USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service
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Contents

The next release is August 19, 2021

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

FMC Launches Inquiry Into Ocean Container Carrier Surcharge Practices

On August 4, the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) launched an expedited inquiry into the practices of eight ocean container carriers with respect to certain surcharges. The carriers were asked to provide details confirming that any congestion or related surcharges they "implemented or announced" accorded with legal and regulatory obligations. The carriers have until August 13 to respond. FMC's Bureau of Enforcement (BoE) will review their responses to determine if the carriers implemented the surcharges with proper notice, if they clearly defined the purpose, and if they identified a clear event or condition that would terminate the surcharge. FMC Chair Daniel Maffei stated, "I want to know the carriers' justifications for additional fees and I strongly support close scrutiny by the FMC's Bureau of Enforcement aimed at stopping any instance where these add-on fees may not fully comply with the law or regulation."

Total Grain Inspections Down but Wheat Rebounds

For the week ending August 5, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions totaled 1.41 million metric tons (mmt). Total grain inspections were down 29 percent from the previous week, down 47 percent from last year, and down 38 percent from the 3-year average. Despite the drop in overall grain inspections, wheat inspections rebounded from the previous week, jumping 49 percent as shipments increased mainly to Asia. Wheat inspections were also the highest since mid-May of this year. Inspections of corn and soybeans decreased 52 and 38 percent, respectively, from the previous week primarily due to lower shipments to Asia. Total inspections of grain decreased 14 percent in the Pacific Northwest and 50 percent in the Mississippi Gulf.

FHWA Announces $60 Million Available for Implementing New Transportation Technologies

On July 7, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a notice of funding opportunity for $60 million in available grants through the Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) program. The program's funding helps State and local governments install advanced transportation technologies that can improve safety, efficiency, system performance, and infrastructure return on investment. Grant-receiving projects have targeted the following areas: infrastructure maintenance, monitoring, and condition assessment, transportation system performance data collection, analysis, and dissemination systems. The application information and digital form are available here, and the submission deadline is August 23.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

For the week ending July 29, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 14.1 mmt. This was 10 percent lower than last week and 21 percent lower than the same time last year. Net **corn export sales** were 0.068 mmt, down significantly from the past week. Net **soybean export sales** were 0.012 mmt, significantly down from the previous week. Net weekly **wheat export sales** were 0.308 mmt, down 40 percent from last week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 18,231 **grain carloads** during the week ending July 31. This was a 12-percent decrease from the previous week, 14 percent less than last year, and 19 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Average August shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers (per car) were $47 below tariff for the week ending August 5. This was $104 less than last week and $334 lower than this week last year. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.

Barge

For the week ending August 7, **barged grain movements** totaled 544,418 tons. This was 16 percent lower than the previous week and 39 percent less than the same period last year.

For the week ending August 7, 359 grain barges **moved down river**—98 fewer barges than the previous week. There were 580 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, 11 percent fewer than the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending August 5, 26 **oceangoing grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf—28 percent fewer than the same period last year. Within the next 10 days (starting August 6), 43 vessels were expected to be loaded—7 percent fewer than the same period last year.

As of August 5, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was $79.00. This was 2 percent less than the previous week. The rate from PNW to Japan was $43.00 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

Fuel

For the week ending August 9, the U.S. average **diesel fuel price** decreased 0.3 cents from the previous week to $3.364 per gallon, 93.6 cents above the same week last year.

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Feature Article/Calendar

Landed Costs of Grain to Mexico Continued Rising in Second Quarter 2021

Given Mexico's status as a leading importer of U.S. grain (see ***GTR* tables 13, 14 and 15**), low transportation and landed costs for U.S.-Mexico routes are vital to the competitiveness of U.S. grain in Mexico and globally. U.S. grain is transported to Mexico either by cross-border land movements or by sea movements to Mexican ports for inland distribution. This article examines the costs of transporting U.S. grain to Mexico over land to Guadalajara (land routes) and by sea to Veracruz (water routes), tracking changes over time (see table).

Table 1. Quarterly costs of transporting U.S. grain to Veracruz and Guadalajara, Mexico

	Water route (to Veracruz) $/metric ton					Land route (to Guadalajara) $/metric ton				
	2020 2nd qtr.	2021 1st qtr.	2021 2nd qtr.	Percent change Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.	2020 2nd qtr.	2021 1st qtr.	2021 2nd qtr.	Percent change Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.
Corn										
Origin			**IL**					**IA**		
Truck	9.70	13.66	13.99	44.2	2.4	3.83	4.88	4.98	30.0	2.0
Rail [1]						94.48	95.30	96.73	2.4	1.5
Barge[2]	14.53	20.87	17.29	19.0	-17.2					
Ocean[3]	12.41	19.19	23.75	91.4	23.8					
Total transportation cost	36.64	53.72	55.03	50.2	2.4	98.31	100.18	101.71	3.5	1.5
Farm value[4]	126.11	180.44	229.91	82.3	27.4	124.80	185.82	230.57	84.8	24.1
Landed cost[5]	162.75	234.16	284.94	75.1	21.7	223.11	286.00	332.28	48.9	16.2
Transport % of landed cost	23	23	19			44	35	31		
Soybeans										
Origin			**IL**					**NE**		
Truck	9.70	13.66	13.99	44.2	2.4	3.83	4.88	4.98	30.0	2.0
Rail						97.15	97.77	99.21	2.1	1.5
Barge	14.53	20.87	17.29	19.0	-17.2					
Ocean	12.41	19.19	23.75	91.4	23.8					
Total transportation cost	36.64	53.72	55.03	50.2	2.4	100.98	102.65	104.19	3.2	1.5
Farm value	309.87	442.15	527.88	70.4	19.4	295.05	445.82	519.31	76.0	16.5
Landed cost	346.51	495.87	582.91	68.2	17.6	396.03	548.47	623.50	57.4	13.7
Transport % of landed cost	11	11	9			25	19	17		
Wheat										
Origin			**KS**					**KS**		
Truck	3.83	4.88	4.98	30.0	2.0	3.83	4.88	4.98	30.0	2.0
Rail	43.31	42.07	42.07	-2.9	0.0	81.10	81.72	83.37	2.8	2.0
Ocean	12.41	19.19	23.75	91.4	23.8					
Total transportation cost	59.55	66.14	70.80	18.9	7.0	84.93	86.60	88.35	4.0	2.0
Farm value	162.65	215.20	227.44	39.8	5.7	162.65	215.20	227.44	39.8	5.7
Landed cost	222.20	281.34	298.24	34.2	6.0	247.58	301.80	315.79	27.6	4.6
Transport % of landed cost	27	24	24			34	29	28		

[1]Rail rates include U.S. and Mexico portions of the movement. Mexico rail rates are estimated based on actual quoted market rates. BNSF and Union Pacific quoted rail tariff rates are through rates for shuttle trains. Rail rates include fuel surcharges, but do not include the cost of purchasing empty rail cars in the secondary market, which could exceed the rail tariff rate plus fuel surcharge shown in the table.

[2]Due to the closure of several lock and dam facilities on Illinois River between July 1 and October 27, 2020, mid-Mississippi barge rate was substituted for Illinois rate as the benchmark for calculating cost index during the closures.

[3]Source for ocean freight rates: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

[4]Source for farm values: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

[5]Landed cost is total transportation cost plus farm value.

Note: Total may not add exactly because of rounding.

Source: Compiled by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Quarter-to-quarter transportation costs. Total transportation costs for U.S. corn, soybeans, and wheat increased from first quarter 2021 to second quarter 2021 (quarter to quarter). Water-route shipping costs increased with higher truck and ocean freight rates.[1] Land-route shipping costs rose with higher rates for truck and rail (public tariff, plus fuel surcharge). Ocean freight rates continued to rise, in part, as a result of the sustained global optimism sparked by major economies' reopening

[1] Water routes typically involve truck transportation to barge to oceangoing vessel, or truck to rail to oceangoing vessel.

early in the year. There was also upward pressure on ocean rates because of increased demand due to expansionary economic policies (e.g., stimulus packages) and tighter vessel supply due to congestion. For example, China's infrastructure policy has continued to create a rise in construction activities, generating a strong demand for iron ore (*Drewry Maritime Research, Inc.*). Truck rates rose at least partly because of higher diesel fuel prices and increased demand for trucking services, especially in grain-producing regions (***GTR* fig. 13**). Rail rates increased at least partly because of higher fuel surcharges (***GTR* fig. 7**).

Year-to-year transportation costs. From second quarter 2020 to second quarter 2021 (year to year), total costs of shipping all grain (U.S. corn, soybeans, and wheat) to Mexico by the water routes rose because of higher truck, barge, and ocean rates. Likewise, total costs of shipping all grain to Mexico by the land routes rose because of higher truck and rail tariff rates.

Quarter-to-quarter landed costs. Quarter to quarter, landed costs increased for all grains shipped via the water and land routes. For both shipping options, landed costs rose with higher transport costs and higher farm values (table 1 and figs. 1 and 2). The transportation share of landed costs ranged from 9 percent to 24 percent for the water routes and from 17 percent to 31 percent for the land routes (see table).

Year-to-year landed costs. Year to year, landed costs increased for both waterborne and land-route corn, soybeans, and wheat because of higher transportation costs and farm values.

