USDA
Agricultural Marketing Service

A weekly publication of the
Transportation and Marketing Programs/Transportation Services Division
www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

Contact Us

October 13, 2011

Contents

The next release is Oct. 20, 2011

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Corn and Soybean Harvests Slightly Above Average Pace

As of October 9, a third of the U.S. corn crop has been harvested, one percentage point above the 5-year average. The top two corn producing States, Iowa and Illinois, have harvested 27 percent and 49 percent, respectively, of their corn crop. Iowa is currently 8 points ahead of its average pace, and Illinois is 3 points above its average pace. Other major corn-producing States with above-average corn harvest paces include Minnesota (20 percent current/13 percent average), Missouri (76 percent current /62 percent average), South Dakota (18 percent current/14 percent average), and Tennessee (88 percent current/86 percent average). Late plantings in Ohio have delayed the corn harvest—only 5 percent has been harvested, compared to 20 percent average pace. The Nation's soybean harvest is 51 percent complete, 5 points better than the 5-year average. Most States are ahead of their typical soybean harvest pace, but Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan are 35, 16, and 7 percent, respectively, behind their typical pace.

Corn and Soybeans Boost Total Grain Inspections

For the week ending October 6, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 1.79 million metric tons (mmt), up 8 percent from the previous week but 37 percent below last year this time. Corn (.810 mmt) and soybean (.637 mmt) inspections increased 9 and 110 percent from the past week. The increases were seen mostly in the Mississippi Gulf (1.11 mmt) (Table 16). Soybean shipments went mainly to China, and corn shipments increased to Egypt and Mexico. Wheat inspection, however, dropped 44 percent as demand from Asia slipped. Outstanding (unshipped) corn and soybean sales also increased from the past week.

DOT Provides $31 Million for Rail Service in Washington State

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved $31.1 million for improvements in Washington State on lines owned by BNSF which will benefit Amtrak's Cascade route and freight trains accessing the Port of Vancouver. Design, environmental review, and construction of track improvements to minimize weather-related delays between Blaine and Vancouver, WA, during the rainy season will receive $16.1 million. Fifteen million dollars will be used to construct a new rail access route to the Port of Vancouver, which will include a grade separation, opening a choke point for rail traffic. This rail corridor is a major route for grain shipments through the Pacific Northwest. The improvement will substantially reduce delays for freight and Amtrak trains. The Washington State Department of Transportation and the Port of Vancouver are contributing a combined $22 million to the project in addition to the FRA grant. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2012.

Presidential Emergency Board Formed to Negotiate Dispute Between Railroads and Labor Unions

After contract talks failed between 11 labor unions that represent 75 percent of all freight railroad employees, and the National Carriers' Conference Committee, which represents the Class I Railroads, the National Mediation Board released the parties from mediation on September 6. Contract negotiations had been underway since January 2010. Under the Railway Labor Act, the mandatory cooling-off period following the end of mediation was set to expire at midnight on October 6 during which time both sides were prevented from seeking self-help such as strikes or lockouts. However, the appointment of a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) on October 6 extended the cooling-off period for an additional 30 days while the PEB investigates the facts and makes non-binding recommendations by November 6. Both sides will have a final 30 day cooling-off period, ending on December 6, to consider the PEB's recommendations and reach a voluntary settlement. If no settlement occurs at that time, both sides are free to pursue self-help. Typically, Congress intervenes by mandating the recommendations of the PEB in order to prevent a major disruption to the nation's freight rail system.

Snapshots by Sector

Rail

U.S. railroads originated 20,722 **carloads of grain** during the week ending October 1, up 14 percent from last week, down 17 percent from last year, and 8 percent lower than the 3-year average.

During the week ending October 6, average October non-shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers** were $28 below tariff, down $17 from last week and $528 lower than last year. Average shuttle rates were $325 above tariff, up $141.50 from last week and $712.50 lower than last year.

Barge

During the week ending October 8, **barge grain movements** totaled 415,103 tons, 25 percent higher than the previous week but 31 percent lower than the same period last year.

During the week ending October 8, 261 grain barges **moved down river**, up 21 percent from last week; 487 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 8 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

During the week ending October 6, 33 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, down 31 percent from last year. Forty-six vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 34 percent less than the same period last year.

During the week ending October 7, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was $56 per metric ton, up 2 percent from the previous week. The cost of shipping from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $34 per mt, up 6 percent from the previous week.

Fuel

During the week ending October 10, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** decreased 3 cents to $3.72 per gallon—0.8 percent lower than the previous week, but 21 percent higher than the same week last year.

Containerized Grain Exports

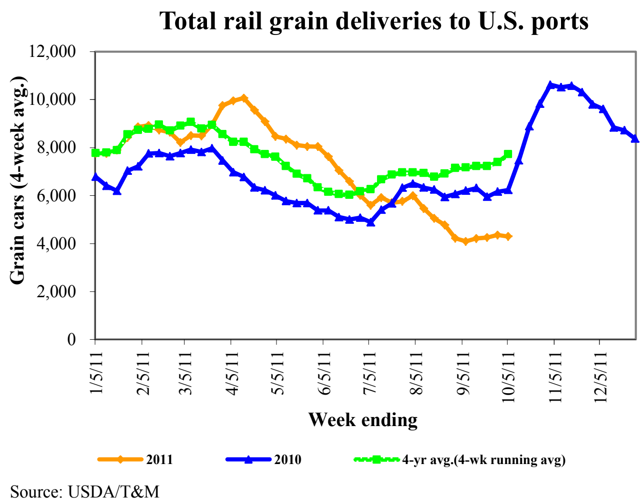
Containerized grain exports to Asia in July were 82 percent higher than the previous year, 36 percent higher than the 3-year average, and 9 percent higher than June movements.

Feature Article/Calendar

AMS Releases Grain Transportation Data

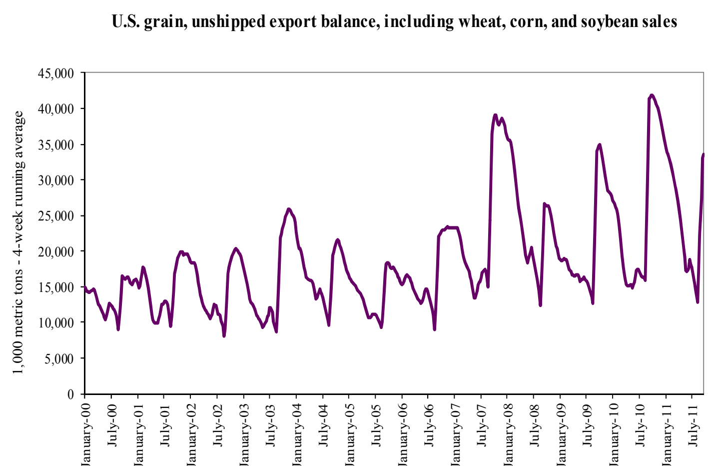
For over a decade the Grain Transportation Report (GTR) team within the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has been tracking and gathering datasets for grain transportation, including prices, deliveries, movements, sales, and freight rates. Now, for the first time, we've released our historic GTR data in an Excel format.

A decade's worth of grain transportation data can yield much valuable information. Market analysts and researchers can identify trends and make projections based on emerging patterns. For example, the GTR gives weekly data on rail grain deliveries to port. This data set goes back to January 1994 and is exclusive to the GTR. The data show rail grain deliveries over time to U.S. ports (as seen in the figure to the right) and for each port region. For much of 2011, rail deliveries to U.S. ports were greater than during 2010 and the 4-year average. In late June, they fell below the 4-year average and in late July they dropped below the 2010 deliveries.



Source: USDA/T&M

Another example is the data set of unshipped export sales balances and year-to-date export sales of wheat, corn, and soybeans (**GTR, Table 12**). This data set goes back to January 2000. It can be used to compare cumulative exports for the current marketing year with those of prior years. The unshipped (outstanding) export balances, which are actual contracted sales of grain, can be used as an indicator for transportation demand in the near term. In addition, the data can be used to indicate export demand and market locations for grain (**GTR, Tables 13-15**). Ocean freight rate data (**GTR, Figure 17**) can be analyzed to follow the trends in the bulk ocean marketplace. This data set goes back to January 1996. The historical spread between the Gulf and the Pacific Northwest can be compared to historical grain inspection (**GTR, Table 16**) or export data to determine how the ocean rate spread influences the choice of export port.



