



Grain Transportation Report

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

Contact Us

January 15, 2015

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Contents

Article/
Calendar

Grain
Transportation
Indicators

Rail

Barge

Truck

Exports

Ocean

Brazil

Mexico

Grain Truck/Ocean
Rate Advisory

Data Links

Specialists

Subscription
Information

The next
release is
January 22, 2015

Bendway Weir Construction Restricts Lower Mississippi River Traffic

On January 5, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began construction of a series of bendway weirs on the Mississippi River 90 miles south of Memphis, TN, in an area where the river is narrow and makes a sharp bend. The bendway weirs are underwater structures that extend out from the river bank and redirect river currents to make a more reliable and safer navigation channel. Construction will be done from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and is expected to take 90 days. Barge traffic will be halted during the construction periods, and the daily accumulation of stopped barges will be allowed to pass the site each night.

U.S.-Mexico Cross-Border Long-Haul Trucking Pilot Program Report Provided to Congress

On January 9, 2015, [the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\) provided a report to Congress](#) concluding that the provisions of U.S. law pertaining to statistical data collection and analysis of the safety of Mexican carriers have been met. Mexico and the United States are granting full access to cross-border trucking services, subject to domestic laws and regulations in accordance with the July 6, 2011 [U.S.-Mexico memorandum of understanding](#) and the North American Free Trade Agreement cross-border long-haul trucking provisions. [FMCSA is accepting applications from additional Mexico carriers](#) interested in conducting long-haul operations in the United States.

Mississippi Gulf Soybean Inspections Increase

For the week ending January 8, total inspections of soybeans from all major export regions reached 1.9 million metric tons (mmt), up 42 percent from the past week and 19 percent above last year. Mississippi Gulf soybeans jumped 92 percent from the previous week as shipments to Asia increased 89 percent from the past week. Soybean inspections in the Mississippi Gulf were the highest since November 20. Increased soybean inspections helped boost total inspections of grain (corn, wheat, soybeans) to 2.6 million metric tons (mmt), up 18 percent from the past week and 38 percent above the 3-year average. Corn and wheat inspections, however, were down 8 and 31 percent from the past week.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

During the week ending January 1, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 33.2 mmt, 12 percent lower than at the same time last year. **Corn export sales** reached .388 mmt—a marketing year low—down 57 percent from the previous week. **Wheat** reached 0.151 mmt—a marketing year low—also down 57 percent, but **soybeans**, at 0.910 mmt, were up 49 percent.

Rail

U.S. railroads originated 22,977 **carloads of grain** during the week ending January 3, up 19 percent from last week, 23 percent from last year, and 39 percent from the 3-year average.

During the week ending January 8, average January shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers per car** were \$350 below tariff, down \$75 from last week and \$2,350 lower than last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were \$34 above tariff.

Barge

During the week ending January 10 **barge grain movements** totaled 580,585 tons—24.7 percent higher than the previous week and 27 percent higher than the same period last year.

During the week ending January 10, 351 grain barges **moved down river**, up 21.5 percent from last week; 970 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, up 57 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

During the week ending January 8, 41 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 13.3 percent less than the same period last year. Sixty-three vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 21.3 percent less than the same period last year.

During the week ending January 9, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was \$36.50 per mt, down 6.4 percent from the previous week. The cost of shipping from the PNW to Japan was \$20.00 per mt, down 4.8 percent from the previous week.

Fuel

During the week ending January 12, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** decreased 8 cents from the previous week to \$3.05 per gallon—down 83 cents from the same week last year.

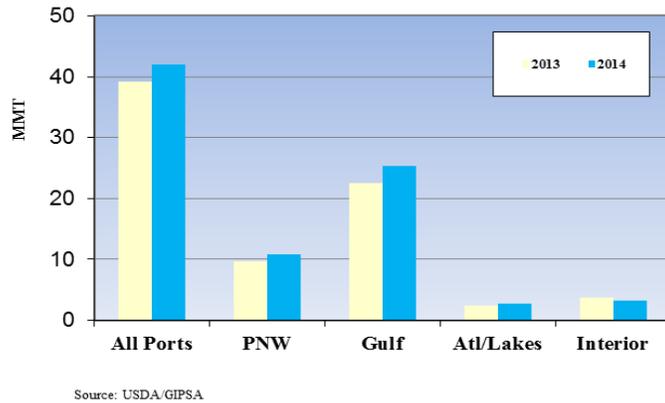
Feature Article/Calendar

Soybeans Push Fourth Quarter Grain Inspections to Record Level

Total grain (wheat, corn, and soybeans) inspected for export at major U.S. ports reached a record 42 million metric tons (mmt) during the fourth quarter 2014, according to the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) (figure 1). Inspections increased 7 percent from last year and 24 percent above the 5-year average. Grain inspections increased as demand for U.S. soybeans remained strong. Fourth quarter inspections of soybeans reached a record 29 mmt, with shipments to Asia increasing 24 percent from last year. Soybeans inspected for export to China increased 26 percent from last year, accounting for over 81 percent of total fourth quarter soybean inspections.

According to GIPSA, Gulf grain inspections totaled 25.3 mmt, up 12 percent from last year and 24 percent above the 5-year average. Fourth quarter inspections of soybeans and corn increased in the Gulf. Wheat inspections in the Gulf, however, dropped 52 percent from the fourth quarter last year, to a low of 1.6 mmt. Increased inspections were also reflected in total rail deliveries of grain to the Gulf during the fourth quarter, which increased 17 percent from last year. Fourth quarter barge grain movements on the Mississippi River increased 21 percent from last year as grain and oilseed production increased and water levels improved.

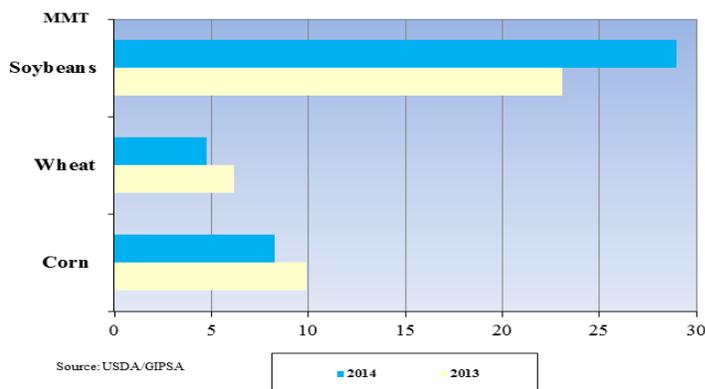
Figure 1: Fourth Quarter Grain Inspections, by Port Region



Fourth quarter Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain inspections reached a record 10.8 mmt, 11 percent above last year and 25 percent above the 5-year average. Soybean inspections jumped 43 percent in the PNW, and wheat increased 3 percent. PNW corn inspections, however, reached their lowest level. Rail deliveries of grain to the PNW during the fourth quarter increased 18 percent from last year, as demand for grain remained strong. Fourth quarter ocean rates for shipping grain from the Gulf remained relatively unchanged while the PNW rates were below the third quarter 2014. However, both the Gulf and PNW ocean rates were below the fourth quarter of last year. The ocean rate spread between the PNW and Gulf was higher than the third quarter 2014 but below the fourth quarter 2013.

Atlantic/Great Lakes grain inspections reached 2.7 mmt, up 14 percent above last year and 40 percent above the 5-year average. Soybean and wheat inspections increased in the Atlantic/Great Lakes. Interior inspections of grain totaled 3.2 mmt, down 13 percent from last year but 28 percent above the 5-year average. Although soybean and wheat inspections in the Interior increased 25 and 15 percent from grain inspections last year, the increases could not offset the 42 percent drop in Interior corn inspections.

Figure 2: Fourth Quarter Grain Inspections, by Types



Soybean Inspections Reach Record; Corn Decreases

Fourth quarter soybean inspections reached a record 29 mmt, up 25 percent from last year and 69 percent above the 5-year average (figure 2). The increase continued to be driven by increased demand from China and other Asian destinations. U.S. soybean shipments to China increased 23 percent from the fourth quarter last year. Gulf soybean

inspections reached a record 17.2 mmt, up 28 percent from last year and 47 percent above the 5-year average. PNW soybean inspections reached a record 8 mmt, 48 percent above last year and 68 percent above the 5-year average. The Atlantic/Great Lakes soybean inspections totaled a record 2 mmt, up 8 percent from last year and 48 percent above the 5-year average. Interior soybean inspections reached 1.8 mmt, up 25 percent from last year and 48 percent above the 5-year average. According to the January World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates [report](#), soybean exports for the 2014/15 marketing year are expected to increase 8 percent from the previous year.

