United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

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

Contact Us

September 19, 2019

Contents

The next release is September 26, 2019

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Panama Canal Approves Toll Structure Modifications

Subsequent to the public hearing held on July 24, 2019 on the proposed toll structure modifications (August 15, 2019 *Grain Transportation Report*) and implementation of some of the suggested comments, the Cabinet Council of the Republic of Panama officially approved modifications to the Canal toll structure on September 3. The new structure modifies the tolls charged to Neopanamax dry bulk vessels carrying iron ore, Neopanamax dry bulk vessels transiting in ballast, and the liquid bulk segment (including oil and product tankers, chemical tankers, liquefied petroleum gas and liquefied natural gas vessels). The modifications also include a 20-foot-equivalent-unit tariff applicable to non-container vessels carrying containers on deck and a revised toll structure for small vessels. For more, see: https://www.pancanal.com/common/maritime/advisories/2019/a-34-2019.pdf.

MARAD Offers Cargo Preference Training Courses

On September 12, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) launched newly accredited, web-based training courses on cargo preference laws and regulations. The courses, developed in collaboration with Defense Acquisition University (DAU), are intended to enhance comprehension of and compliance with cargo preference laws by other Federal agencies, supporting contractors and program participants, such as loan and grant recipients. Cargo preference laws and regulations statutorily mandate the use of U.S.-flag vessels for cargo purchased, furnished, or financed with federal funding. U.S. cargo preference laws require that 100 percent of military and at least 50 percent of non-military government cargo be carried on U.S.-flag vessels. The laws protect the Nation's cargo interest and help U.S.-flag operators remain competitive. The public can access the courses at https://www.dau.edu/.

Total Grain Inspections Lowest Since Mid-July

For the week ending September 12, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 1.60 million metric tons (mmt). Inspections are down 23 percent from the previous week, down 31 percent from last year, and 38 percent below the 3-year average. Total inspections were the lowest since the middle of July, with corn inspections dropping 31 percent from the previous week and soybeans decreasing 32 percent for the same period. Wheat inspections, however, were up 11 percent from the previous week. Mississippi Gulf grain inspections decreased 45 percent from the past week, while Pacific Northwest inspections increased 40 percent.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

For the week ending September 5, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 21 mmt. This indicates a 40-percent decrease in outstanding sales, compared to the same time last year. Net **corn export sales** reached .499 mmt for the beginning of the new marketing year; up significantly from the past week. Net **soybean export sales** were 1.17 mmt, also up noticeably from the previous week. Net weekly **wheat export sales** reached .611 mmt, up 96 percent from the from the previous week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 17,431 **grain carloads** during the week ending September 7. This is a 21-percent decrease from the previous week, 13 percent less than last year, and 13 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Average September shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers (per car) were $194 below tariff for the week ending September 12. This is $148 more than last week and $119 lower than this week last year. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.

Barge

For the week ending September 14, **barge grain movements** totaled 735,777 tons. This is a 106-percent increase from the previous week and 36 percent more than the same period last year.

For the week ending September 14, 473 grain barges **moved down river**. This is 252 more barges than the previous week. There were 374 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, 45 percent fewer than the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending September 12, 30 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf. This is 9 percent fewer than the same period last year. Forty vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days. This is 29 percent fewer than the same period last year.

As of September 12, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was $52.00. This is 1 percent more than the previous week. The rate from PNW to Japan was $29.75 per mt, 1 percent more than the previous week.

Fuel

For the week ending September 16, the U.S. average **diesel fuel price** increased 1.6 cents from the previous week to $2.987 per gallon. This price is 28.1 cents less than the same week last year.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* September 19, 2019.
Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.09-19-2019**

Feature Article/Calendar

Date	Event	Location	Phone/Website
September 17-19	2019 National Waterway Conference Annual Meeting	Memphis, TN	www.waterways.org
September 24	Farm Foundation Forum	Washington, DC	https://www.farmfoundation.org/forums/sept-24-2019-farm-foundation-forum-incentivizing-conservation-agriculture/
September 27-October 2	CropLife America Government Policy/Annual Meeting	Colorado Springs, CO	http://www.cvent.com/events/2019-croplife-america-annual-meeting/event-summary-2159cb024893493e97e0100dd88fd5b7.aspx
October 9-11	Pacific Northwest Waterways Assocation Annual Convention	Vancouver, WA	www.pnwa.net
October 13-15	Global Ethanol Summitt	Washingtom DC	https://grains.org/ges/
October 13-16	American Association of Port Authorities Annual Convention	Norfolk, VA	www.aapa-ports.org
October 17-19	Rally 2019: National Land Conservation Conference	Raleigh, NC	https://alliancerally.org/
October 17-20	North American Millers Association Annual Meeting	Colorado Springs, CO	https://www.namamillers.org/meetings/2019-annual-meeting/
October 22-23	IDFA Dairy Plant Food Safety Workshop	Wilbraham, MA	https://www.idfa.org/events/dpfsw#KansasCity
October 23-25	National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Meeting	Pittsburgh, PA	https://www.ams.usda.gov/event/national-organic-standards-board-nosb-meeting-pittsburgh-pa
October 25-27	AgritourismWorld Summit	Franklin, TN	https://agritourismsummit.com/
October 28-30	Oklahoma Agribusiness Expo	Norman, OK	https://www.oklahomaag.com/oklahoma-ag-expo.html
November 3-6	IAOM Mideast and Africa Region Conference	Dubai, UAE	http://www.iaom-mea.com
November 6-8	2019 Waterway Council Annual Meeting	Pittsburgh, PA	www.waterwayscouncil.org
November 20-21	Kansas Agribusiness Expo	Wichita, KS	https://10times.com/kansas-agri-business
December 8-10	48th Annual County Elevator Conference	Indianapolis, IN	www.ngfa.org
January 12-16	Transportation Research Board's 99th Annual Meeting	Washington, DC	http://www.trb.org/AnnualMeeting/AnnualMeeting.aspx
January 13-15	Michigan Agribusiness Association Meeting	Lansing, MI	517-336-0223
January 15-16	South Dakota Ag Expo	Sioux Falls, SD	605-224-2445
January 28-30	International Feed Expo	Atlanta, GA	703-524-0810
February 16-18	Grain and Feed Association of Illinois	Springfield, IL	217-787-2417