U.S. Exports to Mexico. According to USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, Mexico imported 4.40 mmt of U.S. corn, 0.84 mmt of U.S. soybeans, and 1.00 mmt of U.S. wheat in second quarter 2021. Quarter to quarter, U.S. inspections for export to Mexico increased 34 percent for corn, decreased 31 percent for soybeans, and increased 27 percent for wheat. Year to year, U.S. inspections destined to Mexico rose 11 percent for corn, fell 7 percent for soybeans, and rose 43 percent for wheat. Despite the increases in farm prices and transportation costs, total U.S. grain shipments to Mexico have increased quarter to quarter and year to year. However, if transportation costs do fall in the future, the decline will be an added advantage in maintaining U.S. competitiveness in Mexico.

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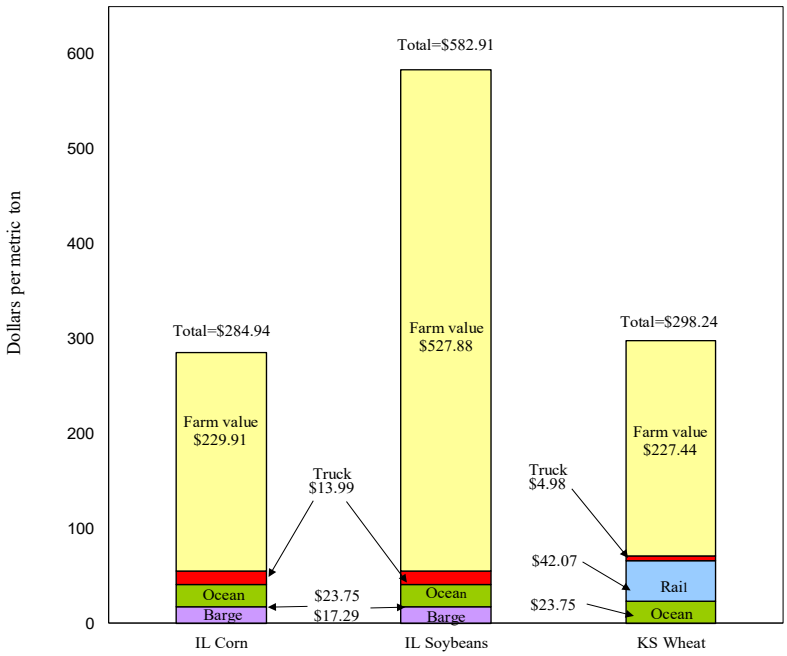
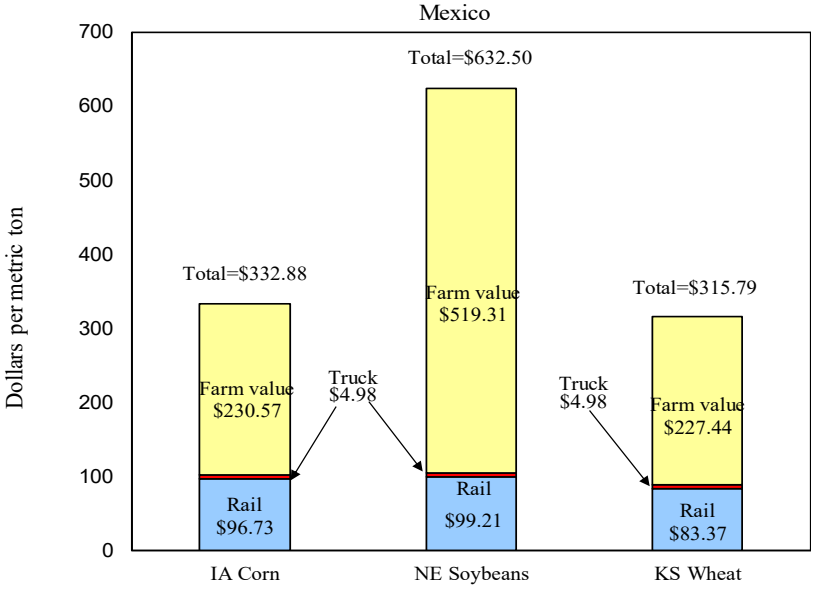
Figure 1. Second-quarter 2021 water-route landed costs to Veracruz, Mexico



Note: IL = Illinois; KS = Kansas.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 2. Second-quarter land-route landed costs to Guadalajara, Mexico



Note: IA = Iowa; NE = Nebraska; KS = Kansas.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain transport cost indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
For the week ending		Non-Shuttle	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
08/11/21	226	290	221	193	353	305
08/04/21	226	290	225	187	362	305

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

Table 2

Market Update: U.S. origins to export position price spreads ($/bushel)

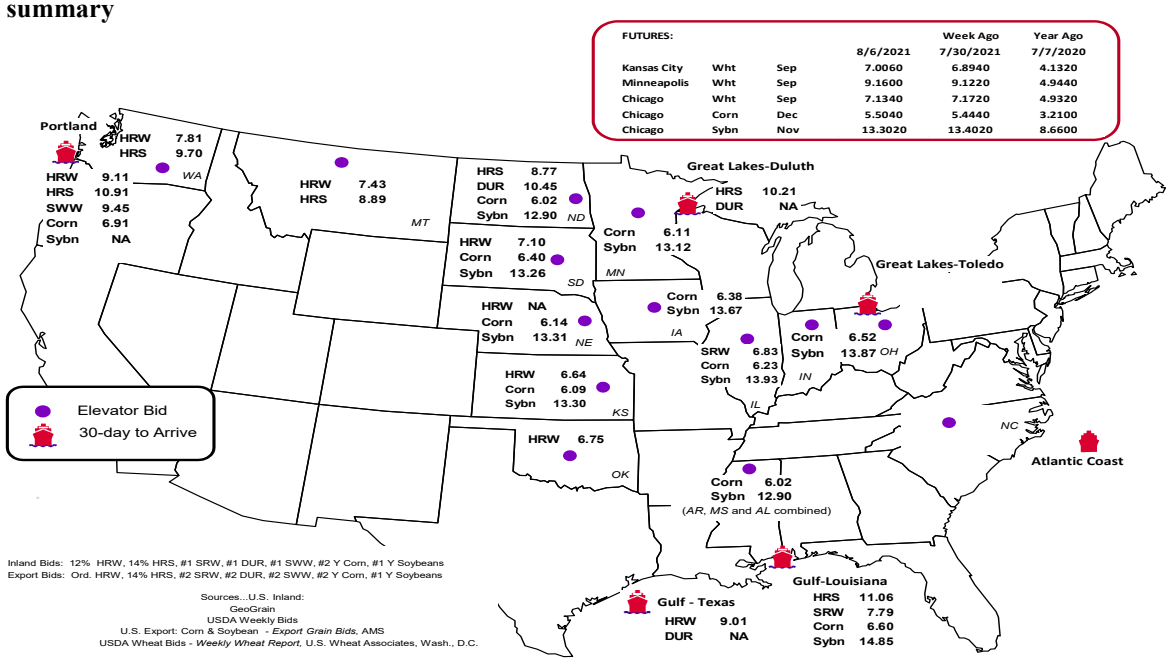
Commodity	Origin–destination	8/6/2021	7/30/2021
Corn	IL–Gulf	-0.37	-0.85
Corn	NE–Gulf	-0.46	-1.08
Soybean	IA–Gulf	-1.18	-0.97
HRW	KS–Gulf	-2.37	-2.35
HRS	ND–Portland	-2.14	-2.09

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

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]
8/04/2021[p]	319	679	3,370	105	4,473	7/31/2021	2,999
7/28/2021[r]	93	581	2,106	0	2,780	7/24/2021	2,852
2021 YTD[r]	35,517	43,108	180,614	9,992	269,231	2021 YTD	85,589
2020 YTD[r]	12,517	26,588	141,363	5,985	186,453	2020 YTD	76,203
2021 YTD as % of 2020 YTD	284	162	128	167	144	% change YTD	112
Last 4 weeks as % of 2020[2]	28	104	84	16	81	Last 4wks. % 2020	95
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	25	97	68	9	66	Last 4wks. % 4 yr.	101
Total 2020	45,294	64,116	299,882	24,458	433,750	Total 2020	126,407
Total 2019	40,974	51,167	251,181	16,192	359,514	Total 2019	127,622

[1]Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided.

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2020 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 Kansas City Southern de Mexico (KCSM) and Grupo Mexico.

