United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

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

Contact Us

May 2, 2019

Contents

The next release is May 9, 2019

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Weekly Grain Barge Movements Drop as High Water Conditions Continue

For the week ending April 27, barge grain movements dropped 10 percent, compared to the previous week, as the Upper Mississippi River continued to experience the effects of above-average rain and melt-off of historic snow falls. Year-to-date (YTD) grain shipments by barge are 8 million tons, 19 percent less than last year. YTD corn shipments by barge are 4 million tons, a notable change (31 percent less) than last year. Typically, as of May 1, there is continuous barge traffic on the Mississippi River between Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN, and the Gulf of Mexico. This year, navigation is blocked by the closure of several locks above St. Louis and by low bridge clearances in certain areas due to high water.

STB Report Details Recommendations on Rate Review Processes

On April 29, the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) Rate Reform Task Force (Task Force) released a staff report, containing recommendations for possible changes to the current railroad rate review processes and methodologies. According to the press release, STB established the Task Force "in January 2018 to recommend improvements to the Board's existing rate review processes and to propose new rate review methodologies that are more attuned to the realities of the current transportation world." Among their main recommendations, the Task Force provides proposals to reduce the cost and complexity in small rate disputes (e.g., requiring arbitration, procedural limitations, etc.) and the Stand-Alone Cost method; offers a new rate methodology (the "Incumbent Network Cost Analysis") for use in large disputes; puts forward a new concept of "long-term" revenue adequacy (and associated remedies for shippers within such an environment); suggests improvements to the Three-Benchmark method; and seeks to simplify determinations of "market dominance."

Total Grain Inspections Recede but Soybeans Rebound

For the week ending April 25, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 2.52 million metric tons (mmt). This indicates a 3 percent decrease from the previous week, no change from last year, and a 6 percent increase from the 3-year average. Overall grain inspections declined despite a 27 percent jump in soybean inspections, which were shipped primarily from the Mississippi Gulf to Asia. Corn inspections increased 1 percent from the previous week, but wheat inspections dropped 23 percent. Pacific Northwest grain inspections decreased 5 percent from the previous week, but Mississippi Gulf grain inspections increased 26 percent.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

For the week ending April 18, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 30.3 mmt. This indicates a 13 percent drop in outstanding sales, compared to the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** were .425 mmt, up 34 percent from the previous week. Net **corn export sales** totaled .780 mmt, down 18 percent from the previous week. Net **soybean export sales** totaled .595 mmt, up 56 percent from the past week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 24,770 **grain carloads** for the week ending April 20. This is up 14 percent from the previous week, 4 percent lower than last year, and 10 percent above the 3-year average.

Average May shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers (per car) were $92 above tariff for the week ending April 25. This is up $217 from last week and $508 below last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers were $350 above tariff, down $300 from last week. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week last year.

Barge

For the week ending April 27, **barge grain movements** totaled 423,900 tons. This is 10 percent lower than the previous week and 43 percent lower than the same period last year.

For the week ending April 27, 268 grain barges **moved down river.** This is 19 fewer barges than the previous week. There were 595 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, 3 percent lower than the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending April 25, 34 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf. This is unchanged from the same period last year. Forty-nine vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days. This is 14 percent more than the same period last year.

As of April 25, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was $42.25, This is 1 percent more than the previous week. The rate for the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $23.00 per mt. This is unchanged from the previous week.

Fuel

For the week ending April 29, the **U.S. average diesel fuel price** increased 2.2 cents, from the previous week, to $3.169 per gallon. This is 1.2 cents above the same week last year.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 2, 2019.
Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-02-2019**

Feature Article/Calendar

May 2-4	Transporation Research Forum 60th Annual Forum	Washington, DC	http://annualforum.trforum.org/
May 8-10	cmdtyExchange Conference by Barchart - Focus on Grain Markets	Chicago, IL	https://www.barchart.com/solutions/cmdty/solutions/insights/exchange
May 13-16	American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) Purchasing and Ingredient Suppliers Conference	Orlando, FL	http://www.afia.org/
May 14-16	Marine Board of the Transportation Research Board Spring Meeting	Paducah, KY	www.trb.org/MarineBoard/Public/MarineBoard.aspx
May 20-22	Waterways Journal Inc., Sixth Annual Inland Marine Expo.	St. Louis, MO	www.inlandmarineexpo.com
May 23	Inland Waterways Users Board	New Orleans, LA	https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/04/25/2019-08265/inland-waterways-users-board-meeting-notice
June 2-5	17th National Transportation Planning Applications Conference	Portland, OR	https://www.cvent.com/events/17th-trb-transportation-planning-applications-conference/registration
June 2-5	Institute of Food Technologists Annual Meeting and Food Expo	New Orleans, LA	http://www.ift.org/Meetings-and-Events/Calendar/Events/2019/Jun/IFT19-Feed-Your-Future.aspx
June 11-12	IGC Grains Conference 2019	London, U.K.	http://www.igc.int/en/conference/registration/regform.aspx
June 11-14	Agriculture Transportation Coalition 31st Annual Meeting	Tacoma, WA	https://agtrans.org/events/
June 15-19	ASTA's Policy & Leadership Development Conference	Denver, CO	https://www.betterseed.org/events/asta-policy-leadership-development-conference/
June 16-19	15th International Rapeseed Congress	Berlin, Germany	https://www.irc2019-berlin.com/registration/conditions-of-participation
June 19-21	Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Assn.	Whitefish, MT	http://www.pnwgfa.org/
June 23-26	2019 AOSCA Annual Meeting	Chicago, IL	https://www.aosca.org/2018-meetings-aosca-other-organizations/2019-aosca-annual-meeting/
June 25-27	International Oil Mill Supt. Association	St. Louis, MO	https://iomsa.org/
June 26 - July 3	32nd Congress of the International Seed Testing Association	Hyderabad, India	https://www.seedtest.org/en/home.html
July 11-13	Florida Feed Association Annual Meeting	Longboat Key, FL	https://floridafeed.com
July 21-26	International Wheat Congress	Saskatoon, Canada	https://2019iwc.ca/registration/
July 24-26	NGFA/GJ CONVEY '19 Conference	Kansas City, MO	https://www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/convey/
August 7-9	Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association, 2019 Annual Seminar	New Orleans, LA	www.gicaonline.com

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
For the week ending		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
05/01/19	213	299	224	214	189	163
04/24/19	211	316	225	210	188	163

[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	4/26/2019	4/18/2019
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.70	-0.74
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.71	-0.75
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.10	-1.10
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.52	-1.52
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.56	-1.61

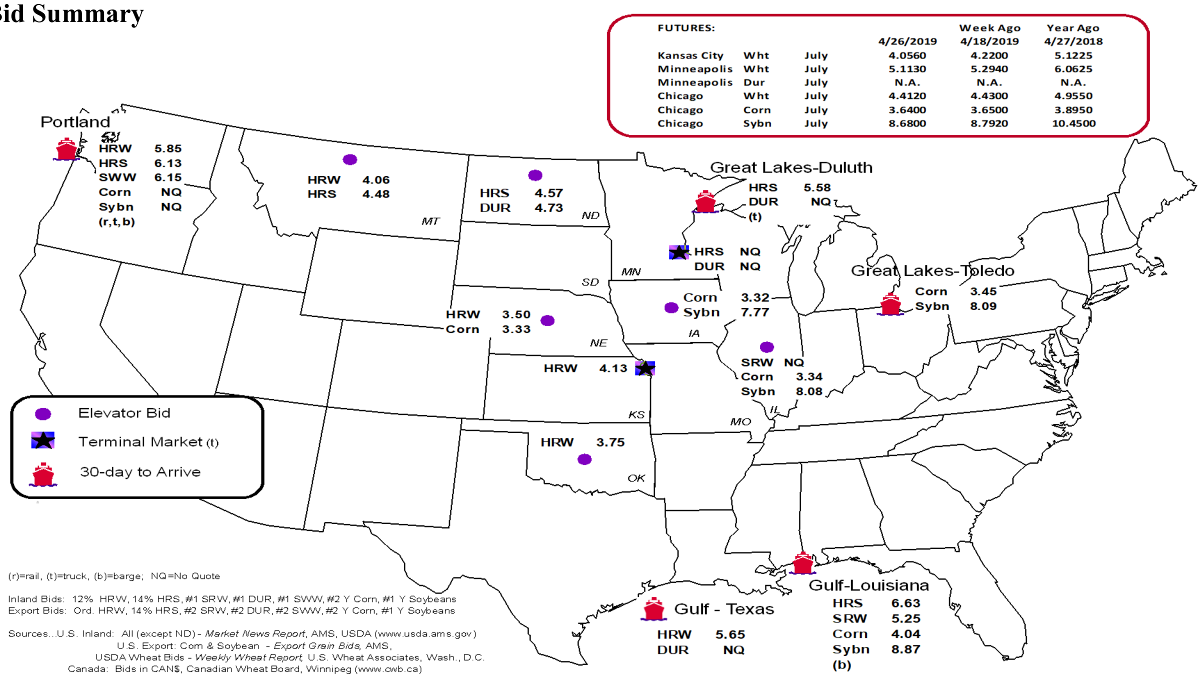
Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available

