United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service

www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

Contact Us

January 31, 2019

Contents

The next release is February 7, 2019

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Notice to Our Readers on Incomplete Data

Due to our staff being on furlough because of the recent partial government shutdown, some GTR datasets are incomplete in this week's report. We plan to have all datasets updated, including historical datasets, in next week's report. This week's Table 4 has been modified to include weekly carloading data from the past five weeks, because the data is only distributed in PDF reports Incomplete datasets in this week's report include tables 12, 13, 14 and 15. We appreciate your patience.

Weekly Grain Inspection Down; Total 2018 Inspections Slightly Above 2017

For the week ending January 24, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 2.24 million metric tons (mmt), down 22 percent from the previous week, down 18 percent from last year, and 5 percent below the 3-year average. Inspections of each of the three major grains were down from the previous week, with wheat dropping 31 percent; corn down 21 percent; and soybeans down 18 percent. Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain inspections decreased 13 percent from the previous week, and Mississippi Gulf inspections decreased 18 percent for the same period. Year-to-date grain inspections for the new year are down 9 percent, but corn inspections have remained fairly strong. Last year, annual grain inspections ended the year slightly above 2017 despite a sizeable decrease in soybean inspections.

Illinois River Traffic Hampered by Cold Weather

Historic cold weather throughout the Midwest has caused significant ice accumulations on the Illinois River, making navigation difficult in some locations. As of January 29, American Commercial Barge Line (ACBL) reports that most marine operations on the Illinois River have stopped due to low temperatures and ice buildup. ACBL has observed that the lack of continuous barge traffic on the Illinois River is causing the channels to freeze back over prior to the next towboat arriving through the impacted channels. The Illinois River is typically open most of the winter, except under the most severe conditions. Before the drastic cold temperatures, down-bound grain movements at Illinois River La Grange Lock and Dam were 704 thousand tons for the first 4 weeks of 2019, 10 percent higher than the 5-year average. There have been considerable increases in corn and wheat shipments at La Grange, however, soybean tonnages have decreased.

Ocean Freight Rates Continue Downward Slide

Ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grains have been falling from their 2018 peak levels reached during the beginning of fourth quarter. As of January 24, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain, from the Gulf to Japan, was $41.00 per metric ton compared to $49.75 per mt during October 18, 2018—18 percent less. As of January 24, the cost of shipping, from the PNW to Japan, was $23.00 per metric ton, compared to $27.75 during October 18—17 percent less. Similar trends were observed on the routes from the U.S. Gulf and PNW to China. According to January 24, 2019 Transportation and Export Report by O'Neil Commodity Consulting, the market needs more cargo demand or an increase in vessel scrapings to clear the existing excess vessel supply in the market.

Snapshots by Sector

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 22,913 **grain carloads** for the week ending January 19, down 7 percent from the previous week, 2 percent from last year, and 4 percent from the 3-year average.

Average February shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers per car were $99 below tariff for the week ending January 24, up $5 from last week, and down $294 from last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were $92 above tariff, down $8 from last week. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week last year.

Barge

For the week ending January 26, **barge grain movements** totaled 456,762 tons, 22 percent lower than the previous week and down 14 percent from the same period last year.

For the week ending January 26, 271 grain barges **moved down river**, 81 barges less than the previous week. There were 821 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, 17 percent higher than the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending January 24, 35 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 6 percent more than the same period last year. Fifty-four vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 2 percent less than the same period last year.

For the week ending January 24, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain, from the Gulf to Japan, was $41.00 per metric ton, 5 percent less than the previous week. The cost of shipping, from the PNW to Japan, was $23.00 per metric ton, 2 percent less than the previous week.

Fuel

For the week ending January 28, the **U.S. average diesel fuel price** was unchanged from the previous week at $2.965 per gallon, 10.5 cents below the same week last year.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* January 31, 2019.
Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.01-31-2019**

Feature Article/Calendar

Jan. 31 - Feb. 1	Ohio AgriBusiness Association Industry Conference	Dublin, OH	http://oaba.net/aws/OABA/pt/sp/events_conference
Feb. 1	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Boise, ID	https://agtrans.org/events/workshops/
Feb. 11-16	Wheat Industry Winter Conference	Washington, DC	https://www.wheatworld.org/newsroom/events/
Feb. 12-14	2019 Waterways Council Washington Meeting	Washington, DC	http://waterwayscouncil.org/calendar/
Feb. 17-19	Grain & Feed Association of Illinois Meeting	Schaumburg, IL	http://gfai.org/events/list/
Feb. 19	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Sacramento, CA	https://agtrans.org/events/workshops/
Feb. 20	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Fresno, CA	https://agtrans.org/events/workshops/
Feb. 20-21	Red River Valley Association Annual Convention	Shreveport, LA	http://www.rrva.org/
Feb. 21-22	USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum	Washington, DC	https://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/
Feb. 27-28	37th annual World Trade & Transport Conference	New Orleans, LA	http://mvttc.com/
Feb. 28 - Mar. 2	Wheat 2019 Commodity Classic	Orlanda, FL	https://www.wheatworld.org/newsroom/events/
Mar. 4-6	2019 National Waterways Legislative Summit	Washington, DC	https://waterways.org/2019-legislative-summit/
Mar. 4-6	Minnesota Grain & Feed Association Annual Convention	Bloommington, MN	http://www.mgfa.org/convention-trade-show/convention-info
Mar. 17-19	NGFA 123rd Annual Convention	Amelia Island, FL	https://www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/
April 3-5	Texas Grain & Feed Association	Austin, TX	http://www.tgfa.com
April 3-5	GEAPS 22nd Annual Great Lakes Conference	Sandusky, OH	http://geapsglc.com/
April 15-19	Intl. Assn. of Operative Millers (IAOM) Conference and Expo	Denver, CO	https://www.iaom.info/annualmeeting/
April 22-25	Inland River, Ports & Terminal Annual Conference	Baton Rouge, LA	https://www.irpt.net/
April 24-27	California Grain & Feed Association	Indian Wells, CA	http://www.cgfa.org/events.html
May 2-3	2019 Annual Transportation Research Forum	Washington, DC	http://annualforum.trforum.org/
May 14-16	American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) Purchasing and Ingredient Suppliers Conference	Orlando, FL	http://www.afia.org/
June 11-14	Agriculture Transportation Coalition 31st Annual Meeting	Tacoma, WA	https://agtrans.org/events/
June 19-21	Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Assn.	Whitefish, MT	http://www.pnwgfa.org/
June 23-25	International Oil Mill Supt. Association	St. Louis, MO	https://iomsa.org/
July 11-13	Florida Feed Association Annual Meeting	Longboat Key, FL	https://floridafeed.com

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
01/30/19	199	287	217	257	183	163
01/23/19	199	287	219	250	192	167

[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 Program/AMS/USDA

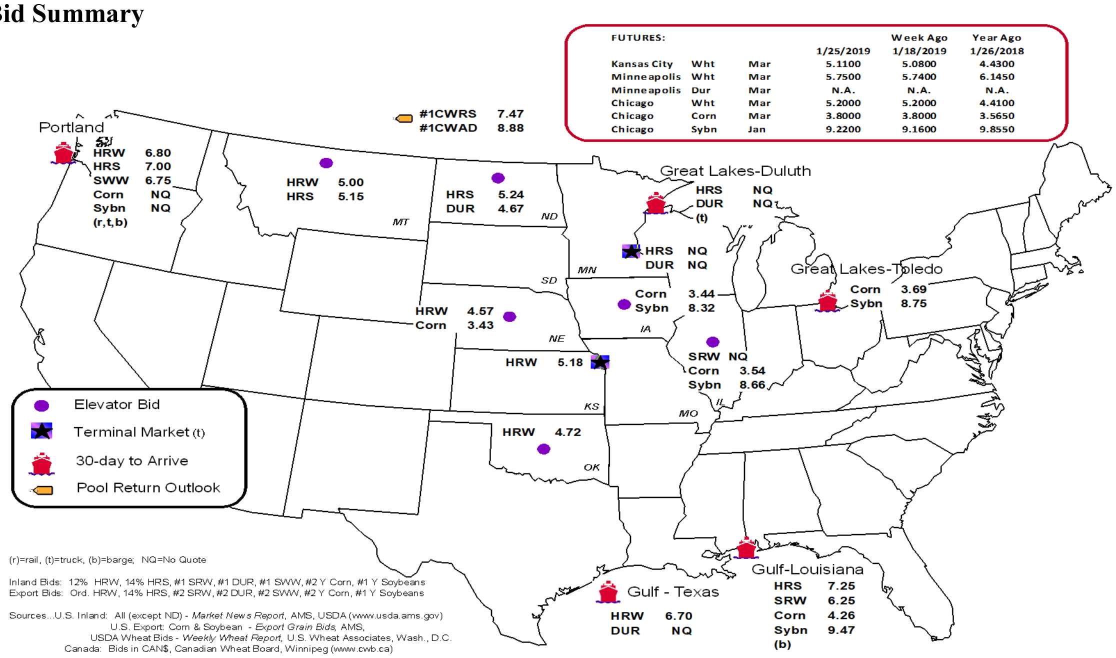
Table 2
Market Update: U.S. Origins to Export Position Price Spreads ($/bushel)

