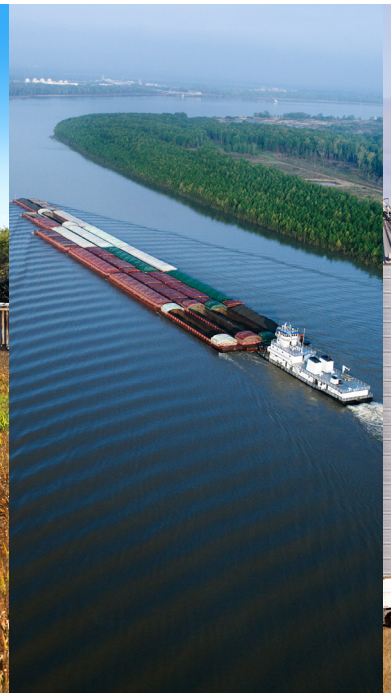
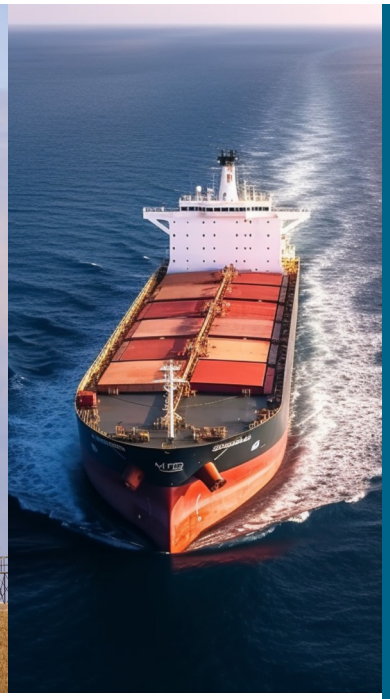
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Grain Transportation Report

Contents

February 8, 2024
A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service
www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

New Hopper Barge Deliveries Rise in 2023 After 2-Year Slide. According to the *River Transportation News's* (RTN) annual survey of new hopper barge construction (January 22 issue), 318 new jumbo hopper barges were delivered in 2023. This number was up 41 percent from 2022 deliveries—but well below pre-2017 levels. Because of high steel prices, carriers' demand for new hopper barges in 2022 lagged what it had been for the past 2 years.

Heartland Barge Management received 38 percent of the new hopper barges, more than double the share of the next closest company. Arcosa Marine produced 62 percent of the new hopper barges, while Heartland Fabrication, Heartland Barge Management's shipyard affiliate, produced the other 38 percent.

By RTN's January 22 issue, the publication had not yet received sufficient responses about numbers of barges scrapped to determine the effect of scrapped barges on total barge supply.

Diesel Price Rises for 2 Consecutive Weeks. For the week ending February 5, the U.S. average diesel fuel price increased 3.2 cents from the previous week to $3.899 per gallon, 64.0 cents below the same week last year. Prices have risen in 4 of the past 7 weeks, and the latest increase marks the third this year. However, despite the 6.1-cent increase in the last 2 weeks, the net change in diesel price since the week ending January 1 has been only a 2.3-cent rise per gallon.

According to the Energy Information Administration's (EIA) February *Short-Term Energy Outlook*, retail on-highway diesel prices per gallon are expected to average $3.92 in 2024—down 29 cents from 2023 and unchanged from EIA's January forecast.

USDA Examines U.S. and Brazilian Competitiveness in Soybean Market. A new report from USDA's Economic Research Service analyzes factors—including transportation—that affect the overall competitiveness of Brazil and the United States in the global soybean market.

According to the research, the U.S. Heartland was the lowest-cost exporter of soybeans. Paraná in Brazil was the next-lowest-cost exporting region, mainly owing to its proximity to a port and low internal transport costs. The report noted that Brazil's major transportation-infrastructure improvements have significantly enhanced the country's competitiveness, even though Brazil's inland transport costs have continued to exceed those of the United States.

The report found that, overall, allocated overhead costs—including land costs—were lower for Brazilian than U.S. producers. However, in the regions studied, the United States had higher yields per acre than Brazil: yields were particularly high in the U.S. Heartland region, which helped offset the higher per acre land costs.

DOT Awards $292 Million in Grants for Truck Parking Projects. On January 25, the Department of Transportation (DOT) announced the award of $292 million in Federal funding for truck parking projects in several States, as part of discretionary grant programs. This latest funding adds to the $80 million in Federal grants for truck parking awarded in September 2023. According to the Federal Highway Administration, truck parking shortages are still a major problem in every State.

Two projects awarded in Wisconsin and Missouri are relevant to grain transportation. The Missouri DOT received $92 million to upgrade parking facilities and information systems along I-70. The Wisconsin DOT received $8 million to reconstruct a rest area along I-90, expanding the site's number of parking spots from 16 to 70. In a 2020, joint USDA/DOT report—*The Importance of Highways to U.S. Agriculture*—I-70 and I-90 were identified as critical grain freight corridors.

Export Sales

For the week ending January 25, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans for marketing year (MY) 2023/24 totaled 34.33 million metric tons (mmt), down 1 percent from last week and up 19 percent from the same time last year.

Net **corn export sales** for MY 2023/24 were 1.207 mmt, up 26 percent from last week. Net **soybean export sales** were 0.165 mmt, down 71 percent from last week. Net weekly **wheat export sales** were 0.323 mmt, down 29 percent from last week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 25,135 **grain carloads** during the week ending January 27. This was a 32-percent increase from the previous week, 11 percent fewer than last year, and 13 percent fewer than the 3-year average.

Average February **shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers** (per car) were $584 above tariff for the week ending February 1. This was $72 more than last week and $819 more than this week last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were $738 above tariff. This was $313 more than last week and $613 more than this week last year.

Barge

For the week ending February 3, **barged grain movements** totaled 597,900 tons. This was 75 percent more than the previous week and 5 percent more than the same period last year.

For the week ending February 3, 413 grain barges **moved down river**—180 more than last week. There were 773 grain barges **unloaded** in the New Orleans region, 63 percent more than last week.

Ocean

For the week ending February 1, 26 **oceangoing grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf—unchanged from the same period last year. Within the next 10 days (starting February 2), 45 vessels were expected to be loaded—4 percent fewer than the same period last year.

As of February 1, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was $58.50. This was 1 percent less than the previous week. The rate from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $31.50 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

GTR Expands Its Rail Service Data for New Insights

Rail service metrics are an important reflection of how well railroads are meeting shippers' transportation needs. In recent years, railroads struggled with severe service issues that posed major challenges for grain shippers and policymakers. In response, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) has taken steps to define and collect data on a variety of service metrics to help illuminate where specific problems may be occurring.

This article highlights new *Grain Transportation Report* (*GTR*) content related to rail service. New **GTR tables 4a** and **4b** contain average speeds for grain trains and various grain car order fulfillment metrics. New **GTR figure 4** displays average monthly shuttle turns for western Class I railroads. Although new to the *GTR*, this data has been featured since July 2021 on the "**Agricultural Rail Service Metrics Dashboard**" on USDA's Agricultural Transportation Open Data Platform, **AgTransport**.

Background: STB's Efforts To Collect Rail Service Data

In response to acute service problems in 2014, STB held public hearings and—beginning in October 2014—ordered each Class I railroad to temporarily submit a set of weekly service metrics. These metrics included train speeds, dwell times, and order fulfillment. In 2017, STB added more metrics (e.g., commodity carloads and the number of monthly grain trains) and made the railroads' data submission a permanent requirement. In 2022, in the midst of poor rail service, STB held a hearing in April on "urgent issues in freight rail service" and then expanded its rail performance data by temporarily requiring weekly submission of first-mile/last-mile service metrics and monthly railroad employment levels (**GTR, May 19, 2022**).[1]

Besides expanding data collection, STB took two other recent actions to improve rail service. On September 7, 2023, STB proposed a new rule on reciprocal switching to remedy inadequate rail service (**GTR, November 16, 2023**). On January 24, STB finalized changes to its regulations on expedited relief for service emergencies (**GTR, January 25, 2024, third highlight**). The final rule streamlines shippers' application process and accelerates procedures for acute service emergencies (such as a clear and present threat to food security).

New Rail Service Elements in the GTR

The new GTR content displays several STB grain service measures. **GTR table 4a** displays statistics related to grain shipment times, and **GTR table 4b** shows statistics on how well each of the 7 Class I railroads are fulfilling orders for grain cars.[2]

These tables display metrics for the current week, an average of the last 4 weeks, and an average for the same 4 week-period last year. Comparing the current week to the average of the last 4 weeks provides an indicator of service issues as they arise. Another benchmark—the current week compared to service in the same period last year—can take into account a longer term perspective and rail service's seasonality (for example, the typically slow winter season). Thus, a year-to-year comparison serves as a useful apples-to-apples indicator, revealing whether service is unusually bad (or good) for that time of the year.

GTR figure 4 displays average monthly shuttle turns over the prior 18 months. The values are averaged over the Class I railroads that operate grain shuttle train programs—BNSF Railway,

1 STB collected additional service data through the end of 2023—and extended the monthly employment data requirement through the end of 2024.
2 Although Canadian Pacific (CP) and Kansas City Southern (KCS) have merged to form CPKC, the service metrics are reported for two legacy networks that correspond to the old nomenclature (CP and KCS).

Union Pacific Railroad, and CPKC. Values are shown for the system level, as well as by region. Regions vary by railroad, but in general, they include the major export corridors (U.S. Gulf, Pacific Northwest, and Mexico), as well as domestic movements—primarily, to livestock feeding operations in Southwestern States.

Train Speeds. GTR table 4a contains two dimensions of a grain shipment's total travel time—grain unit origin dwell times (measured in hours) and grain unit train speeds (measured in miles per hour). Origin dwell time measures how long a railroad takes to "pick up" a grain unit train after it has been loaded at the origin elevator and released to the railroad for departure. Once the unit train has been picked up, grain unit train speeds measure the speed over the line-haul movement. STB collects both metrics as a weekly average by railroad for a railroad's whole system.[3]

Smaller grain shipments (e.g., single cars and small car sets) are shipped in manifest service (i.e., part of a train with mixed commodities and car-types). For manifest trains and other train types (e.g., intermodal trains and ethanol unit trains), STB collects system average train speeds (measured in miles per hour) and terminal dwell times (i.e., the average time, in hours, a car resides at a specified terminal in the rail network). These data are not included in the GTR, but are available on **AgTransport**.

Delays and Order Fulfillment. GTR table 4b's metrics capture aspects of degraded service. The first two metrics are the weekly average number (by railroad) of empty and loaded grain cars not moved in over 48 hours. Sometimes, an empty or loaded grain car that has not moved within 48 hours represents a railroad's deliberate strategy to maintain a shipment's predetermined schedule. However, a large uptick in grain cars not moved—especially, those inactive for more than 48 hours—can signify service degradation and bottlenecks within the network.

Another measurement signaling a disruption in rail service is the weekly total number of grain unit trains held (i.e., a snapshot of trains not moving). Trains can be held because of insufficient crew, a lack of locomotive power, and other reasons (e.g., congestion). GTR table 4b shows only the total number of grain trains held. (Causes for train holding are available on **AgTransport**.)

The last metric in the table is the number of unfilled orders for empty grain cars in manifest service. For a given number of orders placed, some may go unfilled because, for instance, congestion on the line may reduce the number of empty car deliveries. Also, in response to poor rail performance, shippers may place more car orders than they typically would, to get the throughput they need. These extra orders could further increase the excess of cars ordered over those delivered.