Inspections of corn reached 8.3 mmt during the fourth quarter, down 17 percent from last year and 8 percent below the 5-year average (figure 2). PNW corn inspections reached a low of .375 mmt, down 79 percent from last year as shipments to Asia decreased. Gulf corn inspections totaled 6.5 mmt, up 11 percent from last year and 12 percent above the 5-year average. Outstanding (unshipped) export sales of corn averaged 17.2 mmt during the fourth quarter, up 146 percent from last year. U.S. corn exports for the 2014/15 marketing year are expected to increase due to increased production and higher demand.

Fourth quarter wheat inspections reached 4.8 mmt, down 23 percent from last year and 18 percent below the 5-year average (figure 2). Gulf wheat inspections (1.6 mmt) decreased 52 percent from the previous year as demand from Latin America and Asia (China) decreased. PNW wheat inspections reached 2.4 mmt, up 3 percent from last year. Fourth quarter Atlantic/Great Lakes wheat inspections (.505 mmt) increased 63 percent from last year and Interior wheat inspections (.254 mmt) increased 15 percent.

Johnny.Hill@ams.usda.gov

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators¹

Week ending	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
01/14/15	205	257	201	262	163	142
01/07/15	211	255	204	222	174	149

¹Indicator: 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	1/9/2015	1/2/2015
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.75	-0.72
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.82	-0.63
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.30	-1.22
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.25	-1.47
HRS	ND--Portland	-2.77	-2.60

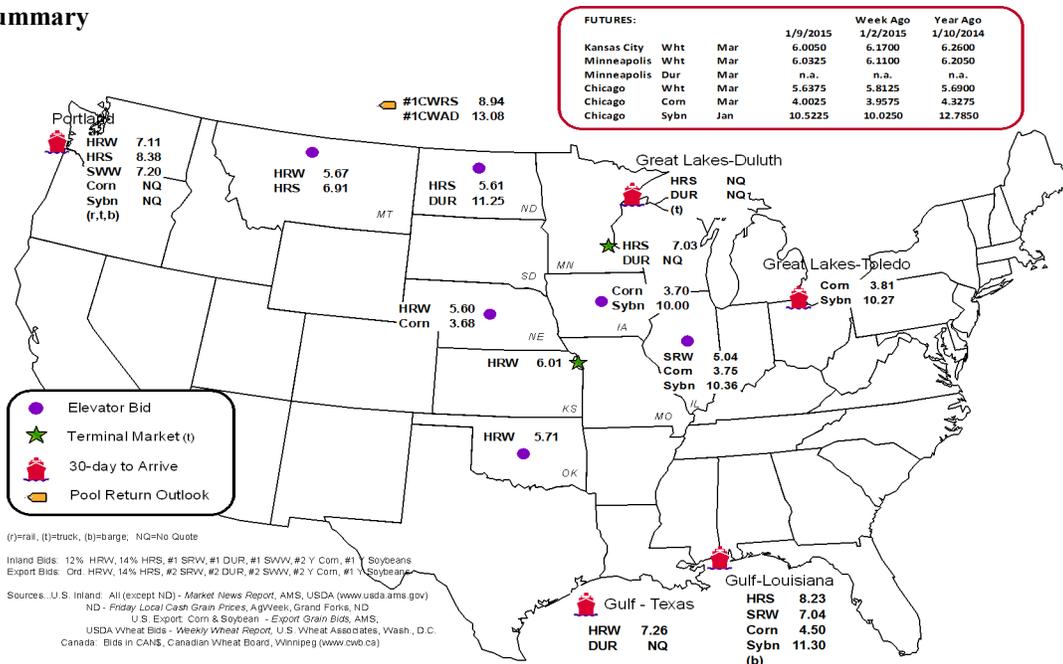
Note: nq = no quote

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

Week ending	Mississippi		Pacific	Atlantic &	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border
	Gulf	Texas Gulf	Northwest	East Gulf			Mexico ³
1/07/2015 ^p	1,090	533	4,761	1,201	7,585	1/3/2015	1,334
12/31/2014 ^r	1,130	1,169	4,474	881	7,654	12/27/2014	1,455
2015 YTD ^r	1,090	533	4,761	1,201	7,585	2015 YTD	1,334
2014 YTD ^r	1,056	1,615	3,908	704	7,283	2014 YTD	1,408
2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	103	33	122	171	104	% change YTD	95
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014 ²	106	104	111	137	111	Last 4wks % 2014	84
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. ²	147	120	125	158	130	Last 4wks % 4 yr	94
Total 2014	44,621	83,674	255,860	32,107	416,262	Total 2014	96,467
Total 2013	31,646	71,388	168,826	25,176	297,036	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 approximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect switching between KCSM and FerroMex.

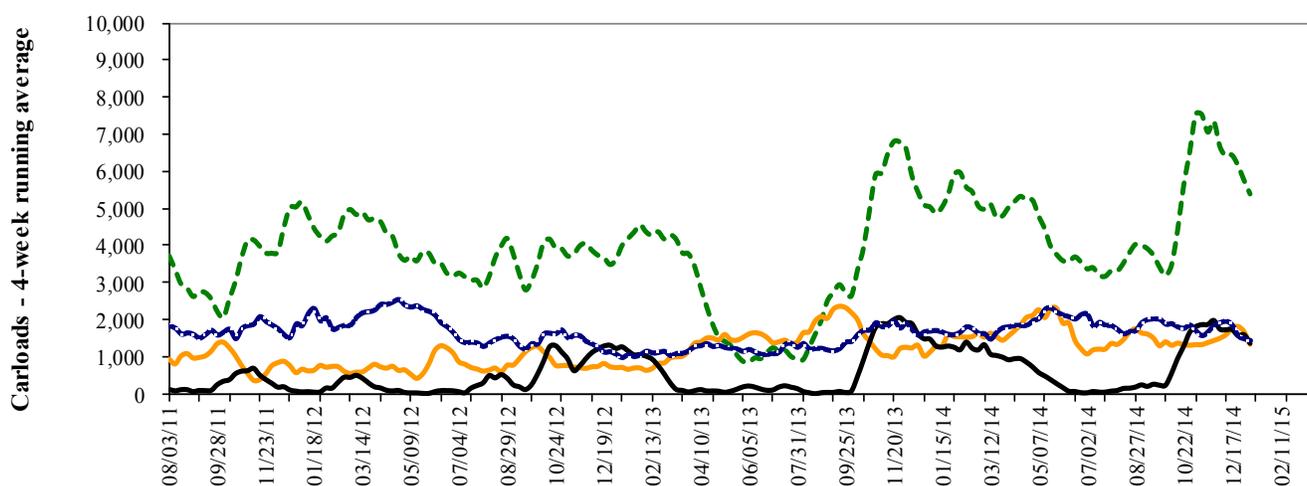
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 29 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

Figure 2

Rail Deliveries to Port



--- Pacific Northwest: 4 wks. ending 1/07--up 11% from same period last year; up 25% from 4-year average
--- Texas Gulf: 4 wks. ending 1/07--up 4% from same period last year; up 20% from 4-year average
--- Miss. River: 4 wks. ending 1/07--up 6% from same period last year; up 47% from 4-year average
--- Cross-border: 4 wks. ending 1/03-- down 16% from same period last year; down 6% from 4-year average