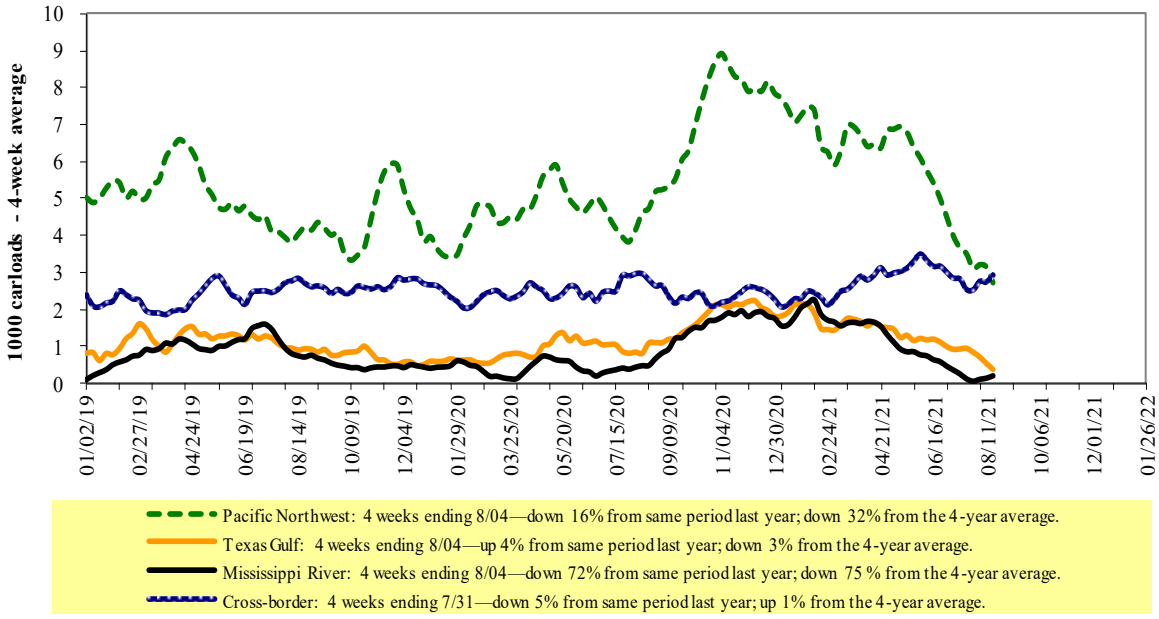
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available; wks. = weeks; avg. = average.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 4

Class I rail carrier grain car bulletin (grain carloads originated)

For the week ending:	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
7/31/2021	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,561	2,432	8,295	980	4,963	18,231	3,442	4,730
This week last year	1,815	2,574	11,395	601	4,780	21,165	3,881	5,203
2021 YTD	56,416	77,094	363,985	33,262	188,304	719,061	128,932	154,189
2020 YTD	50,979	73,094	330,541	31,694	154,951	641,259	124,470	140,504
2021 YTD as % of 2020 YTD	111	105	110	105	122	112	104	110
Last 4 weeks as % of 2020*	104	99	86	111	96	93	60	82
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.**	93	89	79	104	94	86	67	85
Total 2020	91,659	130,176	613,630	57,782	296,701	1,189,948	238,481	261,778

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

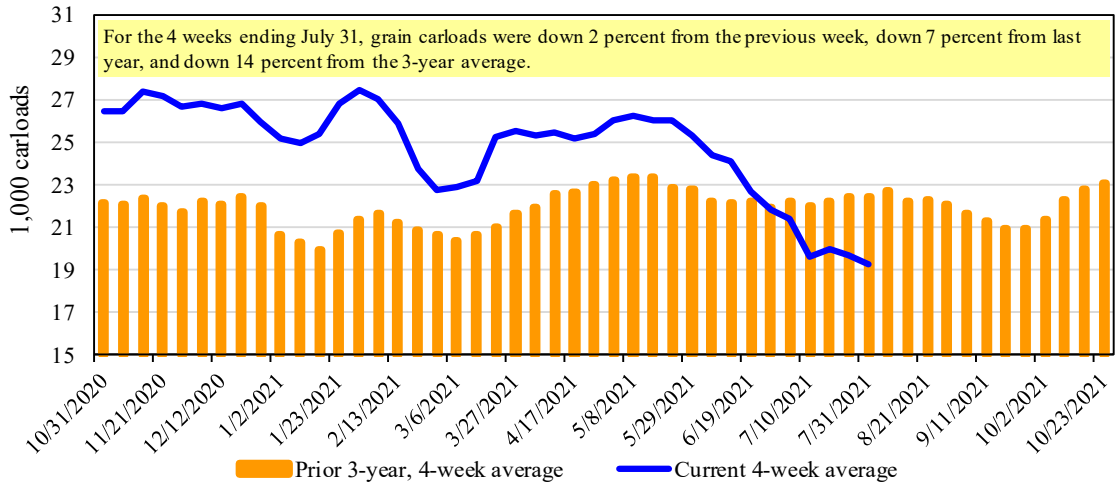
**The past 4 weeks as a percent of the same period from the prior 3-year average. YTD = year-to-date; avg. = average; yr. = year.

Note: NS = Norfolk Southern; KCS = Kansas City Southern; UP = Union Pacific; CN = Canadian National; CP = Canadian Pacific.

Source: Association of American Railroads.

Figure 3

Total weekly U.S. Class I railroad grain carloads



Source: Association of American Railroads.

Table 5

Railcar auction offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

For the week ending:		Delivery period							
8/5/2021		Aug-21	Aug-20	Sep-21	Sep-20	Oct-21	Oct-20	Nov-21	Nov-20
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	0	28	no bids	0	no bids	0	no bids	0
	COT grain single-car	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	9
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	n/a	n/a

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

[2]Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction. n/a = not available.

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

[4]UP - GCAS = Union Pacific Railroad Grain Car Allocation System.

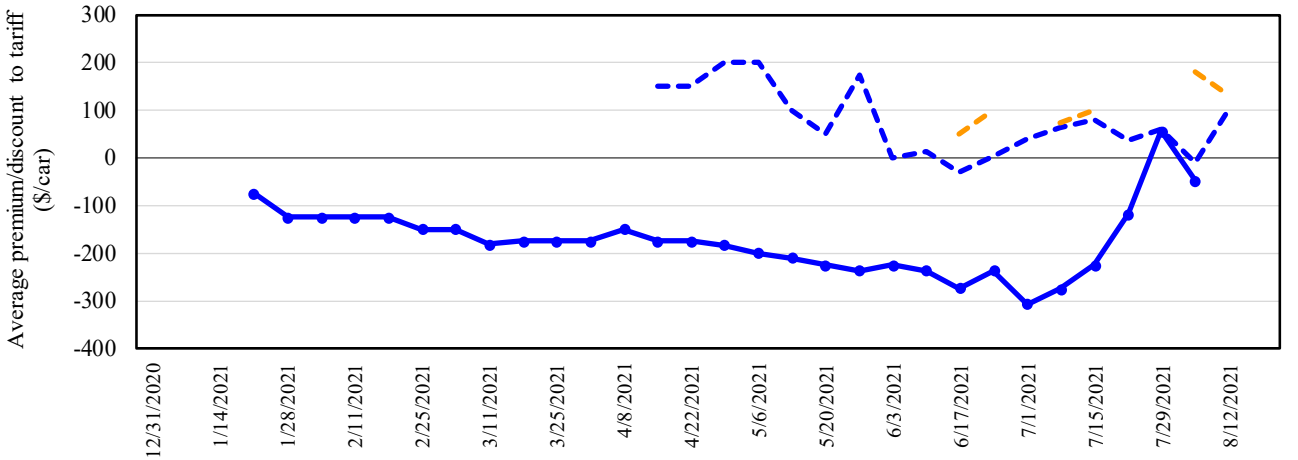
Region 1 includes: AR, IL, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX, WI, and Duluth, MN.

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

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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 August 2021, secondary market

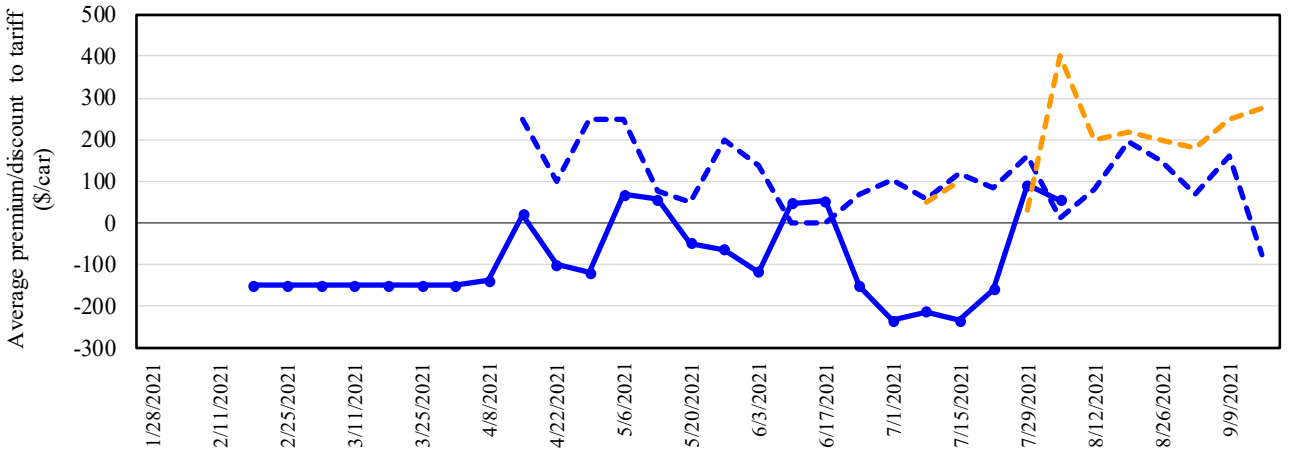


8/5/2021	BNSF	UP
Non-shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	-$244	$150

There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average shuttle bids/offers fell $104 this week and are $104 below the peak.

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.