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
For the week ending		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
09/18/19	200	n/a	212	211	233	211
09/11/19	199	n/a	206	218	235	213

[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)
n/a = not available
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

Table 2

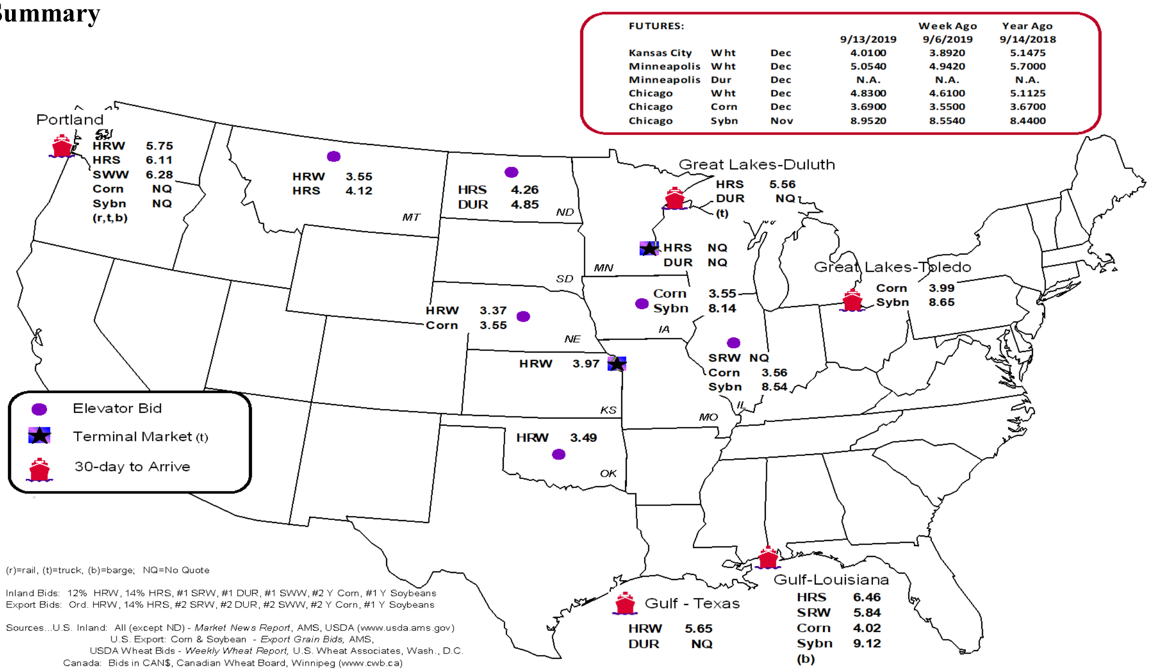
Market Update: U.S. Origins to Export Position Price Spreads ($/bushel)

Commodity	Origin--Destination	9/13/2019	9/6/2019
Corn	IL–Gulf	-0.46	-0.41
Corn	NE–Gulf	-0.47	-0.44
Soybean	IA–Gulf	-0.98	-1.01
HRW	KS–Gulf	-1.68	-1.71
HRS	ND–Portland	-1.85	-1.88

Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available
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]
9/11/2019[p]	505	881	3,716	156	5,258	9/7/2019	2,377
9/04/2019[r]	466	843	4,748	195	6,252	8/31/2019	2,858
2019 YTD[r]	34,240	41,458	183,963	13,248	272,909	2019 YTD	87,658
2018 YTD[r]	15,608	37,609	238,028	14,634	305,879	2018 YTD	85,871
2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	219	110	77	91	89	% change YTD	102
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	96	156	78	123	88	Last 4wks % 2018	97
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	122	76	93	119	93	Last 4wks % 4 yr	118
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.

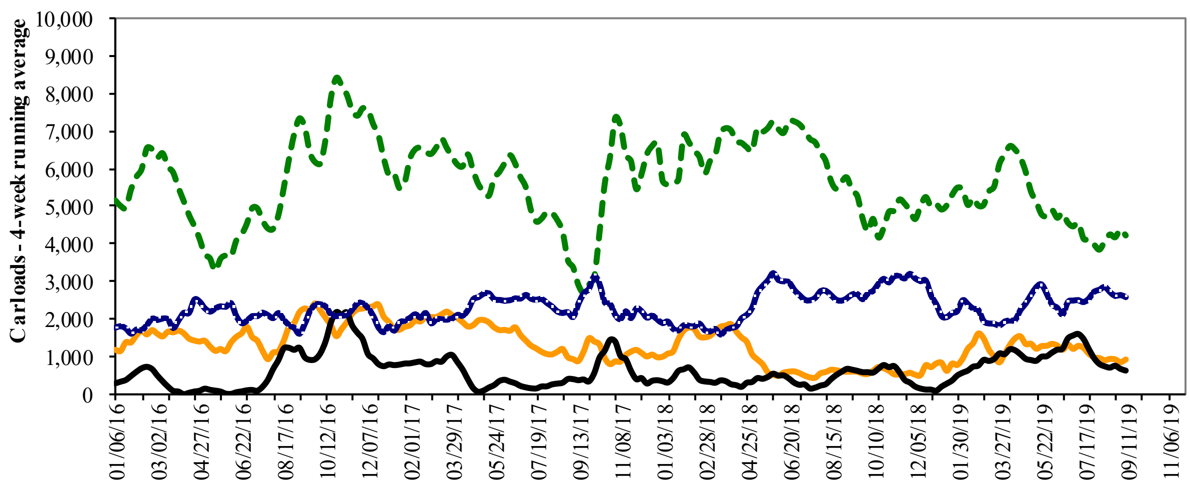
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: 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