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

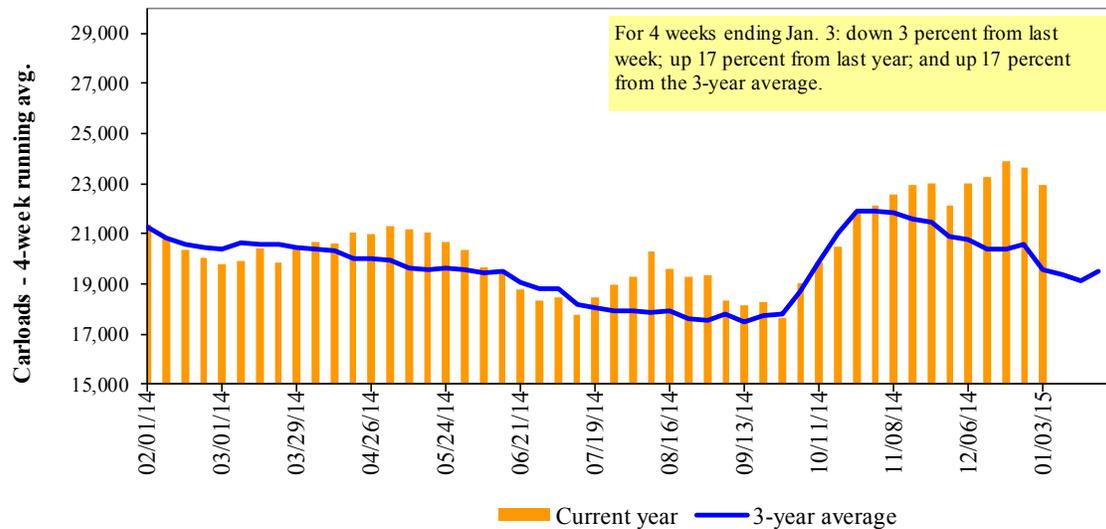
Table 4

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

Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
01/03/15	2,251	3,203	11,051	722	5,750	22,977	4,285	5,033
This week last year	2,208	3,110	7,016	1,013	5,299	18,646	3,585	4,136
2014 YTD	103,331	153,771	482,431	47,510	297,969	1,085,012	242,616	276,322
2013 YTD	88,674	141,025	461,278	36,208	227,557	954,742	193,710	276,889
2014 YTD as % of 2013 YTD	117	109	105	131	131	114	125	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 2013	113	106	130	95	109	117	123	108
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg. ¹	125	115	112	149	126	118	122	96
Total 2013	86,466	137,915	454,262	34,412	222,258	935,313	190,125	272,753

¹As a percent of the same period in 2009 and 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 Offerings¹ (\$/car)²

Week ending	Delivery period							
	Jan-15	Jan-14	Feb-15	Feb-14	Mar-15	Mar-14	Apr-15	Apr-14
BNSF ³								
COT grain units	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	379
COT grain single-car ⁵	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	52. .252
UP ⁴								
GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no offer	1	no offer	1	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no offer	no offer	83	no offer	1	n/a	n/a

¹Auction offerings are for single-car and unit train shipments only.

²Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

³BNSF - COT = Certificate of Transportation; north grain and south grain bids were combined effective the week ending 6/24/06.

⁴UP - 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.

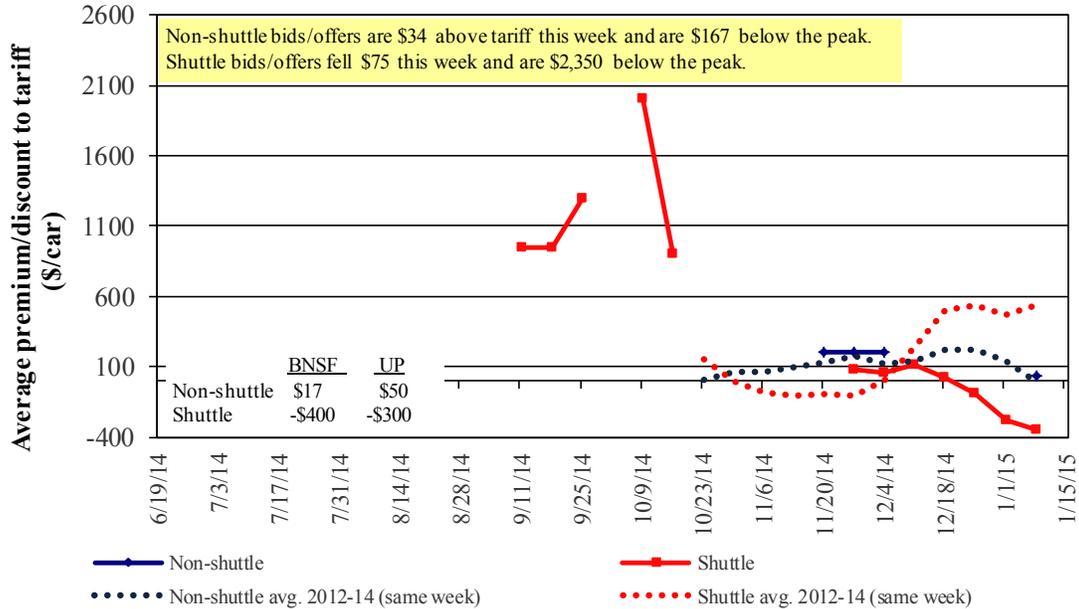
⁵Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

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 January 2015, Secondary Market

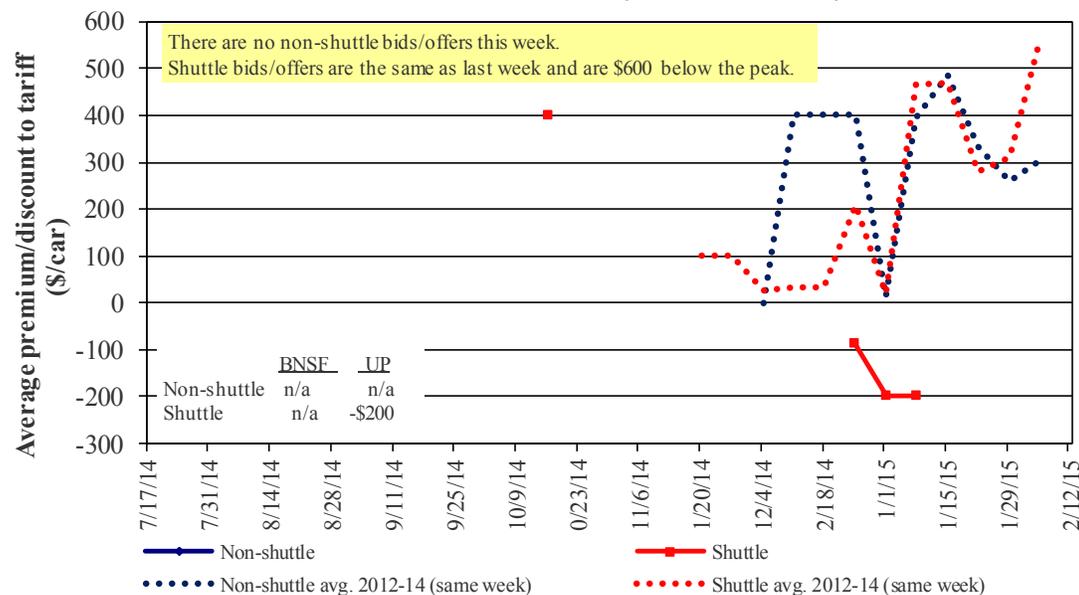


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

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

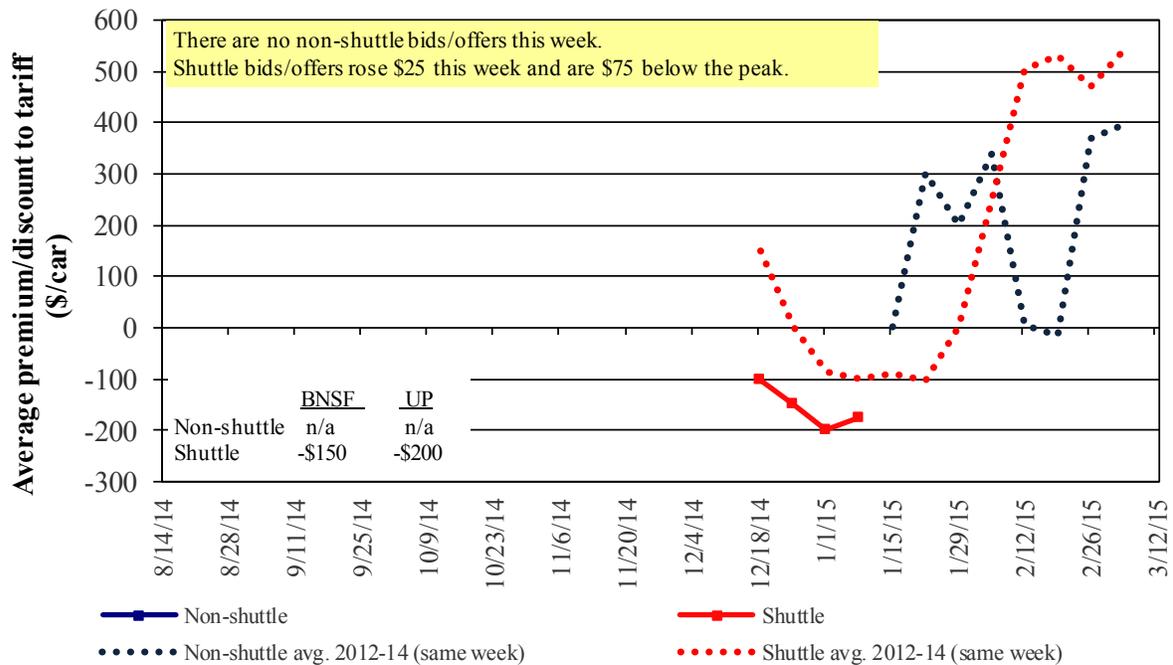


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in March 2015, 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