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

Current year barge movements can be compared with those of previous years using the grain barge movement data set (**GTR, Table 10**), which goes back to January 2004. This year, portions of the Mississippi River and its tributaries experienced major—sometimes record—flooding that limited barge grain movements to export locations, especially to the Baton Rouge-to-New Orleans region. Data from Figure 12 show the number of barges moving on the river and unloaded in the New Orleans region. Historical data show that current barge movements are below average. Although navigation on the Mississippi River was restricted at times, the number of year-to-date grain barge deliveries to the export elevators is only 10 percent lower than last year at this time. By contrast, grain deliveries by rail to Mississippi River ports (**GTR, Table 3**) are 47 percent higher than last year. Historic barge rate data (**GTR, Table 9**) show how current rates compare to previous years, how rates reacted to flood conditions in earlier years, and how they reacted to other major river disruptions, such as Hurricane Katrina.

The Transportation Services Division within AMS will continue to add to the historical data set concurrent with each release of the GTR, building on the information to keep it up to date and accurate. As part of USDA's commitment to transparency and open government, the new dataset is also available through **Data.gov**. Through either the GTR website or the data.gov website, users can formulate, structure, and analyze the raw data to suit their unique analytical needs. The agricultural industry can explore opportunities in the market armed with more information than ever before.

We invite all stakeholders within the grain industry and agricultural marketing research community to take a look. Growers, shippers, distributors, and exporters will find the most immediate value in the information. However, we also anticipate that economists, statisticians, researchers, and others will find the raw data to be valuable. After taking a look and you find this data is helpful to you—if you use it to create something surprising or practical—please let us know. GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail[2]	Barge	Ocean	
Week ending				Gulf	Pacific
10/12/11	250	95	292	250	241
10/05/11	252	85	312	246	227

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

[2]The rail indicator is not an index. It is the difference between the nearby secondary rail market bid for this week and the average bid for year 2000 (+) 100.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2

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

Commodity	Origin--Destination	10/7/2011	9/30/2011
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.79	-0.81
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.90	-0.94
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.20	-1.12
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.45	-1.45
HRS	ND--Portland	-2.91	-2.40

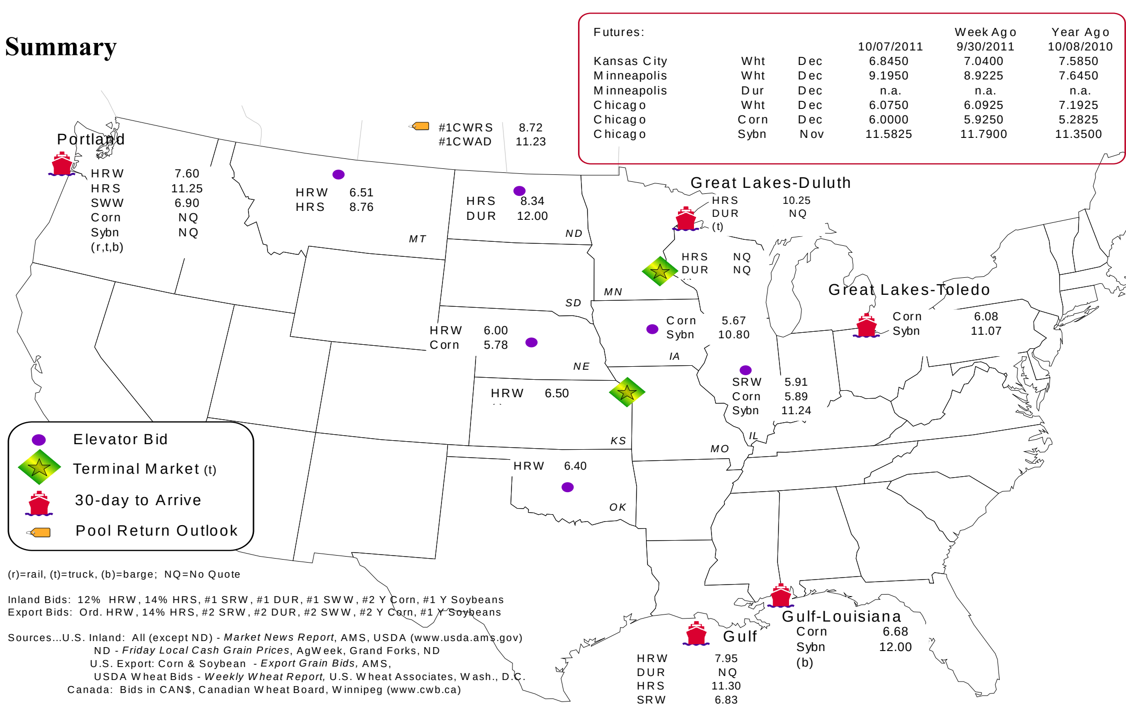
Note: nq = no quote

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 Gulf	Texas Gulf	Cross-Border Mexico	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total
10/05/2011[p]	479	643	511	1,832	170	3,635
09/28/2011[r]	617	1,508	662	1,358	194	4,339
2011 YTD	23,438	69,657	35,879	135,725	17,394	282,093
2010YTD	15,971	58,302	34,271	126,249	20,981	255,774
2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	147	119	105	108	83	110
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[2]	30	63	115	95	22	69
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	30	60	110	55	23	56
Total 2010	33,971	83,492	42,794	177,896	32,780	370,933
Total 2009	33,423	57,646	36,738	175,965	30,328	334,100

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2010 and prior 4-year average.

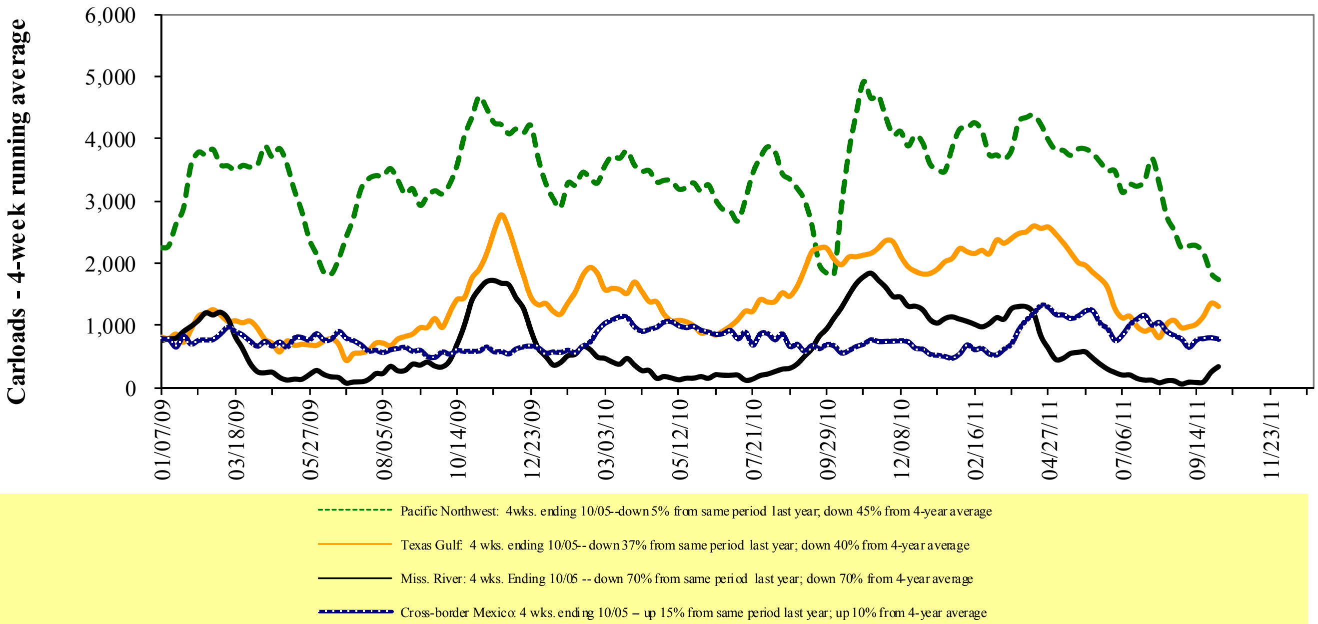
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 35 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)