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]
4/24/2019[p]	925	1,235	6,015	190	8,365	4/20/2019	2,911
4/17/2019[r]	1,028	1,602	6,009	421	9,060	4/13/2019	2,059
2019 YTD[r]	13,865	19,655	96,109	6,124	135,753	2019 YTD	36,109
2018 YTD[r]	7,106	26,455	109,025	6,860	149,446	2018 YTD	28,847
2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	195	74	88	89	91	% change YTD	125
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	340	111	96	41	102	Last 4wks % 2018	106
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	503	95	116	75	120	Last 4wks % 4 yr	100
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.

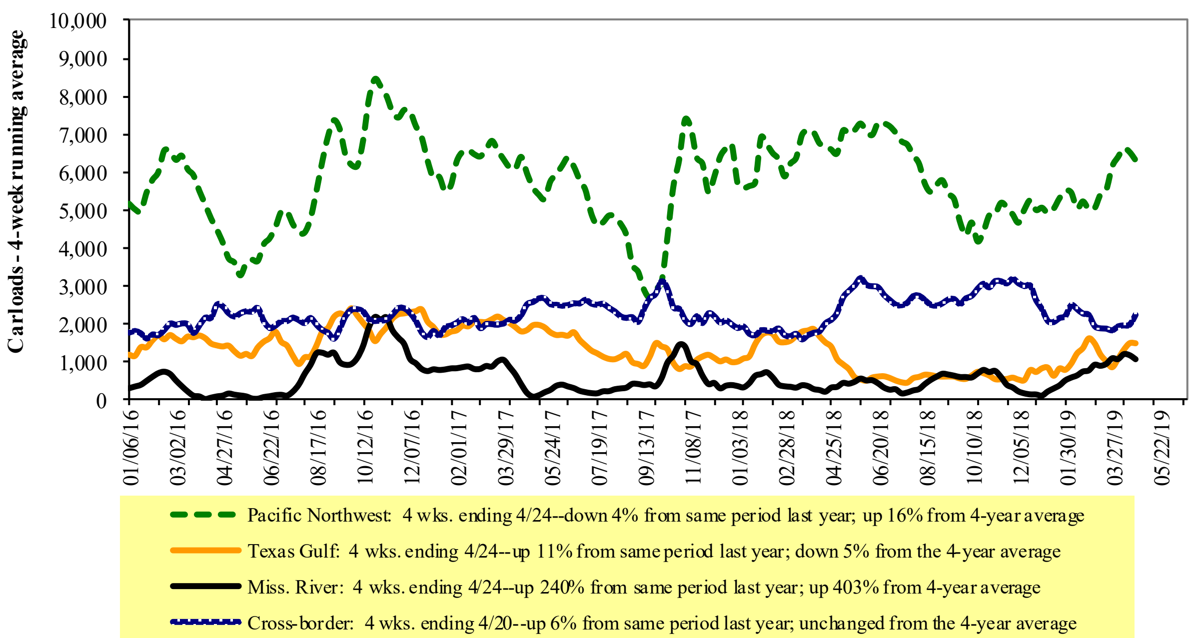
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

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	
4/20/2019	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,906	3,022	13,337	851	5,654	24,770	5,468	4,716
This week last year	2,359	2,585	14,017	1,080	5,893	25,934	4,291	4,740
2019 YTD	31,610	43,411	170,957	18,159	81,596	345,733	69,148	67,429
2018 YTD	30,419	38,976	195,978	14,878	83,974	364,225	57,989	70,261
2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	104	111	87	122	97	95	119	96
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018*	95	118	83	135	98	93	132	106
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.**	107	108	98	137	97	101	136	110
Total 2018	98,978	133,170	635,458	48,638	267,713	1,183,957	211,831	244,697

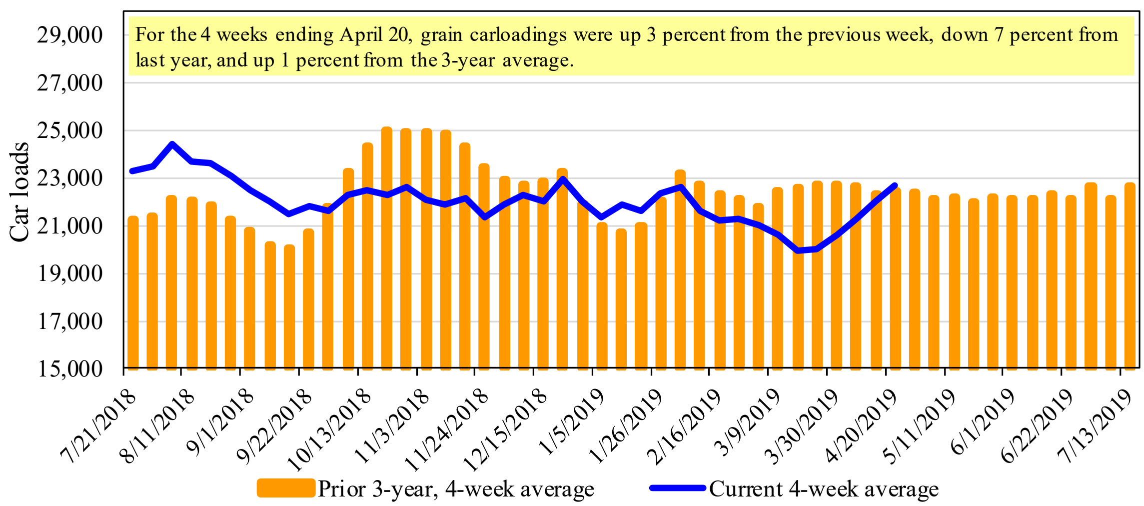
*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

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

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

Figure 3

Total Weekly U.S. Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings



Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 5

Railcar Auction Offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

For the week ending: 4/25/2019		May-19	May-18	Jun-19	Jun-18	Jul-19	Jul-18	Aug-19	Aug-18
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	no offer	0	15	0	0	no bids	19	0
	COT grain single-car[5]	no offer	306	326	7	201	2	159	0
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	n/a	n/a

Delivery period

[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.