Commodity	Origin--Destination	1/25/2019	1/18/2019
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.72	-0.73
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.83	-0.84
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.15	-1.13
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.52	-1.42
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.76	-1.67

Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available
Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/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]
1/23/2019[p]	641	1,037	4,951	605	7,234	1/19/2019	2,476
1/16/2019[r]	420	605	6,083	582	7,690	1/12/2019	2,556
2019 YTD[r]	1,600	3,177	20,946	1,896	27,619	2019 YTD	8,640
2018 YTD[r]	2,514	5,921	22,832	890	32,157	2018 YTD	6,824
2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	64	54	92	213	86	% change YTD	127
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	64	54	92	213	86	Last 4wks % 2018	127
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	53	55	97	66	83	Last 4wks % 4 yr	130
Total 2018	22,118	46,532	310,449	21,432	400,531	Total 2018	129,116
Total 2017	28,796	75,543	287,267	21,312	412,918	Total 2017	119,661

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2018 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.

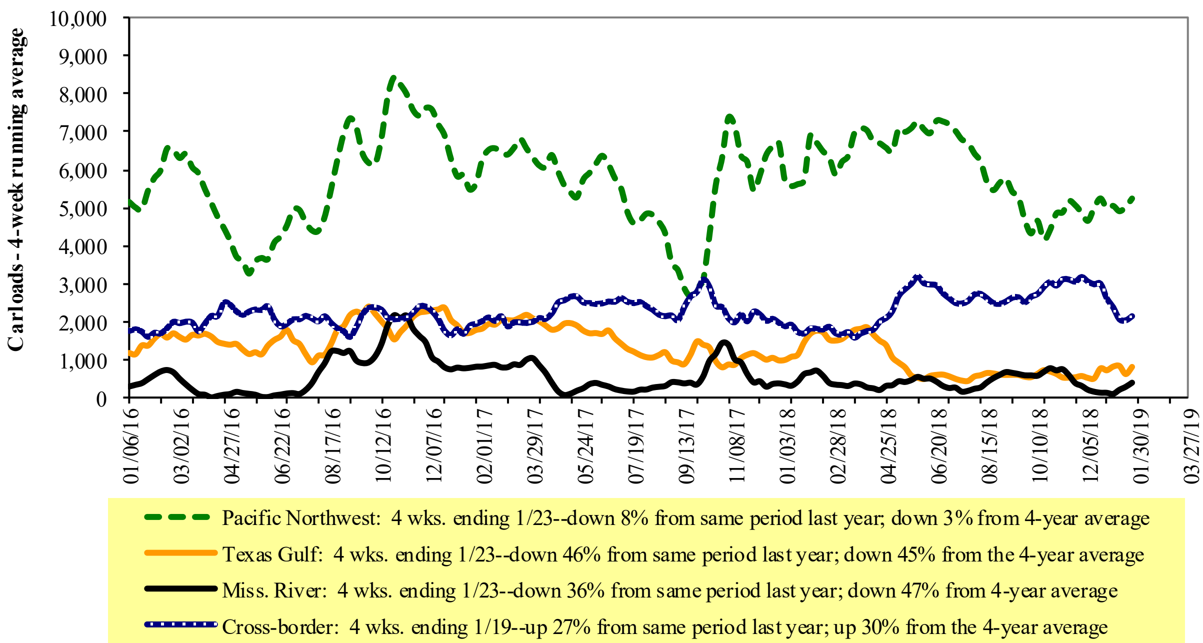
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/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 Program/AMS/USDA

Table 4*

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

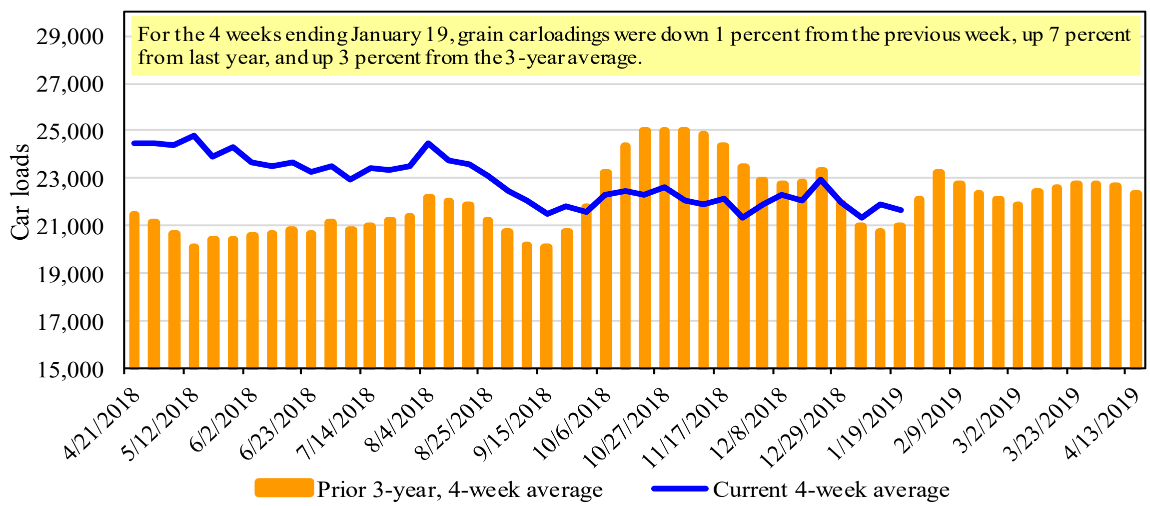
For the week ending:	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
1/19/2019	2,279	2,984	11,281	1,311	5,058	22,913	3,636	5,309
1/12/2019	2,004	3,182	12,337	1,098	6,061	24,682	4,157	3,897
1/5/2019	1,828	2,828	10,438	777	4,635	20,506	3,480	3,824
12/29/2018	1,437	2,689	10,082	535	3,743	18,486	4,142	3,770
12/22/2018	1,834	2,921	12,454	1,160	5,492	23,861	4,174	4,800
12/15/2018	1,328	2,547	12,547	1,143	4,985	22,550	4,020	5,154
2019 YTD	6,111	8,994	34,056	3,186	15,754	68,101	11,273	13,030
Total 2018	98,978	133,140	635,458	48,638	267,713	1,183,927	212,109	244,697

*Modified to include unreported data during the recent partial federal government shutdown.

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: 1/24/2019		Delivery period							
		Feb-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Mar-18	Apr-19	Apr-18	May-19	May-18
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	no bids	0	no bids	no bids	no bids	no bids	no bids	no bids
	COT grain single-car[5]	0	0	0	no bids	0	no bids	0	no bids
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	no offer	10	no bid	10	no offer	no bids	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no offer	10	no bid	10	no offer	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.