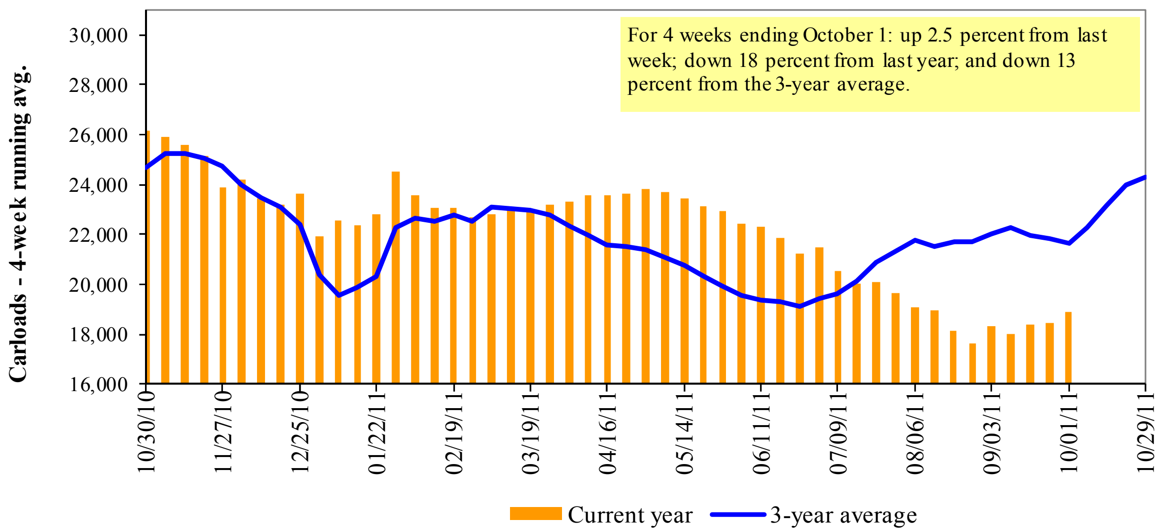
Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
10/01/11	863	2,373	11,582	990	4,914	20,722	3,330	5,242
This week last year	2,188	3,403	10,905	948	7,525	24,969	4,129	5,302
2011 YTD	68,368	111,249	410,562	27,069	225,020	842,268	147,739	197,028
2010 YTD	81,076	116,560	398,871	26,909	213,468	836,884	149,728	201,587
2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	84	95	103	101	105	101	99	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[1]	43	67	94	141	74	82	95	103
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.[1]	50	78	93	137	84	87	95	86
Total 2010	111,935	159,836	546,901	35,807	295,361	1,149,840	203,038	265,835

[1]As 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 Offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

Week ending	Delivery period							
10/6/2011	Oct-11	Oct-10	Nov-11	Nov-10	Dec-11	Dec-10	Jan-12	Jan-11
BNSF[3]								
COT grain units	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer
COT grain single-car[5]	no bids	no offer	10	no offer	10	no offer	0	no offer
UP[4]								
GCAS/Region 1	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	1	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no bids	no offer	no bids	no bids	no bids	no bids	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.

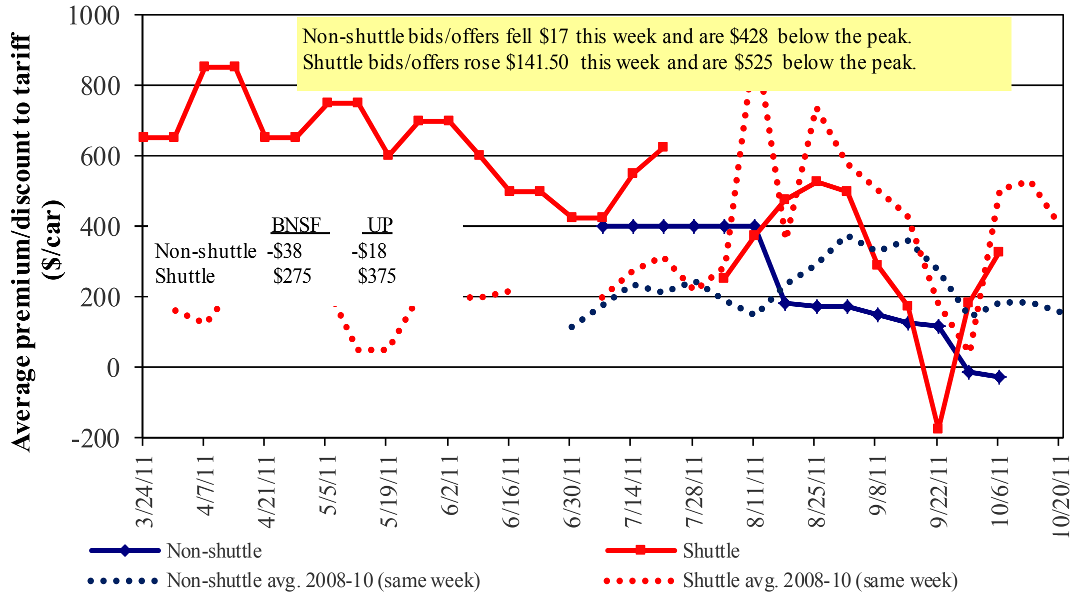
[5]Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

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 October 2011, Secondary Market

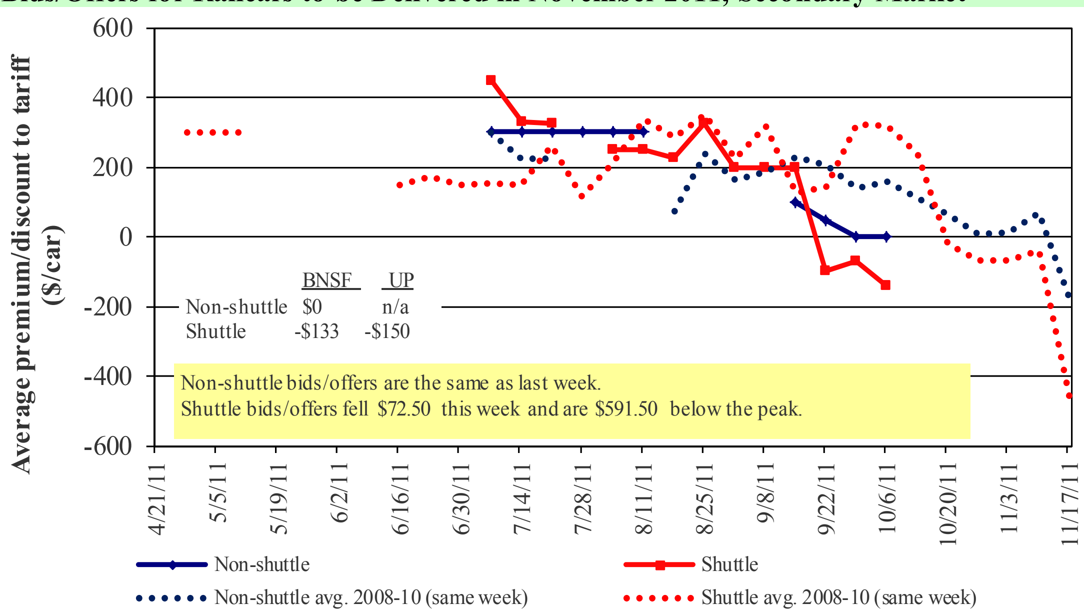


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in November 2011, Secondary Market

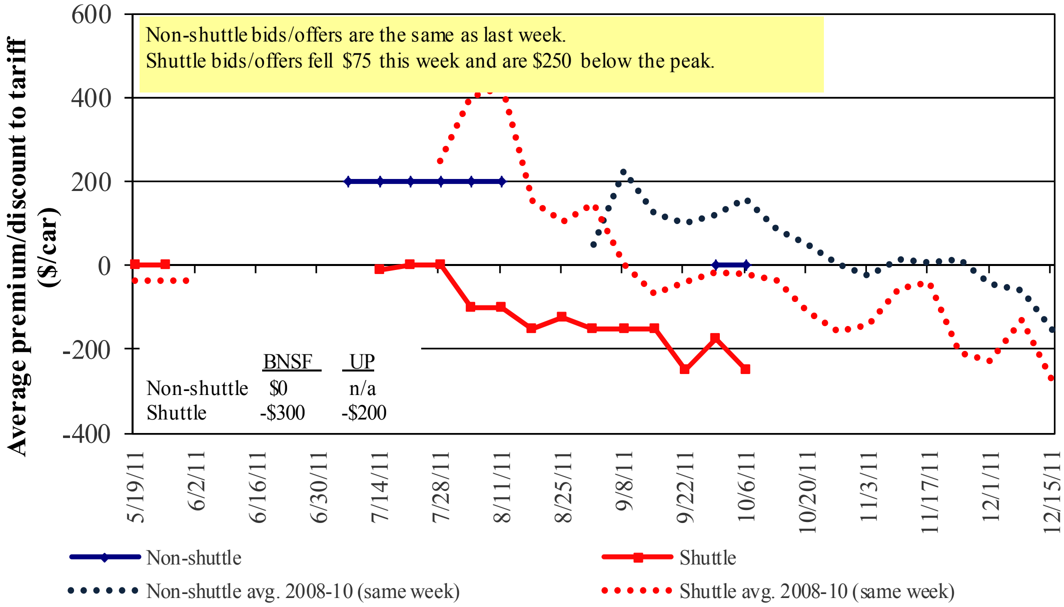


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in December 2011, 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					
10/6/2011	**Oct-11**	**Nov-11**	**Dec-11**	**Jan-12**	**Feb-12**	**Mar-12**
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	(38)	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	4	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	(738)	(467)	(500)	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(18)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(38)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	(318)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle[2]						
BNSF-GF	275	(133)	(300)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	21	(158)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	(1,200)	(983)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	375	(150)	(200)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	262	13	(25)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	(225)	(425)	(162)	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 Atwood/ConAgra, Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Table 7