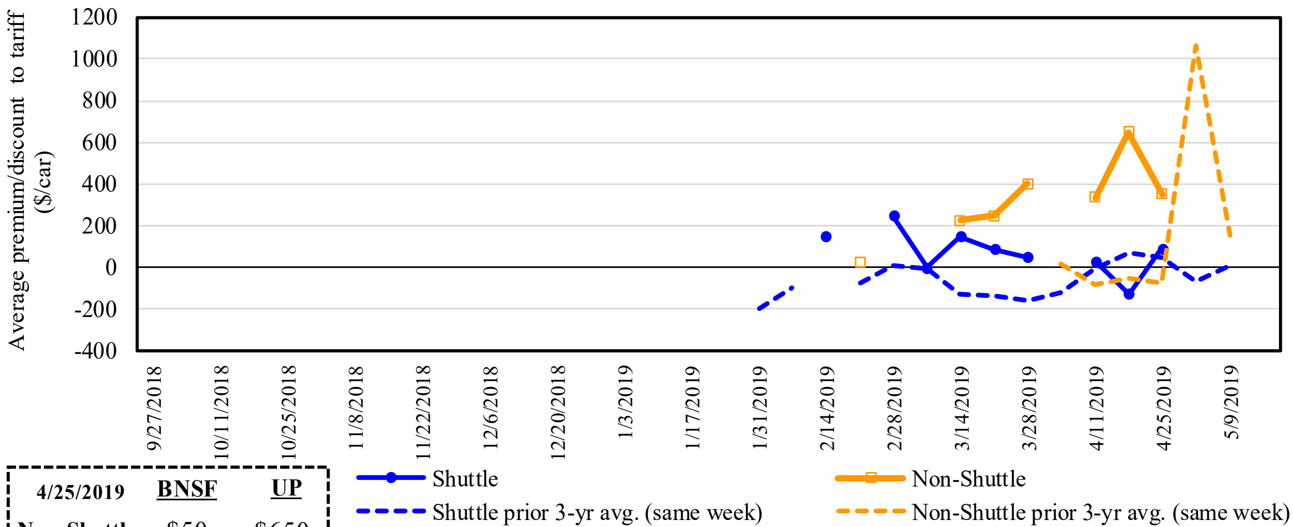
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

[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 May 2019, Secondary Market

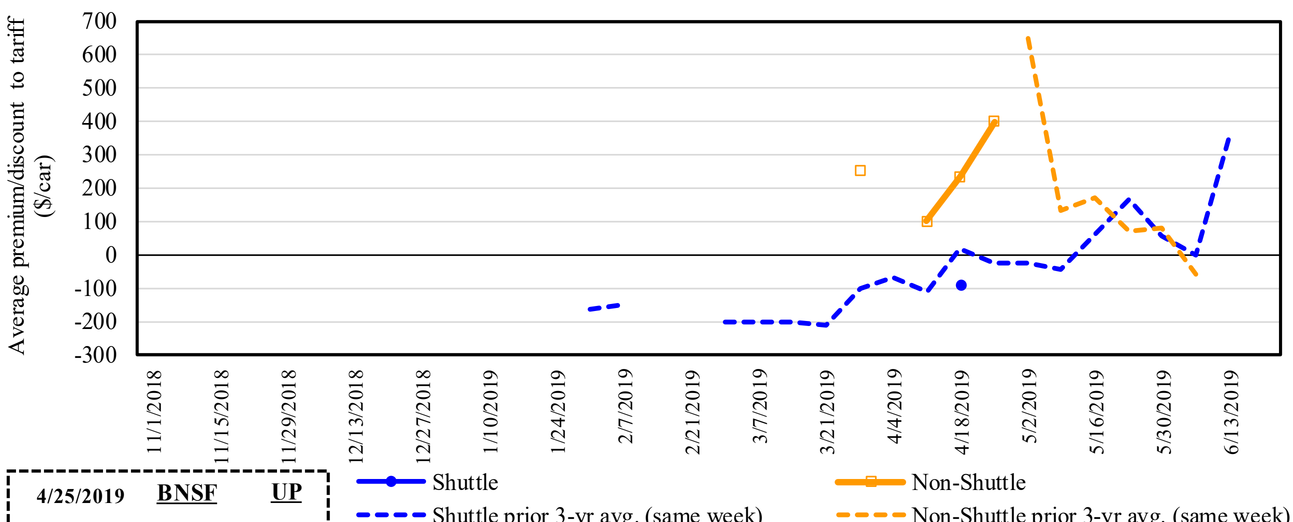


4/25/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$50	$650
Shuttle	$71	$113

Average Non-shuttle bids/offers fell $300 this week, and are $300 below the peak.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $217 this week and are $158 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 June 2019, Secondary Market



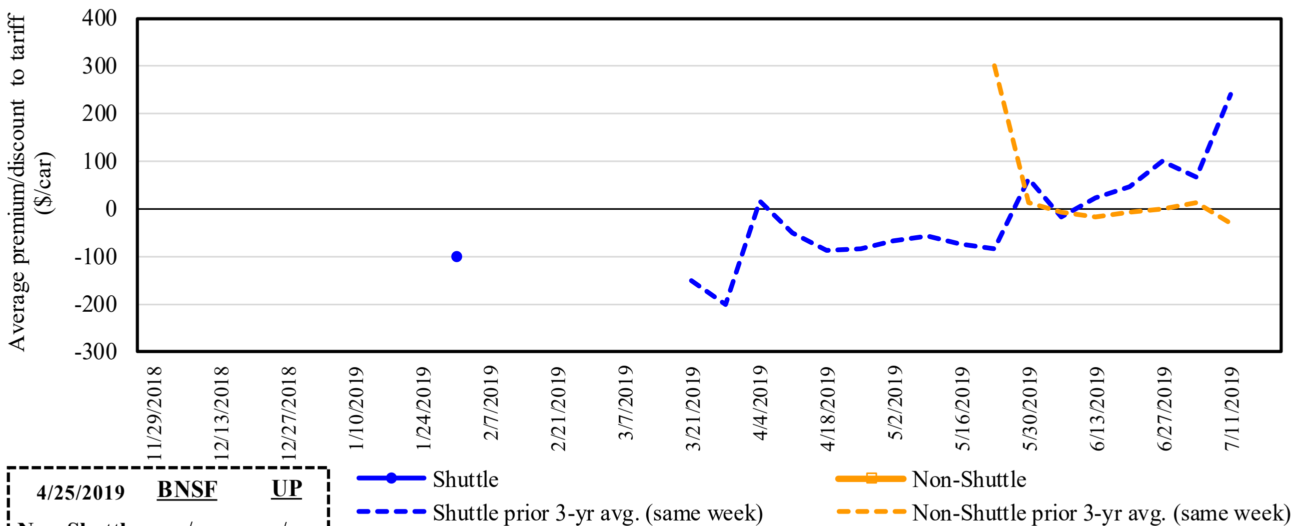
4/25/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	$400	n/a
Shuttle	n/a	n/a

Average Non-shuttle bids/offers rose $166 this week, and are at the peak.
There were no Shuttle bids/offers this week.

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 July 2019, Secondary Market



4/25/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	n/a	n/a

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
There were no Shuttle bids/offers this week.

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: 4/25/2019	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19
Non-shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**50**	**400**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	n/a	331	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	**650**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	0	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**	**71**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	171	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(929)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**113**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	263	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(88)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Delivery period: May-19 through Oct-19.