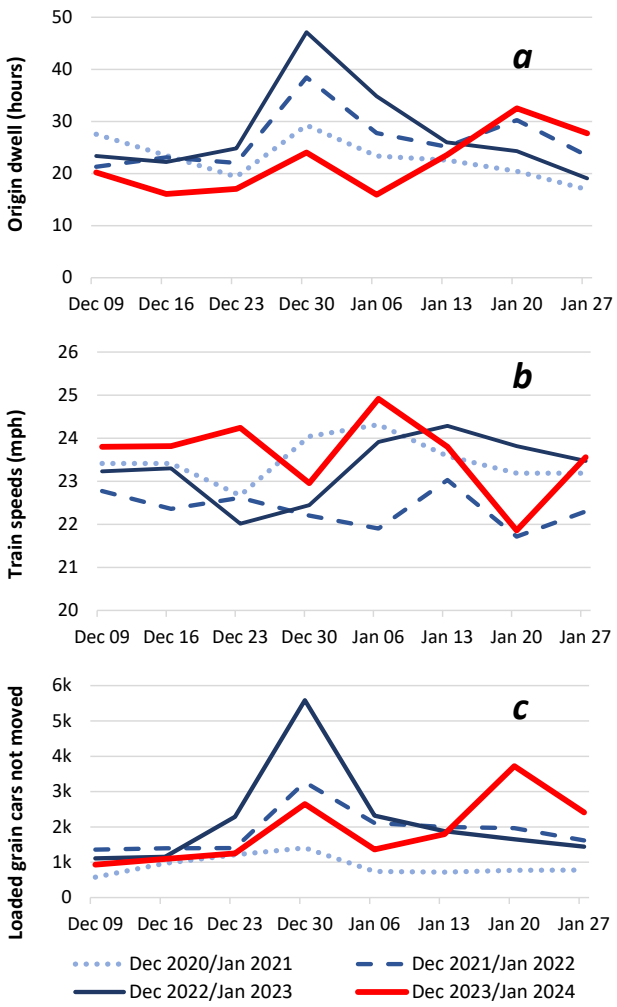
Shuttle Turns. Made up of a large group of grain cars, typically 75 or more, shuttle trains move as a single unit from an origin to a destination. As shown in the new GTR figure 4, a "shuttle turn" refers to the number of trips completed per month by a single grain shuttle train. Rail service disruptions (e.g., track congestion, lack of sufficient power, labor shortages, etc.) are reflected in this metric because they slow shuttle trains and reduce the total number trips a shuttle train can complete.

Because shuttle turns reliably reflect service conditions, they are a key indicator for shippers in the secondary rail market who buy and sell shuttle trains for future use (usually, a single trip or packages of multiple trips). When turns are higher than expected, shippers with a shuttle contract tend to have excess carloads.

Conversely, when turns are lower than expected, those same shippers (with previously purchased contracts) tend to be short on carloads. Therefore, in general, low turns are associated with higher bids in the secondary rail market, and high turns are associated with lower bids in the secondary rail market (**GTR, June 1, 2023**).

3 The Canadian Class I railroads—CP and Canadian National Railway—report these statistics for their U.S. networks only.

Figure 1. Selected rail service metrics for December/January (2020-24): origin dwell times (*a*) train speeds (*b*) and loaded grain cars not moved in 48+ hours (*c*)



Source: Surface Transportation Board.

Using New Data To Examine Recent Rail Service

In recent weeks, railroads have responded to severe winter weather, which plagued much of the Nation (GTR, January 18, 2024, second highlight). The resulting weather-related disruptions are reflected in the new service metrics, which correlate to changes in the secondary railcar auction market values.

Figure 1 shows a selection of the new service metrics—(*a*) origin dwell times; (*b*) train speeds; and (*c*) loaded grain cars that have not moved in 48 hours or more. For each metric, statistics of recent weeks are compared to the same period in prior years.

Taken as a whole, the charts of figure 1 illustrate a long-term, historical pattern and several shorter term trends. First, in all three charts, variation in rail service around the holidays (noted earlier) shows up in the form of longer dwell times, slower speeds, and more cars holding.

The charts also show rail service was poor in the end of 2022 and into 2023. Origin dwell times and the number of cars not moved were generally lower in December 2023/January 2024 than in December 2022/January 2023, whereas train speeds were higher. The charts reflect an improvement in rail service that occurred throughout 2023 (GTR, July 20, 2023). Finally, corresponding with the widespread harsh winter conditions, each of figure 1's charts shows declining performance in recent weeks.

Despite the improved service in 2023, service metrics in recent weeks are worse than the same time in prior years. The only exception is train speeds, which were low in recent weeks, but not quite as low as during the same weeks in 2022. Train speeds also improved significantly in the latest week of data. The recent service disruptions are reflected in the secondary railcar market for shuttle trains. For the week of December 28, values for February trips averaged $250 per car above tariff.

One month later (i.e., the week of January 25), values for February trips had doubled to more than $500 per car (GTR fig. 5). Over the same period, secondary values for non-shuttle cars showed a similar rise as winter weather caused delays and reduced the number of carloads railroads could handle. In turn, slower rail service resulted in fewer carloads shipped and higher premiums in the secondary market.

Austin.Hunt@usda.gov
Jesse.Gastelle@usda.gov
PeterA.Caffarelli@usda.gov

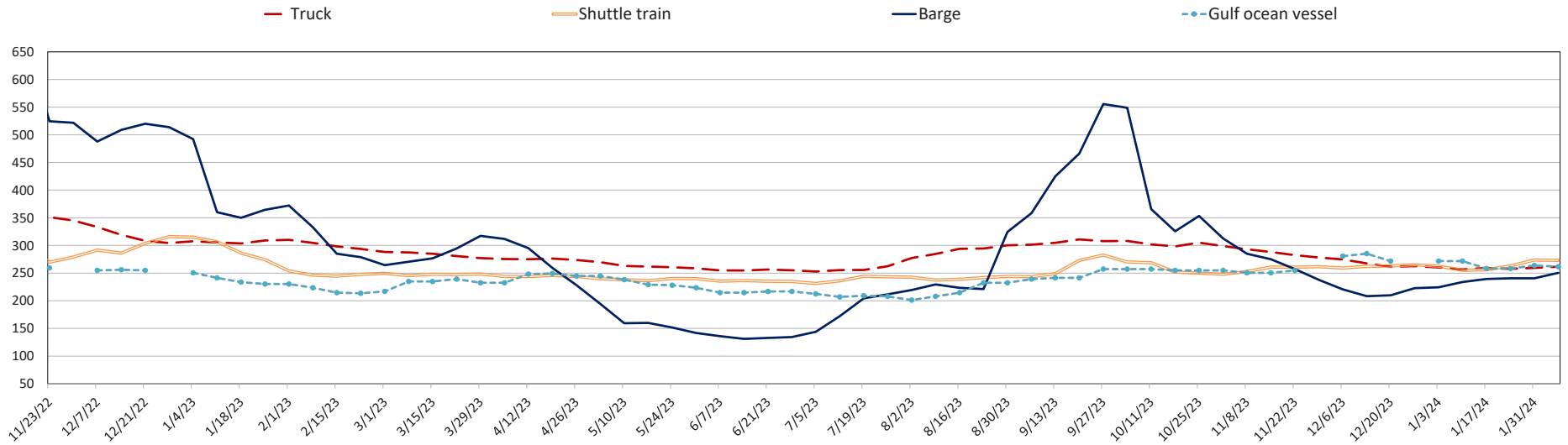
Grains are transported to the domestic and international markets via one or a combination of the following modes: truck, rail, barge and ocean-going vessel. Monitoring the cost of transportation for each mode is vital to the marketing decision making process.

Table 1. Grain transport cost indicators

For the week ending:	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
		Non-shuttle	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
02/07/24	262	357	273	251	262	223
01/31/24	260	342	274	241	264	223
02/08/23	305	327	246	333	224	200

Note: 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); ocean = routes to Japan ($/metric ton); n/a = not available due to holiday.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

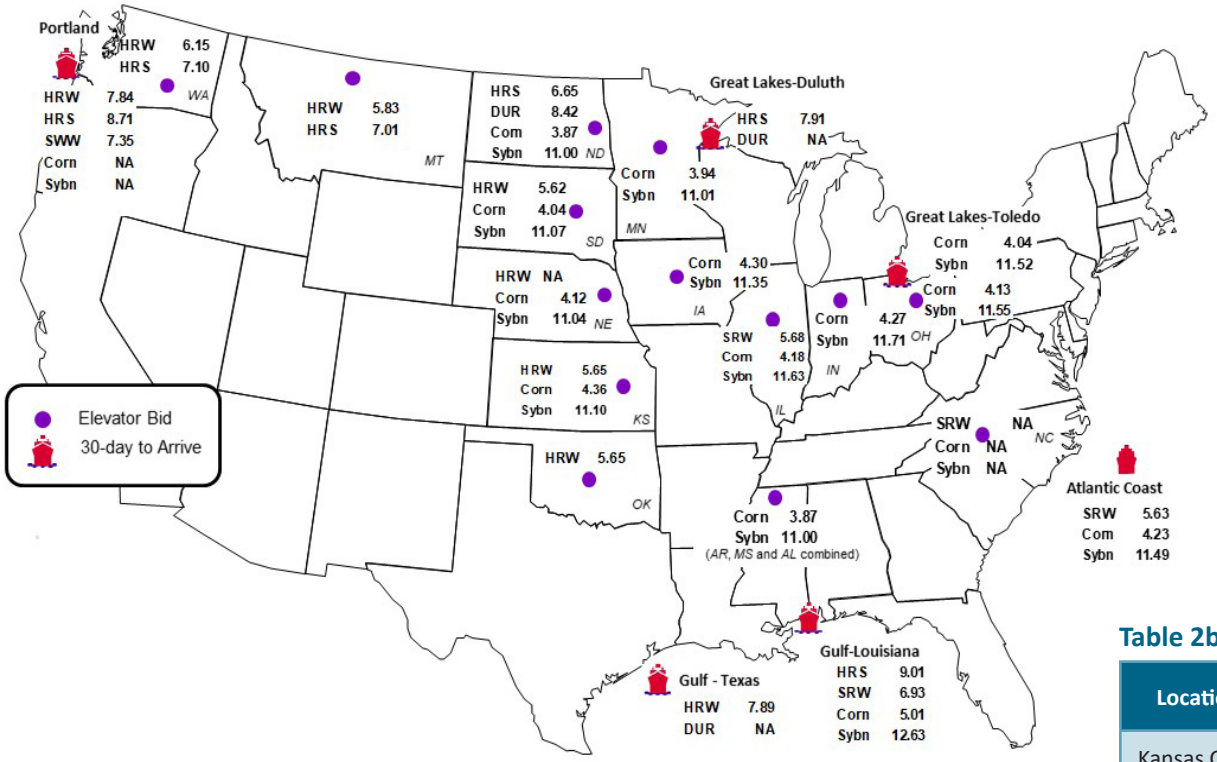
Figure 1. Grain transportation cost indicators as of week ending 2/7/24



Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 2. Grain bid summary

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.



Inland bids: 12% HRW, 14% HRS, #1 SRW, #1 DUR, #1 SWW, #2 Y Corn, #1 Y Soybeans
Export bids: Ord HRW, 14% HRS, #2 SRW, #2 DUR, #2 SWW, #2 Y Corn, #1 Soybeans
Note: HRW = Hard red winter wheat, HRS = Hard red spring wheat, SRW = Soft red winter wheat, DUR = Durum, SWW = Soft white winter wheat, Y = Yellow, Ord = Ordinary. Data from tables 2a and 2b derived from map information.
Sources: U.S. Inland: GeoGrain, USDA Weekly Bids, U.S. Export: Corn & Soybean - Export Grain Bids, AMS, USDA Wheat Bids - Weekly Wheat Report, U.S. Wheat Associates, Washington, DC.

