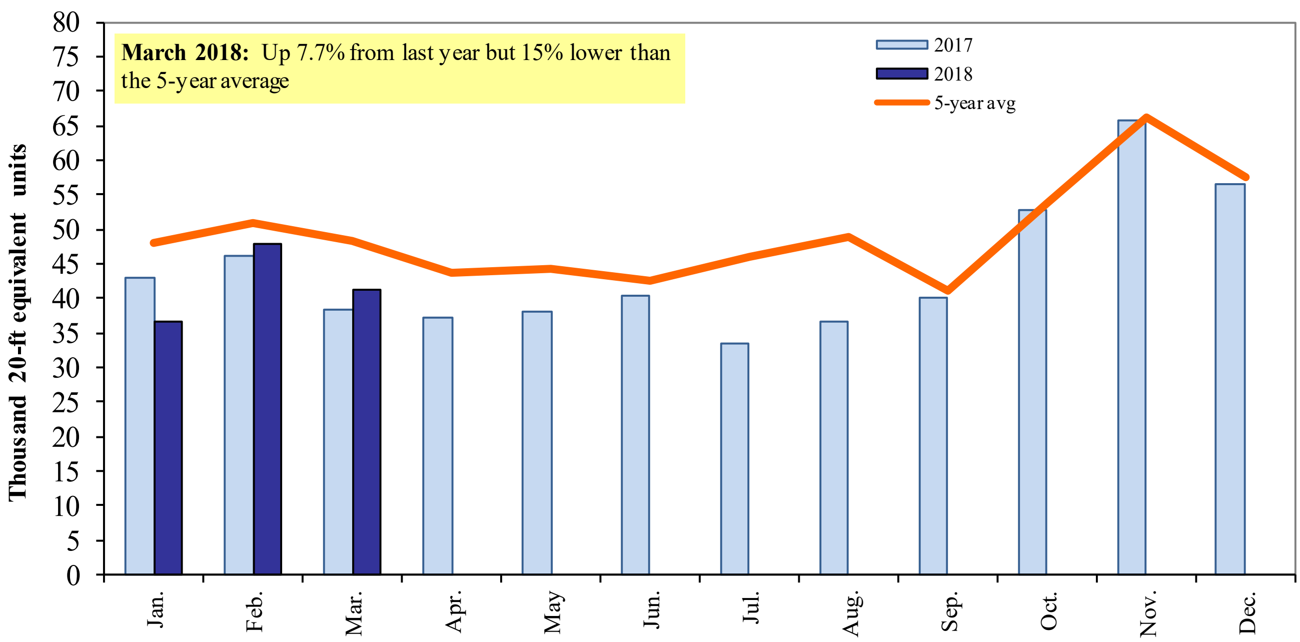


Service (PIERS) data

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, 110220, 110290, 120100, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, and 230990.

Contacts and Links

Coordinators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Pierre Bahizi	pierre.bahizi@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 0992
Adam Sparger	adam.sparger@ams.usda.gov	(202) 205 - 8701
Weekly Highlight Editors		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
Grain Transportation Indicators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Rail Transportation		
Adam Sparger	adam.sparger@ams.usda.gov	(202) 205 - 8701
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Jesse Gastelle	jesse.gastelle@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 1144
Peter Caffarelli	petera.caffarelli@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3244
Barge Transportation		
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Matt Chang	matt.chang@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Truck Transportation		
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Sergio Sotelo	sergioa.sotelo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 756 - 2577
Grain Exports		
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Ocean Transportation		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo (Freight rates and vessels)	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor (Container movements)	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880

Subscription Information: Send relevant information to **GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov** for an electronic copy *(printed copies are also available upon request)*.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 31, 2018. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-31-2018**