[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]

May, 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	$101	$40.56	$1.10	3
	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	$178	$46.85	$1.28	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,911	$0	$68.63	$1.87	2
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,816	$195	$49.76	$1.35	0
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,121	$271	$53.55	$1.46	2
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,000	$201	$41.72	$1.06	2
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,581	$0	$65.35	$1.66	4
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,258	$43	$22.85	$0.58	0
	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	$125	$37.08	$0.94	0
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,327	$365	$56.52	$1.44	1
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$4,131	$194	$42.95	$1.17	1
	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	$201	$49.12	$1.34	0
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	$320	$61.88	$1.68	2
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	$201	$39.73	$1.01	2
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,880	$0	$38.53	$0.98	5
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$4,060	$157	$41.88	$1.06	3
	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	$232	$49.72	$1.35	0
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,634	$0	$46.02	$1.25	6
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,710	$327	$59.95	$1.63	1

[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: May, 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	$139	$70.32	$1.91	2
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,371	$424	$79.65	$2.17	2
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,329	$85	$45.10	$1.23	1
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,528	$373	$90.95	$2.31	4
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,880	$0	$80.51	$2.04	2
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,207	$291	$86.83	$2.20	3
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,905	$0	$70.55	$1.79	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,573	$284	$80.28	$2.04	3
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,480	$0	$76.43	$1.94	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,284	$346	$88.18	$2.40	3
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$8,842	$374	$94.16	$2.56	3
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,110	$0	$93.08	$2.53	2
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,714	$271	$81.58	$2.22	4
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,527	$340	$80.38	$2.04	3
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$8,000	$174	$83.52	$2.12	2
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,633	$140	$69.20	$1.76	3
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,962	$255	$73.74	$1.87	3

[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

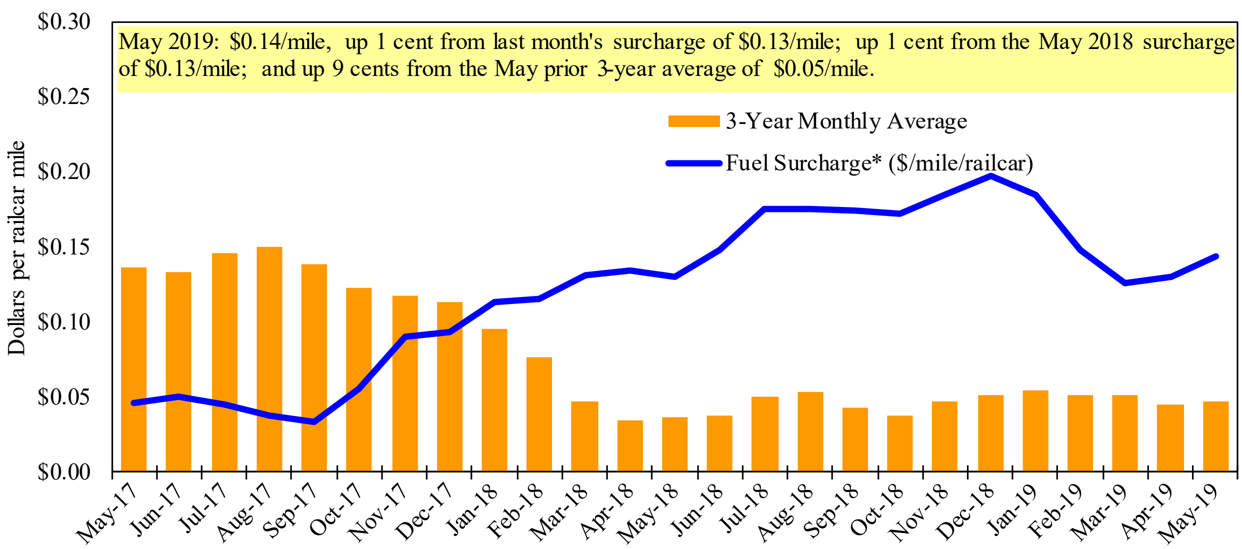
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

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

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

Figure 7

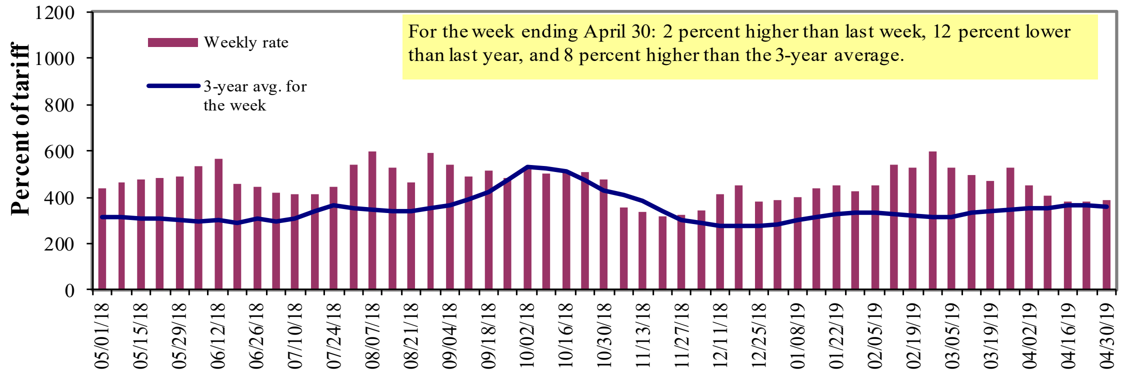
Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average[1]



[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]	4/30/2019	-	-	385	272	278	278	262
	4/23/2019	-	-	378	278	293	293	275
$/ton	4/30/2019	-	-	17.86	10.85	13.04	11.23	8.23
	4/23/2019	-	-	17.54	11.09	13.74	11.84	8.64
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-	-12	-22	-29	-29	-22
	3-year avg. [2]	-	-	8	-2	-4	-5	3
Rate[1]	June	417	392	380	277	283	288	267
	August	451	417	407	307	346	346	282

[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 Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 9
Benchmark tariff rates

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

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

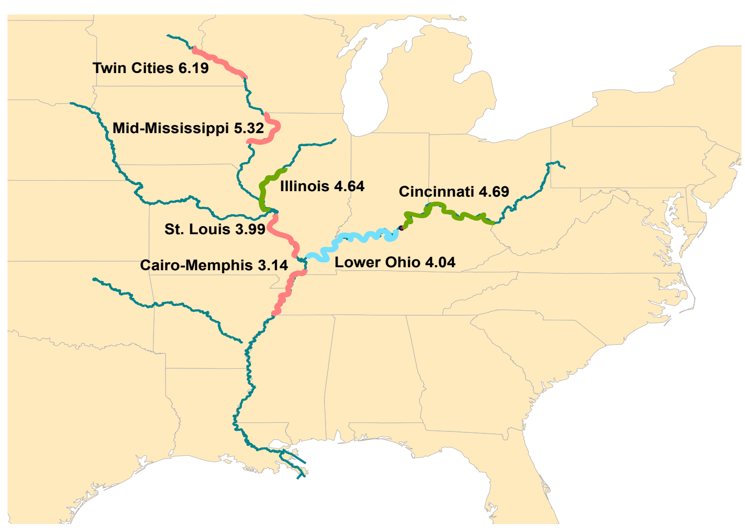
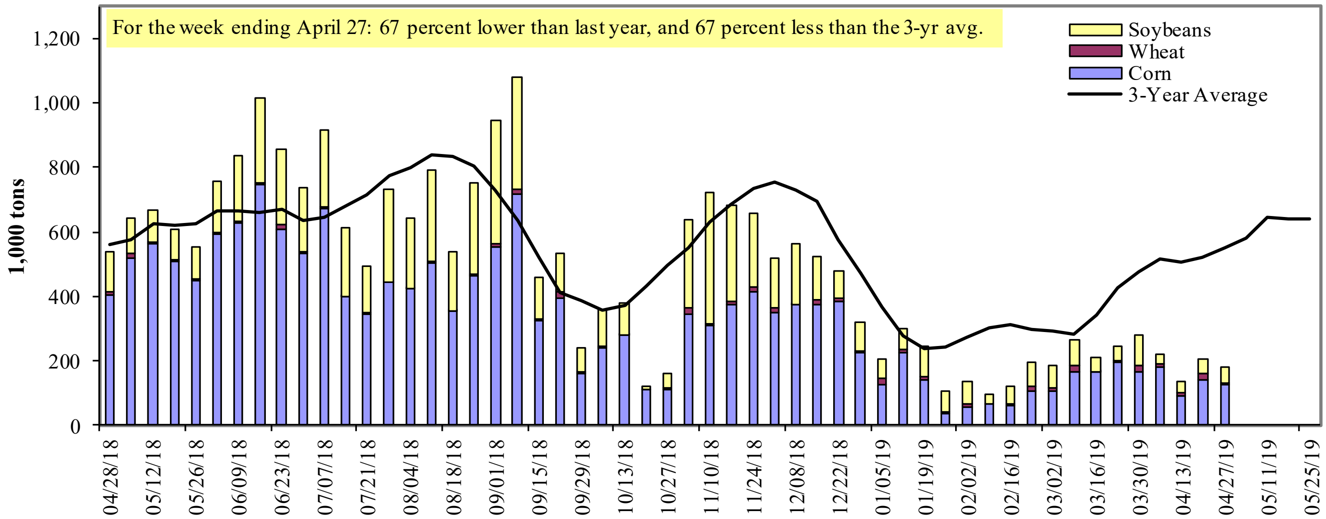


Figure 10

Barge Movements on the Mississippi River[1] (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)



[1] The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

For the week ending 04/27/2019	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	34	0	8	0	42
Alton, IL (L26)	133	6	61	0	201
Granite City, IL (L27)	126	6	47	0	179
Illinois River (L8)	121	5	51	0	176
Ohio River (OLMSTED)	118	2	74	0	195
Arkansas River (L1)	0	25	25	0	51
Weekly total - 2019	244	33	147	0	424
Weekly total - 2018	525	29	179	6	739
2019 YTD[1]	3,987	763	3,166	46	7,962
2018 YTD[1]	5,796	502	3,491	53	9,842
2019 as % of 2018 YTD	69	152	91	87	81
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	62	135	76	103	69
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.