Figure 5
Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in September 2021, secondary market



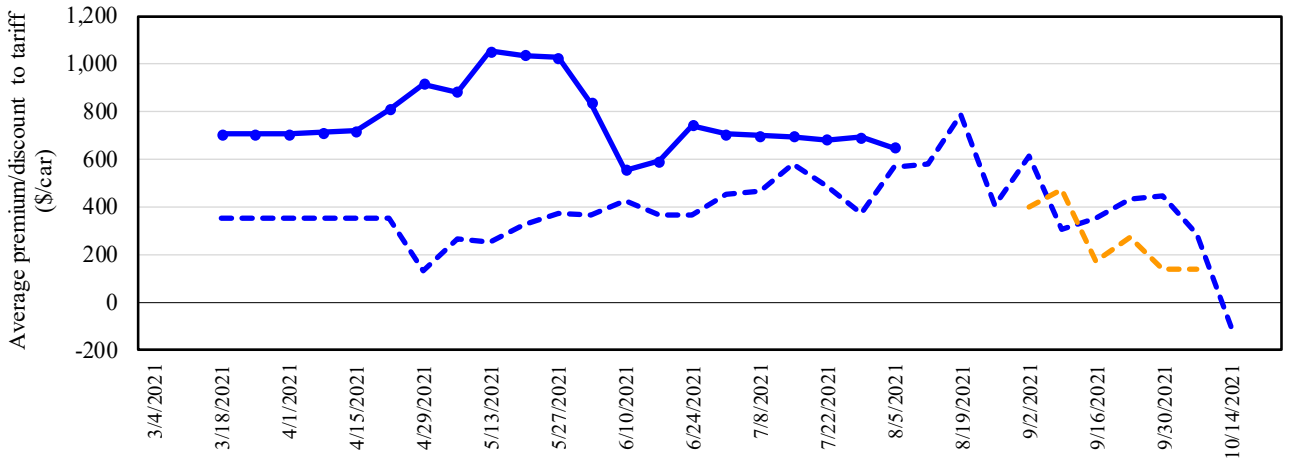
8/5/2021	BNSF	UP
Non-shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$109	$0

There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average shuttle bids/offers fell $36 this week and are $36 below the peak.

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.

Figure 6

Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in October 2021, secondary market



8/5/2021	BNSF	UP
Non-shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$616	$681

There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average shuttle bids/offers fell $44 this week and are $406 below the peak.

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.

Table 6

Weekly secondary railcar market ($/car)[1]

	For the week ending: 8/5/2021	Delivery period					
		Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22
Non-shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2020	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2020	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**(244)**	**109**	**616**	**350**	**n/a**	**200**
	Change from last week	(10)	(41)	(47)	n/a	n/a	50
	Change from same week 2020	(544)	(349)	(368)	(150)	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**150**	**0**	**681**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	(198)	(31)	(41)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2020	(125)	(275)	(157)	n/a	n/a	n/a

[1]Average premium/discount to tariff, $/car-last week.

Note: Bids listed are market indicators only and are not guaranteed prices. n/a = not available; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.

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

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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 7

Tariff rail rates for unit and shuttle train shipments[1]

August 2021	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	$3,695	$121	$37.90	$1.03	5
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,658	$0	$36.33	$0.99	-13
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$7,115	$0	$70.66	$1.92	0
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,525	$214	$47.06	$1.28	3
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,851	$0	$68.03	$1.85	0
	Colby, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,801	$234	$50.00	$1.36	3
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,121	$326	$54.09	$1.47	4
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,900	$241	$41.13	$1.04	4
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$7,833	$0	$77.79	$1.98	15
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,455	$51	$24.89	$0.63	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$5,979	$0	$59.37	$1.51	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$5,040	$0	$50.05	$1.27	3
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,900	$150	$40.22	$1.02	5
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,780	$438	$61.74	$1.57	7
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,631	$256	$38.60	$1.05	6
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$6,595	$0	$65.49	$1.78	17
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$7,125	$0	$70.75	$1.93	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$5,247	$0	$52.11	$1.42	3
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,645	$241	$48.52	$1.32	4
Shuttle train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$4,193	$0	$41.64	$1.13	4
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,236	$0	$42.07	$1.14	0
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$6,376	$0	$63.32	$1.72	-10
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,851	$0	$58.10	$1.58	3
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,721	$0	$56.81	$1.55	-5
	Colby, KS	Portland, OR	$6,012	$384	$63.51	$1.73	4
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,180	$0	$51.44	$1.31	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,140	$0	$51.04	$1.30	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,820	$241	$40.33	$1.02	4
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,880	$0	$38.53	$0.98	0
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$4,320	$189	$44.78	$1.14	5
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,180	$0	$51.44	$1.31	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$5,100	$0	$50.65	$1.29	2
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,850	$0	$58.09	$1.58	0
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,900	$0	$58.59	$1.59	0
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,750	$0	$57.10	$1.55	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,875	$278	$51.18	$1.39	4
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,945	$0	$49.11	$1.34	3
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,260	$393	$56.14	$1.53	5

[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 pounds per bushel (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 (Y/Y) calculated using 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

Date: August 2021							
Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate per car[1]	Fuel surcharge per car[2]	Tariff rate plus fuel surcharge per: metric ton[3]	bushel[3]	Percent change[4] Y/Y
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,699	$0	$78.67	$2.14	4
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,813	$167	$71.32	$1.94	3
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,531	$681	$83.91	$2.28	3
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,347	$102	$45.46	$1.24	2
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,902	$592	$97.00	$2.46	2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$8,140	$0	$83.17	$2.11	0
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,300	$351	$88.39	$2.24	3
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,905	$0	$70.55	$1.79	0
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,665	$342	$81.81	$2.08	4
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,690	$0	$78.57	$1.99	0
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,547	$555	$92.99	$2.53	2
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$9,157	$582	$99.50	$2.71	2
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,410	$0	$96.15	$2.61	-1
	KS	Torreon, CU	$8,014	$406	$86.03	$2.34	3
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,772	$527	$84.79	$2.15	3
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$8,108	$209	$84.97	$2.16	2
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,713	$168	$70.30	$1.78	2
	NE	Torreon, CU	$7,092	$374	$76.28	$1.94	2

[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.

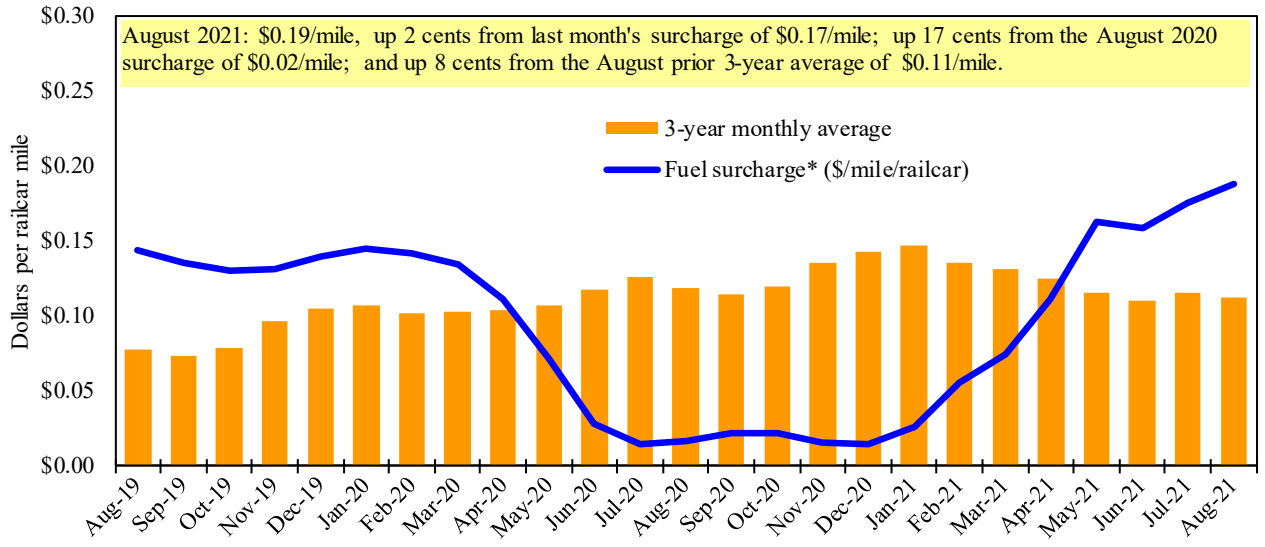
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu.

[4]Percentage change calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage; Y/Y = year over year.

Sources: BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern.

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.

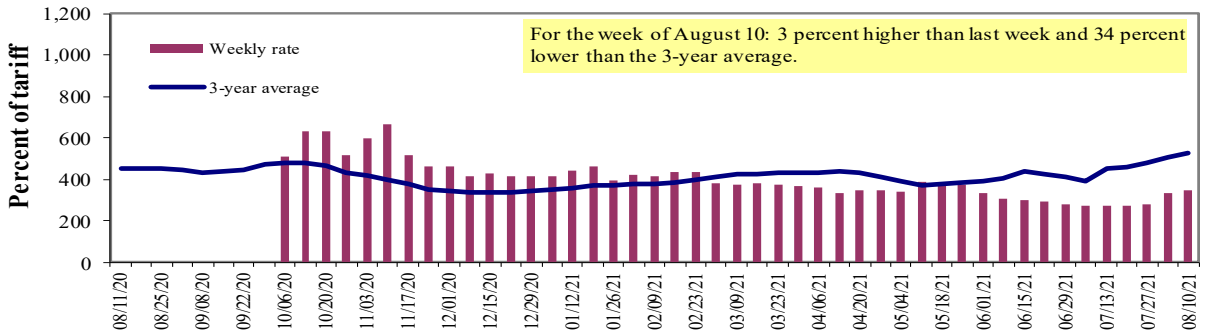
* Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

**CSX strike price changed from $2.00/gal. to $3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

Sources: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, Canadian Pacific Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern Railway, Norfolk Southern Corporation.