Pacific Northwest: 4 wks. ending 9/11—down 22% from same period last year; down 7% the from 4-year average

Texas Gulf: 4 wks. ending 9/11—up 56% from same period last year; down 24% from the 4-year average

Miss. River: 4 wks. ending 9/11—down 4% from same period last year; up 22% from the 4-year average

Cross-border: 4 wks. ending 9/04—down 3% from same period last year; up 18% from the 4-year average

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

Table 4

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

For the week ending: 9/7/2019	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,369	1,961	8,931	1,148	4,022	17,431	2,683	3,881
This week last year	1,494	2,519	10,261	630	5,116	20,020	4,306	4,166
2019 YTD	65,466	100,998	397,705	40,442	183,999	788,610	147,421	158,086
2018 YTD	68,867	92,429	446,918	33,917	189,039	831,170	138,822	167,285
2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	95	109	89	119	97	95	106	95
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018*	88	93	90	158	85	91	67	93
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.**	105	94	96	152	83	95	79	94
Total 2018	98,978	133,276	635,458	48,638	267,713	1,184,063	211,801	244,697

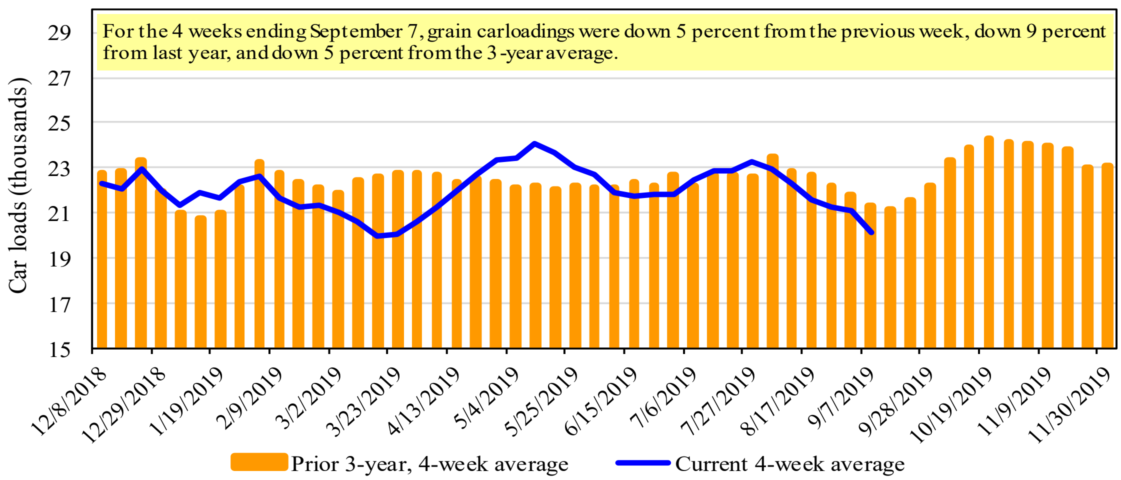
*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

**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

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: 9/12/2019		Nov-19	Nov-18	Dec-19	Dec-18	Jan-20	Jan-19	Feb-20	Feb-19
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	n/a	0	n/a	no bids	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	COT grain single-car[5]	n/a	31	n/a	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	n/a	no offer	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	n/a	81	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Columns Nov-19 through Feb-19: 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.

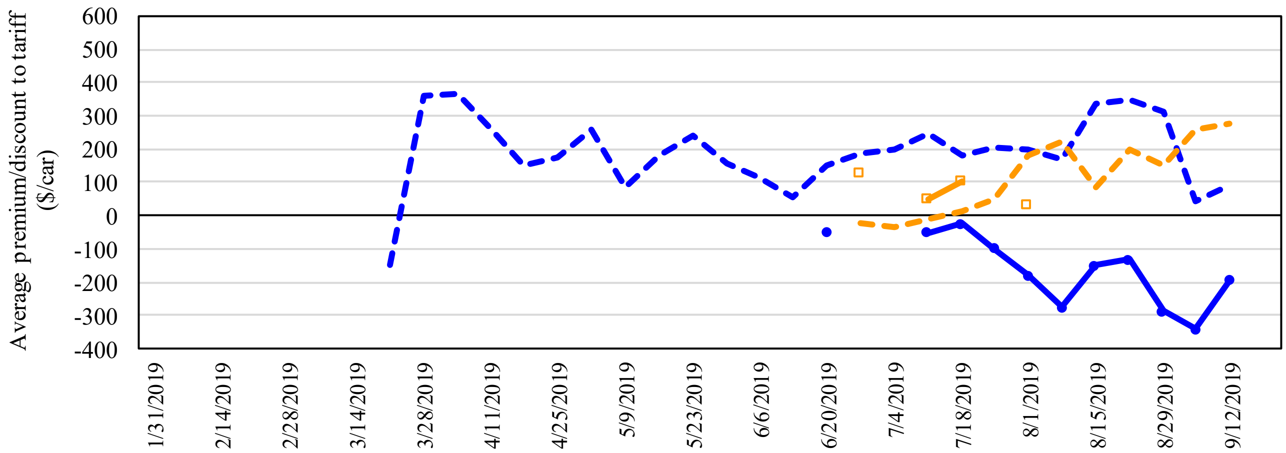
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

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

Source: 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 September 2019, Secondary Market