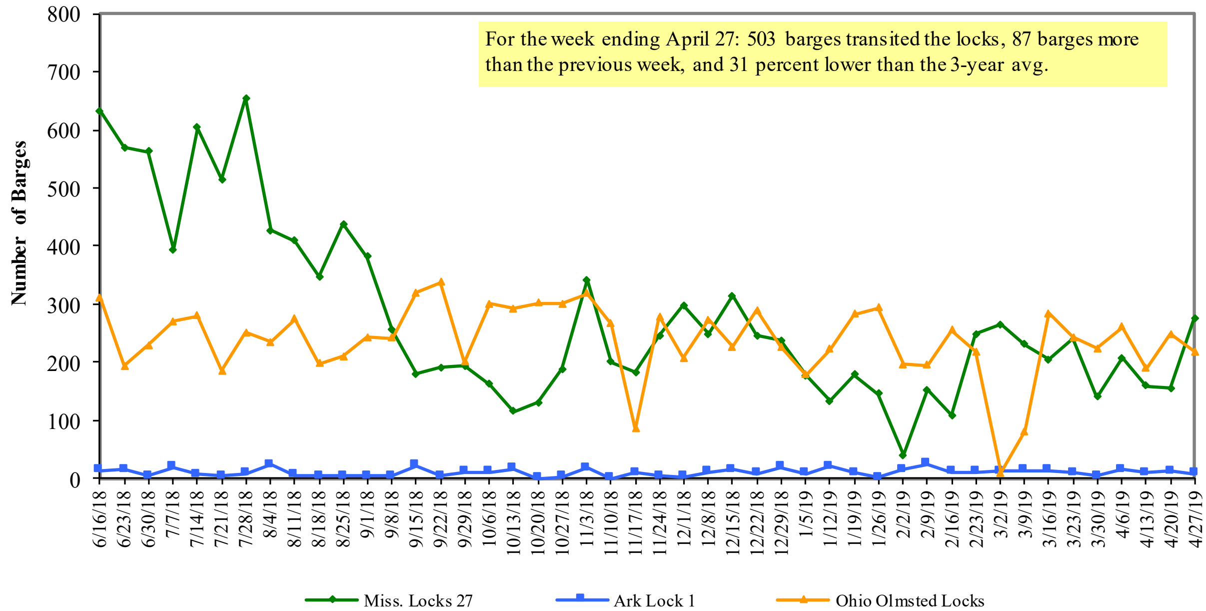
[2] As a percent of same period in 2018.

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

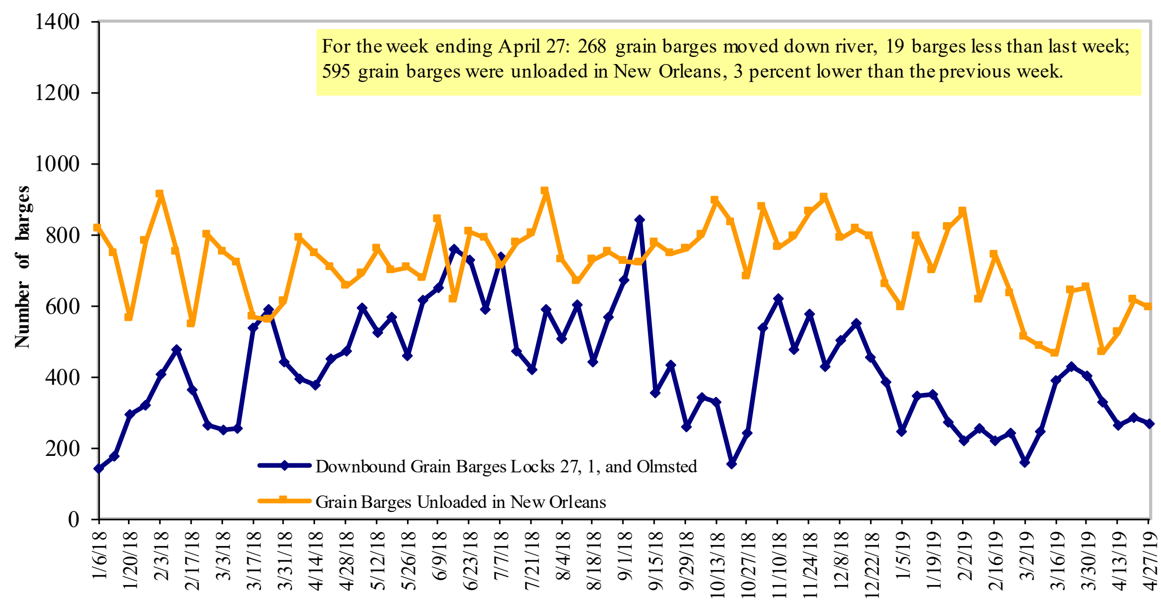
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam



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 AMS FGIS

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 4/29/2019 (US $/gallon)

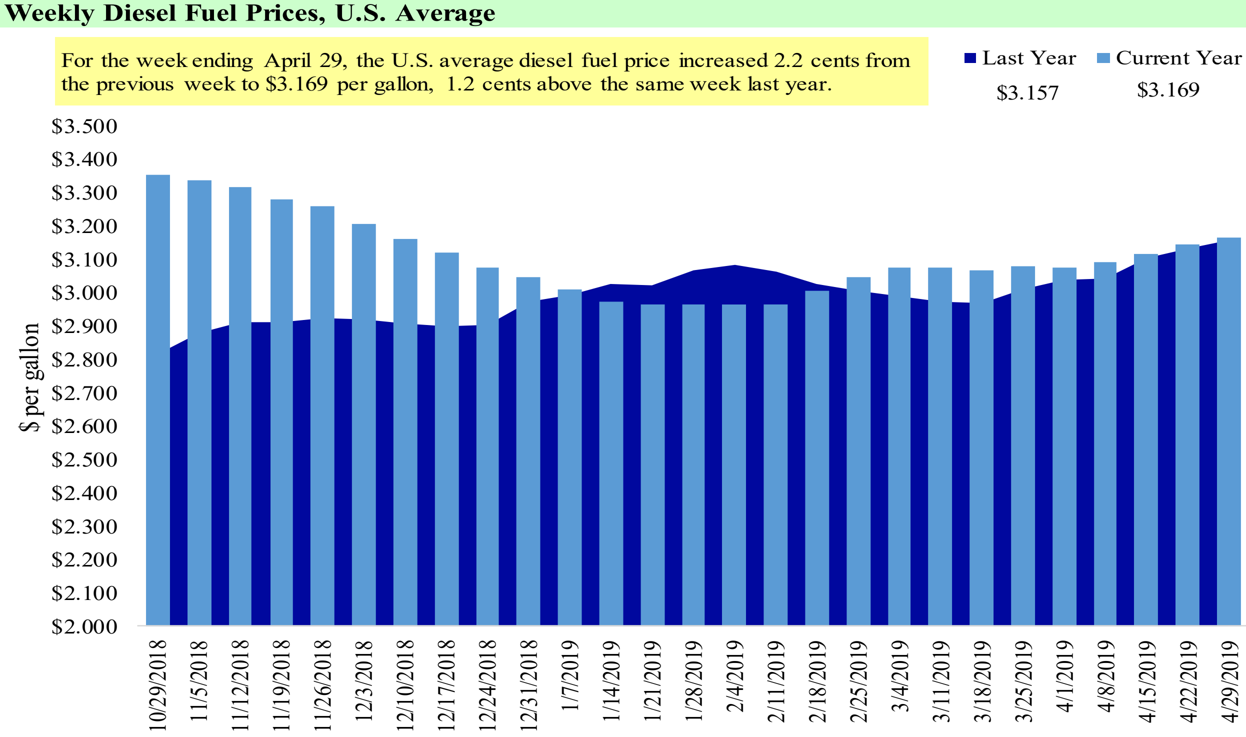
Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.194	0.020	0.032
	New England	3.236	0.019	0.033
	Central Atlantic	3.385	0.015	0.064
	Lower Atlantic	3.057	0.024	0.015
II	Midwest	3.058	0.016	-0.025
III	Gulf Coast	2.939	0.022	-0.007
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.183	0.040	-0.032
V	West Coast	3.730	0.034	0.090
	West Coast less California	3.346	0.037	-0.048
	California	4.035	0.032	0.201
Total	U.S.	3.169	0.022	0.012