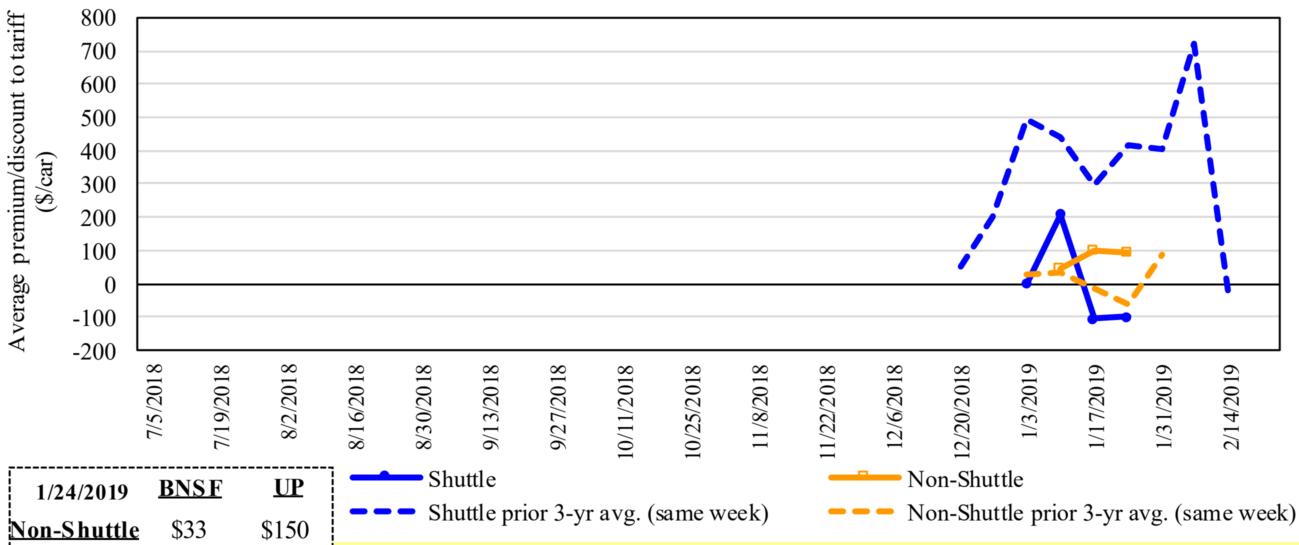
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/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 February 2019, Secondary Market

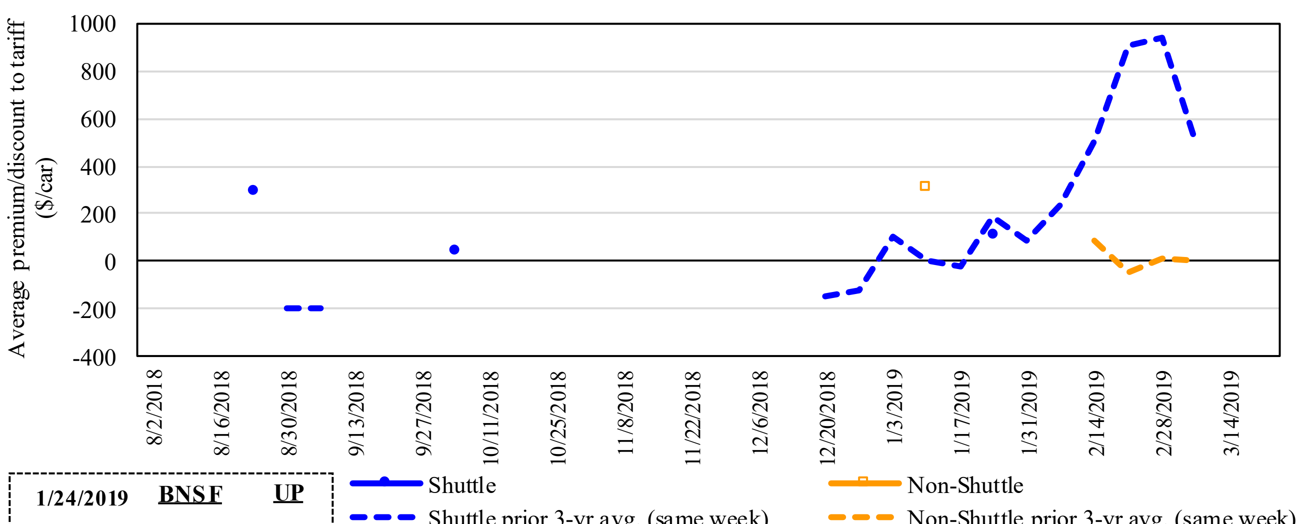


1/24/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$33	$150
Shuttle	$83	-$281

Average Non-shuttle bids/offers fell $8 this week, and are $8 below the peak.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $5 this week and are $307 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

Figure 5
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in March 2019, Secondary Market



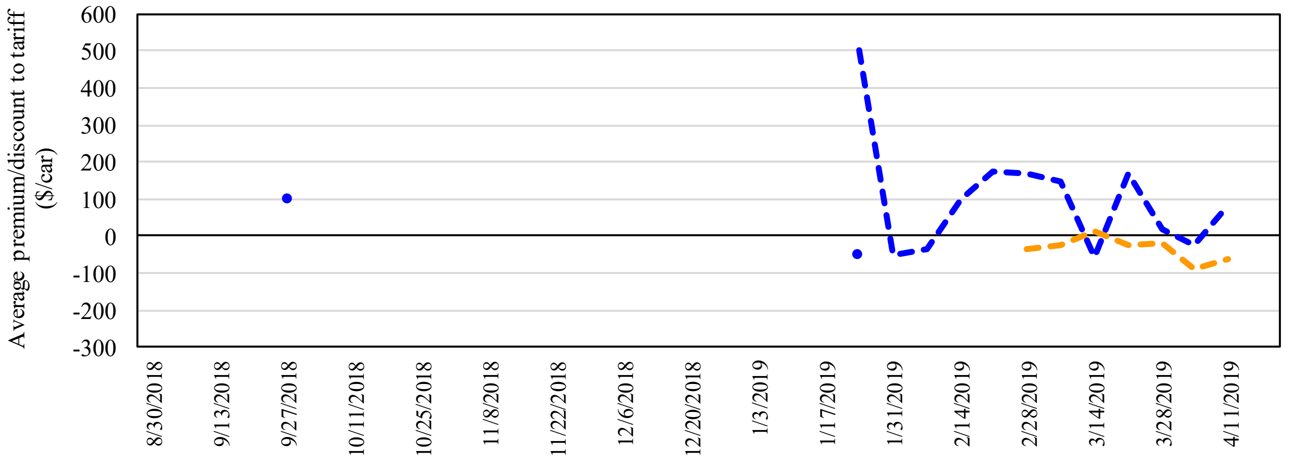
1/24/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$113	n/a

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
There were no Shuttle bids/offers last week. Average Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week are $188 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in April 2019, Secondary Market



1/24/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	-$50	n/a

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
There were no Shuttle bids/offers last week. Average Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week are $150 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

Table 6

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

	For the week ending: 1/24/2019	Delivery period					
		Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19
Non-shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**33**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	33	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**150**	**n/a**	**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 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**83**	**113**	**(50)**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	(34)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(300)	(38)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**(281)**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(287)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	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

Data from James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Source: Transportation and Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

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]