Table 2a. Market update: U.S. origins to export position price spreads ($/bushel)

Commodity	Origin–destination	2/2/2024	1/26/2024
Corn	IL–Gulf	-0.83	-0.78
Corn	NE–Gulf	-0.89	-0.84
Soybean	IA–Gulf	-1.28	-1.25
HRW	KS–Gulf	-2.24	-2.24
HRS	ND–Portland	-2.06	-2.10

Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available; HRW = hard red winter wheat; HRS = hard red spring wheat.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 2b. Futures

Location	Grain	Month	2/2/2024	Week ago 1/26/2024	Year ago 2/3/2023
Kansas City	Wheat	Mar	6.150	6.116	8.736
Minneapolis	Wheat	Mar	6.996	7.034	9.192
Chicago	Wheat	Mar	5.916	5.922	7.572
Chicago	Corn	Mar	4.442	4.410	6.732
Chicago	Soybean	Mar	11.920	11.974	15.234

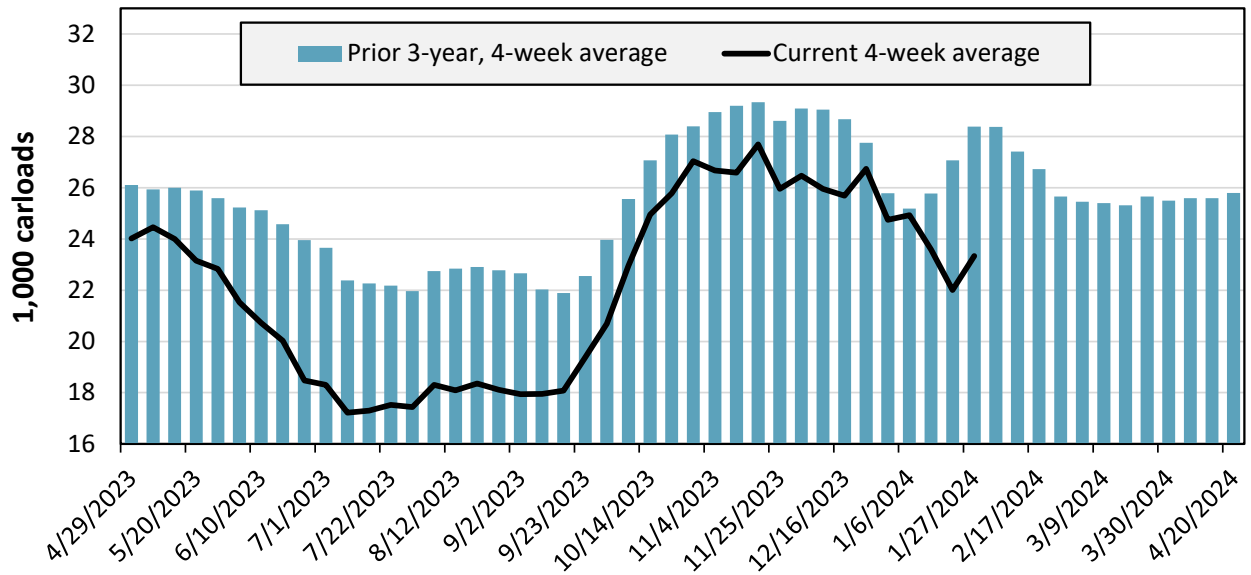
Sources: U.S. Inland: GeoGrain, USDA Weekly Bids, U.S. Export: Corn & Soybean - Export Grain Bids, AMS, USDA Wheat Bids - Weekly Wheat Report, U.S. Wheat Associates, Washington, DC.

Table 3. Class I rail carrier grain car bulletin (grain carloads originated)

For the week ending: 1/27/2024	East		West		Central U.S.		U.S. total
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	UP	CPKC	CN	
This week	1,940	2,929	11,359	4,797	2,905	1,205	25,135
This week last year	1,658	2,913	12,442	6,291	3,007	1,931	28,242
2024 YTD	7,573	11,254	39,220	19,173	11,535	4,590	93,345
2023 YTD	8,261	11,943	47,303	24,123	11,851	7,578	111,059
2024 YTD as % of 2023 YTD	92	94	83	79	97	61	84
Last 4 weeks as % of 2023	92	94	83	79	97	61	84
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.	92	100	79	74	104	65	82
Total 2023	92,754	130,762	499,462	278,079	131,352	66,535	1,198,944

Note: The last 4-week percentages compare the last 4 weeks of this year to the closest 4 weeks of last year, and to the average across the prior 3 years. NS = Norfolk Southern; UP = Union Pacific; CN = Canadian National; CPKC = Canadian Pacific Kansas City; YTD = year-to-date; avg. = average; yr. = year. CPKC and CN report carloads for their U.S.-operations only, so the U.S. total reflects originated carloads for all six Class I railroads.
Source: Surface Transportation Board.

Figure 3. Total weekly U.S. Class I railroad grain carloads



Source: Surface Transportation Board.

For the 4 weeks ending January 27, grain carloads were up 6 percent from the previous week, down 16 percent from last year, and down 18 percent from the 3-year average.

Table 4a. Rail service metrics—grain unit train origin dwell times and train speeds

For the week ending: 1/27/2024		East		West		Central U.S.			U.S. Average
		CSX	NS	BNSF	UP	CN	CP	KCS	
Grain unit train origin dwell times (hours)	This week	22.9	37.9	55.5	23.6	7.1	26.5	20.7	27.7
	Average over last 4 weeks	30.2	28.4	39.3	21.4	7.6	29.8	17.9	24.9
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	41.6	27.0	38.1	23.6	12.3	29.4	10.6	26.1
Grain unit train speeds (miles per hour)	This week	23.8	19.3	24.1	22.1	24.8	22.9	27.9	23.6
	Average over last 4 weeks	23.7	17.9	24.4	23.7	24.7	23.0	27.4	23.5
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	23.5	17.6	25.7	23.2	25.9	25.4	25.9	23.9

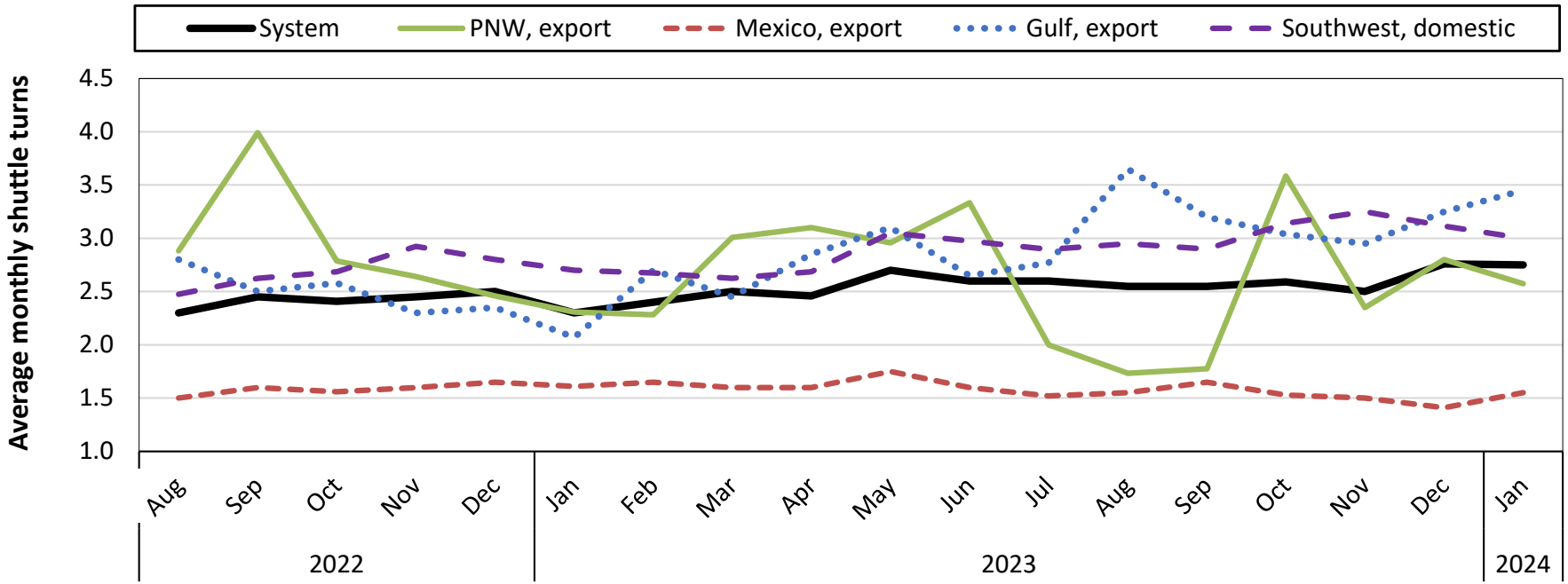
Note: NS = Norfolk Southern; UP = Union Pacific; CN = Canadian National; CP = Canadian Pacific; KCS = Kansas City Southern. Although CP and KCS have merged to form CPKC, the service metrics are reported for two legacy networks that correspond to the old nomenclature (CP and KCS).
These service metrics are published weekly on the Surface Transportation Board's website and on AgTransport. For more information on each service metric, see 49 CFR § 1250.2.
Source: Surface Transportation Board.

Table 4b. Rail service metrics—unfilled grain car orders and delays

For the week ending: 1/27/2024		East		West		Central U.S.			U.S. Total
		CSX	NS	BNSF	UP	CN	CP	KCS	
Empty grain cars not moved in over 48 hours (number)	This week	24	7	696	198	0	42	10	977
	Average over last 4 weeks	34	10	716	176	6	50	43	1,034
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	19	18	569	131	11	48	33	828
Loaded grain cars not moved in over 48 hours (number)	This week	30	338	1,786	129	4	91	35	2,414
	Average over last 4 weeks	38	282	1,732	149	2	103	16	2,322
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	48	207	1,139	187	8	201	30	1,822
Grain unit trains held (number)	This week	0	2	34	1	0	3	6	46
	Average over last 4 weeks	0	4	28	3	0	5	6	46
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	1	4	12	20	0	1	6	43
Unfilled grain car orders (number)	This week	3	0	5,804	257	0	481	25	6,570
	Average over last 4 weeks	5	0	5,244	267	0	310	57	5,883
	Average of same 4 weeks last year	125	22	13,480	2,095	0	2309	26	18,057

Note: NS = Norfolk Southern; UP = Union Pacific; CN = Canadian National; CP = Canadian Pacific; KCS = Kansas City Southern. Although CP and KCS have merged to form CPKC, the service metrics are reported for two legacy networks that correspond to the old nomenclature (CP and KCS).
These service metrics are published weekly on the Surface Transportation Board's website and on AgTransport. For more information on each service metric, see 49 CFR § 1250.2.
Source: Surface Transportation Board.