[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	Wheat SRW	Wheat HRS	Wheat SWW	Wheat DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
4/18/2019	2,366	772	1,136	905	67	5,245	11,974	13,128	30,347
This week year ago	662	386	1,071	738	43	2,901	20,546	11,560	35,006
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2018/19 YTD	6,839	2,567	5,797	4,476	416	20,095	33,497	31,759	85,351
2017/18 YTD	8,497	2,062	4,982	4,478	351	20,368	29,370	42,794	92,532
YTD 2018/19 as % of 2017/18	80	125	116	100	119	99	114	74	92
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2017/18	373	220	120	135	202	196	61	114	90
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

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 4/18/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2018/19 Current MY	Total Commitments[2] 2017/18 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			
Mexico	14,574	12,735	14	13,691
Japan	10,069	9,194	10	11,247
Korea	3,618	4,049	(11)	4,754
Colombia	3,898	3,657	7	4,678
Peru	1,995	2,532	(21)	2,975
Top 5 Importers	**34,154**	**32,166**	**6**	**37,344**
Total US corn export sales	**45,471**	**49,916**	**(9)**	**53,184**
% of Projected	78%	80%		
Change from prior week[2]	**780**	**631**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	75%	64%		70%
USDA forecast, April 2019	**58,524**	**62,036**	**(6)**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, April 2019	**139,700**	**142,367**	**(2)**	

(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

Table 14

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

For the week ending 4/18/2019	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	13,134	28,867	(55)	31,228
Mexico	4,659	3,923	19	3,716
Indonesia	1,824	1,906	(4)	2,250
Japan	2,142	1,838	16	2,145
Netherlands	1,828	1,267	44	2,209
Top 5 importers	**23,585**	**37,802**	**(38)**	**41,549**
Total US soybean export sales	**44,887**	**54,354**	**(17)**	**55,113**
% of Projected	88%	94%		
Change from prior week[2]	**595**	**371**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	53%	70%		**75%**
USDA forecast, April 2019	**51,090**	**58,011**	**88**	

(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)

Table 15

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

For the week ending 4/18/2019	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	3,220	2,876	12	2,781
Japan	2,740	2,898	(5)	2,649
Philippines	3,087	2,582	20	2,441
Korea	1,562	1,435	9	1,257
Nigeria	1,591	1,188	34	1,254
Indonesia	1,322	1,130	17	1,076
Taiwan	1,107	1,134	(2)	1,066
China	42	894	(95)	944
Colombia	654	359	82	714
Thailand	748	664	13	618
Top 10 importers	**16,073**	**15,160**	6	**14,800**
Total US wheat export sales	**25,340**	**23,269**	**9**	**22,869**
% of Projected	98%	95%		
Change from prior week[2]	**425**	**297**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	63%	65%		65%
USDA forecast, April 2019	**25,749**	**24,550**	**5**	

(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.

Table 16

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

Port Regions	For the Week Ending 04/25/19	Previous Week*	Current Week as % of Previous	2019 YTD*	2018 YTD*	2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last Year	Last 4-weeks as % of: Prior 3-yr. avg.	2018 Total*
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	314	401	78	4,428	3,960	112	106	108	13,315
Corn	490	377	130	4,287	6,542	66	72	101	20,024
Soybeans	0	71	0	4,018	3,877	104	192	166	7,719
Total	**804**	**849**	**95**	**12,733**	**14,379**	**89**	**93**	**111**	**41,058**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	172	117	147	1,715	1,479	116	119	114	3,896
Corn	659	745	88	9,199	10,675	86	73	86	33,735
Soybeans	417	132	315	8,455	8,525	99	114	107	28,124
Total	**1,248**	**994**	**126**	**19,369**	**20,679**	**94**	**84**	**94**	**65,755**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	92	242	38	2,074	1,512	137	225	175	3,198
Corn	33	33	100	244	216	113	114	128	730
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	69
Total	**125**	**275**	**45**	**2,318**	**1,728**	**134**	**198**	**166**	**3,997**
Interior									
Wheat	39	80	49	561	491	114	168	166	1,614
Corn	160	169	95	2,287	2,520	91	83	87	8,650
Soybeans	95	193	49	2,146	2,048	105	105	133	6,729
Total	**295**	**442**	**67**	**4,994**	**5,060**	**99**	**98**	**110**	**16,993**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	46	22	212	110	98	113	102	107	894
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	26	0	0	0	404
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	43	0	n/a	n/a	150	1,192
Total	**46**	**22**	**212**	**153**	**124**	**124**	**102**	**98**	**2,491**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	32	64	51	n/a	355	69
Corn	0	7	0	49	38	132	19	57	138
Soybeans	4	10	44	460	805	57	39	65	2,047
Total	**4**	**17**	**26**	**542**	**906**	**60**	**48**	**81**	**2,253**
U.S. total from ports*									
Wheat	664	862	77	8,921	7,603	117	128	124	22,986
Corn	1,342	1,331	101	16,066	20,017	80	74	91	63,682
Soybeans	517	406	127	15,122	15,255	99	116	120	45,879
Total	**2,523**	**2,600**	**97**	**40,109**	**42,875**	**94**	**92**	**104**	**132,547**

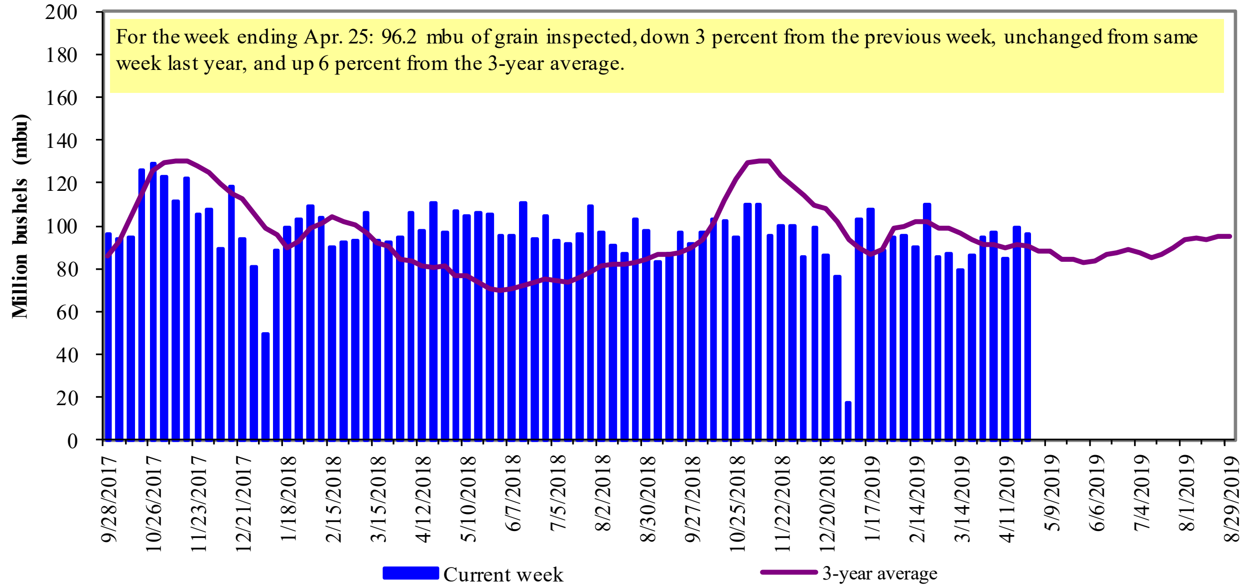
*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source: USDA/Federal Grain Inspection Service (www.gipsa.usda.gov/fgis); 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 53 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2018.