Barge Transportation

Figure 8
Illinois River barge freight rate[1,2,3]



[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average of the 3-year average.
[3]No rates data from 06/23/20 to 9/29/20 due to the lock closure for rehabilitation and replacement of lock machinery.
The 3-yr avg counts the avearge of 2018 and 2019. 2020 data is not available. *Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 9
Weekly barge freight rates: Southbound only

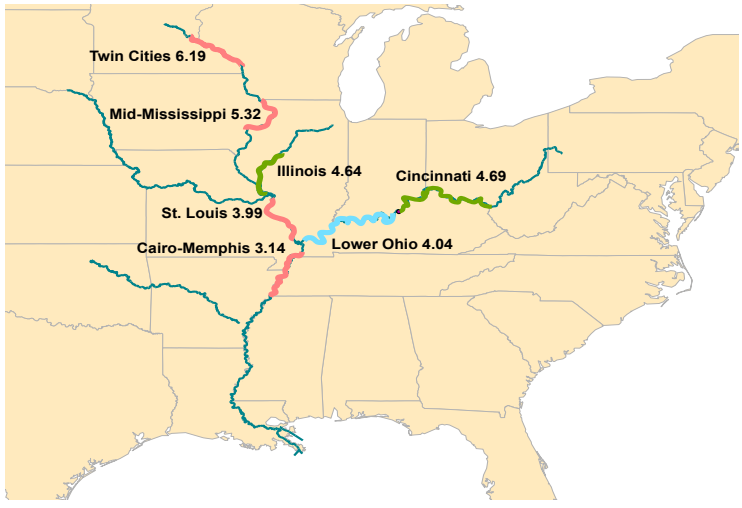
		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate[1]	8/10/2021	437	368	348	260	253	253	251
	8/3/2021	405	355	337	256	252	252	250
$/ton	8/10/2021	27.05	19.58	16.15	10.37	11.87	10.22	7.88
	8/3/2021	25.07	18.89	15.64	10.21	11.82	10.18	7.85
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	4	7	-	12	-14	-14	14
	3-year avg. [2]	-15	-25	-34	-25	-24	-24	-19
Rate[1]	September	513	485	477	420	449	449	405
	November	513	465	448	350	407	407	320

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; "-" not available due to lock closure.
ILL River 3-year avg. is the 4-week moving average of 2018 and 2019. Data for2020 is not available. Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 9
Benchmark tariff rates

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

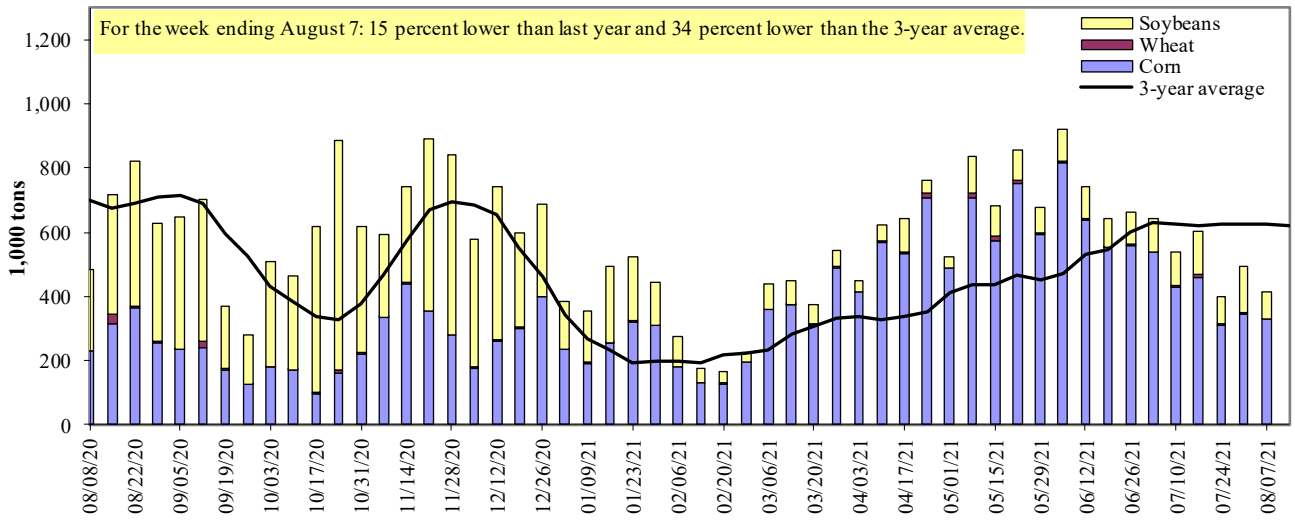
Select applicable index from market quotes are included in tables on this page. The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map.



Map Credit: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

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 08/07/2021	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	135	0	45	0	181
Winfield, MO (L25)	389	0	27	0	416
Alton, IL (L26)	319	0	80	0	399
Granite City, IL (L27)	331	0	81	0	412
Illinois River (La Grange)	77	0	25	0	102
Ohio River (Olmsted)	40	26	15	0	81
Arkansas River (L1)	0	50	1	0	52
Weekly total - 2021	371	77	96	0	544
Weekly total - 2020	465	62	363	0	890
2021 YTD[1]	18,185	1,038	5,197	203	24,622
2020 YTD[1]	11,478	1,179	7,643	97	20,396
2021 as % of 2020 YTD	158	88	68	209	121
Last 4 weeks as % of 2020[2]	109	128	39	96	79
Total 2020	18,942	1,765	19,205	237	40,149

[1] Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date), and calendar year total include MI/27, OH/Olmsted, and AR/1; Other refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye. Total may not add exactly due to rounding.

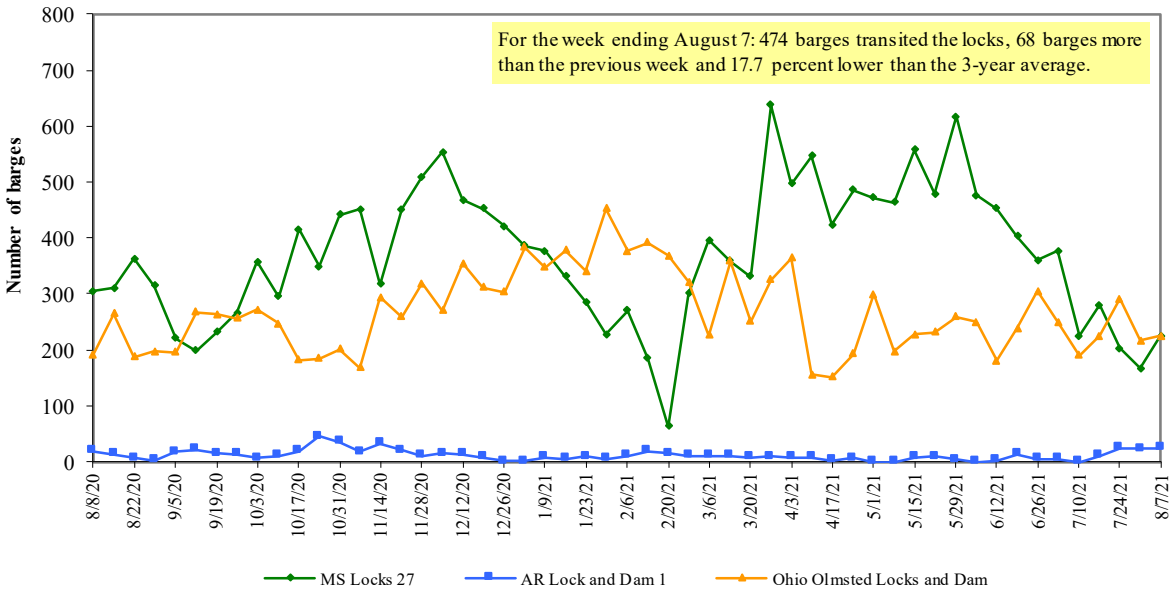
[2] As a percent of same period in 2020.

Note: L (as in "L15") refers to a lock, locks, or locks and dam facility.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure 11

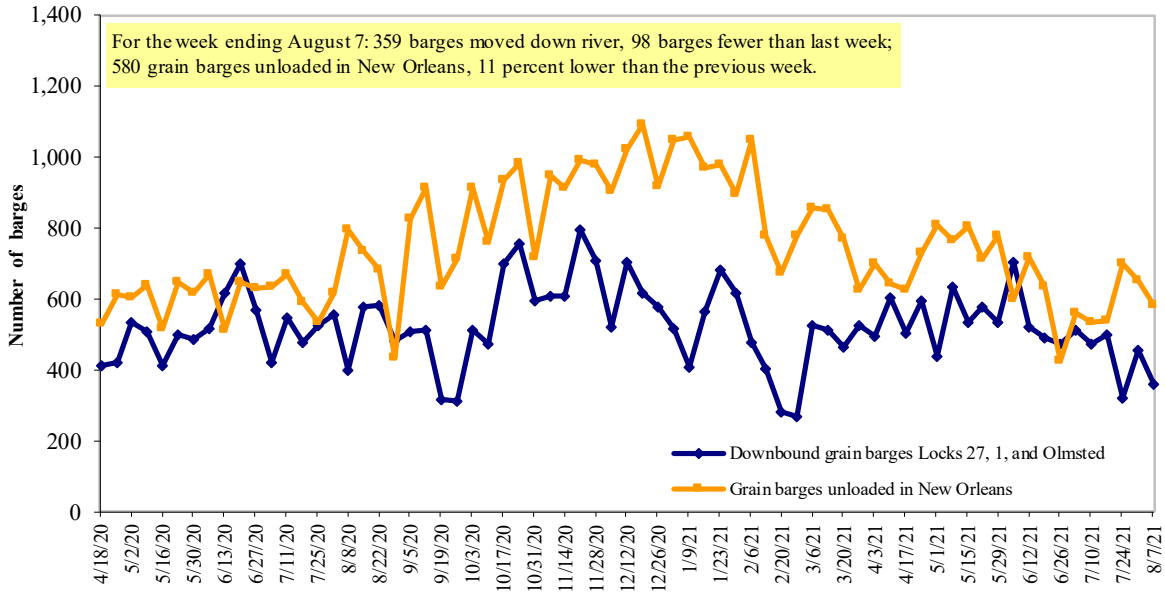
Upbound empty barges transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure 12