Figure 4. Average monthly turns for grain shuttle trains, by region

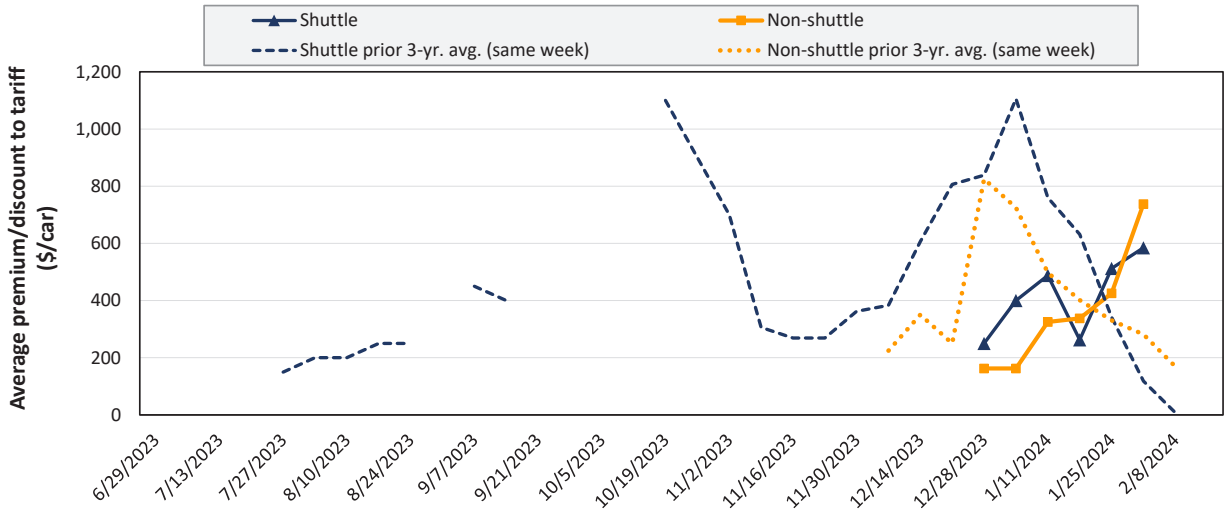


Average monthly system-wide grain shuttle turns reported in the first week of January 2024 were 2.75. By destination region, average monthly grain shuttle turns were 2.58 to PNW, 1.55 to Mexico, 3 to the Gulf, and 3.45 to the Southwest.

Note: Data is submitted in the first weekly report of each month, covering the previous month. A "shuttle turn" refers to the number of trips completed per month by a single train. Numbers reflect averages of the three railroads with a shuttle train program: BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad; and CPKC. CPKC only reports values for the Pacific Northwest (PNW). Regions are not standardized and vary across railroads. "Southwest" refers to domestic destinations and includes: "West Texas, Arkansas/Texas, California/Arizona, and California."
Source: Surface Transportation Board.

Railroads periodically auction guaranteed grain car service for an individual trip or a period of time (e.g., one year). This ordering system is referred to as the "primary market." Once grain shippers acquire guaranteed freight on the primary market, they can trade that freight with other shippers through a broker. These transactions are referred to as the "secondary market." Secondary rail values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/supply. The values published herein are market indicators only and do not represent guaranteed prices.

Figure 5. Secondary market bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in February 2024



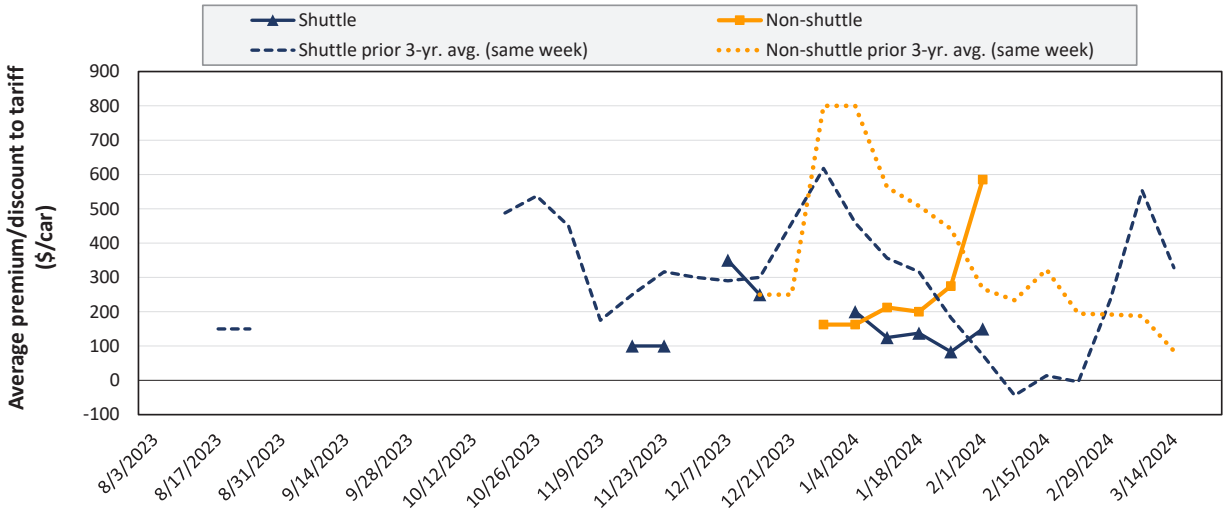
Average non-shuttle bids/offers rose $313 this week, and are at the peak.

Average shuttle bids/offers rose $72 this week and are at the peak.

2/1/2024	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$1,250	$225
Shuttle	$850	$319

Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of data from Tradewest Brokerage Company and the Malsam Company.

Figure 6. Secondary market bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in March 2024



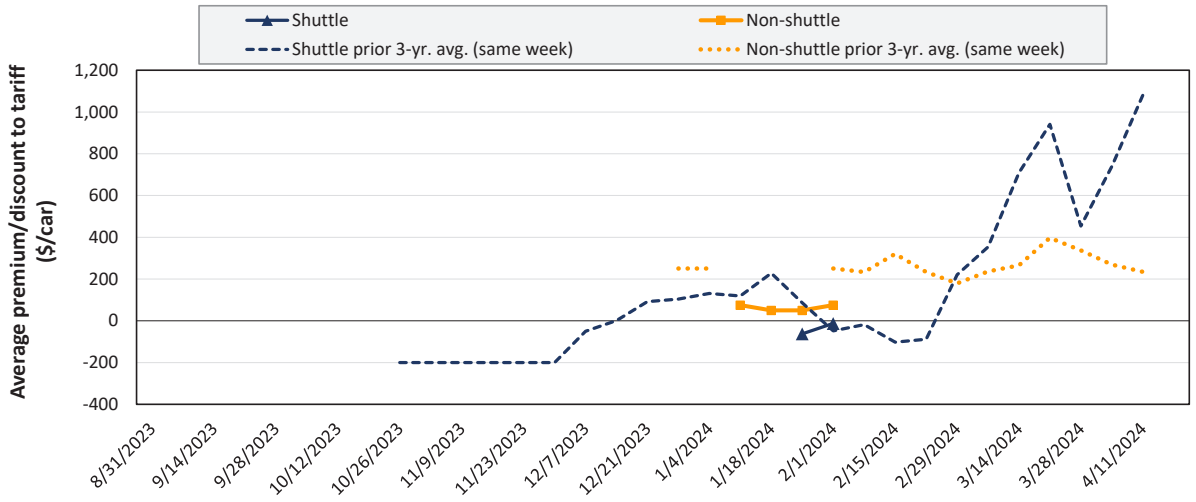
Average non-shuttle bids/offers rose $310 this week, and are at the peak.

Average shuttle bids/offers rose $67 this week and are $200 below the peak.

2/1/2024	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$933	$238
Shuttle	$400	-$100

Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of data from Tradewest Brokerage Company and the Malsam Company.

Figure 7. Secondary market bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in April 2024



Average non-shuttle bids/offers rose $25 this week, and are at the peak.

Average shuttle bids/offers rose $50 this week and are at the peak.

2/1/2024	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	$75
Shuttle	-$13	n/a

Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of data from Tradewest Brokerage Company and the Malsam Company.

Table 5. Weekly secondary railcar market (dollars per car)

For the week ending: 2/1/2024		Delivery period					
		Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24
Non-shuttle	BNSF	1,250	933	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	550	533	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2023	1,050	733	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP	225	238	75	75	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	75	88	25	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2023	175	138	-25	-25	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	BNSF	850	400	-13	-100	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	0	150	51	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2023	1,063	600	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP	319	-100	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	144	-17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2023	575	125	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	CPKC	150	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	-200	-125	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2023	175	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note: Bids and offers represent a premium/discount to tariff rates; n/a = not available; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad; CPKC = Canadian Pacific Kansas City.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of data from Tradewest Brokerage Company and the Malsam Company.

The tariff rail rate is the base price of freight rail service. Together with fuel surcharges and any auction and secondary rail values, the tariff rail rate constitutes 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. However, during times of high rail demand or short supply, high auction and secondary rail values can exceed the cost of the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Table 6. Tariff rail rates for unit train shipments

February 2024	Origin region	Destination region	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per bushel	Percent Change Y/Y
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	$4,095	$192	$42.57	$1.16	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,508	$57	$35.40	$0.96	-10
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$6,840	$291	$70.81	$1.93	-11
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,825	$338	$51.27	$1.40	2
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,611	$239	$68.02	$1.85	-11
	Colby, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,075	$371	$54.08	$1.47	1
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,121	$516	$55.97	$1.52	-3
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,000	$382	$43.52	$1.11	-3
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$8,877	$0	$88.15	$2.24	4
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,830	$81	$28.91	$0.73	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$6,866	$0	$68.18	$1.73	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$5,790	$0	$57.50	$1.46	4
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$4,425	$238	$46.30	$1.18	2
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$6,305	$693	$69.49	$1.77	-1
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,156	$555	$36.86	$1.00	-20
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$7,269	$0	$72.18	$1.96	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$8,169	$0	$81.12	$2.21	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$5,921	$0	$58.80	$1.60	4
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$5,040	$382	$53.85	$1.47	0

Note: 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. The table assumes 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons) per car, 56 pounds per bushel of corn, and 60 pounds per bushel of wheat and soybeans. Percentage change year to year (Y/Y) is calculated using the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge

Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, and Union Pacific Railroad.