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

Effective date: 10/3/2011	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	$2,992	$182	$31.52	$0.86	11
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,097	$104	$31.79	$0.87	19
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$5,710	$536	$62.02	$1.69	9
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$3,492	$320	$37.86	$1.03	11
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,410	$440	$58.09	$1.58	6
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,760	$351	$40.82	$1.11	11
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$3,959	$489	$44.17	$1.20	12
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,062	$362	$34.00	$0.93	14
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$3,942	$407	$43.19	$1.18	10
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$1,934	$77	$19.97	$0.54	7
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$3,381	$306	$36.61	$1.00	10
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$2,833	$196	$30.08	$0.82	6
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,074	$225	$32.76	$0.89	8
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$4,985	$656	$56.02	$1.52	20
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,424	$395	$37.92	$1.03	10
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$3,057	$289	$33.23	$0.90	9
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$4,013	$410	$43.92	$1.20	9
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$2,749	$196	$29.25	$0.80	9
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,406	$362	$37.42	$1.02	13
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,239	$308	$35.22	$0.96	9
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,144	$240	$33.60	$0.91	7
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$3,645	$382	$39.99	$1.09	9
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$4,702	$532	$51.98	$1.41	9
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,745	$554	$62.55	$1.70	10
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$4,727	$576	$52.66	$1.43	11
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$4,800	$648	$54.10	$1.47	16
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,760	$593	$53.16	$1.45	15
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$2,877	$362	$32.17	$0.88	13
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,310	$346	$36.30	$0.99	13
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,430	$283	$36.88	$1.00	7
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$4,800	$643	$54.05	$1.47	16
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,200	$665	$48.31	$1.31	15
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,040	$593	$55.94	$1.52	12
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,030	$648	$56.38	$1.53	12
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$4,930	$527	$54.20	$1.47	11
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$3,710	$418	$40.99	$1.12	11
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$2,672	$289	$29.40	$0.80	10
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$4,520	$589	$50.74	$1.38	8

[1]A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of 90-110 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: 10/3/2011				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	$7,491	$563	$82.29	$2.24	8
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,610	$589	$73.56	$2.00	10
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,210	$849	$82.35	$2.24	7
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$3,656	$240	$39.81	$1.08	10
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$7,445	$864	$84.89	$2.15	5
	SD	Penjamo, GJ	$7,245	$736	$81.55	$2.07	7
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$7,012	$759	$79.40	$2.01	15
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$5,650	$560	$63.45	$1.61	13
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$6,227	$740	$71.19	$1.81	17
	SD	Torreon, CU	$6,248	$617	$70.14	$1.78	7
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$6,745	$760	$76.69	$2.09	10
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$7,662	$869	$87.16	$2.37	13
	IA	El Castillo, JA[5]	$7,770	$732	$86.87	$2.36	11
	KS	Torreon, CU	$6,169	$594	$69.10	$1.88	13
Sorghum	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$5,670	$559	$63.65	$1.62	15
	TX	Guadalajara, JA	$6,653	$479	$72.87	$1.85	10
	NE	Penjamo, GJ	$7,171	$794	$81.38	$2.07	14
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$6,198	$523	$68.67	$1.74	12
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,963	$497	$55.79	$1.42	13
	NE	Torreon, CU	$5,941	$627	$67.11	$1.70	10

[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

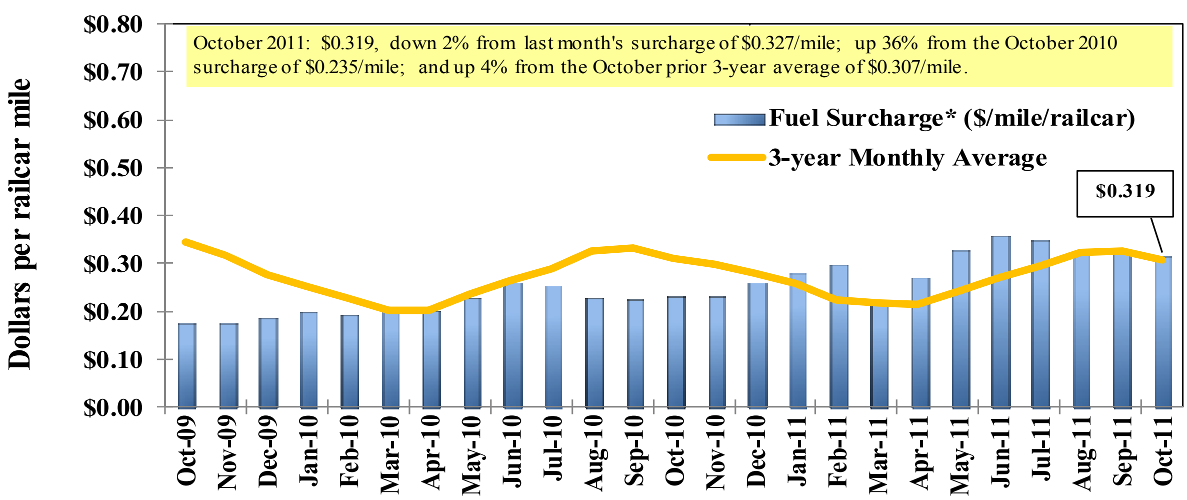
[4] Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

[5] Beginning 12/6/10, El Castillo, JA replaced Penjamo, GJ as the destination

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.

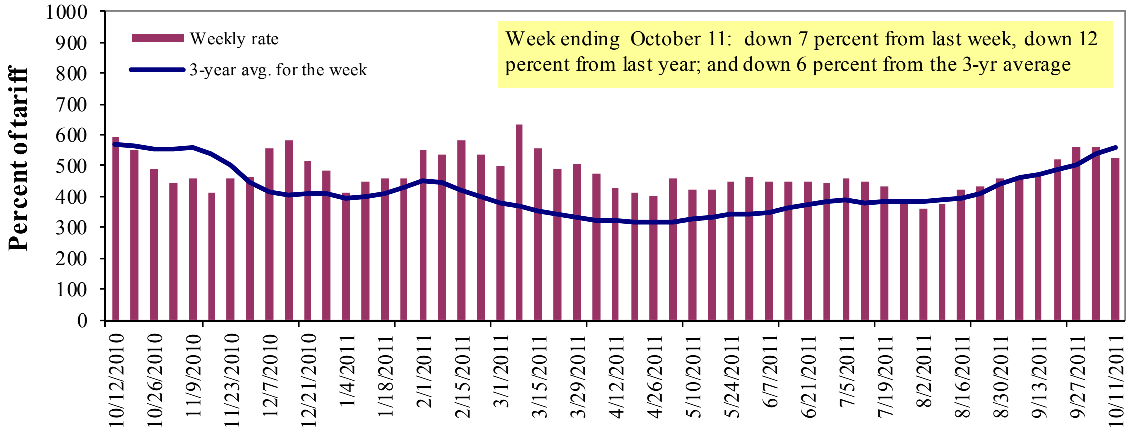
* Mileage-based fuel surcharges for March and April 2007 are estimated. Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

** 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.csx.com, www.kcsi.com, www.nscorp.com, www.uprr.com

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]	10/11/2011	541	525	525	459	525	525	450
	10/4/2011	567	557	562	475	567	567	472
$/ton	10/11/2011	33.49	27.93	24.36	18.31	24.62	21.21	14.13
	10/4/2011	35.10	29.63	26.08	18.95	26.59	22.91	14.82
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-25	-25	-12	-15	-25	-25	-10
	3-year avg. [2]	-1	-5	-6	-15	-17	-17	-19
Rate[1]	November	500	453	450	379	480	480	358
	January	--	--	450	360	444	444	338

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Calculating barge rate per ton:
(Index * 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 (see figure 9).