Figure 14

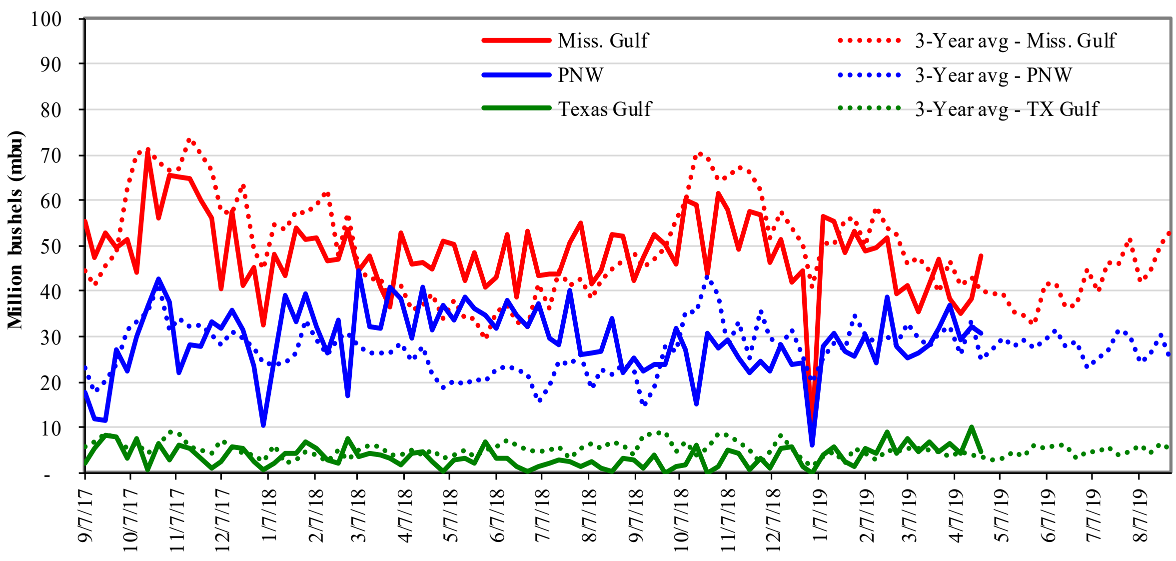
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: USDA/Federal Grain Inspection Service (www.gipsa.usda.gov/fgis)
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 04/25/19 inspections (mbu):		Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf:	47.6	Last Week:	up 24	down 54	up 7	down 4
PNW:	30.8	Last Year (same	up 6	up 91	up 11	down 2
Texas Gulf:	4.7	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov.	up 11	up 21	up 12	up 6

Source: USDA/Federal Grain Inspection Service (www.gipsa.usda.gov/fgis)

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

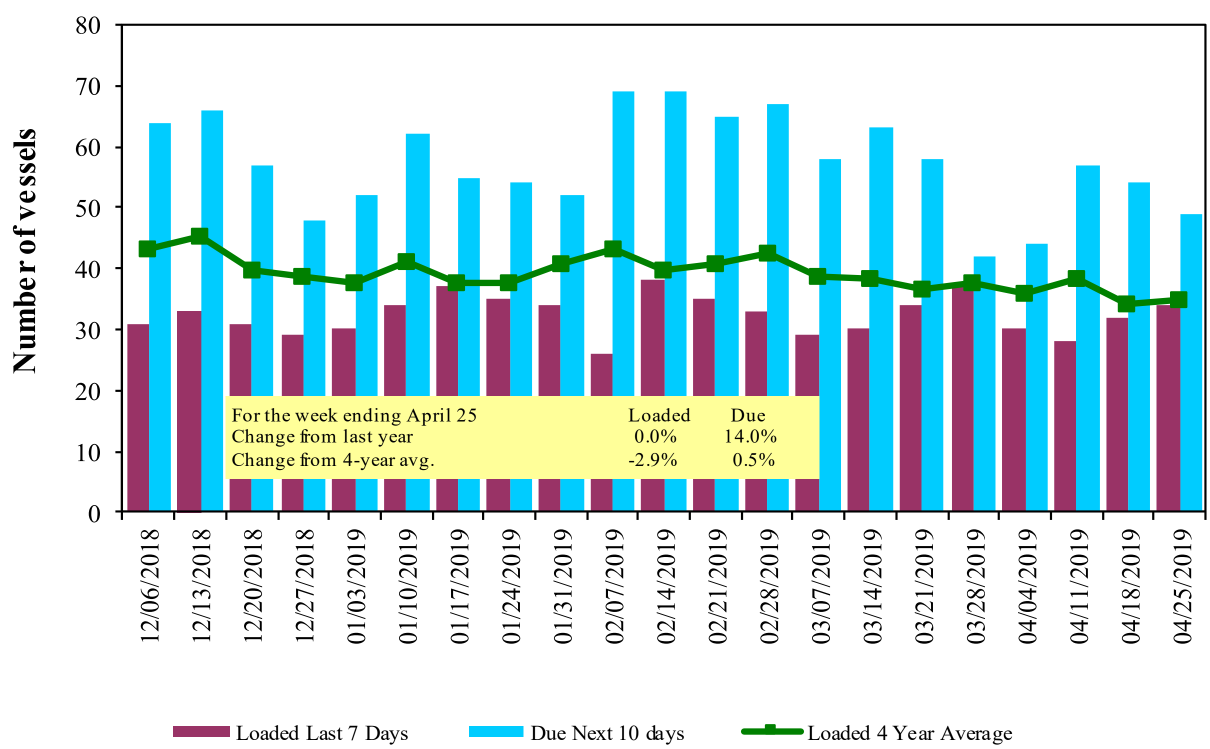
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port
4/25/2019	33	34	49	21
4/18/2019	31	32	54	24
2018 range	(23..88)	(24..41)	(38..67)	(4..30)
2018 avg.	40	34	54	17