January, 2019	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	$3,983	$127	$40.81	$1.11	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$4,268	$0	$42.38	$1.15	3
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$7,175	$0	$71.25	$1.94	2
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,540	$223	$47.29	$1.29	2
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,911	$0	$68.63	$1.87	2
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,816	$244	$50.25	$1.37	2
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,121	$339	$54.22	$1.48	4
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,000	$252	$42.22	$1.07	4
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,581	$0	$65.35	$1.66	4
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,258	$53	$22.95	$0.58	1
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$5,646	$0	$56.07	$1.42	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$4,704	$0	$46.71	$1.19	4
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,609	$157	$37.39	$0.95	1
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,327	$456	$57.43	$1.46	3
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$4,131	$253	$43.54	$1.18	16
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$5,459	$0	$54.21	$1.48	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$6,698	$0	$66.51	$1.81	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$4,937	$0	$49.03	$1.33	4
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,745	$252	$49.62	$1.35	2
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$4,078	$0	$40.50	$1.10	3
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,296	$0	$42.66	$1.16	3
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$5,896	$0	$58.55	$1.59	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,736	$0	$56.96	$1.55	2
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,056	$0	$60.14	$1.64	2
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$5,912	$400	$62.68	$1.71	4
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,180	$0	$51.44	$1.31	4
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,140	$0	$51.04	$1.30	4
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,800	$252	$40.23	$1.02	4
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,880	$0	$38.53	$0.98	5
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$4,060	$197	$42.27	$1.07	4
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,180	$0	$51.44	$1.31	4
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$5,000	$0	$49.65	$1.26	4
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,750	$0	$57.10	$1.55	3
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,800	$0	$57.60	$1.57	3
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,650	$0	$56.11	$1.53	3
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,775	$290	$50.30	$1.37	2
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,634	$0	$46.02	$1.25	6
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,710	$409	$60.77	$1.65	2

[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

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.csx.com, www.up.com

Table 8

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

Date: January, 2019

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car[1]	Fuel surcharge per car[2]	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton[3]	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[3]	Percent change[4] Y/Y
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,284	$0	$74.43	$2.02	-2
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,743	$174	$70.68	$1.92	2
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,371	$414	$79.54	$2.16	3
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,329	$106	$45.32	$1.23	2
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,528	$385	$91.06	$2.31	4
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,880	$0	$80.51	$2.04	2
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,207	$364	$87.57	$2.22	4
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,905	$0	$70.55	$1.79	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,573	$355	$81.00	$2.06	4
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,480	$0	$76.43	$1.94	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,284	$356	$88.28	$2.40	3
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$8,842	$388	$94.30	$2.56	3
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,110	$0	$93.08	$2.53	2
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,714	$289	$81.77	$2.22	4
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,527	$357	$80.55	$2.04	4
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$8,000	$218	$83.96	$2.13	3
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,633	$175	$69.55	$1.77	4
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,962	$277	$73.97	$1.88	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

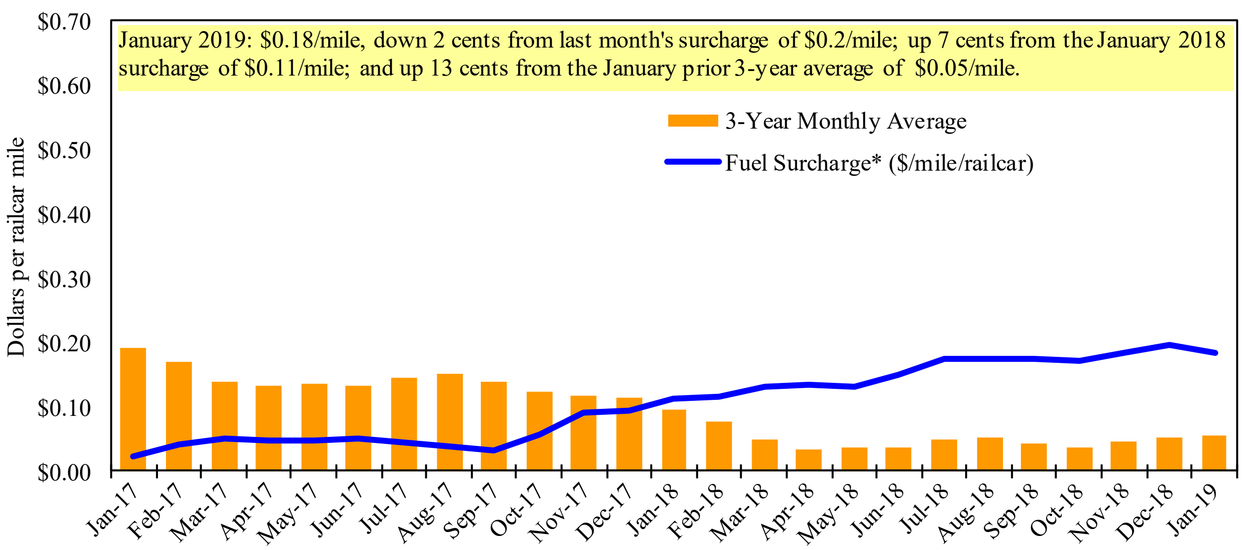
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

[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]

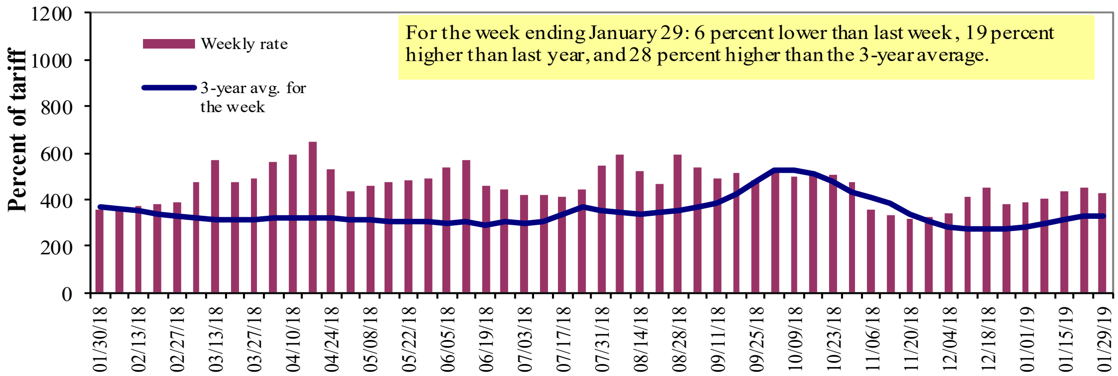


[1] Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.
* Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.
**CSX strike price changed from $2.00/gal. to $3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.
Sources: 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 Program/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]	1/29/2019	-	-	425	345	363	363	333
	1/22/2019	-	-	450	355	400	408	350
$/ton	1/29/2019	-	-	19.72	13.77	17.02	14.67	10.46
	1/22/2019	-	-	20.88	14.16	18.76	16.48	10.99
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-	19	20	18	18	58
	3-year avg. [2]	-	-	28	47	41	41	74
Rate[1]	February	-	-	425	303	355	355	313
	April	418	385	388	278	313	313	310

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/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.