Grain barges for export in New Orleans region



Note: Olmsted = Olmsted Locks and Dam.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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 8/9/2021 (U.S. $/gallon)

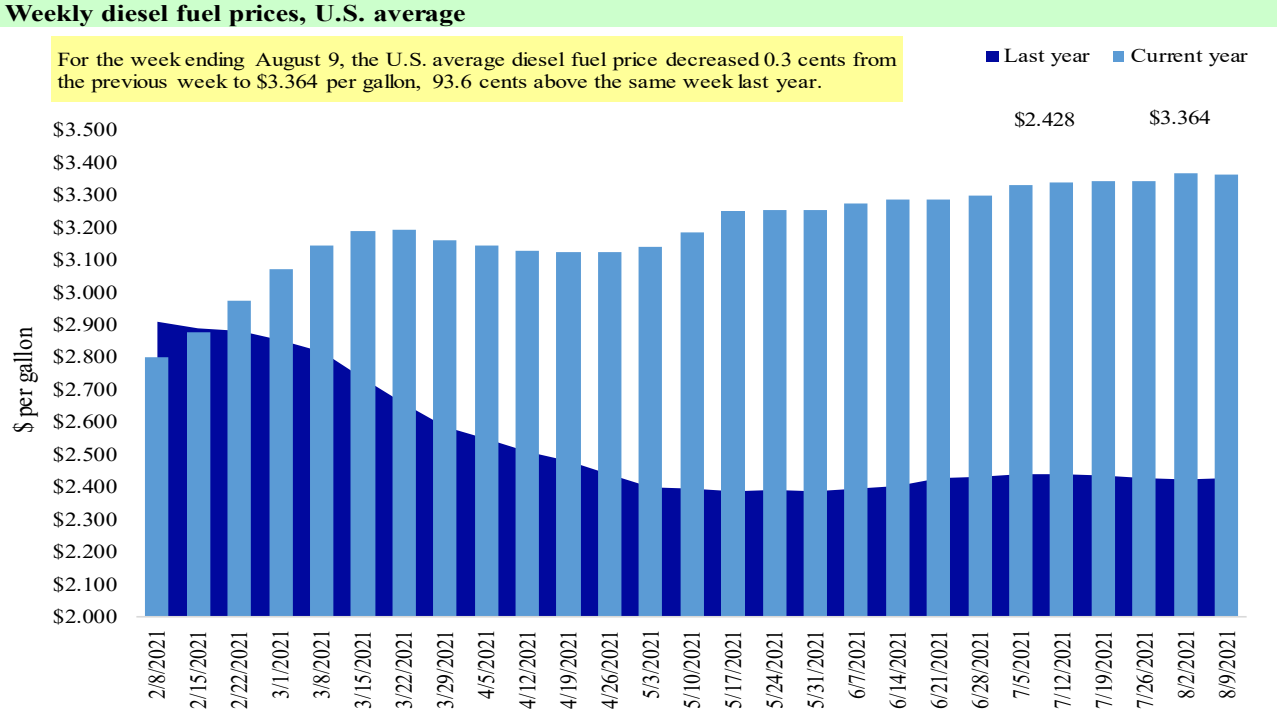
Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.328	-0.004	0.814
	New England	3.262	0.007	0.629
	Central Atlantic	3.493	0.000	0.801
	Lower Atlantic	3.230	-0.008	0.860
II	Midwest	3.271	-0.007	0.966
III	Gulf Coast	3.083	-0.014	0.900
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.675	0.009	1.306
V	West Coast	4.009	0.016	1.054
	West Coast less California	3.675	0.014	1.087
	California	4.288	0.017	1.032
Total	United States	3.364	-0.003	0.936

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

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Figure 13

Weekly diesel fuel prices, U.S. average



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices.

Grain Exports

Table 12

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

	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
For the week ending	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export balances[1]									
7/29/2021	1,736	1,054	1,438	1,060	8	5,296	6,201	2,605	14,102
This week year ago	1,727	704	1,852	1,215	197	5,695	5,094	6,980	17,769
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2020/21 YTD	1,118	478	966	512	42	3,116	63,523	59,316	125,954
2019/20 YTD	2,070	311	1,155	704	188	4,428	38,689	39,961	83,078
YTD 2020/21 as % of 2019/20	54	154	84	73	22	70	164	148	152
Last 4 wks. as % of same period 2019/20*	97	141	82	88	4	93	161	42	92
Total 2019/20	9,526	2,318	6,960	4,751	922	24,477	42,622	43,994	111,094
Total 2018/19	8,591	3,204	6,776	5,164	479	24,214	48,924	46,189	119,327

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

[2] Shipped export sales to date; 2021/22 marketing year now in effect for wheat while corn and soybeans remain in effect for the 2020/21 marketing year.

Note: marketing year: wheat = 6/01-5/31, corn and soybeans = 9/01-8/31. YTD = year-to-date; wks. = weeks; HRW= hard red winter; SRW = soft red winter; HRS= hard red spring; SWW= soft white wheat; DUR= durum.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 13

Top 5 importers[1] of U.S. corn

For the week ending 07/29/2021	Total commitments[2]			% change	Exports[3]
	2021/22 next MY	2020/21 current MY	2019/20 last MY	current MY from last MY	3-yr. avg. 2017-19
			- 1,000 mt -		
Mexico	2,464	15,285	14,407	6	14,869
Japan	1,143	10,984	9,824	12	11,221
Columbia	230	3,894	4,689	(17)	4,830
Korea	65	3,527	2,568	37	4,011
China	10,744	22,869	2,136	971	909
Top 5 importers	**14,646**	**56,559**	**33,624**	**68**	**35,840**
Total U.S. corn export sales	**17,487**	**69,724**	**43,783**	**59**	**49,983**
% of projected exports	27%	96%	97%		
Change from prior week[2]	**830**	**68**	**102**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	84%	81%	77%		72%
USDA forecast July 2021	**63,613**	**72,519**	**45,216**	**60**	
Corn use for ethanol USDA forecast, July 2021	**132,080**	**128,270**	**123,368**	**4**	

[1]Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2019/20; marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), 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.

[3]FAS marketing year ranking reports (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number; mt = metric ton.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 14

Top 5 importers[1] of U.S. soybeans

For the week ending 07/29/2021	Total commitments[2]			% change	Exports[3]
	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	current MY	3-yr. avg.
	next MY	current MY	last MY	from last MY	2017-19
			1,000 mt -		- 1,000 mt -
China	4,386	35,785	16,435	118	19,106
Mexico	1,084	4,803	4,731	2	4,591
Egypt	65	2,777	3,807	(27)	2,980
Indonesia	14	2,350	2,280	3	2,360
Japan	190	2,338	2,402	(3)	2,288
Top 5 importers	**5,738**	**48,054**	**29,656**	**62**	**31,324**
Total U.S. soybean export sales	**10,603**	**61,920**	**46,941**	**32**	**49,352**
% of projected exports	19%	100%	103%		
change from prior week[2]	**425**	**12**	**345**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	54%	78%	63%		**63%**
USDA forecast, July 2021	**56,540**	**61,853**	**45,749**	**135**	

[1]Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2019/20; marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. The total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales and/or accumulated sales.

[3]FAS marketing year ranking reports (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number; mt = metric ton.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 15

Top 10 importers[1] of all U.S. wheat

For the week ending 07/29/2021	Total Commitments[2]		% change	Exports[3]
	2021/22	2020/21	current MY	3-yr. avg.
	current MY	last MY	from last MY	2018-20
		1,000 mt -		- 1,000 mt -
Mexico	1,454	987	47	3,388
Philippines	1,290	1,346	(4)	3,121
Japan	854	948	(10)	2,567
Korea	506	585	(14)	1,501
Nigeria	627	534	17	1,490
China	612	1,097	(44)	1,268
Taiwan	291	465	(37)	1,187
Indonesia	0	347	(100)	1,131
Thailand	171	263	(35)	768
Italy	54	305	(82)	681
Top 10 importers	**5,860**	**6,878**	(15)	**17,102**
Total U.S. wheat export sales	**8,412**	**10,123**	(17)	**24,617**
% of projected exports	35%	37%		
change from prior week[2]	**308**	**606**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	70%	68%		69%
USDA forecast, July 2021	**23,842**	**27,030**	(12)	

[1] Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service(FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2020/21; Marketing year (MY) = Jun 1 - May 31.