Week ending	Delivery period					
	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle²						
BNSF-GF	(400)	n/a	(150)	(200)	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(3,650)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(300)	(200)	(200)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(25)	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(1,050)	(900)	(525)	n/a	n/a	n/a

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

²Shuttle 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 Shipments¹

Effective date:		Origin region*	Destination region*	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent change Y/Y ³
1/1/2015						metric ton	bushel ²	
Unit train								
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	\$3,387	\$157	\$35.19	\$0.96	5	
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	\$3,596	\$86	\$36.57	\$1.00	0	
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	\$6,244	\$444	\$66.41	\$1.81	-1	
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	\$4,026	\$276	\$42.72	\$1.16	4	
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$5,824	\$364	\$61.45	\$1.67	-1	
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,293	\$302	\$45.63	\$1.24	4	
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,492	\$421	\$48.79	\$1.33	3	
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,328	\$312	\$36.15	\$0.92	3	
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	\$5,555	\$364	\$58.78	\$1.49	16	
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	\$2,168	\$66	\$22.19	\$0.56	4	
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	\$4,761	\$273	\$49.99	\$1.27	15	
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	\$4,104	\$175	\$42.49	\$1.08	17	
Soybeans	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	\$3,308	\$194	\$34.78	\$0.88	2	
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,852	\$565	\$53.79	\$1.37	-7	
	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	\$3,864	\$335	\$41.70	\$1.13	5	
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$4,676	\$258	\$49.00	\$1.33	24	
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$5,625	\$366	\$59.50	\$1.62	16	
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	\$4,368	\$175	\$45.12	\$1.23	27	
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,974	\$312	\$42.56	\$1.16	5	
Shuttle Train								
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	\$3,678	\$255	\$39.06	\$1.06	-1	
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,471	\$199	\$36.44	\$0.99	-9	
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$4,723	\$341	\$50.29	\$1.37	17	
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	\$5,159	\$441	\$55.61	\$1.51	-1	
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,084	\$459	\$64.98	\$1.77	-1	
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	\$5,260	\$496	\$57.16	\$1.56	3	
	Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,000	\$537	\$54.98	\$1.40	-2
Sioux Falls, SD		Tacoma, WA	\$4,960	\$492	\$54.14	\$1.38	-2	
Champaign-Urbana, IL		New Orleans, LA	\$3,147	\$312	\$34.35	\$0.87	3	
Lincoln, NE		Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,510	\$287	\$37.70	\$0.96	-1	
Des Moines, IA		Amarillo, TX	\$3,690	\$244	\$39.07	\$0.99	2	
Minneapolis, MN		Tacoma, WA	\$5,000	\$532	\$54.94	\$1.40	-2	
Council Bluffs, IA		Stockton, CA	\$4,400	\$551	\$49.16	\$1.25	-2	
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,520	\$492	\$59.70	\$1.62	-1	
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,530	\$537	\$60.25	\$1.64	-2	
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	\$5,430	\$437	\$58.26	\$1.59	-1	
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	\$4,425	\$360	\$47.51	\$1.29	4	
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$3,851	\$258	\$40.81	\$1.11	31	
Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	\$5,360	\$507	\$58.27	\$1.59	3		

¹A 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.

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

³Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge

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

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car ¹	Fuel		Percent change Y/Y ⁴	
				surcharge per car ²	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton ³ / bushel ³		
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	\$6,960	\$466	\$75.88	\$2.06	8
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	\$6,565	\$566	\$72.86	\$1.98	5
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,010	\$547	\$77.22	\$2.10	5
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$3,885	\$213	\$41.88	\$1.14	30
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,349	\$644	\$91.88	\$2.33	3
	SD	Celaya, GJ	\$7,656	\$610	\$84.46	\$2.14	-1
	NE	Queretaro, QA	\$7,535	\$572	\$82.83	\$2.10	1
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$5,880	\$464	\$64.82	\$1.64	-1
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	\$6,887	\$555	\$76.04	\$1.93	0
	SD	Torreon, CU	\$6,722	\$511	\$73.90	\$1.88	-1
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	\$8,111	\$543	\$88.42	\$2.40	2
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,722	\$621	\$95.46	\$2.60	2
	IA	El Castillo, JA	\$8,855	\$606	\$96.67	\$2.63	-1
	KS	Torreon, CU	\$7,089	\$385	\$76.36	\$2.08	2
Sorghum	TX	Guadalajara, JA	\$6,953	\$397	\$75.10	\$1.91	-1
	NE	Celaya, GJ	\$7,287	\$554	\$80.11	\$2.03	0
	KS	Queretaro, QA	\$6,795	\$348	\$72.98	\$1.85	1
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$5,500	\$407	\$60.36	\$1.53	1
	NE	Torreon, CU	\$6,418	\$455	\$70.22	\$1.78	1

¹Rates 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.

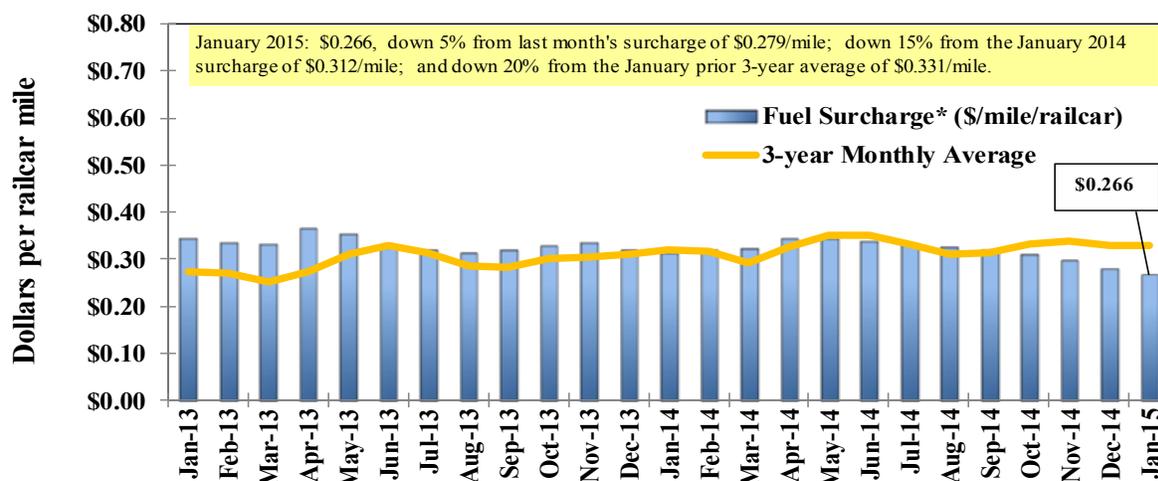
²Fuel surcharge adjusted to reflect the change in Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V railroad fuel surcharge policy as of 10/01/2009

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

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

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

Figure 7

Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average¹

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

* Mileage-based fuel surcharges for March and April 2007 are estimated. Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

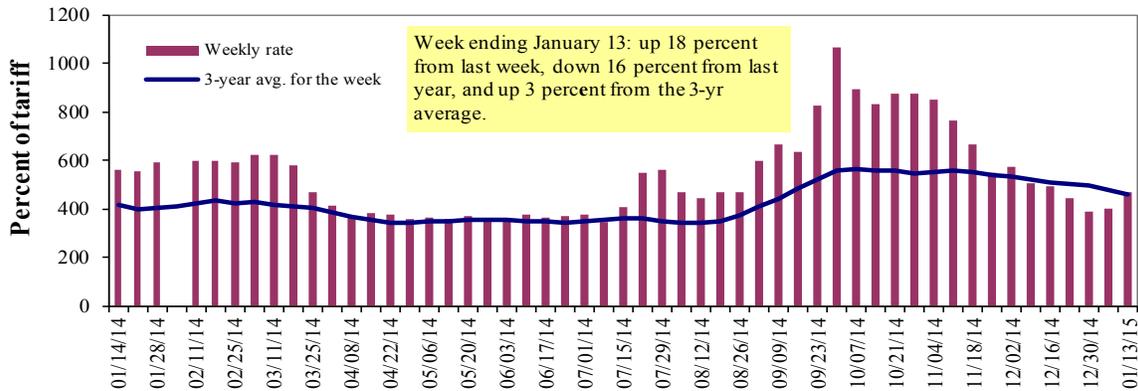
** BNSF strike price (diesel price when fuel surcharges begin) changed from \$1.25/gal. to \$2.50/gal starting March 1, 2011. As a result, the weighted average fuel surcharge for March 2011 was \$0.227/mile instead of \$0.331/mile.