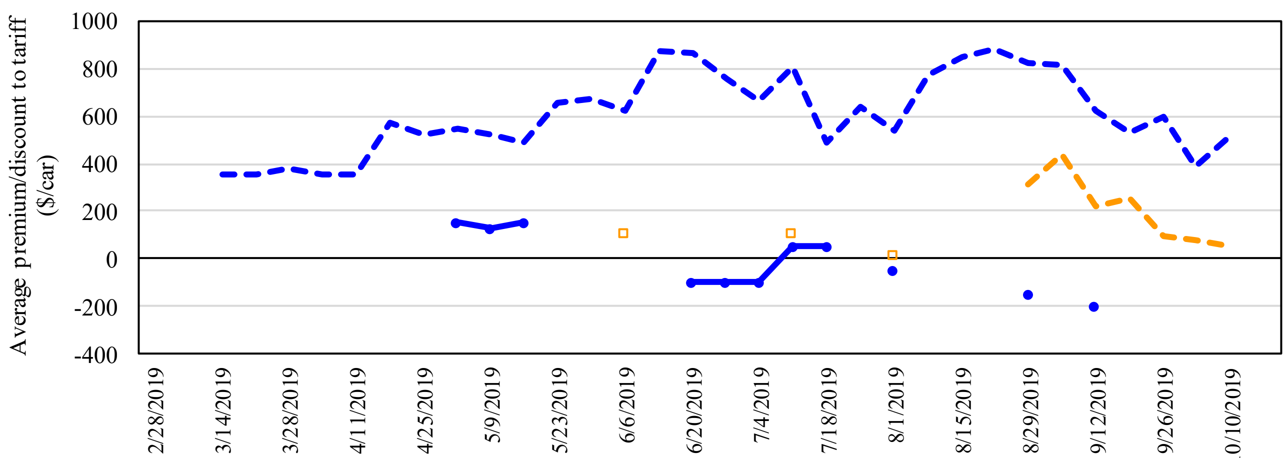
9/12/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	-$150	-$238

Shuttle — Non-Shuttle — Shuttle prior 3-yr avg. (same week) — Non-Shuttle prior 3-yr avg. (same week)

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $148 this week and are $169 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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



9/12/2019	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	n/a	-$200

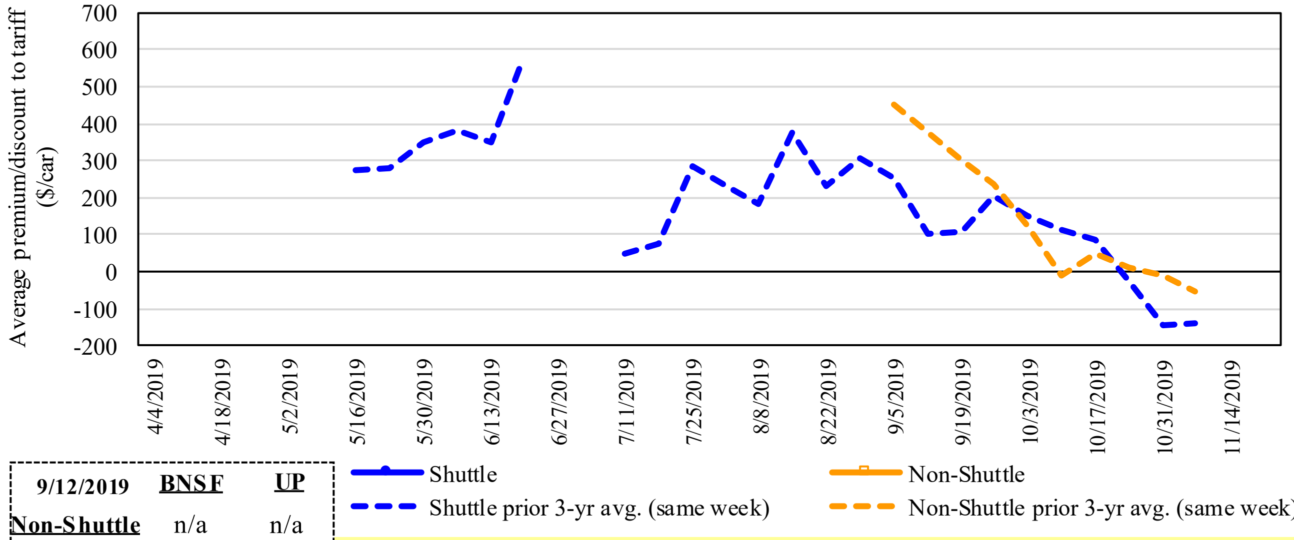
Shuttle — Non-Shuttle — Shuttle prior 3-yr avg. (same week) — Non-Shuttle prior 3-yr avg. (same week)

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
There were no Shuttle bids/offers last week. Average Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week are $350 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 6

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



9/12/2019	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: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 6

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

	For the week ending: 9/12/2019	Delivery period					
		Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20
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 2018	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 2018	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**(150)**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	83	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(50)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**(238)**	**(200)**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	212	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2018	(188)	(200)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

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

Note: Bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices, n/a = not available; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool.