[2] Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. The 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 (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 16

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

Port regions	For the week ending 08/05/21	Previous week*	Current week as % of previous	2021 YTD*	2020 YTD*	2021 YTD as % of 2020 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last year	Last 4-weeks as % of: Prior 3-yr. avg.	2020 total*
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	392	186	211	9,333	9,662	97	80	93	15,966
Corn	0	271	0	12,263	6,667	184	91	86	9,969
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	3,758	2,777	135	0	0	14,028
Total	**392**	**457**	**86**	**25,354**	**19,106**	**133**	**84**	**74**	**39,963**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	109	131	83	1,886	2,391	79	146	141	3,422
Corn	425	924	46	29,001	18,327	158	111	116	28,781
Soybeans	48	114	42	10,863	13,125	83	20	19	38,013
Total	**582**	**1,169**	**50**	**41,750**	**33,843**	**123**	**76**	**76**	**70,215**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	80	43	187	2,506	2,806	89	91	94	4,248
Corn	0	0	n/a	322	470	68	123	109	723
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	656	7	n/a	n/a	0	2,098
Total	**80**	**43**	**187**	**3,484**	**3,283**	**106**	**95**	**96**	**7,068**
Interior									
Wheat	54	65	83	1,808	1,363	133	205	206	2,263
Corn	231	171	135	5,874	5,229	112	104	111	8,683
Soybeans	60	77	78	3,598	3,901	92	60	55	7,274
Total	**345**	**313**	**110**	**11,280**	**10,493**	**107**	**99**	**99**	**18,220**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	253	415	61	26	31	891
Corn	0	7	0	55	0	n/a	n/a	59	111
Soybeans	11	0	n/a	67	144	47	40	37	1,111
Total	**11**	**7**	**158**	**376**	**558**	**67**	**42**	**38**	**2,113**
Atlantic									
Wheat	2	1	128	89	12	764	198	426	65
Corn	0	0	n/a	14	8	174	n/a	n/a	33
Soybeans	1	3	23	1,069	470	228	23	11	1,870
Total	**2**	**4**	**56**	**1,173**	**489**	**240**	**41**	**22**	**1,968**
U.S. total from ports*									
Wheat	638	427	149	15,875	16,649	95	99	108	26,854
Corn	656	1,373	48	47,529	30,701	155	105	107	48,301
Soybeans	120	195	62	20,012	20,423	98	29	23	64,394
Total	**1,414**	**1,994**	**71**	**83,415**	**67,772**	**123**	**82**	**78**	**139,548**

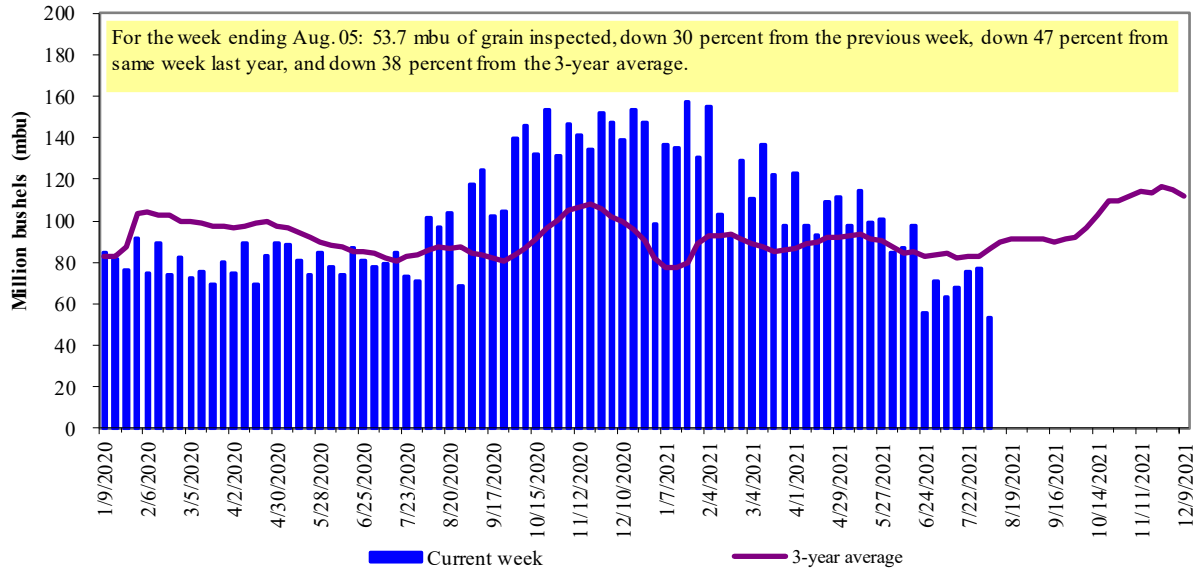
*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service; YTD= year-to-date; n/a = not applicable or no change.

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 2020.

Figure 14

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

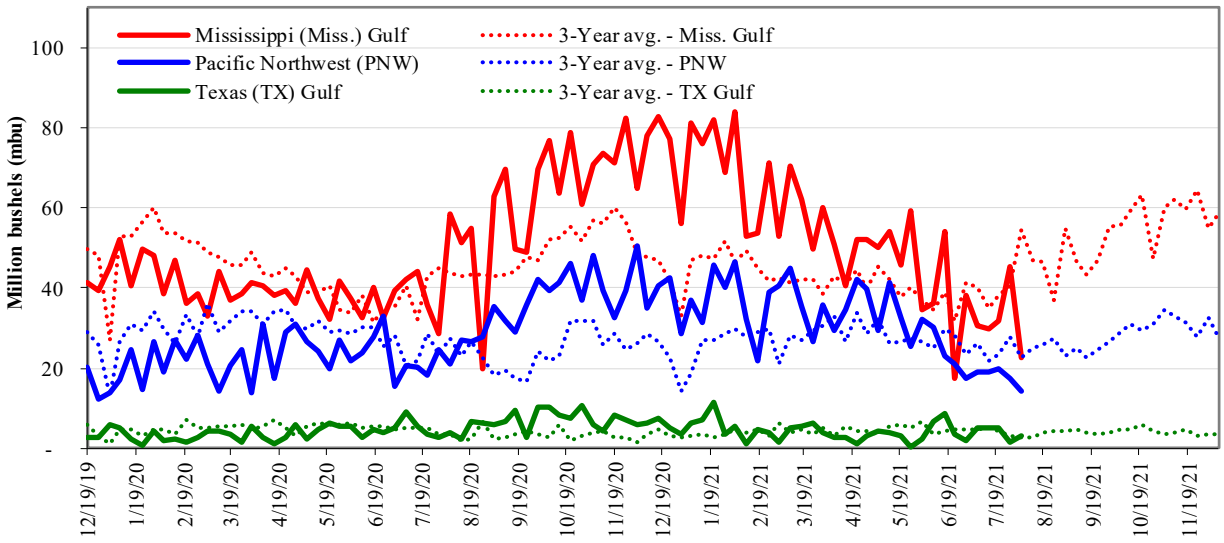


Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average.

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Figure 15

U.S. Grain inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW[1] (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Week ending 08/05/21 inspections (mbu):	
MS Gulf:	22.5
PNW:	14.4
TX Gulf:	3.0

Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last wk:	down 50	up 87	down 46	down 18
Last Year (same wk):	down 62	down 26	down 59	down 31
3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 47	down 22	down 44	down 39

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Table 17

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

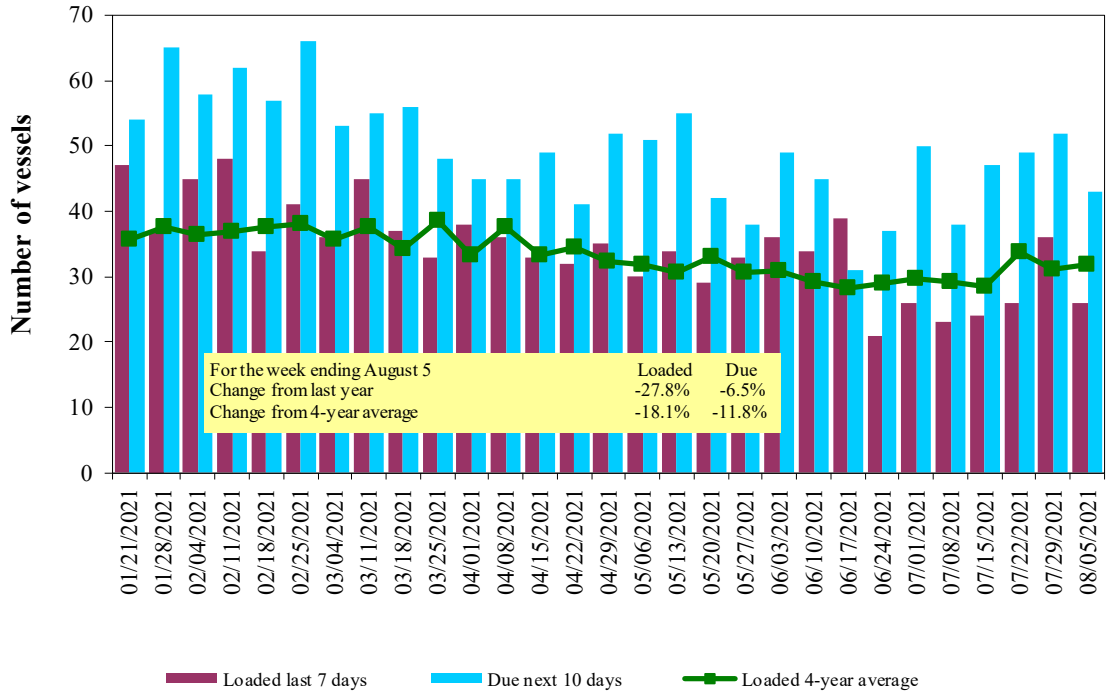
	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port
8/5/2021	24	26	43	16
7/29/2021	16	36	52	12
2020 range	(22…60)	(23...46)	(34...68)	(7…24)
2020 average	37	33	49	15

Note: n/a = not available due to holiday.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 16