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

Barge Transportation

Figure 8

Illinois River Barge Freight Rate^{1,2}



¹Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); ²4-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
Rate¹	1/13/2015	-	-	472	335	378	378	257
	1/6/2015	-	-	400	313	425	425	250
\$/ton	1/13/2015	-	-	21.90	13.37	17.73	15.27	8.07
	1/6/2015	-	-	18.56	12.49	19.93	17.17	7.85
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-	-16	-13	-4	-4	-1
	3-year avg. ²	-	-	3	-8	5	5	2
Rate¹	February	-	-	410	322	368	368	250
	April	417	367	348	292	325	325	242

¹Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); ²4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds;

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 9

Benchmark tariff rates

Calculating barge rate per ton:

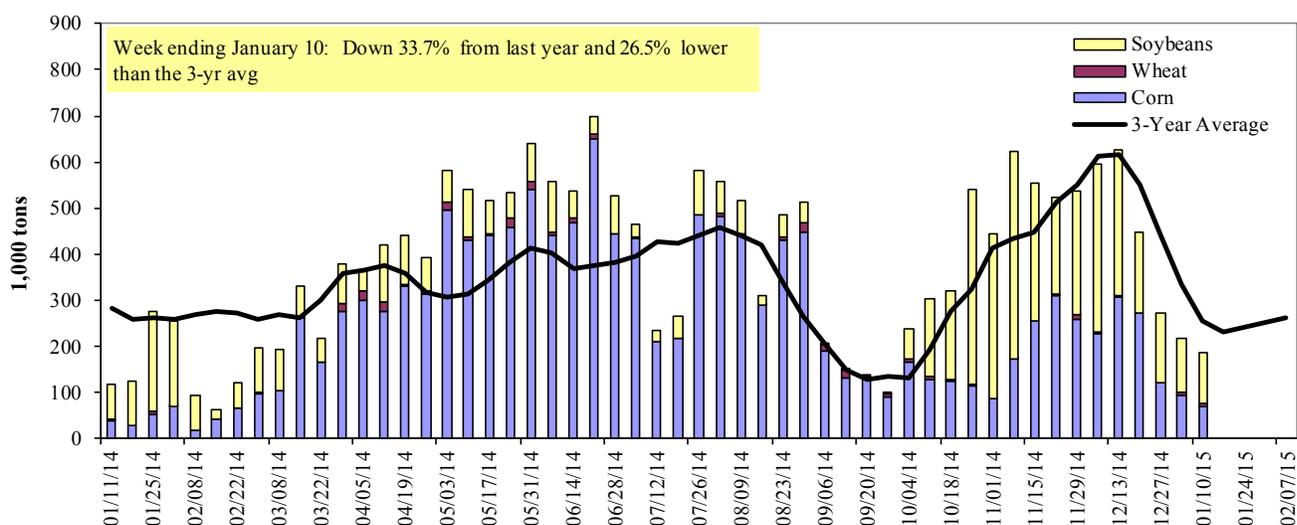
(Rate * 1976 tariff benchmark rate per ton)/100

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 River¹ (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)

Week ending 01/10/2015	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	2	0	27	0	29
Alton, IL (L26)	69	6	110	2	187
Granite City, IL (L27)	69	6	112	2	189
Illinois River (L8)	64	0	76	0	140
Ohio River (L52)	193	2	165	0	360
Arkansas River (L1)	0	10	21	1	32
Weekly total - 2015	262	18	298	3	581
Weekly total - 2014	155	33	261	8	457
2015 YTD ¹	262	18	298	3	581
2014 YTD	155	33	261	8	457
2015 as % of 2014 YTD	169	53	114	38	127
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014 ²	116	66	100	66	104
Total 2014	20,693	2,181	11,813	258	34,946

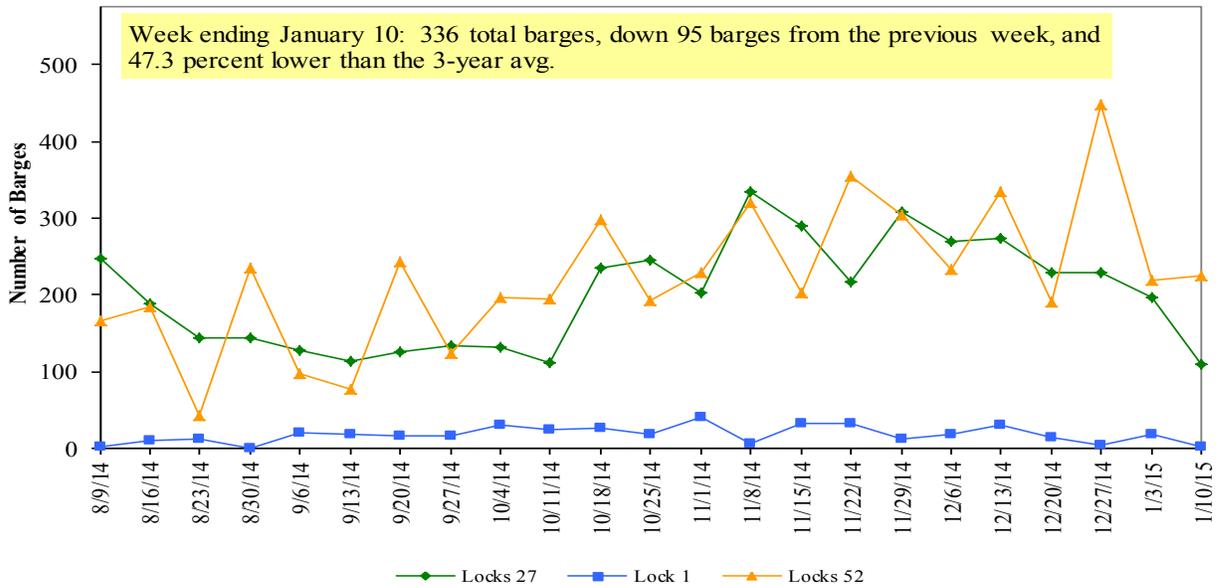
¹ Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

² As a percent of same period in 2014.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

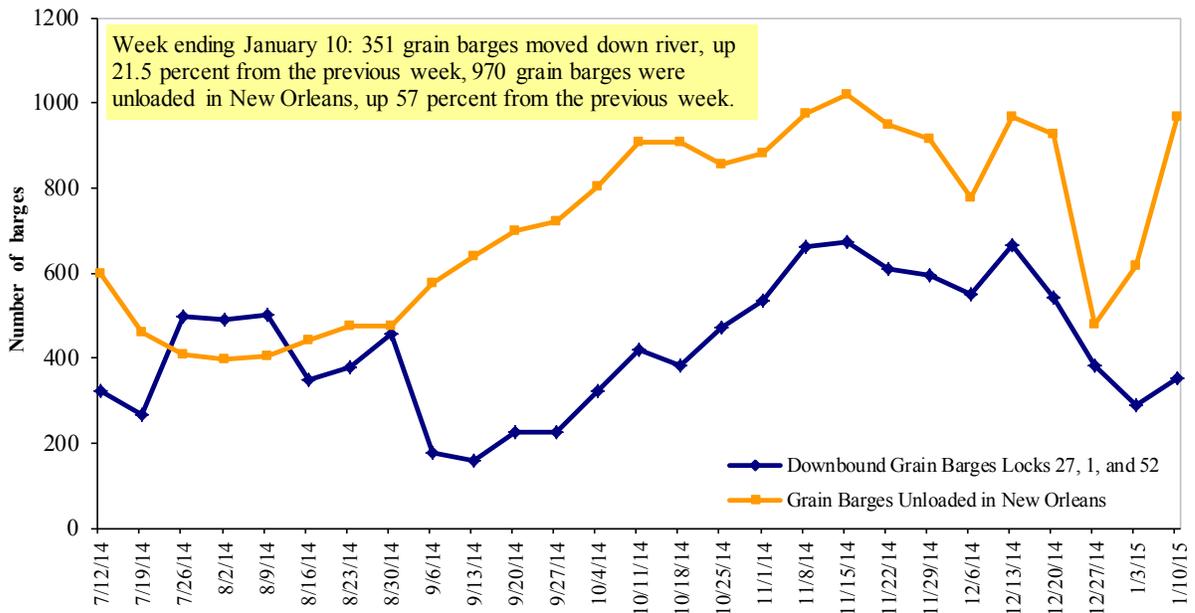
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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 Prices¹, Week Ending 01/12/2014 (US \$/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	3.134	-0.070	-0.806
	New England	3.195	-0.092	-0.912
	Central Atlantic	3.239	-0.064	-0.806
	Lower Atlantic	3.039	-0.070	-0.792
II	Midwest ²	3.010	-0.092	-0.844
III	Gulf Coast ³	2.964	-0.081	-0.816
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.027	-0.112	-0.859
V	West Coast	3.126	-0.094	-0.870
	West Coast less California	2.978	-0.096	-0.913
	California	3.250	-0.091	-0.835
Total	U.S.	3.053	-0.084	-0.833