Table 7. Tariff rail rates for shuttle train shipments

February 2024	Origin region	Destination region	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per bushel	Percent Change Y/Y
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$4,043	$167	$41.81	$1.14	-11
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,111	$130	$42.12	$1.15	-7
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$7,413	$0	$73.61	$2.00	5
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,701	$289	$59.48	$1.62	-9
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,146	$296	$54.04	$1.47	-9
	Colby, KS	Portland, OR	$5,923	$608	$64.85	$1.77	-4
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,660	$352	$59.70	$1.52	-5
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,620	$322	$59.01	$1.50	-5
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,345	$382	$46.94	$1.19	1
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,560	$188	$47.15	$1.20	0
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$4,845	$299	$51.08	$1.30	1
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,660	$349	$59.67	$1.52	-5
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$5,780	$361	$60.98	$1.55	-2
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$6,335	$322	$66.11	$1.80	-5
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$6,385	$352	$66.90	$1.82	-5
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$6,235	$286	$64.76	$1.76	-4
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$5,270	$441	$56.71	$1.54	0
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$5,509	$0	$54.71	$1.49	4
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,905	$622	$64.82	$1.76	-1

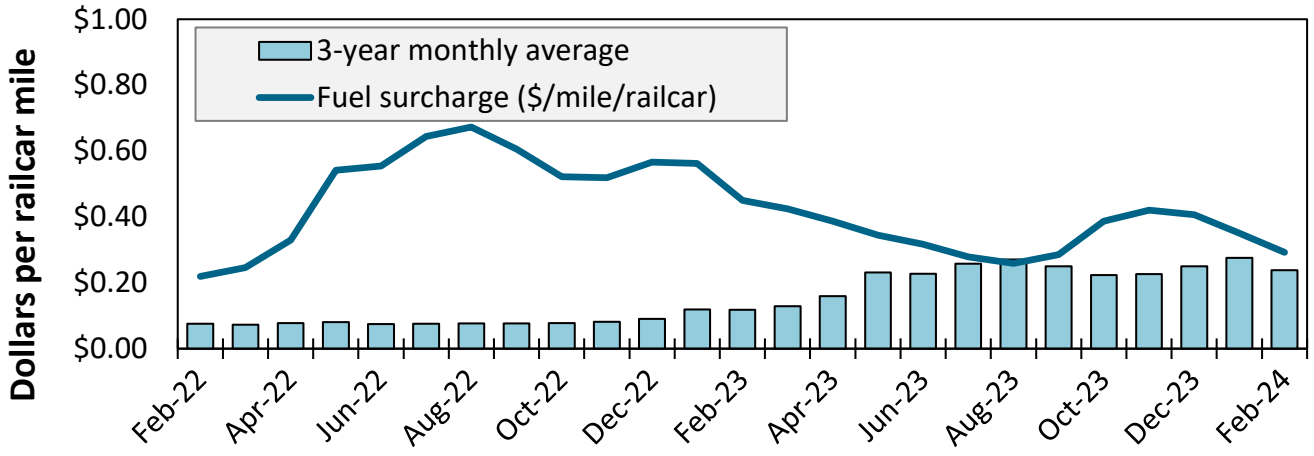
Note: A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are generally available for qualified shipments of 75-120 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements. The table assumes 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons) per car, 56 pounds per bushel of corn, and 60 pounds per bushel of wheat and soybeans. Percentage change year to year (Y/Y) is calculated using the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.
Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, and Union Pacific Railroad.

Table 8. Tariff rail rates for U.S. bulk grain shipments to Mexico

December 2021	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate per car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff rate plus fuel surcharge per:		Percent change Y/Y
					metric ton	bushel	
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,699	$0	$78.67	$2.14	4
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,900	$230	$72.85	$1.98	6
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,619	$719	$85.19	$2.32	7
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,420	$138	$46.57	$1.27	4
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$9,102	$663	$99.77	$2.53	6
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$8,300	$0	$84.81	$2.15	2
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,322	$462	$89.75	$2.28	5
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,905	$0	$70.55	$1.79	0
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,687	$450	$83.14	$2.11	5
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,825	$0	$79.95	$2.03	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,647	$614	$94.63	$2.57	5
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$9,207	$646	$100.67	$2.74	5
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,510	$0	$97.17	$2.64	1
	KS	Torreon, CU	$8,109	$466	$87.61	$2.38	5
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,932	$597	$87.15	$2.21	6
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$8,108	$287	$85.77	$2.18	3
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,713	$231	$70.94	$1.80	3
	NE	Torreon, CU	$7,225	$438	$78.29	$1.99	6

Note: Rates are based on published tariff rates for high-capacity shuttle trains. Shuttle trains are available for qualified shipments of 75-110 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements. The table assumes 97.87 metric tons per car, 56 pounds per bushel for corn and sorghum, and 60 pounds per bushel for wheat and soybeans. Percentage change year over year (Y/Y) is calculated using the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge. **As of January 1, both BNSF and Union Pacific changed their billing and reporting of rates to Mexico. As we incorporate the change, table 8 updates will be delayed.**
Source: BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern.

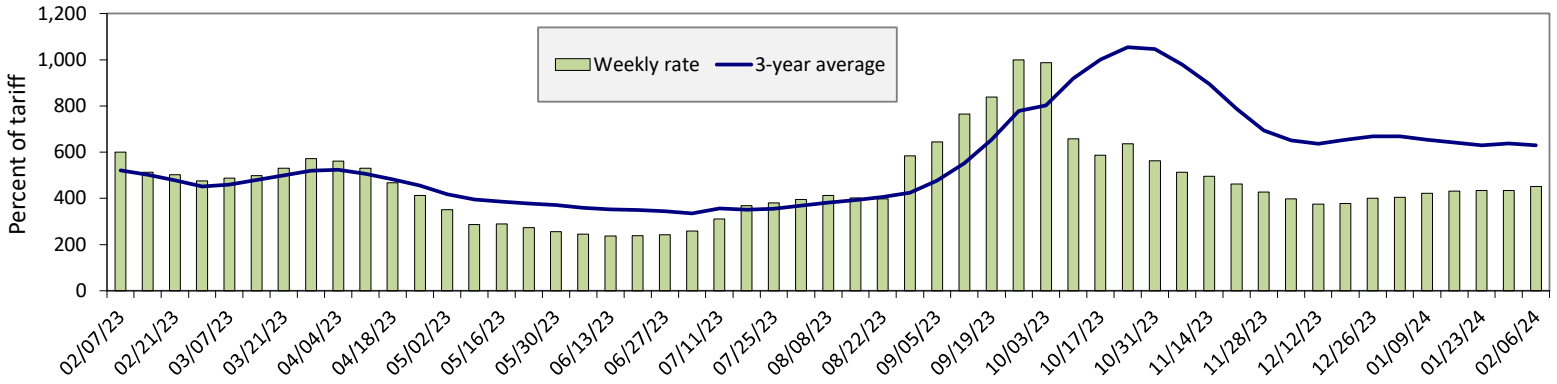
Figure 8. Railroad fuel surcharges, North American weighted average



February 2024: $0.29/mile, down 6 cents from last month's surcharge of $0.35/mile; down 16 cents from the February 2023 surcharge of $0.45/mile; and up 5 cents from the February prior 3-year average of $0.24/mile.

Note: Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.
Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, Canadian Pacific Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern Railway, Norfolk Southern Corporation.

Figure 9. Illinois River barge freight rate



For the week ending February 6: 4 percent higher than the previous week; 25 percent lower than last year; and 28 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Note: Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); 3-year avg. = 4-week moving average of the 3-year average.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 9. Weekly barge freight rates: southbound only

Measure	Date	Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate	2/6/2024	n/a	n/a	451	353	436	436	310
	1/30/2024	n/a	n/a	433	346	350	350	281
$/ton	2/6/2024	n/a	n/a	20.93	14.08	20.45	17.61	9.73
	1/30/2024	n/a	n/a	20.09	13.81	16.42	14.14	8.82
Measure	**Time Period**	**Twin Cities**	**Mid-Mississippi**	**Lower Illinois River**	**St. Louis**	**Cincinnati**	**Lower Ohio**	**Cairo-Memphis**
Current week % change from the same week	Last year	n/a	n/a	-25	-24	-16	-16	-11
	3-year avg.	n/a	n/a	-28	-28	-19	-19	-23
Rate	March	n/a	399	390	316	337	337	274
	May	389	370	361	298	314	314	256

Note: Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); 3-year avg. = 4-week moving average of the 3-year avg.; ton = 2,000 pounds; n/a = data not available.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

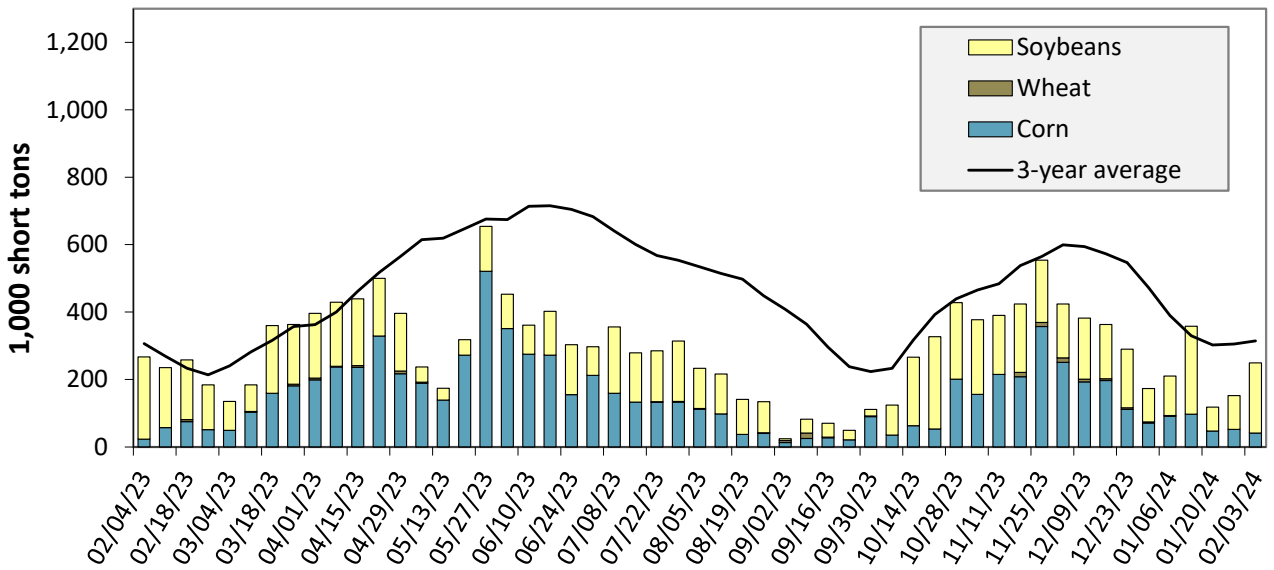
Figure 10. Benchmark tariff rates

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

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

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 11. Barge movements on the Mississippi River (Locks 27-Granite City, IL)



For the week ending February 3: 7 percent lower than last year and 21 percent lower than the 3-year average.

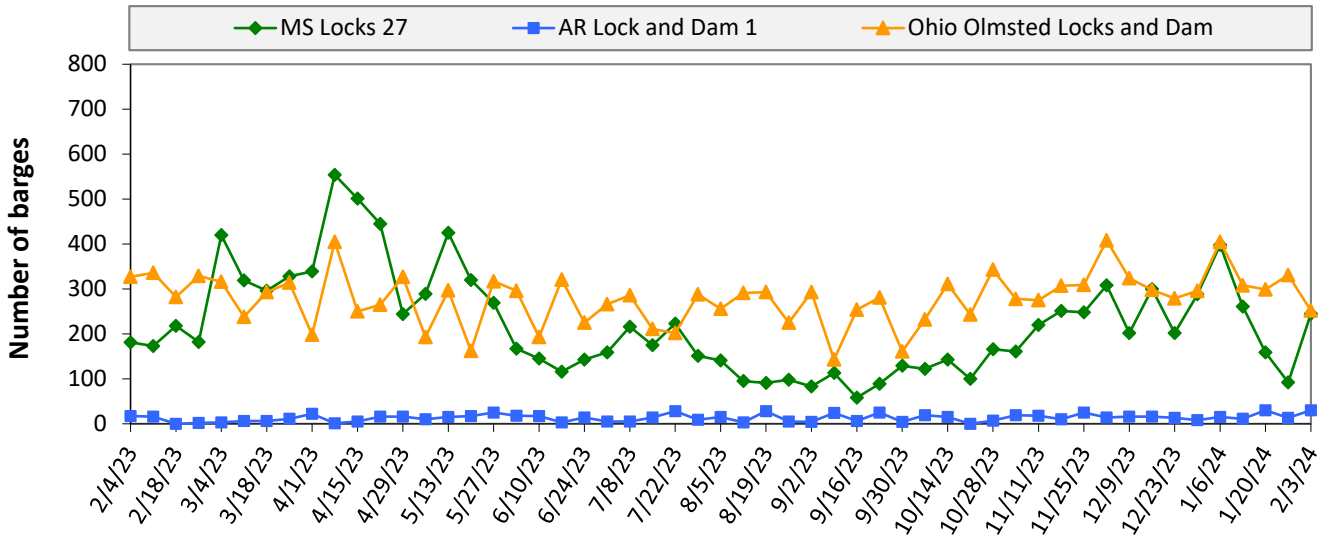
Note: The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Table 10. Barged grain movements (1,000 tons)