Figure 9

Benchmark tariff rates

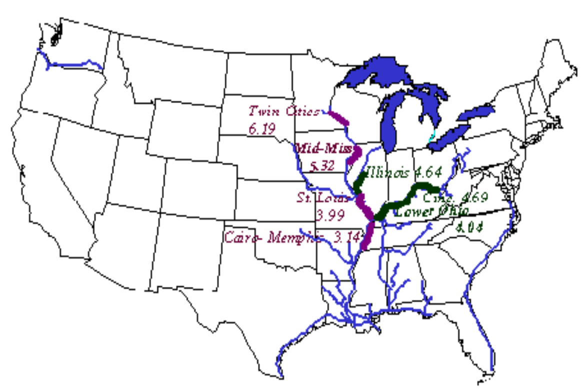
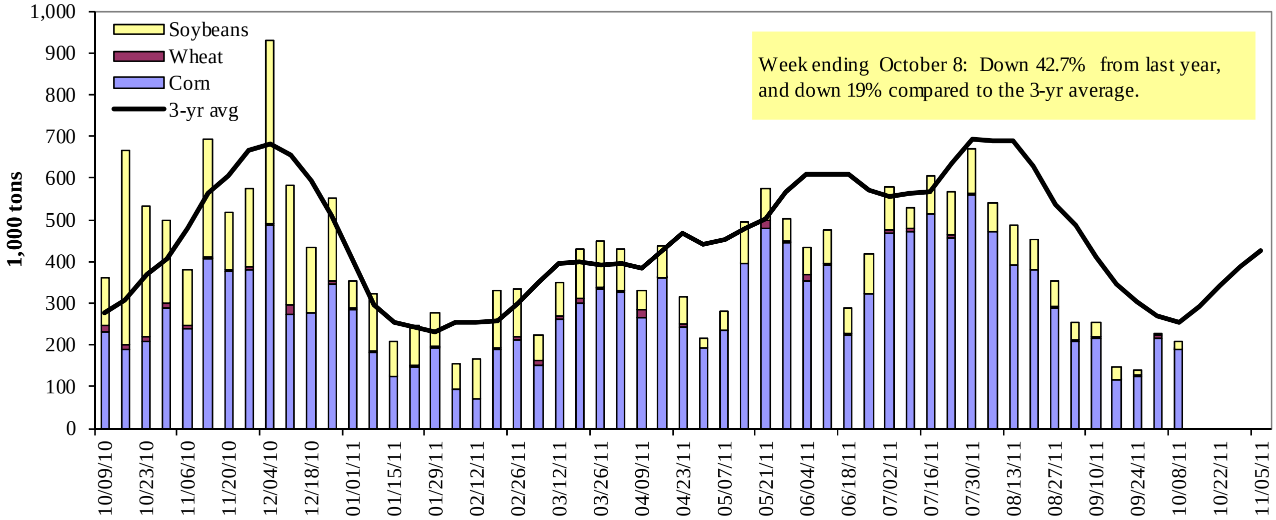


Figure 10

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 (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrimi/omni/webrpts/default.asp)

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

Week ending 10/8/2011	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	34	3	27	0	64
Winfield, MO (L25)	79	3	25	0	107
Alton, IL (L26)	169	2	16	0	187
Granite City, IL (L27)	189	2	16	0	206
Illinois River (L8)	74	0	3	0	77
Ohio River (L52)	114	7	38	0	158
Arkansas River (L1)	1	6	43	0	50
Weekly total - 2011	305	14	97	0	415
Weekly total - 2010	302	27	264	12	604
2011 YTD[1]	14,506	1,225	5,042	294	21,068
2010 YTD	18,322	1,028	5,776	363	25,489
2011 as % of 2010 YTD	79	119	87	81	83
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[2]	71	76	40	22	63
Total 2010	22,768	1,220	10,373	481	34,841

[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.

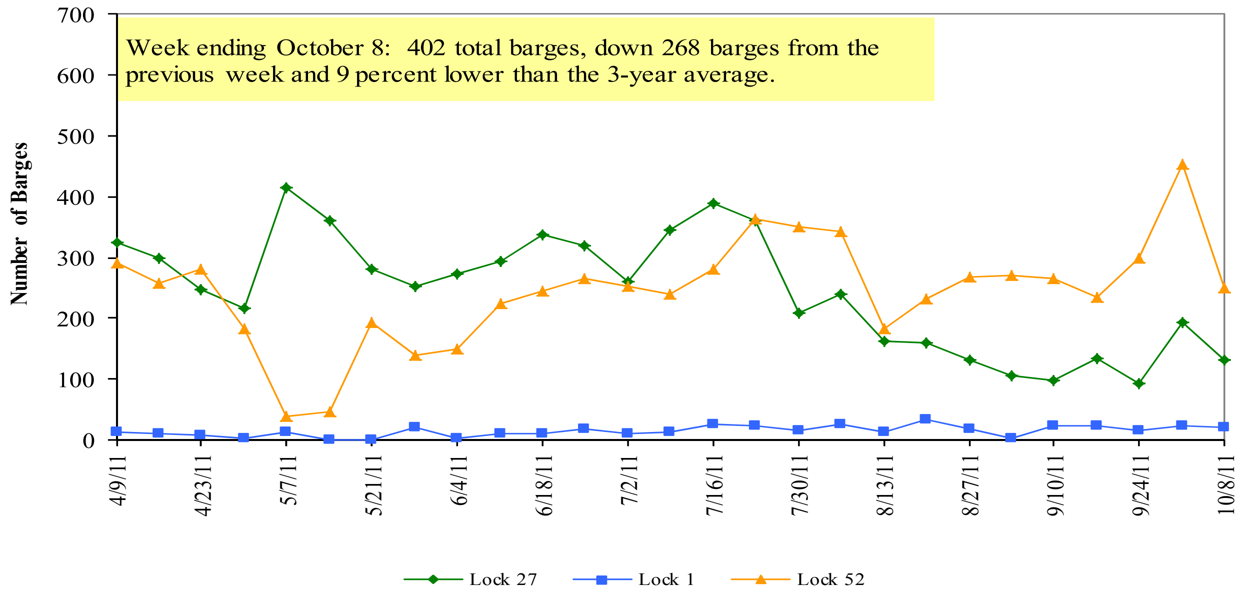
[2] As a percent of same period in 2010.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrimi/omni/webrpts/default.asp)

Figure 11

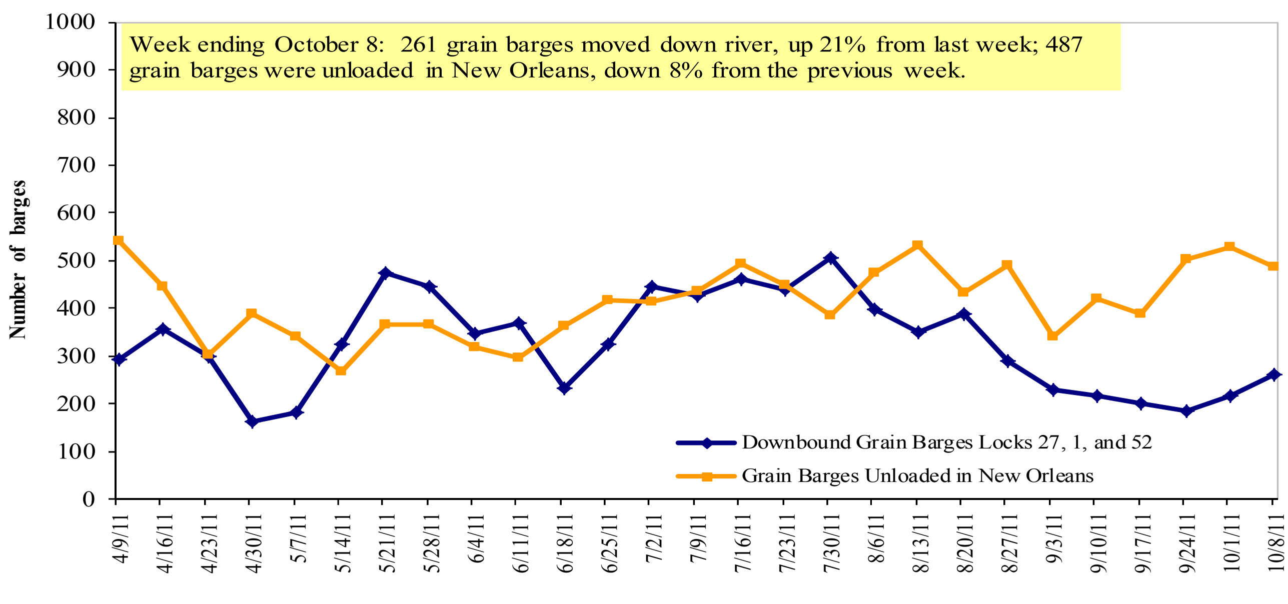
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