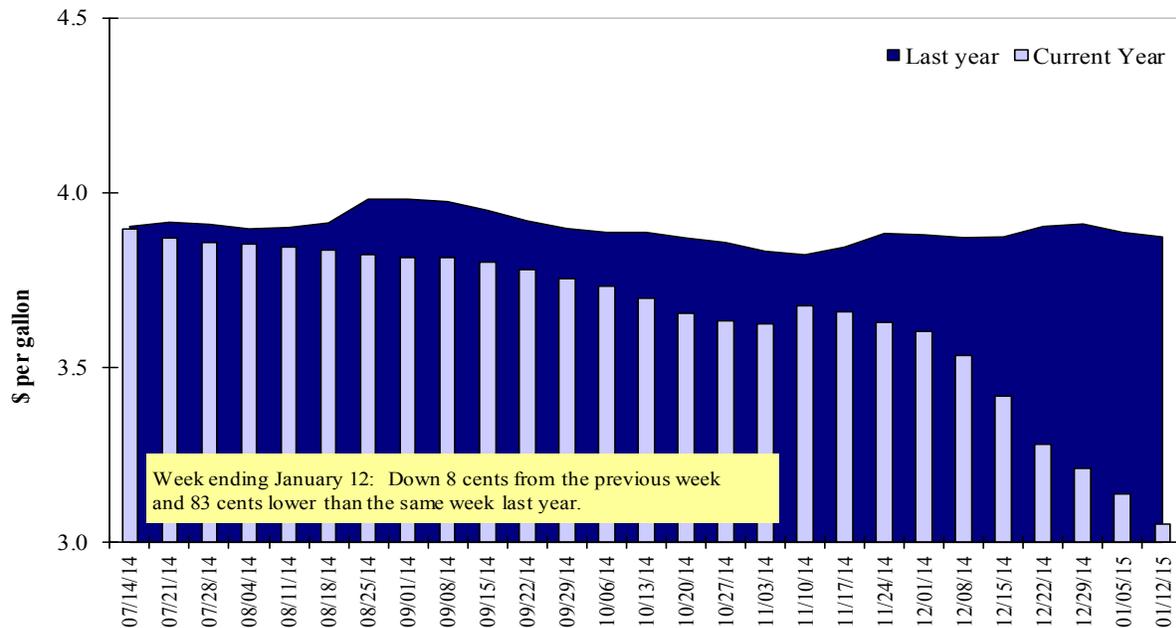
¹Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

²Same as North Central ³Same 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)

Week ending	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances¹									
1/1/2015	1,325	820	1,743	902	88	4,877	14,727	13,546	33,150
This week year ago	1,562	1,136	1,452	866	133	5,149	16,743	15,720	37,612
Cumulative exports-marketing year²									
2014/15 YTD	4,327	2,339	4,337	2,294	476	13,772	12,615	29,644	56,031
2013/14 YTD	7,619	5,550	3,508	2,463	279	19,419	11,415	25,031	55,865
YTD 2014/15 as % of 2013/14	57	42	124	93	171	71	111	118	100
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2013/14	93	77	116	106	72	98	86	94	91
2013/14 Total	11,465	7,307	6,338	4,367	486	29,963	46,868	44,478	121,309
2012/13 Total	10,019	5,039	5,825	4,619	591	26,093	17,980	36,220	80,293

¹ Current unshipped export sales to date

² Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year 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 Importers¹ of U.S. Corn

Week ending 01/01/2015	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-year avg 2011-2013
	2014/15 Current MY	2013/14 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	5,710	5,122	11	10,079
Mexico	6,700	7,819	(14)	8,145
Korea	982	1,213	(19)	2,965
Colombia	2,109	1,091	93	3,461
Taiwan	491	566	(13)	1,238
Top 5 Importers	15,992	15,809	1	25,887
Total US corn export sales⁴	27,342	28,159	(3)	34,445
% of Projected	62%	58%		
Change from prior week	388	92		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	58%	56%		75%
USDA forecast, January 2015	44,450	48,700	(9)	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, January 2015	131,445	130,404	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 Importers¹ of U.S. Soybeans

Week Ending 01/01/2015	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-yr avg. 2011-13
	2014/15 Current MY	2013/14 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	27,048	26,108	4	24,211
Mexico	2,083	1,825	14	2,971
Indonesia	1,039	1,174	(12)	1,895
Japan	1,165	1,106	5	1,750
Taiwan	1,048	915	14	1,055
Top 5 importers	32,382	31,128	4	31,882
Total US soybean export sales	43,190	40,751	6	39,169
% of Projected	90%	91%		
Change from prior week*	844	155		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	75%	76%		81%
USDA forecast, January 2015	48,170	44,820	7	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.²Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>³FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)⁴Not included - FAS Press Releases: **356,000 mt** (233,000 mt on 1/5 and 123,000 mt on 1/6 to China)

Table 15

Top 10 Importers¹ of All U.S. Wheat

Week Ending 01/01/2015	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-yr avg 2011-2013
	2014/15 Current MY	2013/14 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	2,459	1,875	31	3,243
Mexico	2,105	2,308	(9)	3,066
Nigeria	1,758	2,141	(18)	2,960
Philippines	1,723	1,418	22	2,006
China	215	4,137	(95)	1,830
Brazil	1,488	3,508	(58)	1,617
Korea	1,131	966	17	1,552
Taiwan	793	736	8	969
Indonesia	399	732	(45)	813
Colombia	509	579	(12)	610
Top 10 importers	12,579	18,398	(32)	18,665
Total US wheat export sales	18,650	24,567	(24)	27,696
% of Projected	74%	77%		
Change from prior week*	151	90		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	67%	75%		67%
USDA forecast, January 2015	25,170	32,010	(21)	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31.²Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>³FAS 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	Week ending 01/08/15	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		Total ¹ 2014
							2014	3-yr. avg.	
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	175	195	90	369	271	136	84	90	12,165
Corn	109	98	111	207	3	n/a	17	20	7,680
Soybeans	285	418	68	703	521	135	229	272	12,469
Total	569	711	80	1,280	795	161	117	136	32,314
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	11	99	11	110	279	39	29	33	4,397
Corn	302	346	87	647	514	126	108	125	30,566
Soybeans	1,378	716	192	2,093	1,211	173	110	144	28,371
Total	1,690	1,160	146	2,851	2,004	142	105	132	63,334
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	40	42	95	82	210	39	55	60	6,175
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	26	0	36	60	580
Soybeans	88	63	140	151	108	140	152	164	886
Total	128	105	122	233	345	68	69	79	7,640
Interior									
Wheat	16	16	104	32	26	122	96	155	1,381
Corn	78	87	90	165	97	171	72	83	5,516
Soybeans	69	101	68	170	112	152	76	156	4,183
Total	163	203	80	367	234	156	125	117	11,081
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	113	189	909
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	579	302
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	228	236	988
Total	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	179	224	2,199
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	548
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	2	0	9	9	817
Soybeans	83	46	179	129	77	169	98	133	2,073
Total	83	46	180	130	79	164	96	128	3,438
U.S. total from ports²									
Wheat	242	351	69	593	786	76	72	81	25,574
Corn	489	531	92	1,020	643	159	76	90	45,462
Soybeans	1,903	1,344	142	3,247	2,030	160	136	171	48,970
Total	2,634	2,226	118	4,861	3,458	141	107	130	120,006