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

U.S. Gulf Vessel Loading Activity

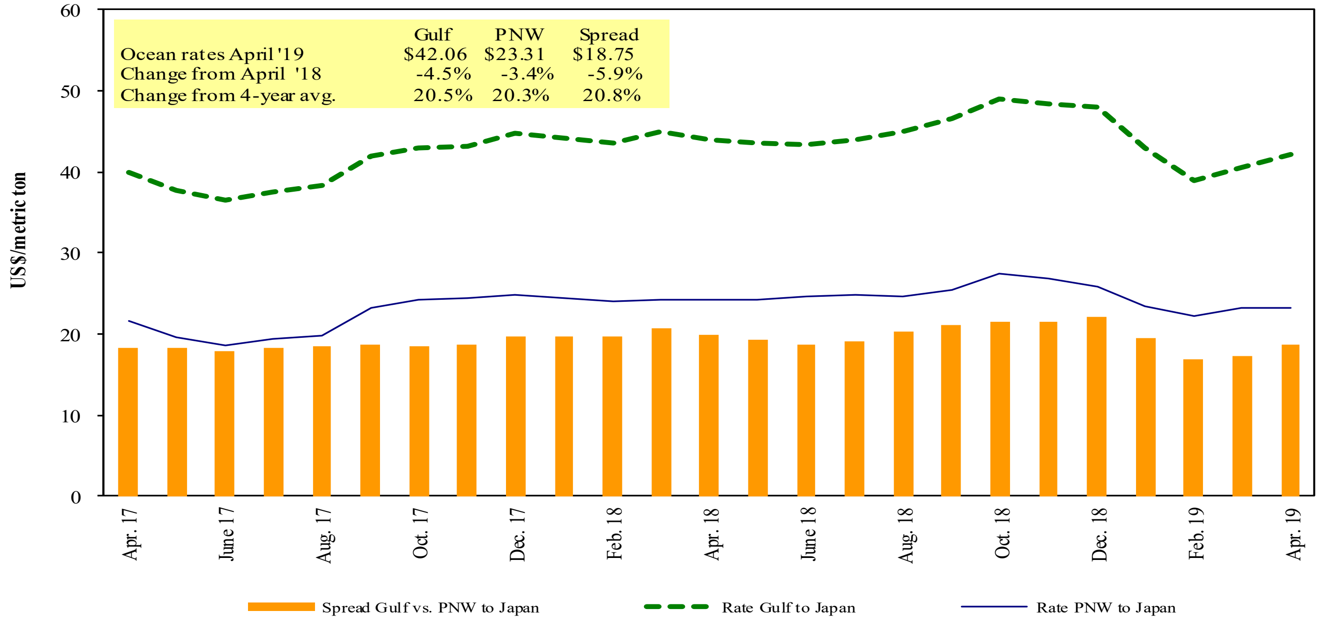


Source: Transportation & Marketing Program/AMS/USDA

[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 04/27/2019

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 1/30	63,000	42.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Mar 15/Apr 15	63,000	40.00
PNW	China	Heavy Grain	Mar 2/18	60,000	27.50
PNW	Oman	Wheat	Feb 18/28	25,000	69.94*
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 20/May 5	63,000	33.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 15/30	63,000	32.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Mar 20/30	66,000	13.30
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Mar 3/11	63,000	27.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 26/Mar 4	66,000	24.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 20/25	65,000	26.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 13/26	60,000	26.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jan 22/30	60,000	29.50
River Plate	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 21/30	65,000	37.85

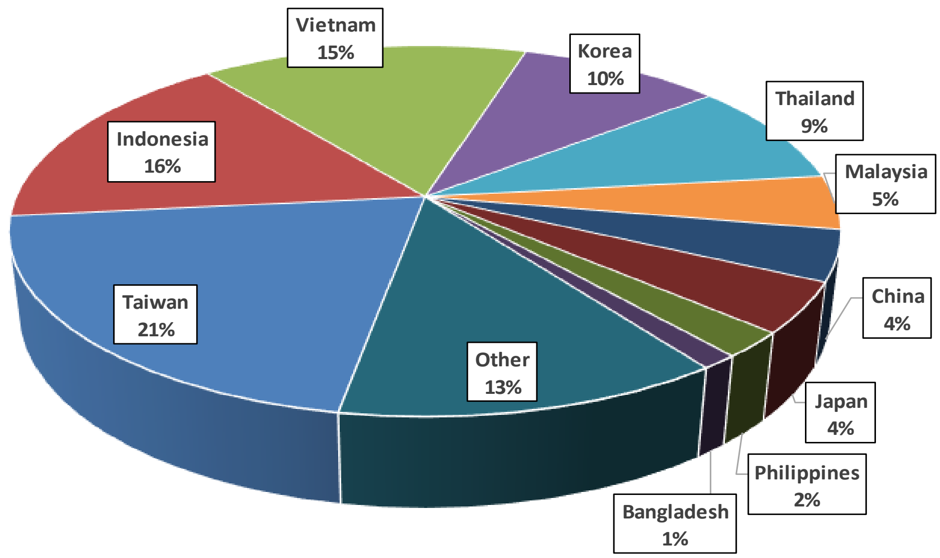
Rates shown are per metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicated; op = option

*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.

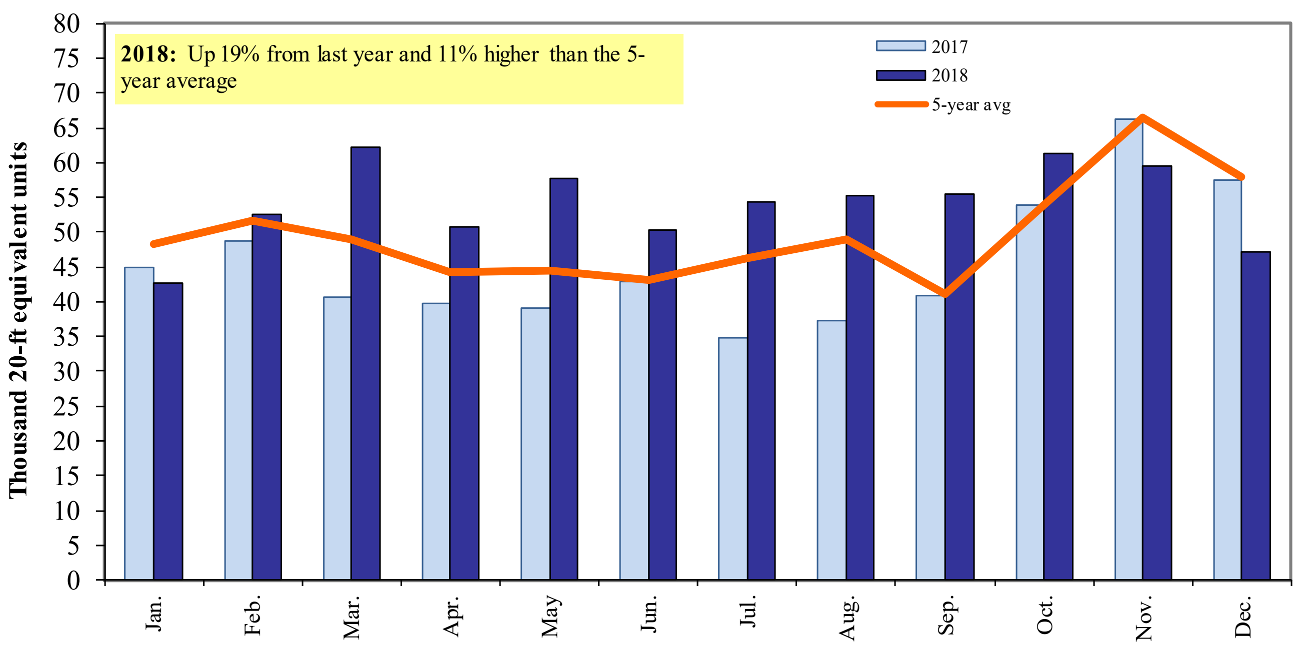
Figure 18
Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, 2018



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: 1001, 100190, 1002, 1003 100300, 1004, 100400, 1005, 100590, 1007, 100700, 1102, 110100, 230310, 110220, 110290, 1201, 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@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Kuo-Liang (Matt) Chang	matt.chang@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Weekly Highlight Editors		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor	april.taylor@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
Grain Transportation Indicators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Rail Transportation		
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Jesse Gastelle	jesse.gastelle@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 1144
Peter Caffarelli	petera.caffarelli@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3244
Barge Transportation		
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
April Taylor	april.taylor@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Kuo-Liang (Matt) Chang	matt.chang@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Truck Transportation		
April Taylor	april.taylor@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Grain Exports		
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Ocean Transportation		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo (Freight rates and vessels)	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor (Container movements)	april.taylor@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880

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

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 2, 2019. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-02-2019**