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 10/10/2011 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.741	-0.024	0.676
	New England	3.912	-0.029	0.794
	Central Atlantic	3.860	-0.021	0.682
	Lower Atlantic	3.674	-0.025	0.663
II	Midwest[2]	3.671	-0.028	0.616
III	Gulf Coast[3]	3.651	-0.042	0.669
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.828	-0.018	0.743
V	West Coast	3.910	-0.017	0.671
	California	3.977	-0.030	0.762
Total	U.S.	3.721	-0.028	0.655

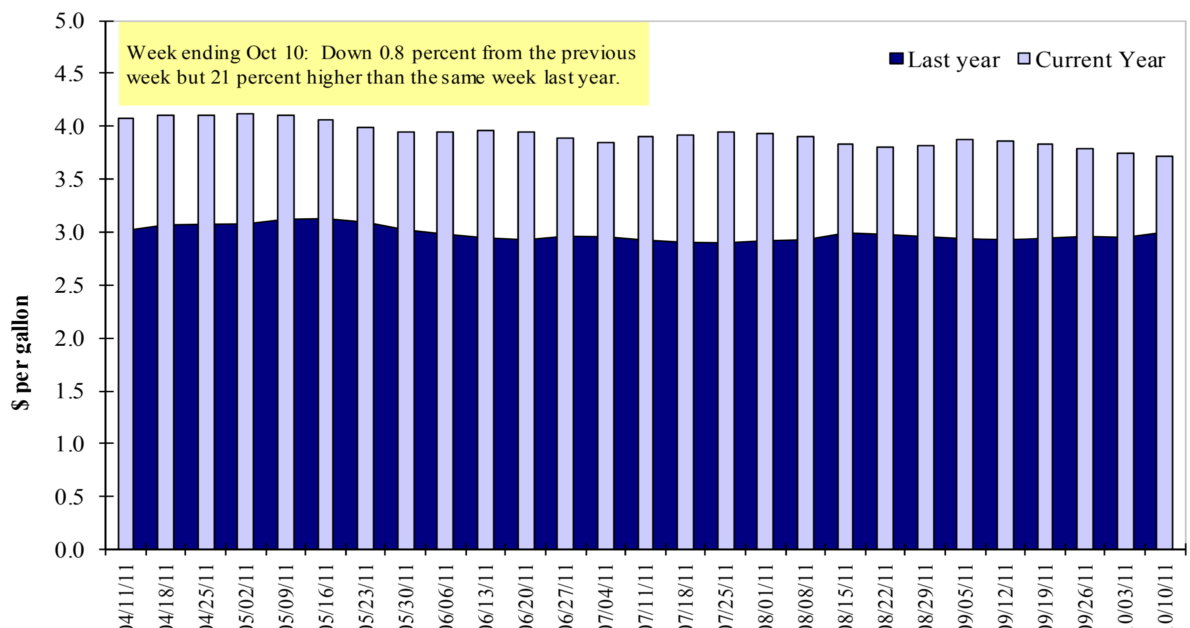
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[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)

	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
Week ending	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances[1]									
9/29/2011	1,417	746	1,280	918	84	4,445	14,282	15,589	34,316
This week year ago	3,600	560	2,245	1,228	213	7,846	13,770	20,449	42,065
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2011/12 YTD	4,370	1,376	2,507	1,749	221	10,223	2,827	1,229	14,279
2010/11 YTD	4,778	676	2,567	1,657	373	10,051	4,297	1,776	16,124
YTD 2011/12 as % of 2010/11	91	204	98	106	59	102	66	69	89
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2010/11	43	120	62	81	37	60	101	73	80
2010/11 Total	15,837	2,828	8,623	4,717	979	32,984	44,569	39,753	117,306
2009/10 Total	8,458	2,733	5,329	3,897	983	21,400	47,700	39,285	108,385

[1] Current unshipped export sales to date

[2] Shipped export sales to date; the new marketing year is 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

Week ending 09/29/11	**Total Commitments**[2] **2011/12 Current MY**	**2010/11 Last MY**	**% change current MY from last MY**	**Exports**[3] **2010/11**
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	3,749	5,324	(30)	14,279
Mexico	3,037	2,488	22	7,019
Korea	1,406	1,367	3	6,104
Egypt	356	1,205	(70)	3,302
Taiwan	637	706	(10)	2,393
Top 5 importers	**9,185**	**11,090**	**(17)**	**33,096**
Total US corn export sales	**17,109**	**18,067**	**(5)**	**46,610**
% of Projected	41%	39%		
Change from Last Week	1,289	585		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	54%	61%		
USDA forecast, September 2011	**41,910**	**46,610**	**(10)**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, Ethanol September 2011	**127,000**	**116,612**	**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.

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

Table 14

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

Week Ending 09/29/2011	Total Commitments[2] 2011/12 Current MY	2010/11 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2010/11
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	11,768	13,269	(11)	24,445
Mexico	921	929	(1)	3,215
Japan	656	728	(10)	1,887
EU-25	124	204	(39)	2,607
Indonesia	427	558	(23)	1,397
Top 5 importers	**13,897**	**15,690**	**(11)**	**33,551**
Total US soybean export sales	**16,818**	**22,224**	**(24)**	**40,690**
% of Projected	44%	55%		
Change from last week	702	948		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	83%	71%		
USDA forecast, September 2011	**38,510**	**40,690**	**(5)**	
Soybean Use for Biodiesel USDA forecast, September 2011	**8,632**	**5,755**	**50**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS 2008/09 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.

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

Table 15

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

Week Ending 09/29/2011	Total Commitments[2] 2011/12 Current MY	2010/11 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2010/11
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Nigeria	1,663	1,693	(2)	3,233
Japan	1,879	1,687	11	3,148
Mexico	1,865	1,411	32	2,601
Philippines	1,224	1,353	(10)	1,518
Korea	581	1,001	(42)	1,111
Peru	574	581	(1)	923
Taiwan	355	396	(10)	913
Colombia	334	390	(14)	783
Indonesia	433	354	22	781
Yemen	267	196		659
Top 10 importers	**9,175**	**9,063**	**1**	**15,670**
Total US wheat export sales	**14,668**	**17,897**	**(18)**	**33,439**
% of Projected	53%	51%		
Change from last week	431	803		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	63%	51%		
USDA forecast, September 2011	**27,896**	**35,080**	**(20)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Modified from the FAS **2010/11** 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.

[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	Week ending 10/06/11	Previous Week[1]	Current Week as % of Previous	2011 YTD[1]	2010 YTD[1]	2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of 2010	Last 4-weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.	Total[1] 2010
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	199	355	56	11,422	8,789	130	109	111	11,062
Corn	0	2	17	7,038	8,391	84	50	30	9,950
Soybeans	131	0	241,200	3,926	5,463	72	33	42	10,191
Total	**331**	**357**	**93**	**22,386**	**22,643**	**99**	**82**	**76**	**31,203**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	30	94	32	4,235	3,092	137	107	73	4,199
Corn	743	613	121	20,510	23,666	87	89	98	29,794
Soybeans	335	235	142	11,670	12,472	94	52	96	22,519
Total	**1,108**	**941**	**118**	**36,415**	**39,231**	**93**	**76**	**94**	**56,512**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	77	115	67	9,502	6,972	136	69	86	9,339
Corn	0	0	n/a	810	1,401	58	0	0	1,859
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	763	745	102	0	0	1,916
Total	**77**	**115**	**67**	**11,075**	**9,118**	**121**	**57**	**72**	**13,115**
Interior									
Wheat	29	24	119	896	699	128	28	128	926
Corn	66	127	52	5,487	5,215	105	80	95	6,388
Soybeans	167	67	247	3,024	2,523	120	83	145	3,641
Total	**262**	**218**	**120**	**9,407**	**8,437**	**112**	**102**	**114**	**10,954**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	8	20	41	837	1,315	64	15	22	1,897
Corn	0	0	n/a	149	53	284	n/a	80	119
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	22	168	13	0	0	655
Total	**8**	**20**	41	**1,009**	**1,536**	**66**	**15**	**21**	**2,672**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	1	0	651	246	265	16	13	343
Corn	0	4	0	201	343	59	12	10	469
Soybeans	4	1	310	496	728	68	164	166	1,417
Total	**4**	**6**	**69**	**1,348**	**1,316**	**102**	**28**	**25**	**2,229**
U.S. total from ports[2]									
Wheat	343	607	56	27,544	21,113	130	80	87	27,765
Corn	810	745	109	34,196	39,069	88	83	82	48,580
Soybeans	637	304	210	19,901	22,099	90	52	85	40,340
Total	**1,790**	**1,656**	**108**	**81,640**	**82,281**	**99**	**73**	**84**	**116,684**