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

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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]

September, 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	$96	$40.51	$1.10	0
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$4,333	$0	$43.03	$1.17	2
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$7,240	$0	$71.90	$1.96	1
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,525	$169	$46.61	$1.27	-1
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,976	$0	$69.28	$1.89	1
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,801	$185	$49.52	$1.35	-1
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,121	$258	$53.41	$1.45	-1
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,800	$191	$39.63	$1.01	-4
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,581	$0	$65.35	$1.66	4
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,114	$40	$21.39	$0.54	-7
	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	$3,660	$119	$37.53	$0.95	1
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,520	$346	$58.26	$1.48	2
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,631	$186	$37.91	$1.03	-13
	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	$4,545	$191	$47.03	$1.28	-5
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$4,143	$0	$41.14	$1.12	2
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,361	$0	$43.31	$1.18	2
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$5,896	$0	$58.55	$1.59	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,801	$0	$57.61	$1.57	1
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,121	$0	$60.78	$1.65	1
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$6,012	$304	$62.72	$1.71	1
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	$3,720	$191	$38.84	$0.99	-1
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,880	$0	$38.53	$0.98	5
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$4,060	$150	$41.80	$1.06	1
	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	0
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,800	$0	$57.60	$1.57	0
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,650	$0	$56.11	$1.53	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,775	$220	$49.61	$1.35	-1
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,634	$0	$46.02	$1.25	6
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,710	$311	$59.79	$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 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 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: September, 2019				Fuel			Percent
	Origin		Tariff	surcharge	Tariff plus surcharge per:		change[4]
Commodity	state	Destination region	rate/car[1]	per car[2]	metric ton[3]	bushel[3]	Y/Y
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,509	$0	$76.72	$2.09	3
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,775	$132	$70.58	$1.92	0
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,534	$594	$83.04	$2.26	5
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,329	$81	$45.06	$1.23	0
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,828	$502	$95.33	$2.42	8
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$8,140	$0	$83.17	$2.11	6
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$8,207	$278	$86.69	$2.20	2
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,905	$0	$70.55	$1.79	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,573	$271	$80.15	$2.03	2
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,690	$0	$78.57	$1.99	5
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,497	$475	$91.67	$2.49	5
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$9,122	$497	$98.27	$2.67	5
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$9,390	$0	$95.94	$2.61	3
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,914	$344	$84.37	$2.29	5
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,787	$446	$84.12	$2.13	7
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$8,000	$165	$83.43	$2.12	2
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,633	$133	$69.12	$1.75	2
	NE	Torreon, CU	$7,172	$316	$76.51	$1.94	6

[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.

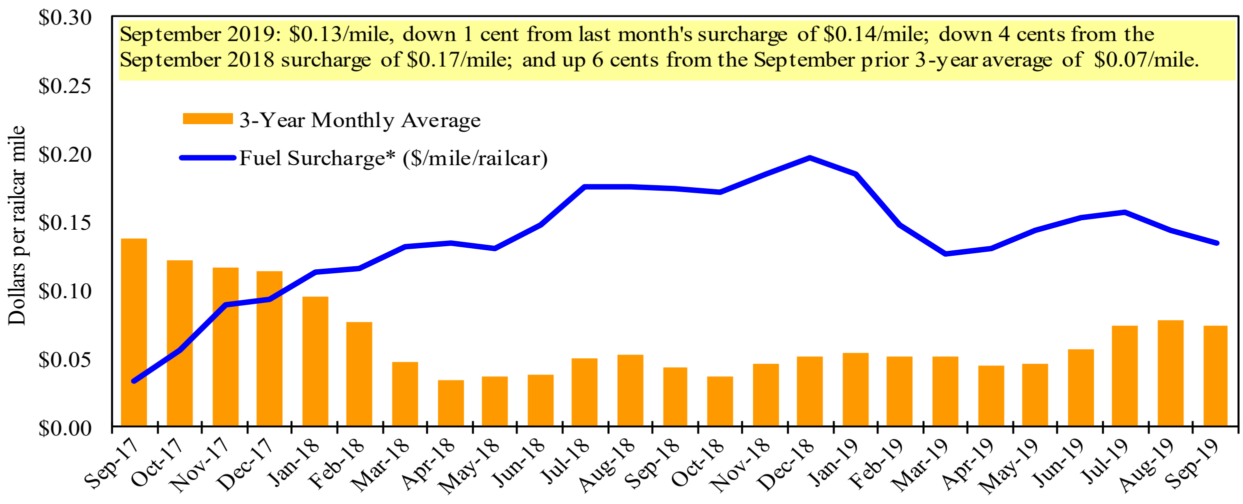
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: corn and sorghum 56 pounds per bushel (lbs./bu.), wheat and soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

[4]Percentage change calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Source: BNSF Railway, Kansas City Southern Railway, and Union Pacific Railroad.

Figure 7

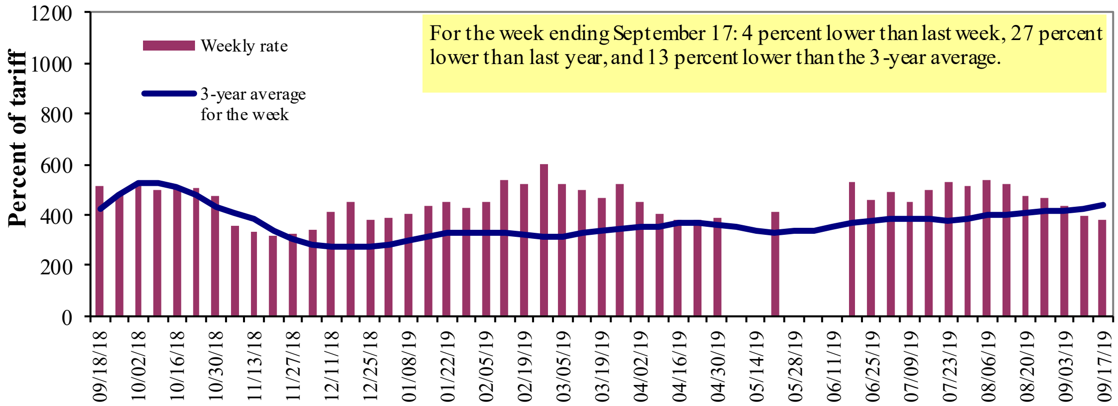
Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average[1]



[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.
Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, CSX Transportation, Kansas City Southern Railway, Norfolk Southern Railway, and Union Pacific Railroad.