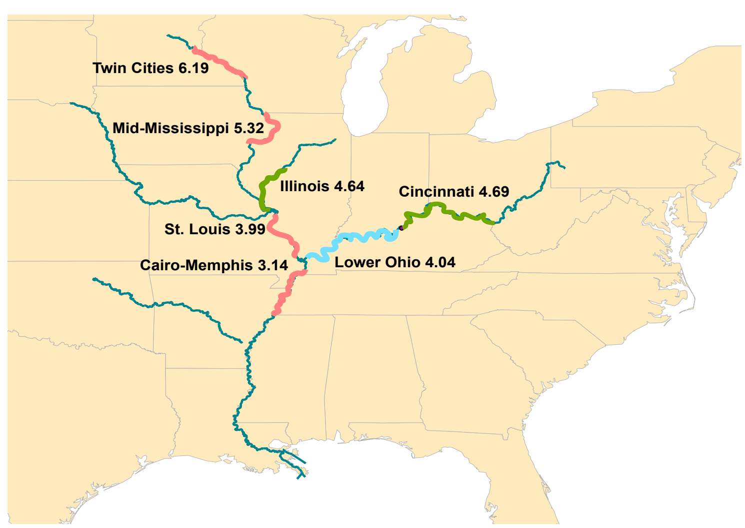
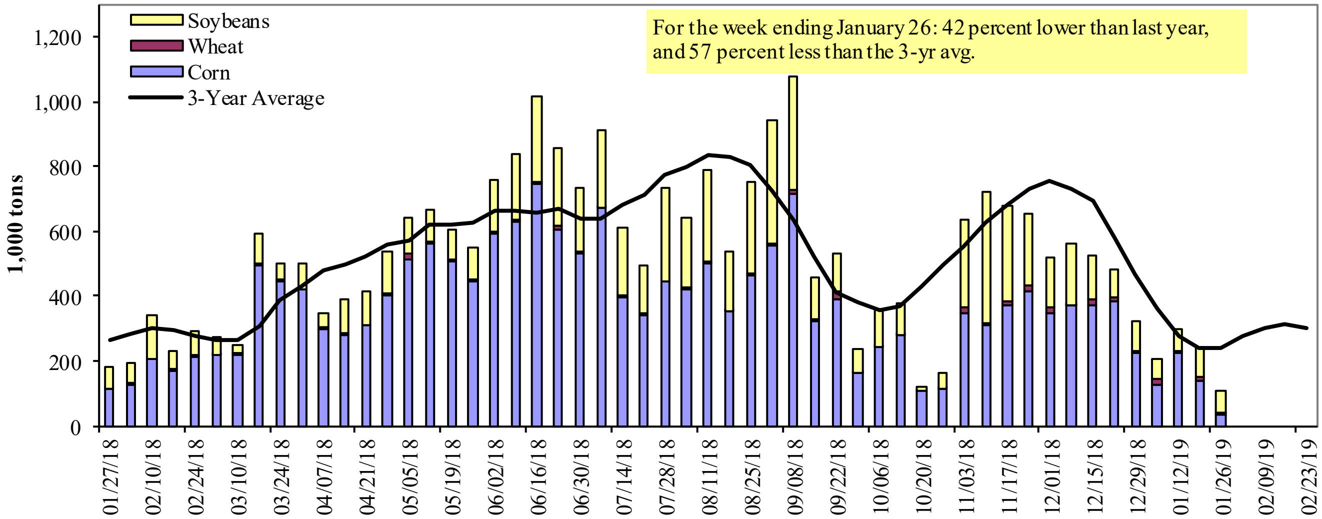


Figure 10

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 01/26/2019	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	0	0	0	0	0
Alton, IL (L26)	42	6	69	0	117
Granite City, IL (L27)	36	6	63	0	104
Illinois River (L8)	58	2	76	0	135
Ohio River (OLMSTED)	161	28	142	5	337
Arkansas River (L1)	0	6	10	0	16
Weekly total - 2019	197	40	214	5	457
Weekly total - 2018	189	11	327	4	531
2019 YTD[1]	950	149	866	7	1,972
2018 YTD[1]	554	63	904	4	1,524
2019 as % of 2018 YTD	171	238	96	196	129
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	171	238	96	196	129
Total 2018	23,349	1,674	12,819	133	37,975

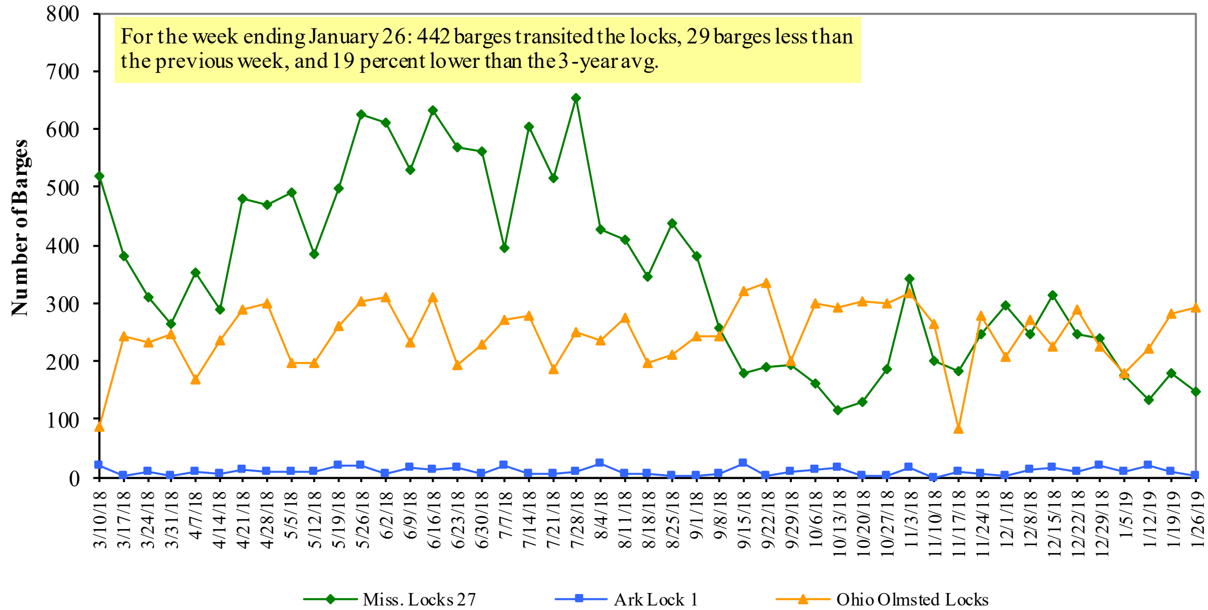
[1] Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/OLMSTED, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

[2] As a percent of same period in 2018.

Note: 1. Total may not add exactly, due to rounding.
2. Starting from 11/24/2018, weekly movement through Ohio 52 is replaced by Olmsted.

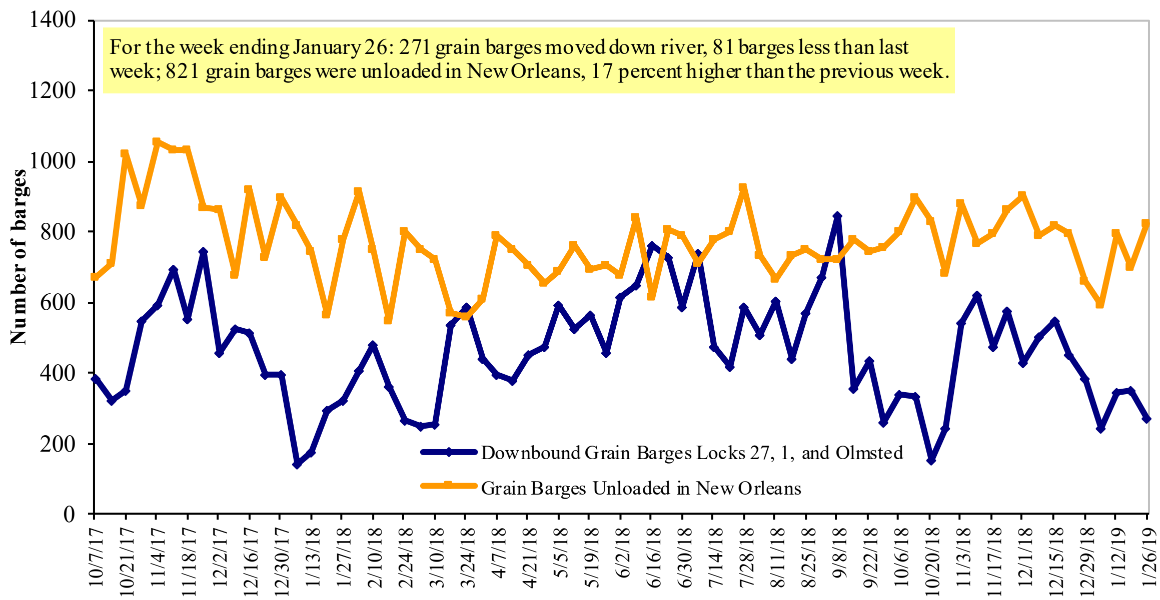
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam



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.