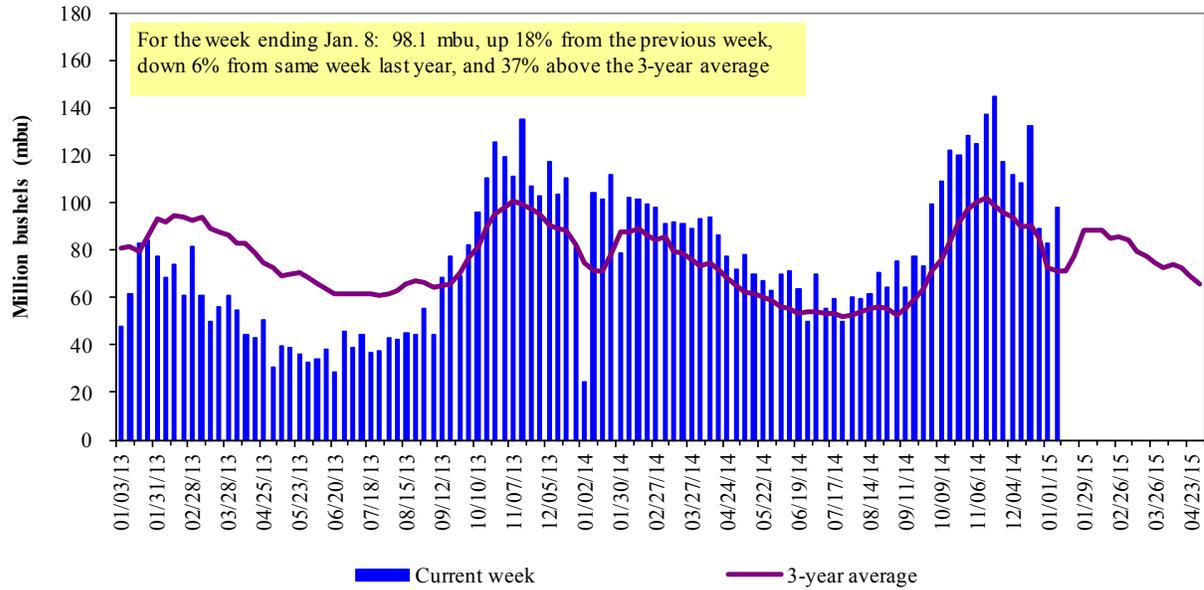
¹Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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 61 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2013.

Figure 14

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

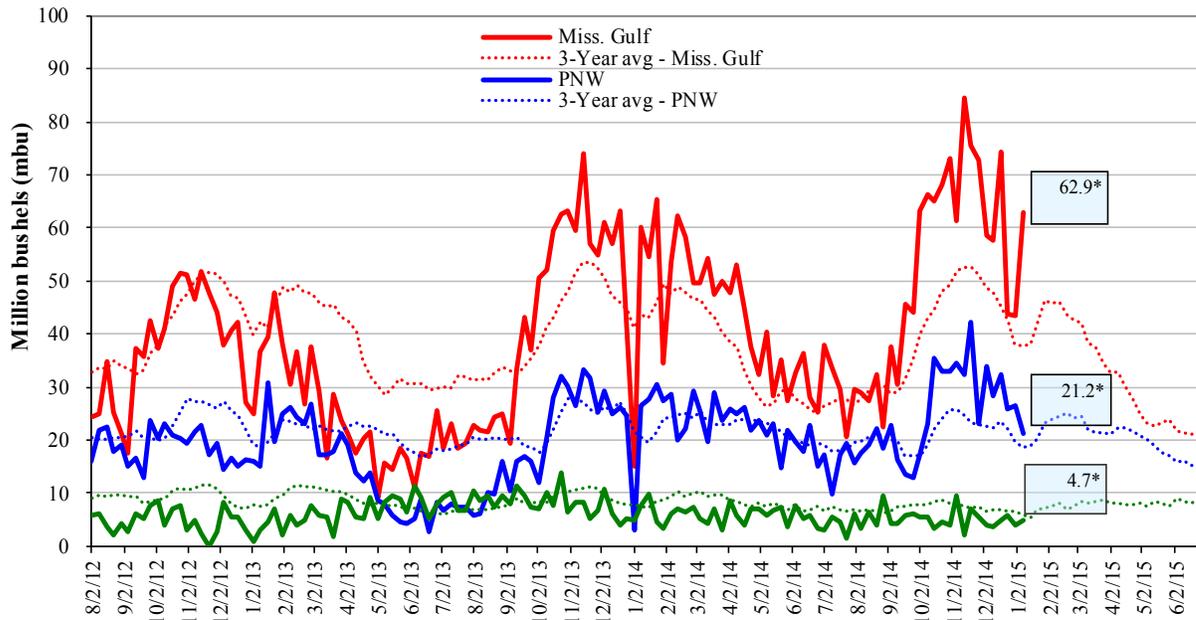


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

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

Figure 15

U.S. Grain Inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW¹ (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



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

Jan 8: % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	up 45	up 22	up 43	down 20
Last year (same week)	up 5	down 39	down 0.3	down 20
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.)	up 60	up 16	up 56	up 2

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

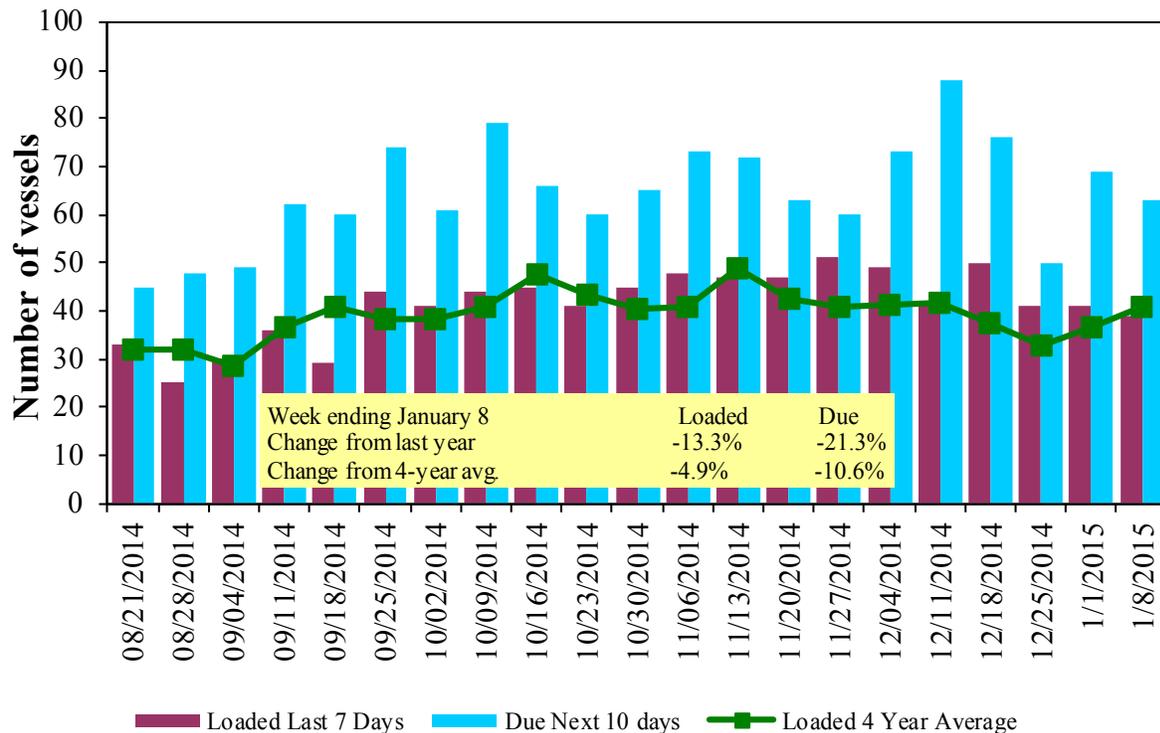
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
1/8/2015	41	39	63	15	n/a
1/1/2015	31	41	69	12	n/a
2014 range	(18..88)	(24..52)	(27..97)	(6..26)	n/a
2014 avg.	46	39	59	15	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