For the week ending 02/03/2024	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River (Rock Island, IL (L15))	0	0	0	0	0
Mississippi River (Winfield, MO (L25))	0	0	0	0	0
Mississippi River (Alton, IL (L26))	41	0	230	0	272
Mississippi River (Granite City, IL (L27))	41	0	208	0	249
Illinois River (La Grange)	26	0	191	0	217
Ohio River (Olmsted)	111	7	195	5	318
Arkansas River (L1)	0	19	13	0	31
Weekly total - 2024	152	26	415	5	598
Weekly total - 2023	102	29	437	0	569
2024 YTD	777	71	1,500	14	2,362
2023 YTD	764	81	1,858	62	2,766
2024 as % of 2023 YTD	102	88	81	23	85
Last 4 weeks as % of 2023	90	57	82	9	82
Total 2023	12,857	1,346	11,824	267	26,294

Note: “Other” refers to oats, barely, sorghum, and rye. Total may not add up due to rounding. YTD = year to date. Weekly total, YTD, and calendar year total include Mississippi River lock 27, Ohio River Olmsted lock, and Arkansas Lock 1. “L” (as in "L15") refers to a lock, locks, or lock and dam facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

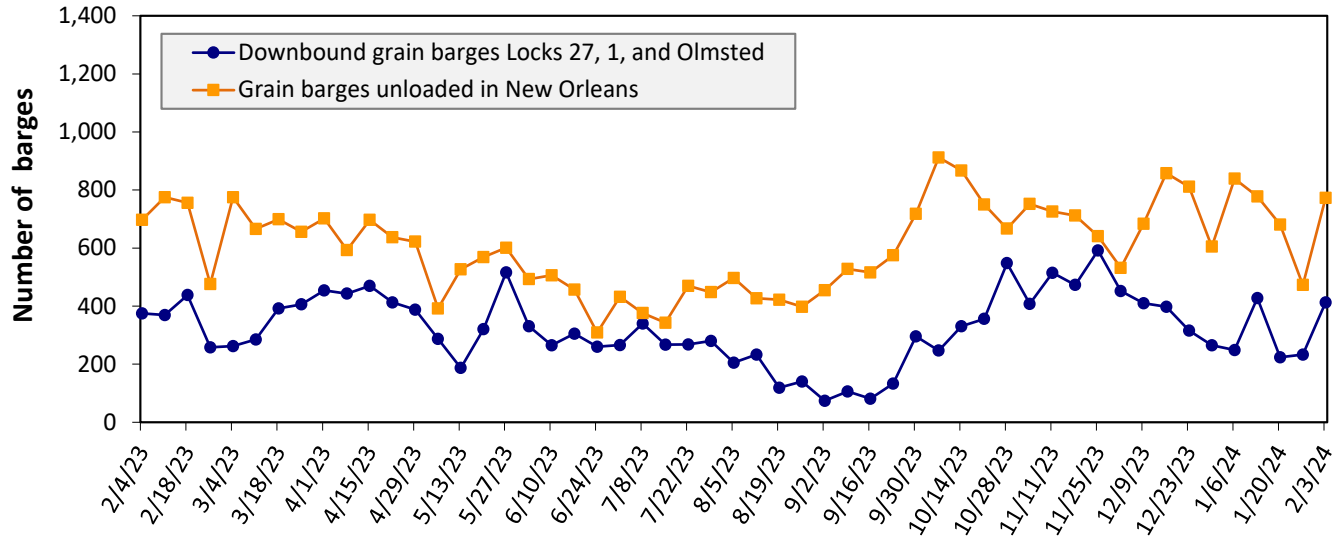
Figure 12. Upbound empty barges transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam



For the week ending February 3: 527 barges transited the locks, 91 barges more than the previous week, and 4 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Note: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure 13. Grain barges for export in New Orleans region



For the week ending February 3: 413 barges moved down river, 180 more than the previous week; 773 grain barges unloaded in the New Orleans Region, 63 percent more than the previous week.

Note: Olmsted = Olmsted Locks and Dam. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

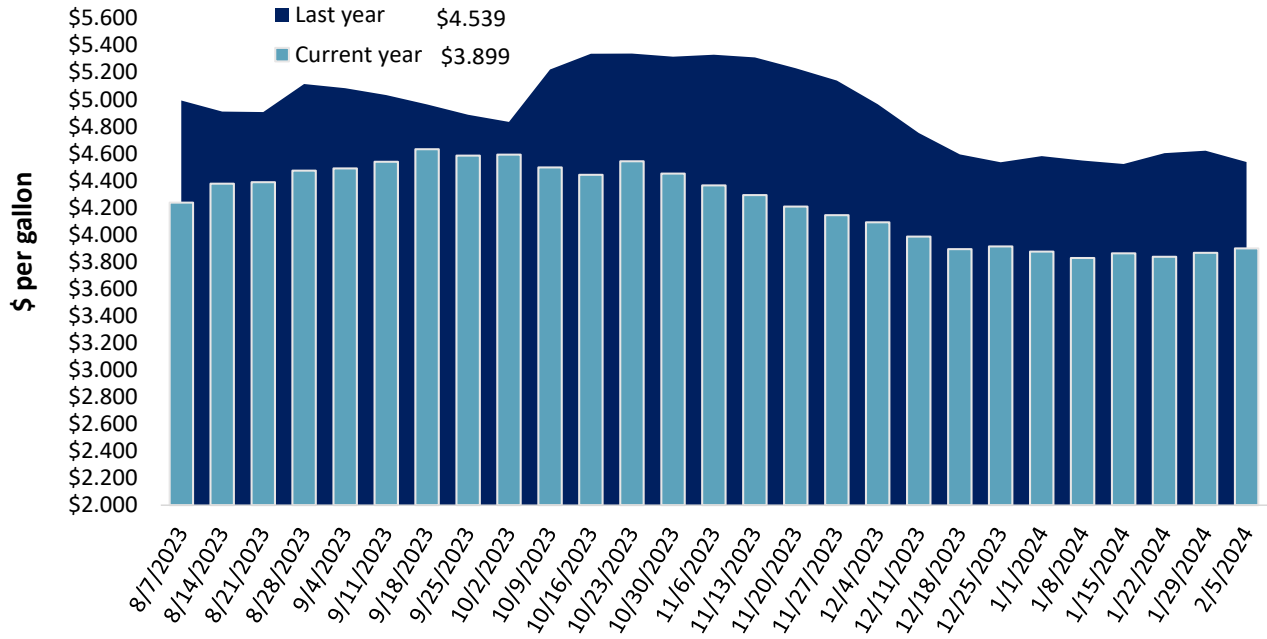
The weekly diesel price provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates as diesel fuel is a significant expense for truck grain movements.

Table 11. Retail on-highway diesel prices, week ending 2/05/2024 (U.S. $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	4.043	0.000	-0.709
	New England	4.324	0.035	-0.793
	Central Atlantic	4.275	0.047	-0.725
	Lower Atlantic	3.929	-0.020	-0.695
II	Midwest	3.738	0.034	-0.640
III	Gulf Coast	3.702	0.058	-0.547
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.650	0.005	-1.091
V	West Coast	4.551	0.043	-0.535
	West Coast less California	4.054	0.043	-0.688
	California	5.121	0.043	-0.361
Total	United States	3.899	0.032	-0.640

Note: Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel. On June 13, 2022, the Energy Information Administration implemented a new methodology to estimate weekly on-highway diesel fuel prices.
Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Figure 14. Weekly diesel fuel prices, U.S. average



For the week ending February 5, the U.S. average diesel fuel price increased 3.2 cents from the previous week to $3.899 per gallon, 64.0 cents below the same week last year.

Note: On June 13, 2022, the Energy Information Administration implemented a new methodology to estimate weekly on-highway diesel fuel prices.
Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Table 12. U.S. export balances and cumulative exports (1,000 metric tons)

Grain Exports		Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
		Hard red winter (HRW)	Soft red winter (SRW)	Hard red spring (HRS)	Soft white wheat (SWW)	Durum	All wheat			
Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales	For the week ending 1/25/2024	916	2,327	1,662	1,034	158	6,097	17,418	10,817	34,332
	This week year ago	905	717	1,248	1,262	113	4,246	13,021	11,683	28,950
	Last 4 wks. as % of same period 2022/23	97	328	126	75	112	138	131	102	121
Current shipped (cumulative) exports sales	2023/24 YTD	2,044	2,141	3,856	2,445	292	10,778	16,271	27,296	54,345
	2022/23 YTD	3,488	1,816	3,581	2,843	198	11,925	12,611	35,452	59,988
	YTD 2023/24 as % of 2022/23	59	118	108	86	147	90	129	77	91
	Total 2022/23	4,872	2,695	5,382	4,414	395	17,759	39,469	52,208	109,435
	Total 2021/22	7,172	2,786	5,254	3,261	196	18,669	59,764	57,189	135,622

Note: The marketing year for wheat is Jun. 1 to May 31 and, for corn and soybeans, Sep. 1 to Aug. 31. YTD = year-to-date; wks. = weeks.
Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 13. Top 5 importers of U.S. corn

For the week ending 1/25/2024	Total commitments (1,000 mt)		% change current MY from last MY	Exports 3-year average 2020-22 (1,000 mt)
	YTD MY 2023/24	YTD MY 2022/23		
Mexico	15,660	11,888	32	15,227
China	1,837	4,326	-58	12,616
Japan	4,992	2,139	133	10,273
Columbia	2,974	867	243	4,398
Korea	866	211	310	2,563
Top 5 importers	**26,329**	**19,432**	**35**	**45,077**
Total U.S. corn export sales	**33,689**	**25,632**	**31**	**56,665**
% of YTD current month's export projection	63%	61%	-	-
Change from prior week	1,207	1,593	-	-
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	**78%**	**76%**	**-**	**80%**
USDA forecast January 2024	**53,343**	**42,192**	**26**	**-**
Corn use for ethanol USDA forecast, January 2024	**136,525**	**131,471**	**4**	**-**

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2022/23 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated exports (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports).
mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date; "-" = not applicable.
Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 14. Top 5 importers of U.S. soybeans

For the week ending 1/25/2024	Total commitments (1,000 mt)		% change current MY from last MY	Exports 3-year average 2020-22 (1,000 mt)
	YTD MY 2023/24	YTD MY 2022/23		
China	20,855	28,955	-28	32,321
Mexico	3,529	3,705	-5	4,912
Egypt	481	782	-38	2,670
Japan	1,468	1,645	-11	2,259
Indonesia	1,002	792	27	1,973
Top 5 importers	**27,336**	**35,880**	**-24**	**44,133**
Total U.S. soybean export sales	**38,113**	**47,135**	**-19**	**56,656**
% of YTD current month's export projection	80%	87%	-	-
Change from prior week	**165**	**668**	**-**	**-**
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	**72%**	**76%**	**-**	**78%**
USDA forecast, January 2024	**47,763**	**54,213**	**-12**	**-**

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2022/23 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated export (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports). mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date; "-" = not applicable.
Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 15. Top 10 importers of all U.S. wheat