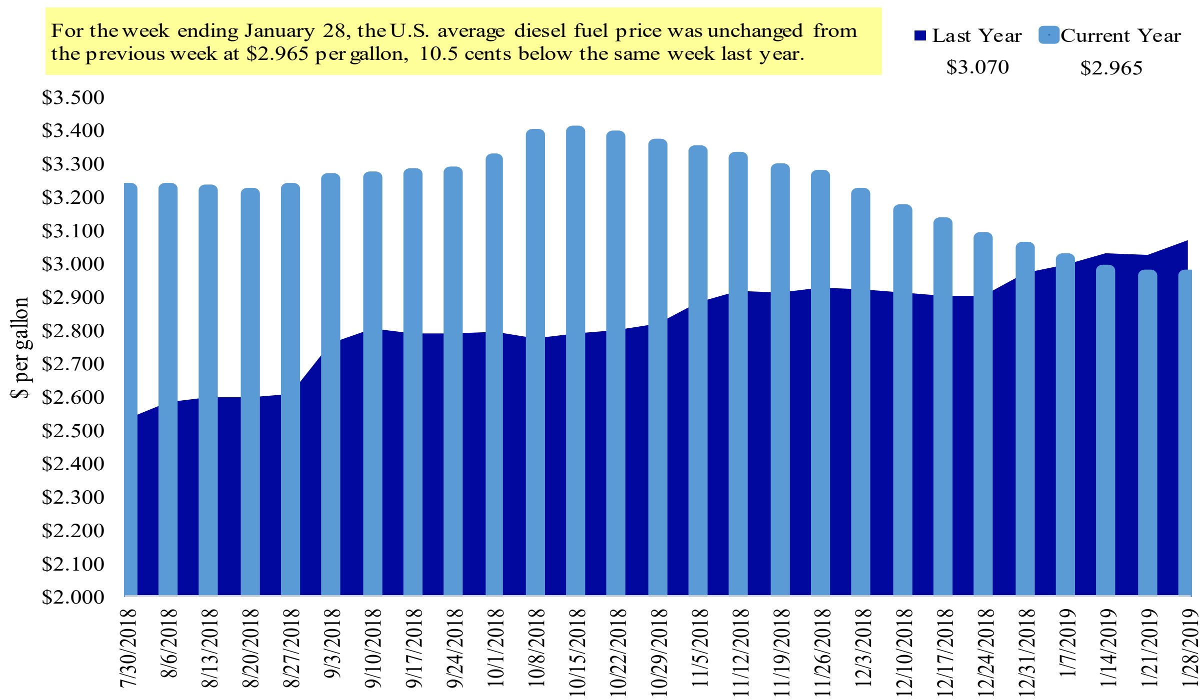
Table 11
Retail on-Highway Diesel Prices, Week Ending 1/28/2019 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.050	0.013	-0.062
	New England	3.188	-0.003	0.028
	Central Atlantic	3.237	0.022	-0.069
	Lower Atlantic	2.893	0.009	-0.075
II	Midwest	2.806	-0.001	-0.224
III	Gulf Coast	2.789	-0.001	-0.079
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.911	-0.033	-0.056
V	West Coast	3.448	-0.015	0.014
	West Coast less California	3.099	-0.016	-0.021
	California	3.726	-0.013	0.043
Total	U.S.	2.965	0.000	-0.105

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

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

Figure 13
Weekly Diesel Fuel Prices, U.S. Average



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

Grain Exports

Table 12

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

For the week ending	Wheat HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
1/17/2019	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
This week year ago	2,038	726	1,456	1,099	58	5,378	17,687	11,163	34,228
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2018/19 YTD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2017/18 YTD	6,025	1,325	3,805	3,375	214	14,744	12,765	32,073	59,582
YTD 2018/19 as % of 2017/18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2017/18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2017/18 Total	9,150	2,343	5,689	4,854	384	22,419	57,209	56,214	135,842
2016/17 Total	11,096	2,285	7,923	4,254	484	26,042	41,864	51,156	119,062

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

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

* N/A indicates a missing value due to the recent partial federal government shutdown

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 1/17/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Current MY	2017/18 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			
Mexico	n/a*	9,938	n/a	13,691
Japan	n/a	5,058	n/a	11,247
Korea	n/a	1,492	n/a	4,754
Colombia	n/a	2,173	n/a	4,678
Peru	n/a	1,841	n/a	2,975
Top 5 Importers	n/a	**20,502**	n/a	**37,344**
Total US corn export sales	**n/a**	**30,401**	**n/a**	**53,184**
% of Projected	n/a	62%		
Change from prior week[2]	**n/a**	**1,446**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	n/a	67%		70%
USDA forecast, January 2019	**n/a**	**48,982**	**n/a**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, January 2019	**n/a**	**140,335**	**n/a**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2017/18 - 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

*n/a indicates a missing value due to the recent partial federal government shutdown

Table 14

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

For the week ending 1/17/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Current MY	2017/18 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg. 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	n/a*	25,784	n/a	31,228
Mexico	n/a	2,451	n/a	3,716
Indonesia	n/a	1,086	n/a	2,250
Japan	n/a	1,319	n/a	2,145
Netherlands	n/a	756	n/a	2,209
Top 5 importers	n/a	**31,396**	**n/a**	**41,549**
Total US soybean export sales	**n/a**	**43,236**	**n/a**	**55,113**
% of Projected	n/a	73%		
Change from prior week[2]	**n/a**	**616**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	n/a	73%		**75%**
USDA forecast, January, 2019	**n/a**	**58,856**	**n/a**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2017/18 - 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)

*n/a indicates a missing value due to the recent partial federal government shutdown

Table 15

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

For the week ending 1/17/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Current MY	2017/18 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Mexico	n/a*	2,430	n/a	2,781
Japan	n/a	2,284	n/a	2,649
Philippines	n/a	2,220	n/a	2,441
Korea	n/a	1,316	n/a	1,257
Nigeria	n/a	1,016	n/a	1,254
Indonesia	n/a	1,002	n/a	1,076
Taiwan	n/a	929	n/a	1,066
China	n/a	817	n/a	944
Colombia	n/a	520	n/a	714
Thailand	n/a	630	n/a	618
Top 10 importers	**n/a**	**13,164**	n/a	**14,800**
Total US wheat export sales	**n/a**	**20,122**	**n/a**	**22,869**
% of Projected	n/a	76%		
Change from prior week[2]	**n/a**	**853**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	n/a	65%		65%
USDA forecast, January 2019	**n/a**	**26,567**	**n/a**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2017/18 - 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.

* n/a indicates a missing value due to the recent partial federal government shutdown

Table 16

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

Port Regions	For the Week Ending 01/24/19	Previous Week*	Current Week as % of Previous	2019 YTD*	2018 YTD*	2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last Year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	2018 Total*
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	203	226	90	788	905	87	87	96	13,315
Corn	258	300	86	882	727	121	121	150	20,024
Soybeans	247	289	86	748	1,246	60	60	58	7,719
Total	**708**	**814**	**87**	**2,418**	**2,878**	**84**	**84**	**89**	**41,058**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	88	149	59	312	290	107	107	137	3,896
Corn	502	609	82	1,742	1,567	111	111	102	33,735
Soybeans	615	704	87	2,324	2,870	81	81	70	28,124
Total	**1,205**	**1,462**	**82**	**4,378**	**4,727**	**93**	**93**	**83**	**65,755**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	65	123	53	292	279	105	105	128	3,198
Corn	0	33	0	33	31	106	106	55	730
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	69
Total	**65**	**156**	**42**	**325**	**310**	**105**	**105**	**105**	**3,997**
Interior									
Wheat	25	55	46	140	92	153	153	124	1,614
Corn	117	159	74	487	491	99	99	110	8,650
Soybeans	105	134	78	364	408	89	89	100	6,729
Total	**248**	**348**	**71**	**991**	**991**	**100**	**100**	**108**	**16,993**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	11	19	58	58	174	894
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	404
Soybeans	0	14	0	22	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,192
Total	**0**	**14**	**0**	**33**	**19**	**173**	**173**	**520**	**2,491**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	69
Corn	0	7	0	14	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	138
Soybeans	11	50	22	108	148	73	73	41	2,047
Total	**11**	**57**	**19**	**122**	**148**	**82**	**82**	**45**	**2,253**
U.S. total from ports*									
Wheat	381	553	69	1,544	1,585	97	97	109	22,986
Corn	877	1,107	79	3,158	2,816	112	112	113	63,682
Soybeans	978	1,191	82	3,566	4,672	76	76	68	45,879
Total	**2,237**	**2,851**	**78**	**8,268**	**9,073**	**91**	**91**	**87**	**132,547**