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

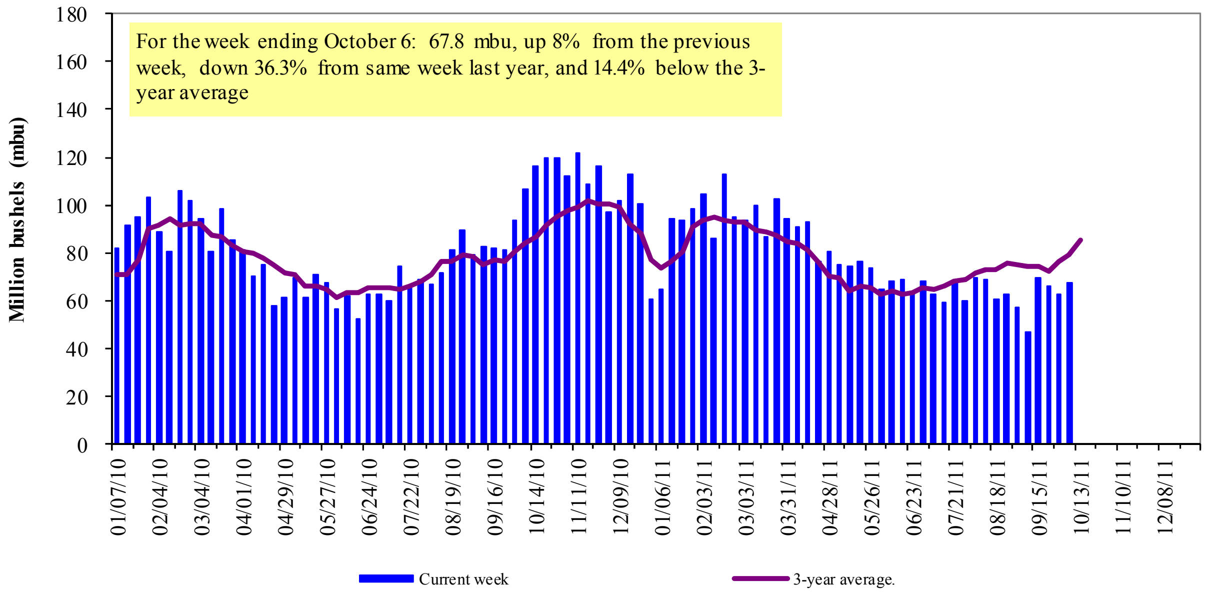
[2] Total includes only port regions shown above; Interior land-based grain shipments are now included.

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 2010.

Figure 14

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

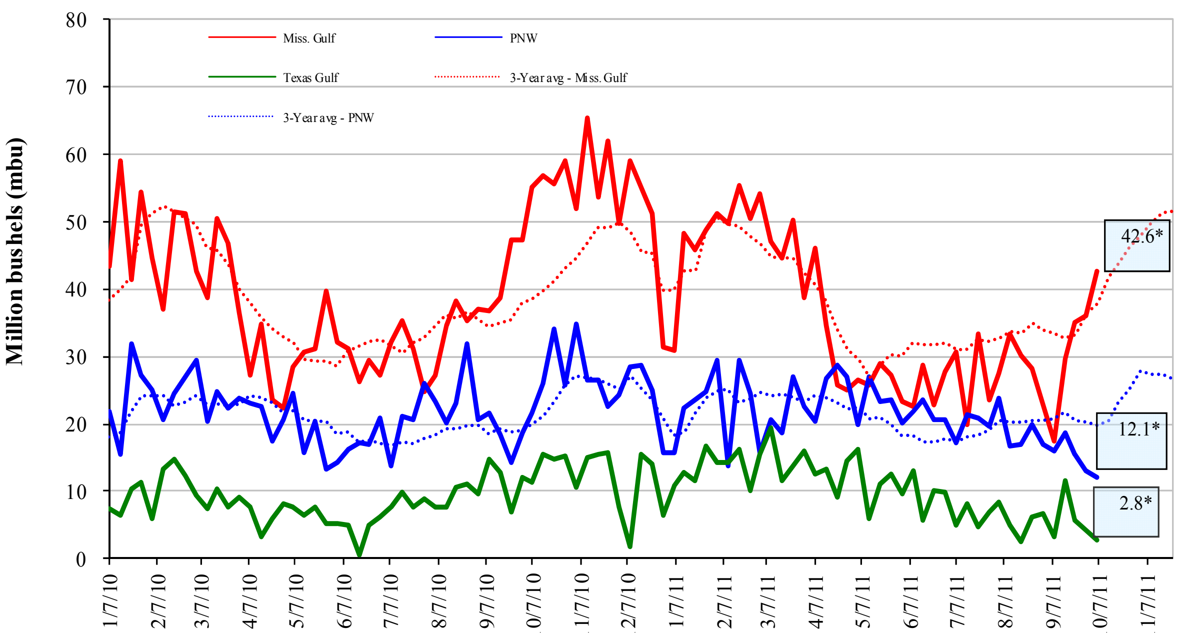


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

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 6 % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	up 18	down 33	up 13	down 7
Last year (same week)	down 23	down 75	down 32	down 44
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.)	up 13	down 67	down 2	down 32

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

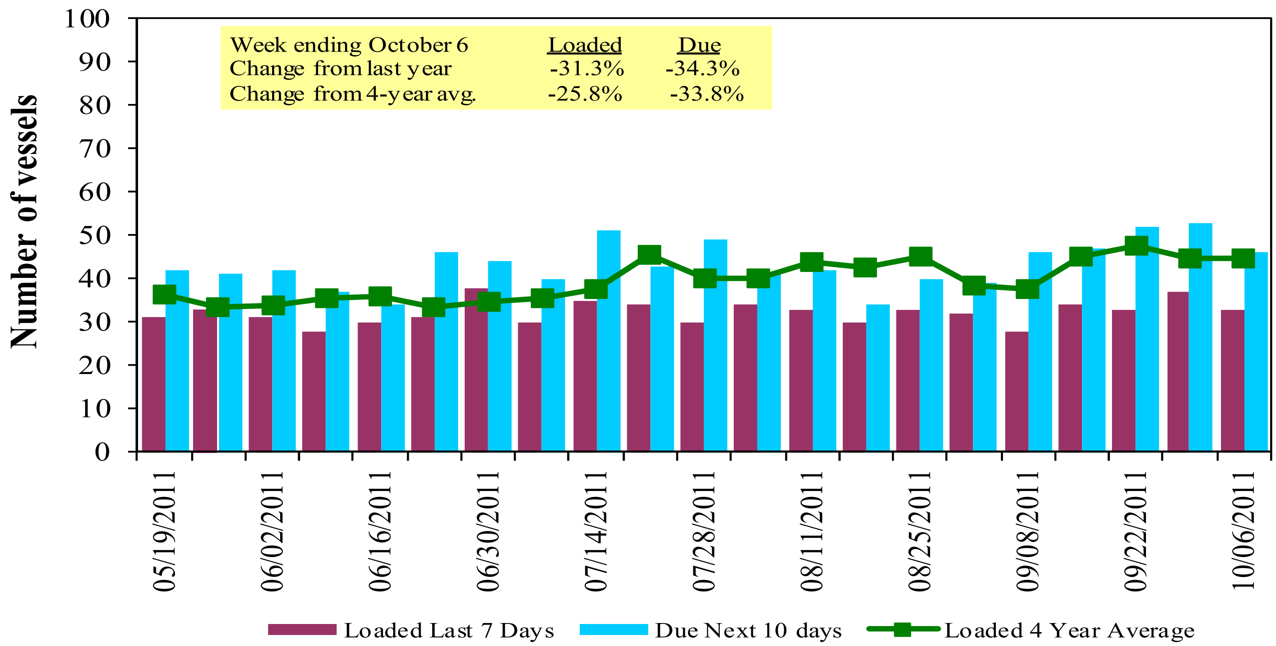
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf In port	Gulf Loaded 7-days	Gulf Due next 10-days	Pacific Northwest In port	Vancouver B.C. In port
10/6/2011	27	33	46	9	n/a
9/29/2011	27	37	53	9	n/a
2010 range	(15..69)	(30..57)	(33..84)	(4..24)	(2..20)
2010 avg.	41	42	58	12	11