For the week ending 1/25/2024	Total commitments (1,000 mt)		% change current MY from last MY	Exports 3-year average 2020-22 (1,000 mt)
	YTD MY 2023/24	YTD MY 2022/23		
Mexico	2,691	2,734	-2	3,397
Philippines	2,355	1,786	32	2,615
Japan	1,627	1,869	-13	2,281
China	2,395	750	219	1,740
Korea	1,119	1,192	-6	1,426
Nigeria	203	706	-71	1,276
Taiwan	910	652	40	944
Thailand	444	591	-25	643
Columbia	233	418	-44	537
Indonesia	431	299	44	469
Top 10 importers	**12,407**	**10,996**	**13**	**15,327**
Total U.S. wheat export sales	**16,875**	**16,171**	**4**	**20,411**
% of YTD current month's export projection	86%	78%	-	-
Change from prior week	323	136	-	-
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	**74%**	**68%**	**-**	**75%**
USDA forecast, January 2024	**19,731**	**20,657**	**-4**	**-**

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2022/23 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated export (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports). mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date; "-" = not applicable.
Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

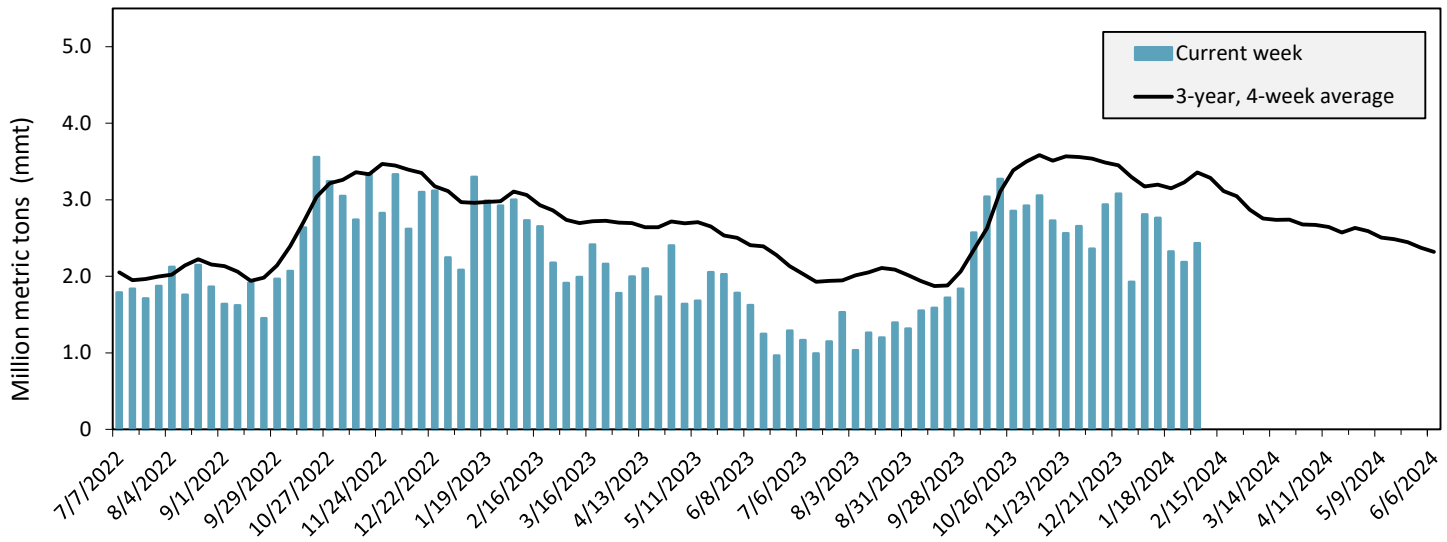
Table 16. Grain inspections for export by U.S. port region (1,000 metric tons)

Port regions	Commodity	For the week ending 02/01/2024	Previous week*	Current week as % of previous	2024 YTD*	2023 YTD*	2024 YTD as % of 2023 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of:		2023 total*
								Last year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	
Pacific Northwest	Corn	137	282	49	1,002	491	204	209	113	5,267
	Soybeans	335	65	514	1,078	2,260	48	41	44	10,286
	Wheat	117	154	76	794	1,197	66	50	55	9,814
	All Grain	**589**	**500**	**118**	**3,003**	**3,949**	**76**	**65**	**62**	**25,913**
Mississippi Gulf	Corn	211	420	50	1,713	1,380	124	107	57	23,630
	Soybeans	860	640	134	3,433	4,747	72	69	74	26,878
	Wheat	60	51	118	310	210	148	147	128	3,335
	All Grain	**1,130**	**1,110**	**102**	**5,511**	**6,337**	**87**	**80**	**70**	**53,843**
Texas Gulf	Corn	10	10	99	44	29	154	136	80	397
	Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	49	0	n/a	n/a	267
	Wheat	64	17	390	81	115	71	70	37	1,593
	All Grain	**186**	**88**	**212**	**598**	**264**	**227**	**224**	**76**	**5,971**
Interior	Corn	259	214	121	1,046	855	122	119	126	10,474
	Soybeans	190	189	100	824	907	91	80	96	6,508
	Wheat	25	58	43	199	262	76	69	76	2,281
	All Grain	**478**	**465**	**103**	**2,089**	**2,033**	**103**	**95**	**107**	**19,467**
Great Lakes	Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	57
	Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	2	0	n/a	n/a	192
	Wheat	0	0	n/a	12	4	313	331	145	581
	All Grain	**0**	**0**	**n/a**	**12**	**6**	**200**	**223**	**135**	**831**
Atlantic	Corn	7	0	n/a	16	17	100	100	143	166
	Soybeans	42	19	222	218	380	57	67	62	2,058
	Wheat	0	5	0	5	6	76	76	137	101
	All Grain	**49**	**24**	**206**	**239**	**403**	**59**	**68**	**65**	**2,325**
All Regions	Corn	624	926	67	3,823	2,773	138	128	81	40,004
	Soybeans	1,426	913	156	5,606	8,399	67	62	66	46,459
	Wheat	266	284	94	1,401	1,793	78	66	66	17,738
	All Grain	**2,433**	**2,187**	**111**	**11,505**	**13,046**	**88**	**81**	**72**	**108,664**

*Note: As of February 1, corrections were made to prior data. Data includes revisions from prior weeks; "All grain" includes corn, soybeans, wheat, sorghum, oats, barley, rye, sunflower, flaxseed, and mixed grains; "All regions" includes listed regions and other minor regions not listed; YTD= year-to-date; n/a = not available or no change.
Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

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 2019.

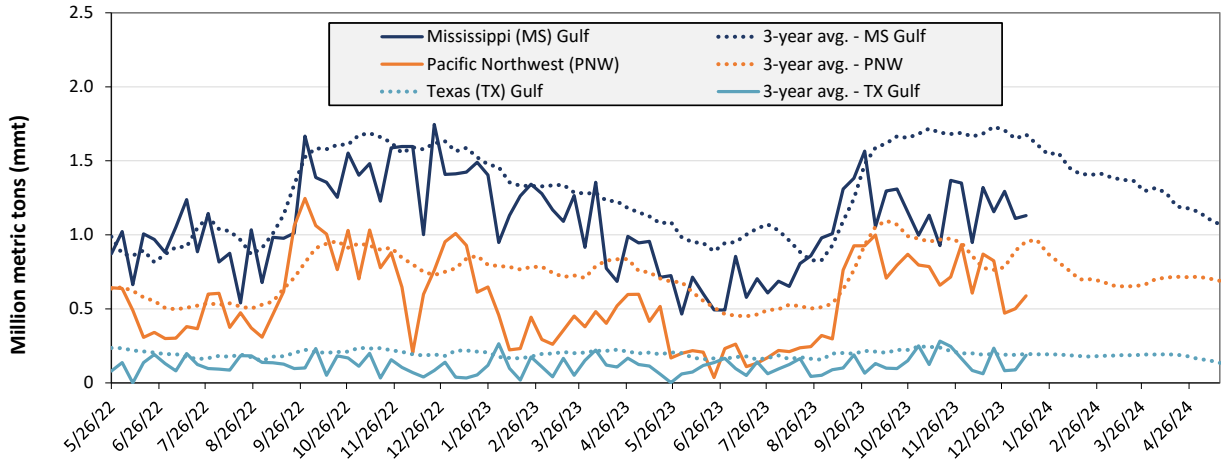
Figure 15. U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



For the week ending Feb. 1: 2.4 mmt of grain inspected, up 11 percent from the previous week, down 20 percent from the same week last year, and down 28 percent from the 3-year, 4-week average.

Notes: As of February 1, corrections were made to prior data. 3-year average consists of 4-week running average.
Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Figure 16. U.S. grain inspections for U.S. Gulf and PNW (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Week ending 02/01/24 inspections (mmt):
MS Gulf: 1.13
PNW: 0.59
TX Gulf: 0.19

Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	up 2	up 112	up 10	up 18
Last year (same 7 days)	down 27	up 6946	down 15	down 37
3-year average (4-week moving average)	down 33	down 5	down 30	down 38

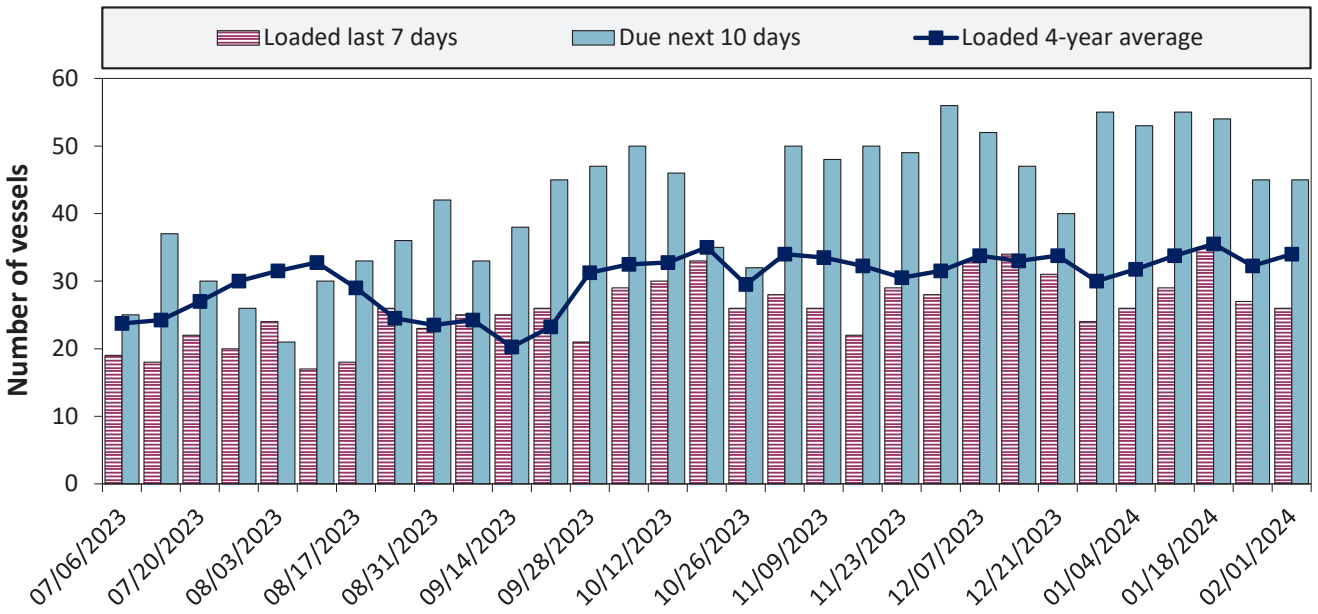
Note: As of February 1, corrections were made to prior data.
Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Table 17. Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port
2/1/2024	41	26	45	19
1/25/2024	32	27	45	21
2023 range	(8…38)	(17…34)	(21…56)	(1…24)
2023 average	22	26	39	10