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: 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]	9/17/2019	373	400	379	375	363	363	400
	9/10/2019	382	400	393	367	332	332	358
$/ton	9/17/2019	23.09	21.28	17.59	14.96	17.02	14.67	12.56
	9/10/2019	23.65	21.28	18.24	14.64	15.57	13.41	11.24
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-31	-24	-27	-13	-29	-29	-11
	3-year avg. [2]	-22	-10	-13	12	-13	-13	23
Rate[1]	October	413	413	409	381	398	398	385
	December	-	-	363	288	313	313	269

[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
* - Current weekly rate is a nominal value, reflecting the anticipation of improved navigation conditions
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 included in tables on this page. The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map.

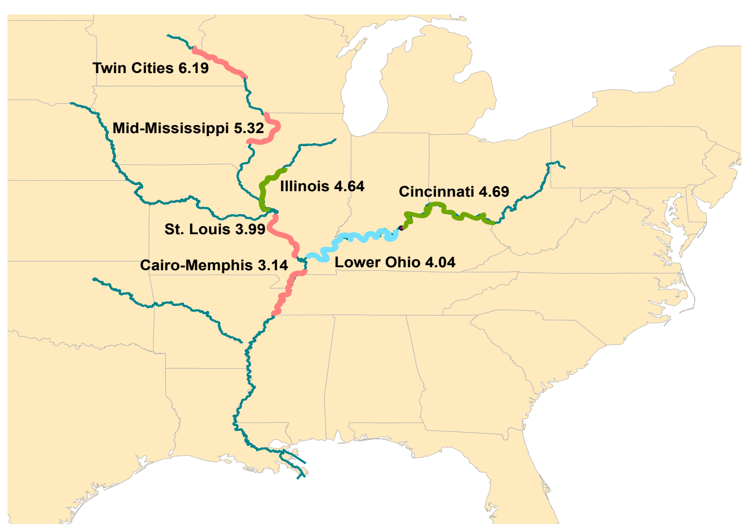
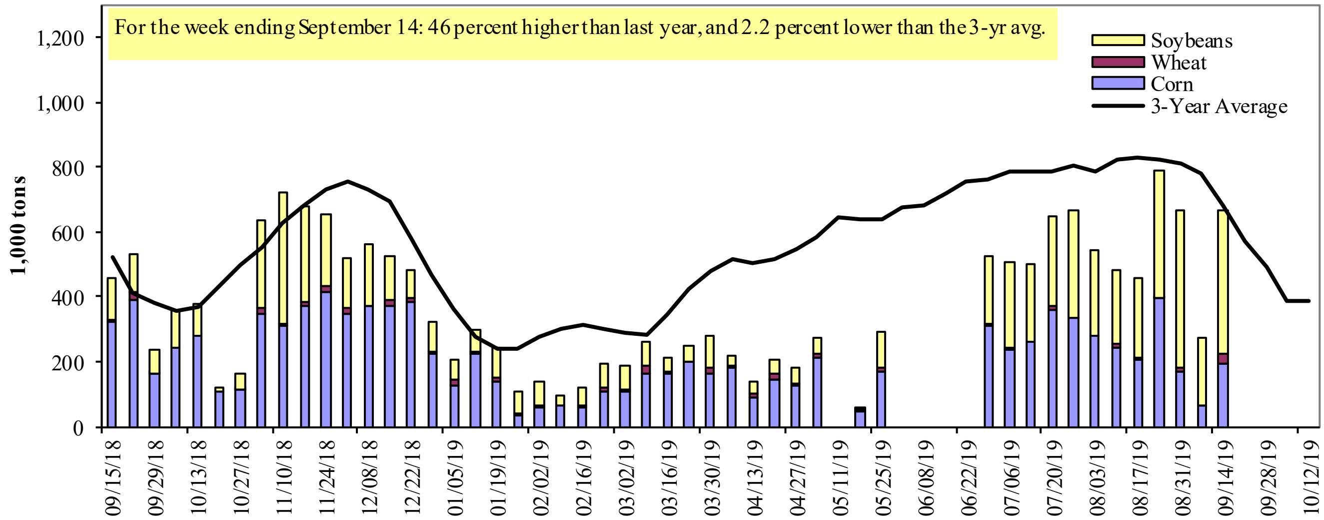


Figure 10

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 09/14/2019	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	61	11	118	0	189
Winfield, MO (L25)	177	28	392	2	599
Alton, IL (L26)	200	28	484	2	713
Granite City, IL (L27)	195	27	446	2	669
Illinois River (LAGRANGE)	14	0	39	0	53
Ohio River (OLMSTED)	16	9	32	6	62
Arkansas River (L1)	0	0	4	0	4
Weekly total - 2019	211	36	482	7	736
Weekly total - 2018	368	30	143	0	541
2019 YTD[1]	8,962	1,247	8,682	129	19,019
2018 YTD[1]	17,698	1,345	8,923	88	28,054
2019 as % of 2018 YTD	51	93	97	147	68
Last 4 weeks as % of 2018[2]	37	63	137	430	72
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.