U.S. Gulf¹ Vessel Loading Activity

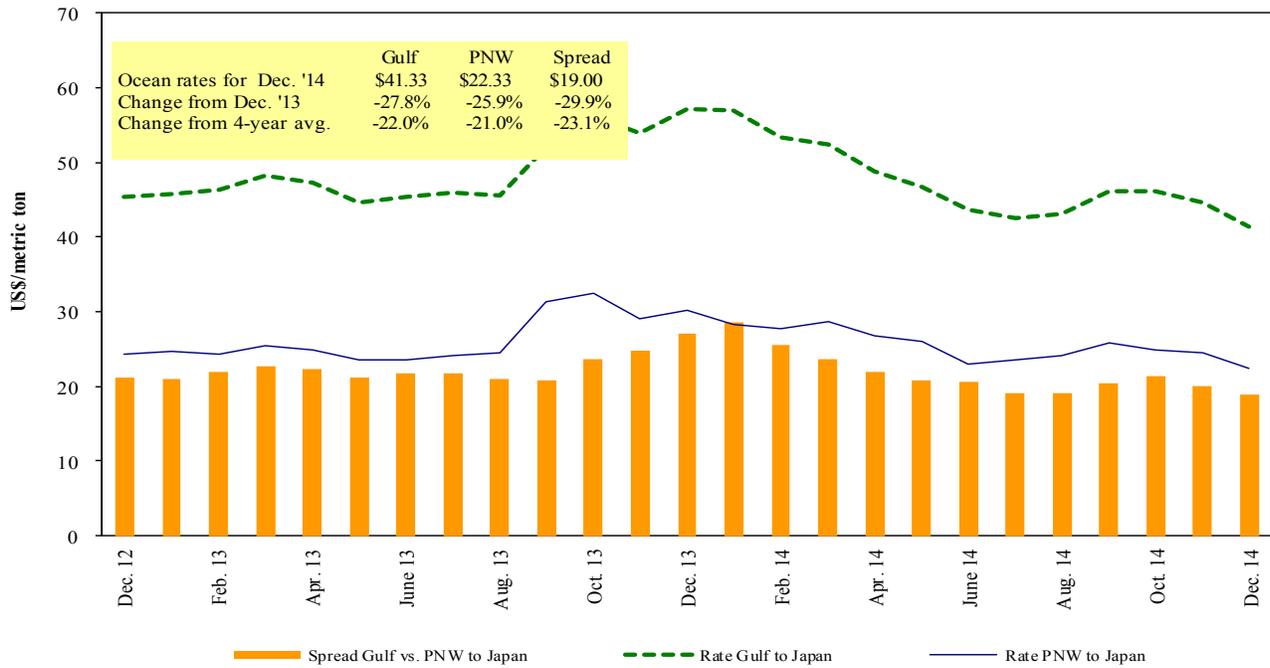


Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

¹U.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 1/10/2015

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US\$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Kenya ¹	Sorghum	Jan 2/12	10,000	91.35
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 15/30	5,500	40.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 15/20	55,000	50.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 10/17	55,000	41.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 10/20	60,000	41.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 20/30	60,000	44.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 15/25	55,000	44.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 5/15	60,000	45.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 1/8	58,000	46.00
U.S. Gulf	Brazil	Wheat	Nov 8/14	25,000	22.00
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti ¹	Wheat/Sorghum	Nov 20/30	22,000	68.50
PNW	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 1/30	60,000	26.50
PNW	China	Grain	Oct 20/30	60,000	23.00

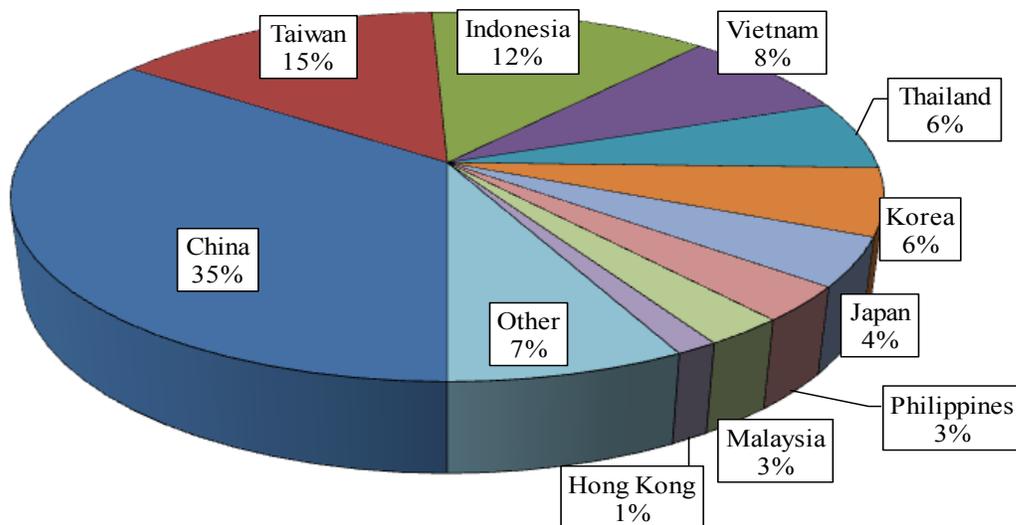
Rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicates; op = option

¹50 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 2013, containers were used to transport 10 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, up 2 percentage points from 2012. Approximately 61 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2013 went to Asia, of which 16 percent were moved in containers. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—97 percent in 2013.

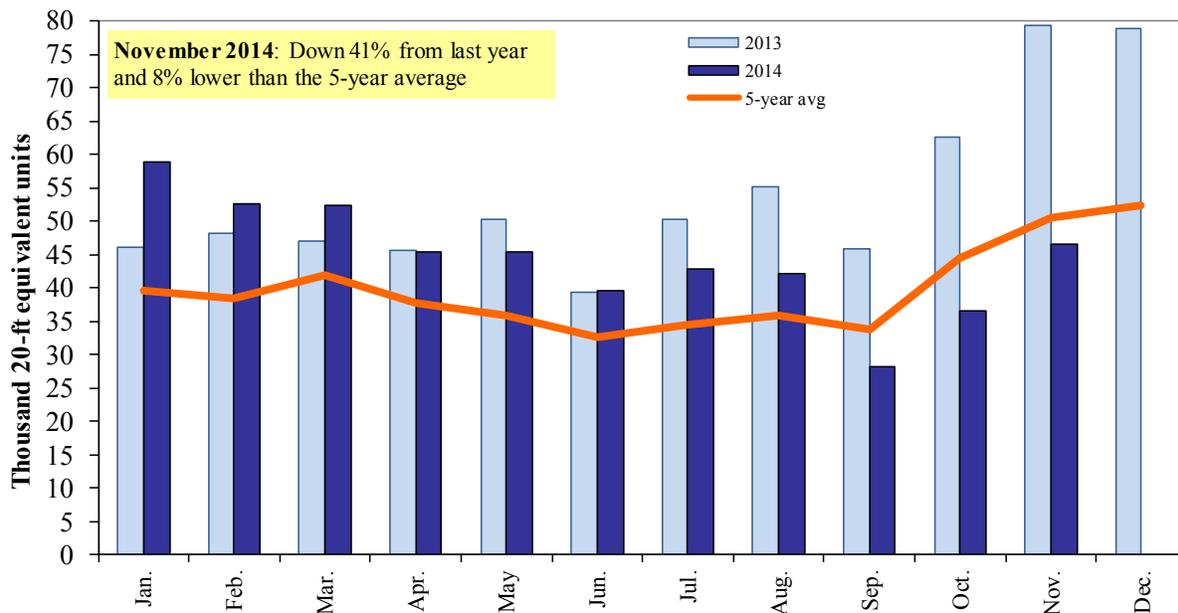
Figure 18
Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, January-November, 2014



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.

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

Marina Denicoff marina.denicoff@ams.usda.gov (202) 690 - 3244
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov (202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor april.taylor@ams.usda.gov (202) 295 - 7374
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

Marvin Prater marvin.prater@ams.usda.gov (540) 361 - 1147
Johnny Hill johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov (202) 690 - 3295
Adam Sparger adam.sparger@ams.usda.gov (202) 205 - 8701

Barge Transportation

Nicholas Marathon nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov (202) 690 - 4430
April Taylor april.taylor@ams.usda.gov (202) 295 - 7374

Truck Transportation

April Taylor april.taylor@ams.usda.gov (202) 295 - 7374

Grain Exports

Johnny Hill johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov (202) 690 - 3295
Marina Denicoff marina.denicoff@ams.usda.gov (202) 690 - 3244

Ocean Transportation

Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov (202) 720 - 0119
(Freight rates and vessels)
April Taylor april.taylor@ams.usda.gov (202) 295 - 7374
(Container movements)

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*. January 15, 2015. Web: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.01-15-2015>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).