Note: The data are voluntarily submitted and may not be complete.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

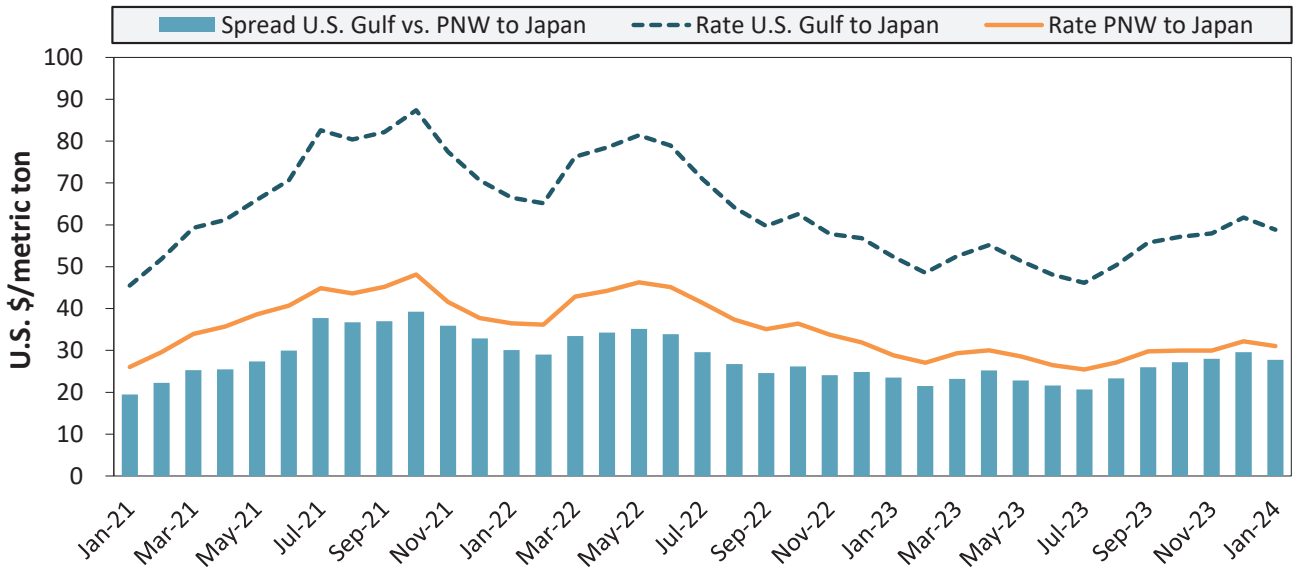
Figure 17. U.S . Gulf vessel loading activity



Week ending 2/1/24, number of vessels	Loaded	Due
Change from last year	0%	-4%
Change from 4-year average	-24%	-5%

Note: U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and the East Gulf region.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 18. U.S. Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan



Ocean rates	U.S. Gulf	PNW	Spread
January 2024	$59	$31	$28
Change from January 2023	12%	8%	18%
Change from 4-year average	12%	7%	18%

Note: PNW = Pacific Northwest
Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

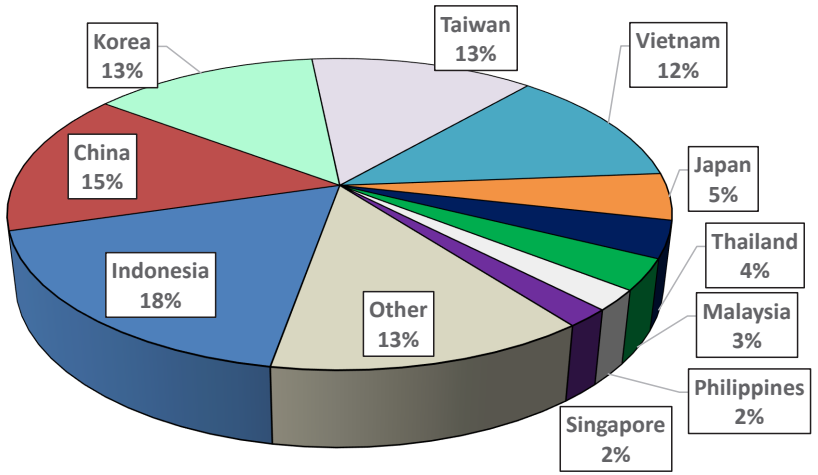
Table 18. Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 2/3/2024

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Entry date	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy grain	Sep 12, 2023	Oct 1/ Nov 1, 2023	66,000	54.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy grain	Sep 6, 2023	Oct 1/10, 2023	68,000	55.00
U.S. Gulf	Jamaica	Wheat	Nov 2, 2023	Dec 1/10, 2023	9,460	63.50
U.S. Gulf	Colombia	Wheat	Oct 26, 2023	Dec 15/25, 2023	27,500	99.00
U.S. Gulf	Guyana	Wheat	Nov 2, 2023	Dec 1/10, 2023	8,250	84.00
U.S. Gulf	S. Korea	Heavy grain	Oct 10, 2023	Nov 25/Dec 5, 2023	58,000	65.35
U.S. Gulf	S. Korea	Heavy grain	Sep 27, 2023	Oct 25/Nov 5, 2023	57,000	64.85
U.S. Gulf	S. Korea	Heavy grain	Sep 19, 2023	Nov 1/15, 2023	58,000	64.50
U.S. Gulf	S. Korea	Heavy grain	Aug 1, 2023	Oct 1/20, 2023	57,000	58.30
PNW	N. China	Heavy grain	Oct 19, 2023	Nov 16/22, 2023	66,000	28.00
PNW	Thailand	Heavy grain	Oct 20, 2023	Dec 5/15, 2023	66,000	22.50
PNW	Yemen	Wheat	Oct 6, 2023	Nov 5/15, 2023	30,000	74.43
PNW	Yemen	Wheat	Sep 26, 2023	Nov 5/15, 2023	24,740	91.89
WC US	Thailand	Wheat	Nov 9, 2023	Dec 1/10, 2023	60,500	35.25
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	Jan 20, 2024	Feb 2/8, 2024	63,000	40.50

Note: 50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels. Rates shown are per metric ton (1 metric ton = 2,204.62 pounds), free on board (F.O.B), except where otherwise indicated. op = option
Source: Maritime Research, Inc.

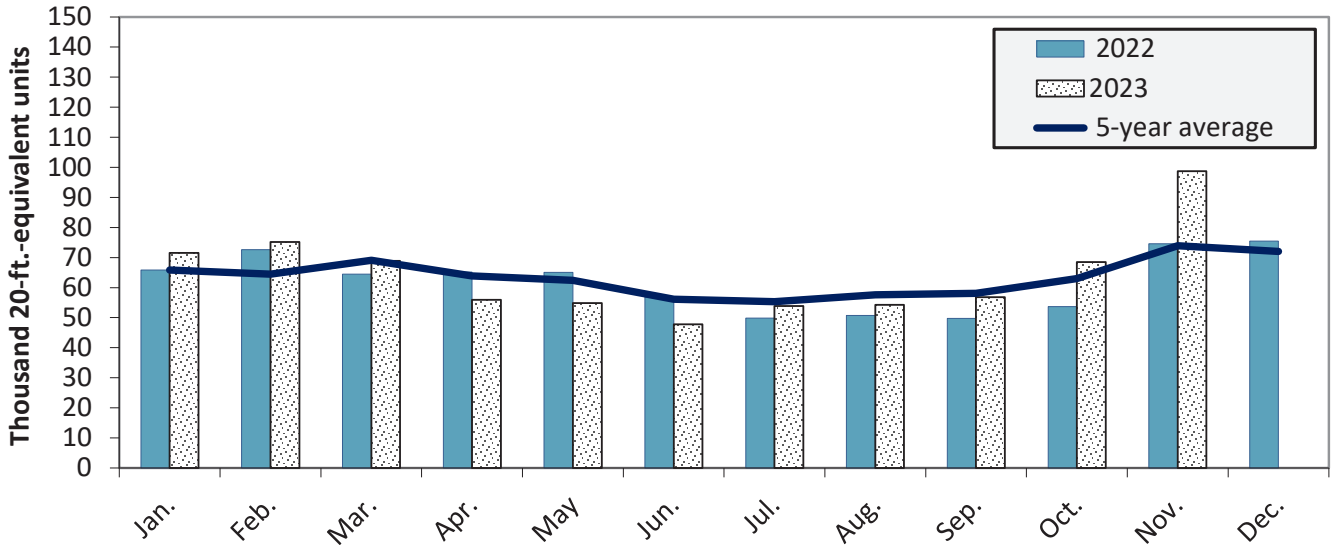
In 2020, containers were used to transport 10 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 66 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2020 went to Asia, of which 14 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 95 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

Figure 19. Top 10 destination markets for U.S. containerized grain exports, Jan-Nov 2023



Note: The following harmonized rariff codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 1001, 100190, 1002, 100200, 1003, 100300, 1004, 100400, 1005, 100590, 1007, 100700, 110100, 1102, 110220, 110290, 1201, 120100, 120190, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, 2304, and 230990.
Source: Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of PIERS data, S&P Global.

Figure 20. Monthly shipments of U.S. containerized grain exports



Containerized grain shipments in Nov. 2023 were up 32.5 percent from last year and up 33.6 percent from the 5-year average.

Note: ft. = foot. The following harmonized tariff codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 1001, 100190, 1002, 100200, 1003, 100300, 1004, 100400, 1005, 100590, 1007, 100700, 110100, 1102, 110220, 110290, 1201, 120100, 120190, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, 2304, and 230990.
Source: Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of PIERS data, S&P Global.

Title	Name	Email	Phone
Coordinators	Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720-0119
	Maria Williams	maria.williams@usda.gov	(202) 690-4430
	Bernadette Winston	bernadette.winston@usda.gov	(202) 690-0487
Grain Transportation Indicators	Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720-0119
Rail Transportation	Jesse Gastelle	jesse.gastelle@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690-1144
	Peter Caffarelli	petera.caffarelli@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690-3244
	Rich Henderson	richard.henderson2@usda.gov	(919) 855-7801
	Austin Hunt	austin.hunt@usda.gov	(540) 681-2596
Barge Transportation	Rich Henderson	richard.henderson2@usda.gov	(919) 855-7801
	Alexis Heyman	alexis.heyman@usda.gov	(847) 699-2414
Truck Transportation	Kranti Mulik	kranti.mulik@usda.gov	(202) 756-2577
	April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720-7880
	Alexis Heyman	alexis.heyman@usda.gov	(847) 699-2414
Grain Exports	Alexis Heyman	alexis.heyman@usda.gov	(847) 699-2414
	Kranti Mulik	kranti.mulik@usda.gov	(202) 756-2577
	Bernadette Winston	bernadette.winston@usda.gov	(202) 690-0487
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
Editor	Maria Williams	maria.williams@usda.gov	(202) 690-4430

Subscription Information: Please sign up to receive regular email announcements of the latest GTR issue by **entering your email address** and selecting your preference to receive Transportation Research and Analysis. For any other information, you may contact us at **GTRContactUs@usda.gov**.

Preferred citation: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report*. February 8, 2024. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.02-08-2024**

Additional Transportation Research and Analysis resources include the ***Grain Truck and Ocean Rate Advisory (GTOR)***, the ***Mexico Transport Cost Indicator Report***, and the ***Brazil Soybean Transportation Report***.

Photo Credit: Adobe Stock