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

U.S. Gulf[1] Vessel Loading Activity

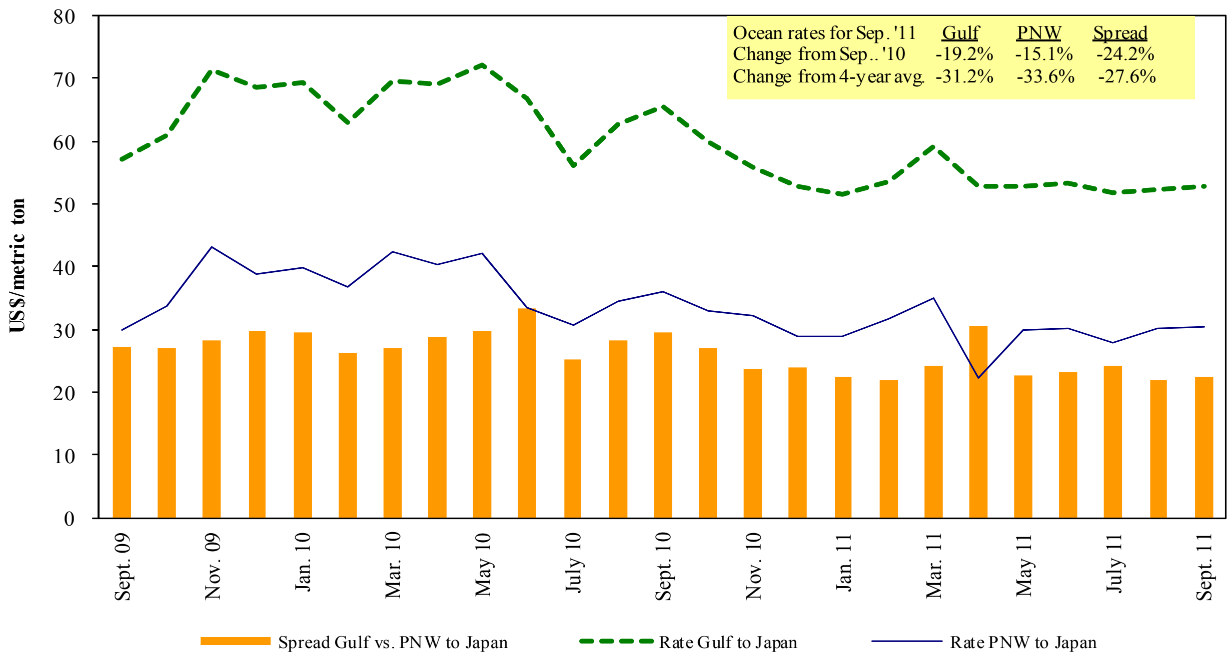


Source:Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

[1]U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.

Figure 17

Grain Vessel Rates, U.S. to Japan



Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean Freight Rates For Selected Shipments, Week Ending 10/08/2011

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 21/30	55,000	52.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 5/10	60,000	59.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Sep 15/30	60,000	54.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Sep 1/10	60,000	48.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 17/Sep 30	60,000	49.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 1/30	55,000	51.00
U.S. Gulf	Egypt	Grain	May 1/10	60,000	28.50
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy Grain	June 1/12	54,000	52.50
U.S. Gulf	Sierra Leone[1]	Wheat	Dec 5/15	16,960	257.90
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 18/27	60,000	49.50
France	Algeria	Wheat	Sep 25/30	25,000	24.50
River Plate	Algeria	Maize	Oct 1/5	25,000	34.50
River Plate	Algeria	Corn	July 15/25	25,000	43.50
River Plate	Algeria	Corn	July 1/10	25,000	42.90
River Plate	Algeria	Corn	June 15/25	25,000	42.75
River Plate	Algeria	Wheat	Aug 18/25	25,000	49.00
South Africa	Taiwan	Corn	Aug 5/15	55,000	31.00

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

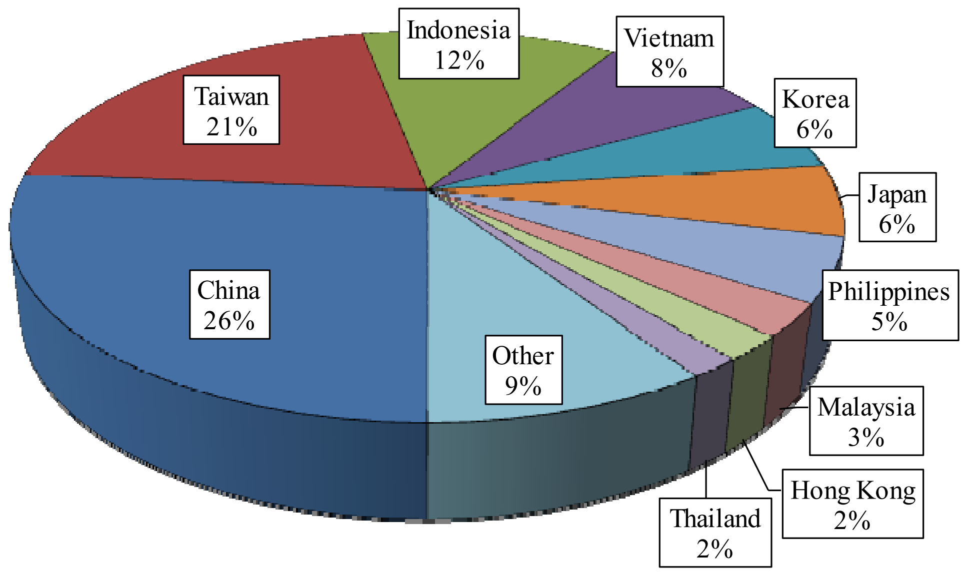
[1]75 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

In 2010, containers were used to transport 5 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, and 7 percent of U.S. grain exports to Asia. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—94 percent in 2010.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, July 2011

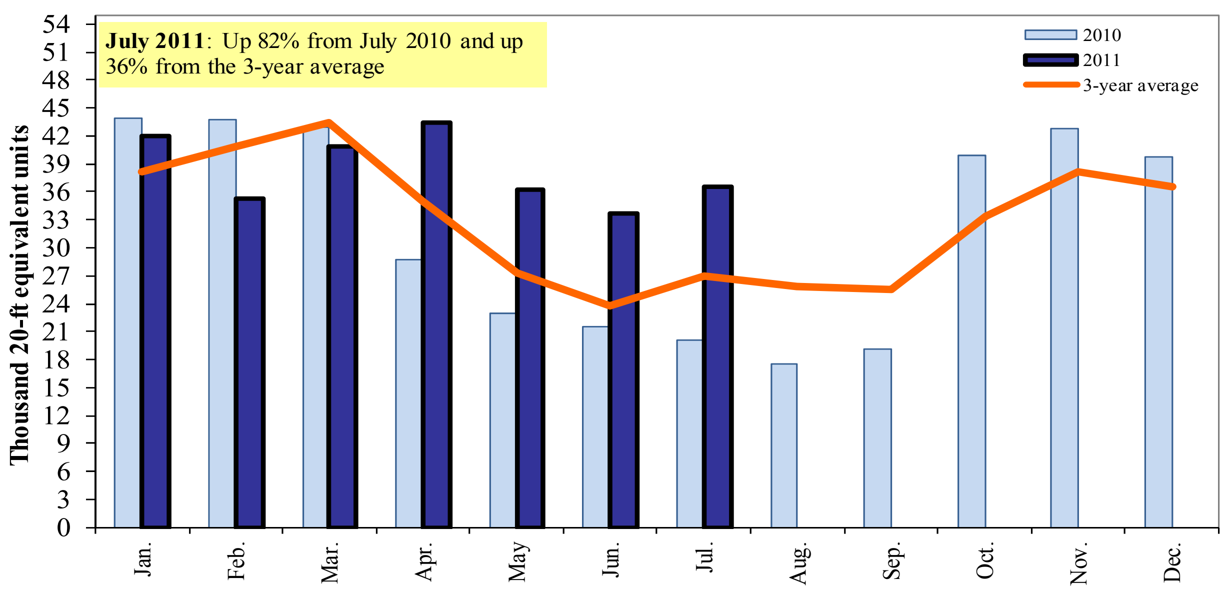


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements (recently added codes are highlighted in bold type): 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 (recently added codes are highlighted in bold type): 100190, 100200, 100300, 100400, 100590, 100700, 110100, 230310, 110220, 110290, 120100, 230210, 230990, **230330**, and **120810**.

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