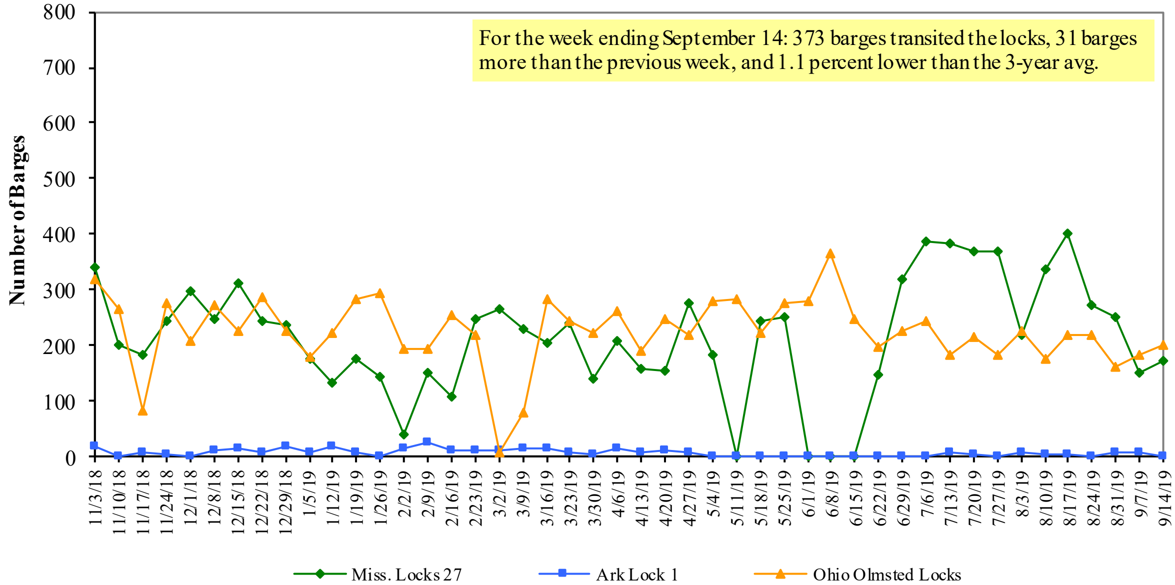
[2] As a percent of same period in 2018.

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

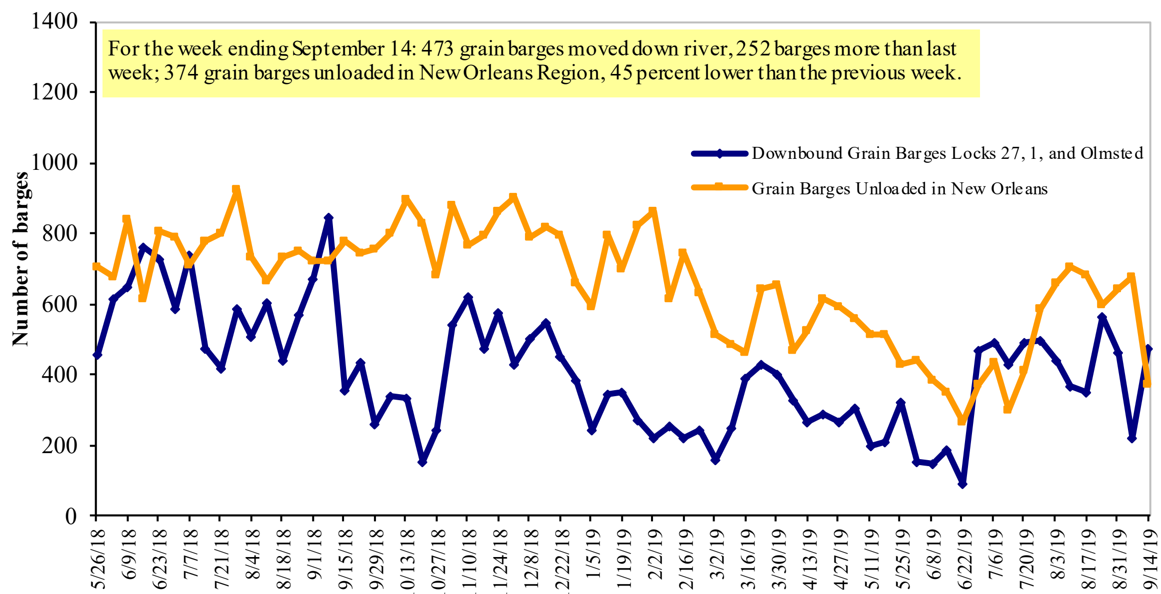
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam



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 9/16/2019 (US $/gallon)

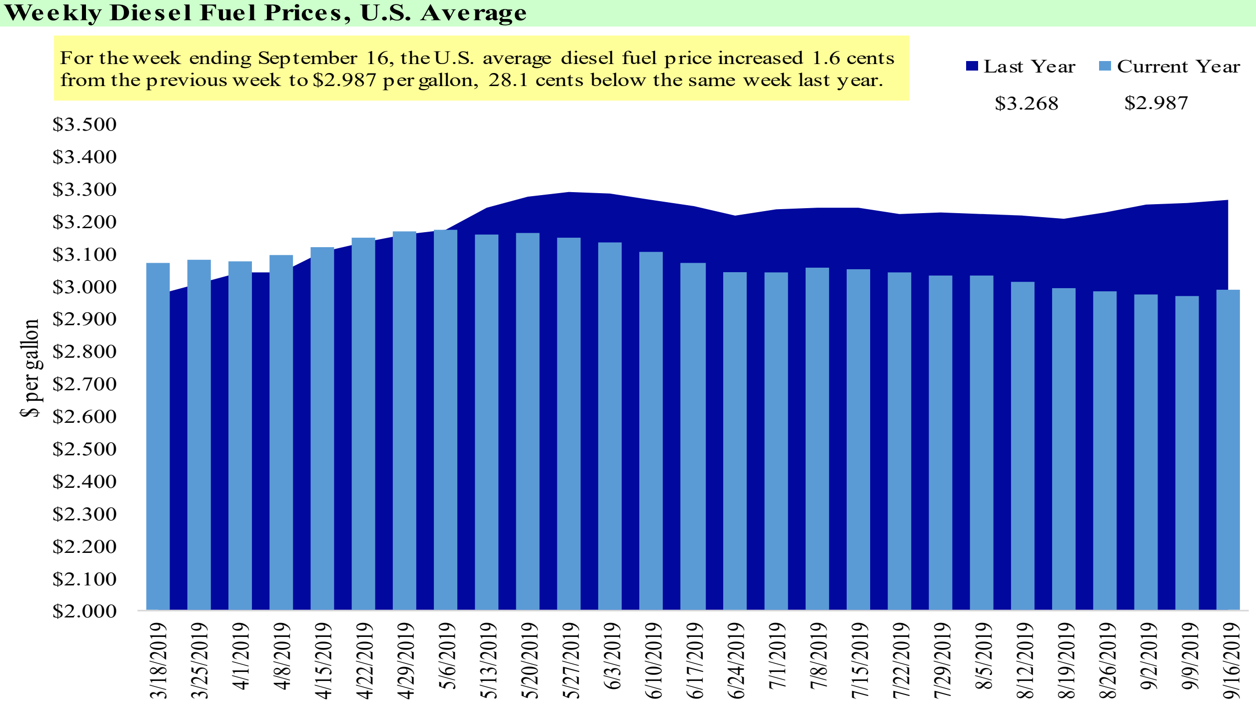
Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	2.998	0.006	-0.254
	New England	3.013	-0.009	-0.254
	Central Atlantic	3.177	0.016	-0.238
	Lower Atlantic	2.874	0.003	-0.261
II	Midwest	2.882	0.018	-0.326
III	Gulf Coast	2.761	0.016	-0.295
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.959	0.026	-0.404
V	West Coast	3.574	0.026	-0.181
	West Coast less California	3.161	0.030	-0.312
	California	3.901	0.023	-0.078
Total	U.S.	2.987	0.016	-0.281