U.S. Gulf[1] vessel loading activity

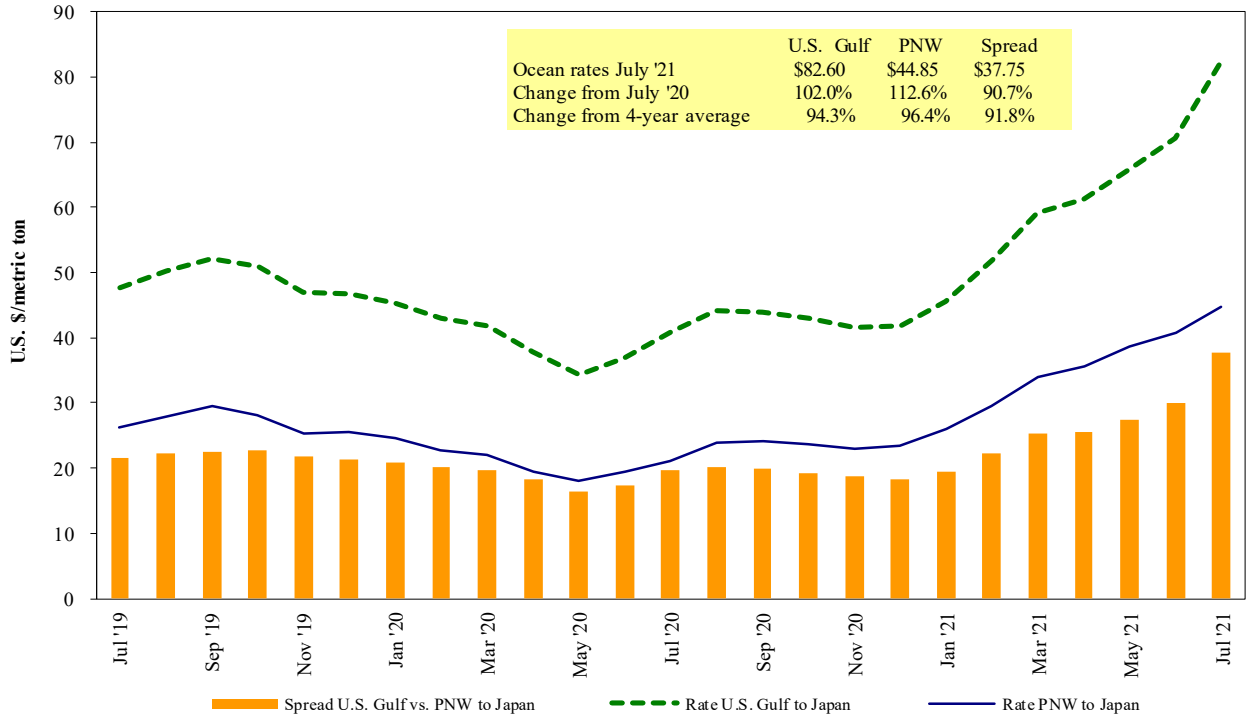


[1]U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.

Source:USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 17

Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan



Note: PNW = Pacific Northwest

Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 08/07/2021

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy grain	Oct 1/10	48,000	70.10
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy grain	Aug 21/Sep 9	50,000	60.90
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy grain	Aug 1/10	50,000	69.75
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy grain	Jul 1/15	50,000	64.10
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Grain	May 25/Jun 25	50,000	46.85 op 47.85
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Heavy grain	Apr 15/May 15	50,000	47.00
U.S. Gulf	Sudan	Wheat	Sep 1/10	49,000	79.12*
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti	Wheat	Jul 6/16	5,880	85.70*
PNW	Japan	Wheat	Sep 1	52,170	56.55*
PNW	Japan	Wheat	Jul 25/ Aug 5	32,590	64.00
PNW	Japan	Wheat	Jul 16/31	30,250	64.35
PNW	Japan	Wheat	Jun 5/15	50,600	49.30
PNW	Yemen	Wheat	Jun 10/20	22,230	132.25*
PNW	Taiwan	Heavy grain	Aug 20/30	35,000	64.20*
PNW	Taiwan	Wheat	Aug 1/10	55,000	54.95
PNW	Taiwan	Wheat	May 29/Jun 12	45,665	48.00

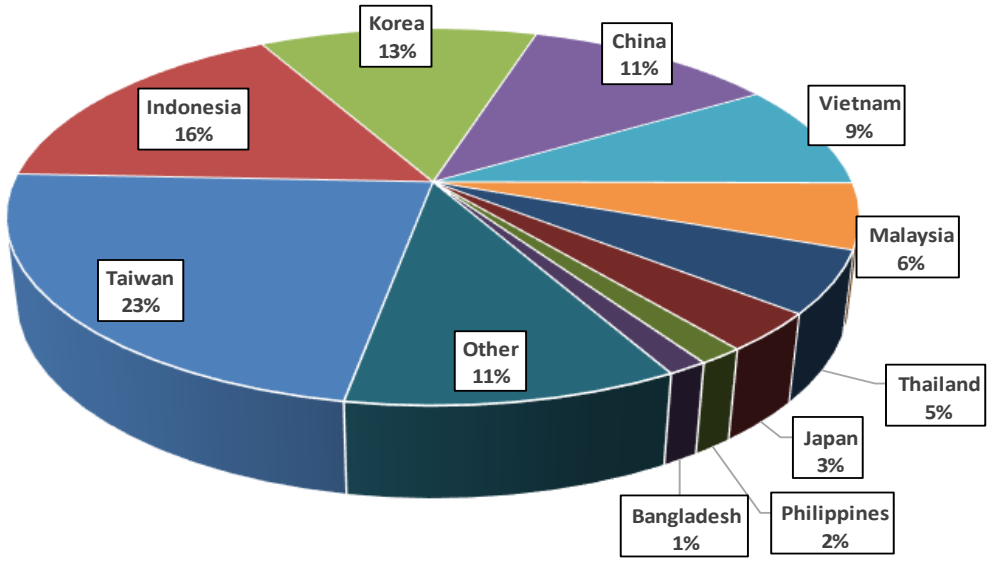
*50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

Source: Maritime Research, Inc.

In 2019, containers were used to transport 9 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 60 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2019 went to Asia, of which 14 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 94 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

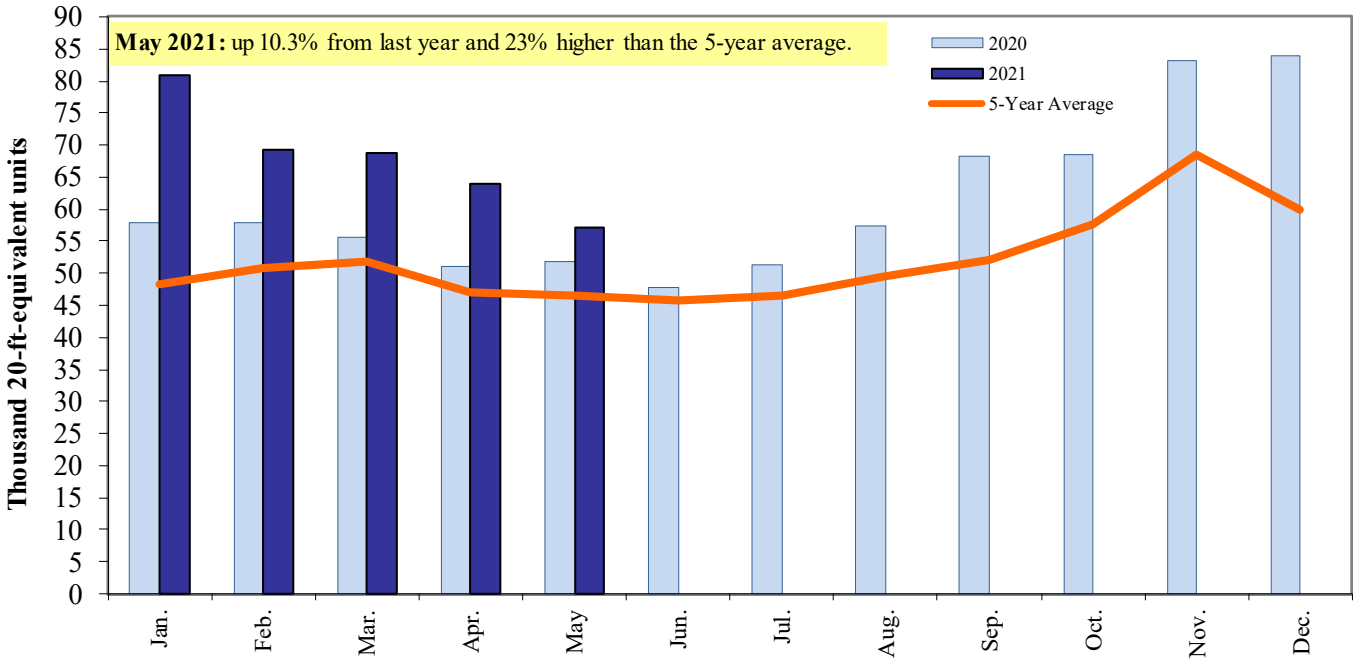
Figure 18
Top 10 destination markets for U.S. containerized grain exports, Jan-May 2021



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, 120810, and 120190.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Transportation Services Division analysis of PIERS data.

Figure 19
Monthly shipments of U.S. containerized grain exports



Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 100190, 100200, 100300, 100400, 100590, 100700, 110100, 110220, 110290, 1201, 120100, 120190, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, and 230990.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Transportation Services Division analysis of PIERS data.

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