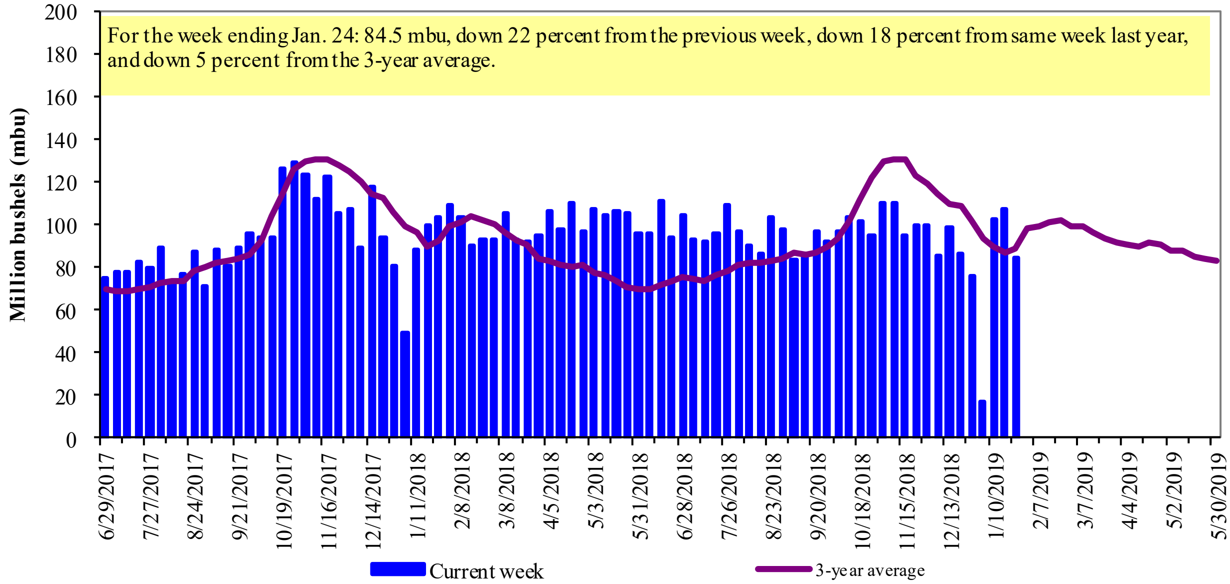
*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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

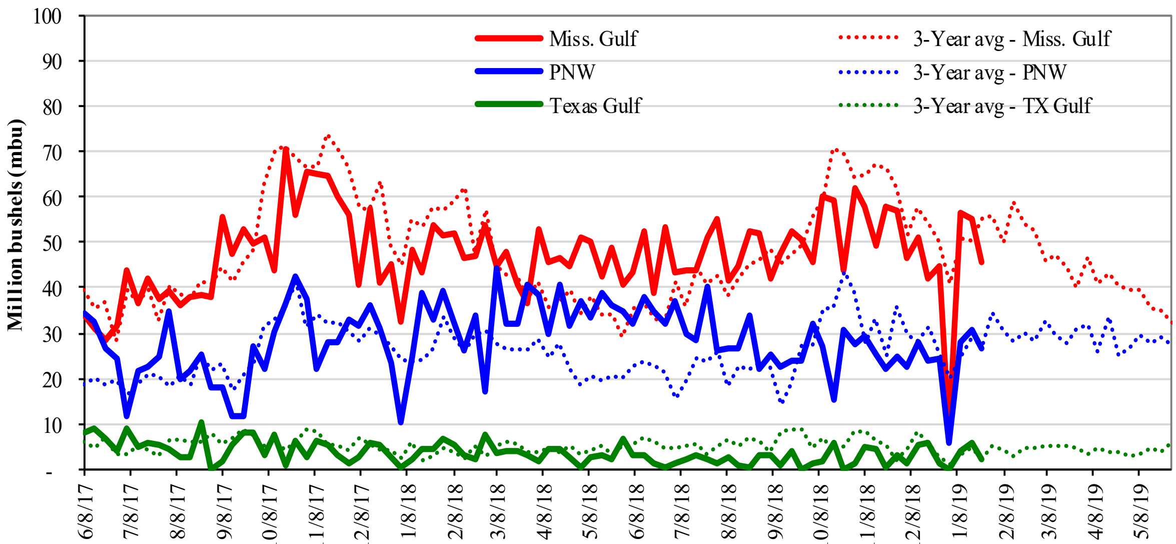
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



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 01/24/19 inspections (mbu):		Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf:	45.6	Last Week:	down 18	down 59	down 22	down 13
PNW:	26.7	Last Year (same week):	down 16	down 46	down 18	down 19
Texas Gulf:	2.4	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 8	down 17	down 8	up 6

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

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

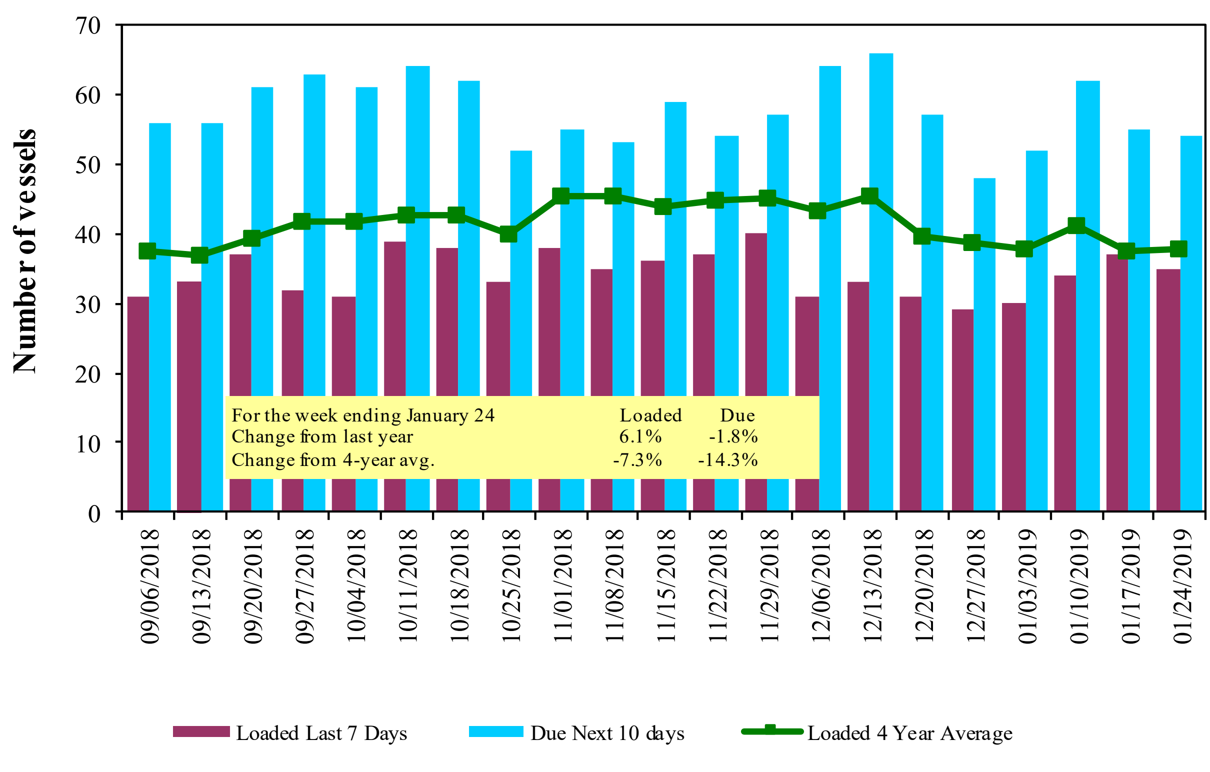
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port
1/24/2019	44	35	54	8
1/17/2019	49	37	55	10
2018 range	(23..88)	(24..41)	(38..67)	(4..30)
2018 avg.	40	34	54	17

Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

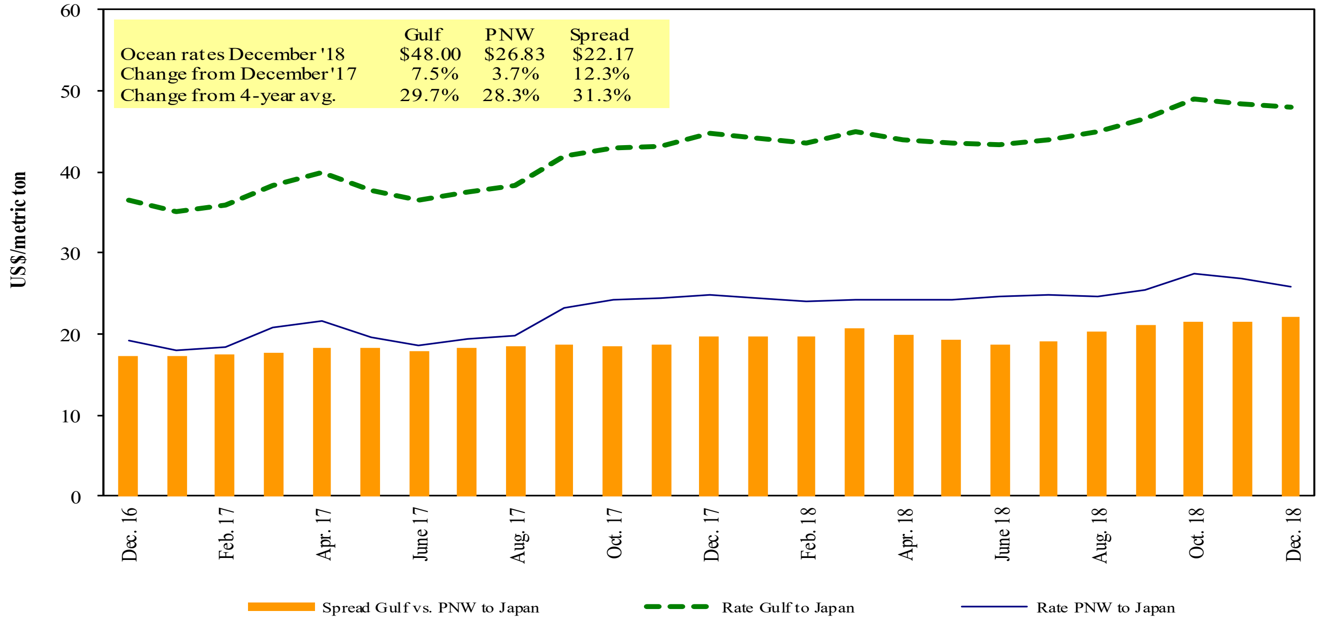
U.S. Gulf Vessel Loading Activity



Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/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 01/19/2019

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti	Wheat	Dec 27/Jan 7	9,800	113.11*
U.S. Gulf	Pt. Sudan	Sorghum	Dec 7/17	30,430	71.88*
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti	Wheat	Nov 2/12	21,470	85.44*
PNW	Taiwan	Heavy Grain	Sep 15/Oct 31	63,000	25.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jan 22/30	60,000	29.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 15/20	60,000	37.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 1/10	60,000	36.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 20/30	60,000	38.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 1/10	60,000	34.00
Brazil	S.Korea	Heavy Grain	Nov 5/10	66,000	43.00

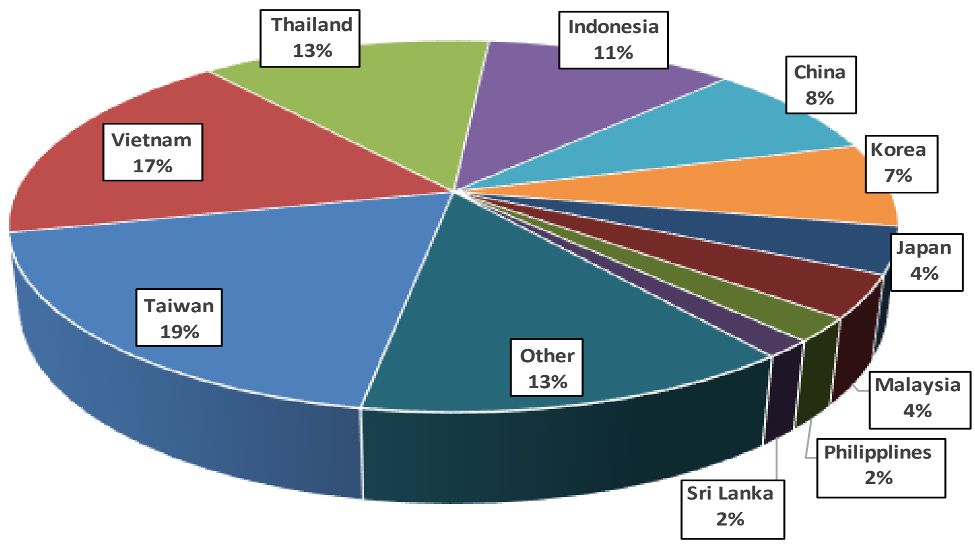
Rates shown are per metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicated; op = option

*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.

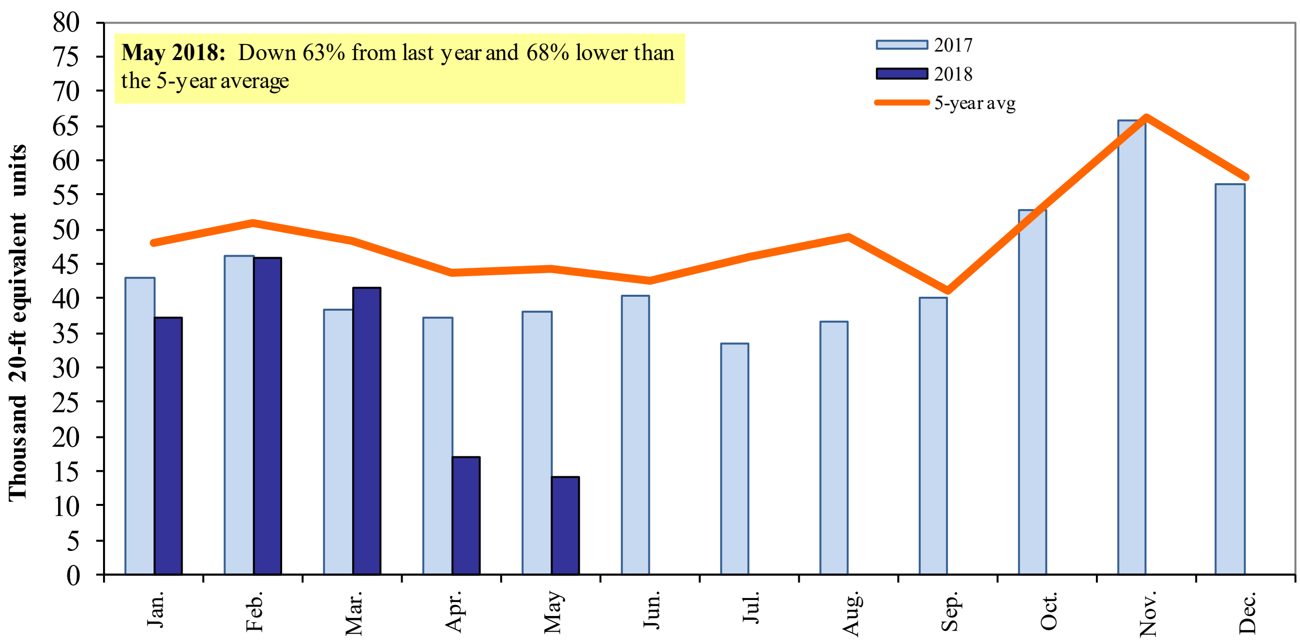
Figure 18
Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, January-May 2018



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
Kuo-Liang (Matt) Chang	matt.chang@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 0992
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		
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
Kuo-Liang (Matt) Chang	matt.chang@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Truck Transportation		
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
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.* January 31, 2019. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.01-31-2019**