[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)

	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
For the week ending	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances[1]									
9/5/2019	1,425	681	1,717	1,018	303	5,143	6,778	9,033	20,954
This week year ago	1,449	541	1,304	881	179	4,354	14,444	16,119	34,918
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2019/20 YTD	3,069	837	1,642	1,129	186	6,863	412	476	7,752
2018/19 YTD	1,448	673	1,629	1,548	86	5,384	727	825	6,937
YTD 2019/20 as % of 2018/19	212	124	101	73	216	127	57	58	112
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2018/19	101	126	127	108	172	116	20	31	37
2018/19 Total	8,591	3,204	6,776	5,164	479	24,214	48,924	46,189	119,327
2017/18 Total	9,150	2,343	5,689	4,854	384	22,419	57,209	56,214	135,842

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

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

Note: YTD = year-to-date. Marketing Year: wheat = 6/01-5/31, corn & soybeans = 9/01-8/31

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service

Table 13

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

For the week ending 9/05/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2019/20 Current MY	2018/19 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			
Mexico	3,619	4,613	(22)	13,691
Japan	944	2,482	(62)	11,247
Korea	70	1,260	(94)	4,754
Colombia	196	365	(46)	4,678
Peru	0	230	(100)	2,975
Top 5 Importers	**4,829**	**8,950**	**(46)**	**37,344**
Total US corn export sales	**7,190**	**15,172**	**(53)**	**53,184**
% of Projected	14%	29%		
Change from prior week[2]	**499**	**774**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	67%	59%		70%
USDA forecast, September 2019	**52,163**	**52,417**	**(0)**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, September 2019	**138,430**	**136,525**	**1**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2017/18; 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

Table 14

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

For the week ending 9/05/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2019/20 Current MY	2018/19 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg. 2015-2017
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	67	1,070	(94)	31,228
Mexico	1,896	2,055	(8)	3,716
Indonesia	205	545	(62)	2,250
Japan	460	522	(12)	2,145
Netherlands	57	0	n/a	2,209
Top 5 importers	**2,684**	**4,193**	**(36)**	**41,549**
Total US soybean export sales	**9,509**	**16,944**	**(44)**	**55,113**
% of Projected	20%	36%		
Change from prior week[2]	**1,173**	**694**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	28%	25%		**75%**
USDA forecast, September 2019	**48,365**	**47,548**	**102**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2017/18; 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 reivisions from previous week's outstanding sales and/or accumulated sales

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 15

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

For the week ending 9/05/2019	Total Commitments[2] 2019/20 Current MY	2018/19 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg 2016-2018
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Philippines	1,447	1,521	(5)	3,047
Mexico	1,703	1,189	43	3,034
Japan	1,155	1,145	1	2,695
Nigeria	765	448	71	1,564
Indonesia	234	370	(37)	1,381
Korea	704	802	(12)	1,355
Taiwan	557	501	11	1,164
Egypt	42	0	n/a	821
Thailand	375	459	(18)	747
Iraq	262	305	(14)	574
Top 10 importers	**7,244**	**6,740**	7	**16,382**
Total US wheat export sales	**12,006**	**9,739**	**23**	**24,388**
% of Projected	45%	38%		
Change from prior week[2]	**611**	**388**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	60%	69%		67%
USDA forecast, September 2019	**26,567**	**25,504**	**4**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2018/19; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 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 the previous week's outstanding and/or accumulated sales

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports

Table 16

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

Port Regions	For the Week Ending 09/12/19	Previous Week*	Current Week as % of Previous	2019 YTD*	2018 YTD*	2019 YTD as % of 2018 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last Year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	2018 Total*
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	223	171	130	9,586	9,209	104	88	85	13,315
Corn	0	0	n/a	6,858	15,424	44	0	0	20,024
Soybeans	211	139	151	7,400	6,400	116	162	191	7,719
Total	**434**	**311**	**140**	**23,844**	**31,033**	**77**	**72**	**75**	**41,058**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	114	105	109	3,653	2,888	126	159	141	3,896
Corn	236	459	51	16,422	25,133	65	51	55	33,735
Soybeans	368	739	50	17,997	17,139	105	107	87	28,124
Total	**719**	**1,303**	**55**	**38,072**	**45,161**	**84**	**81**	**76**	**65,755**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	97	113	86	5,025	2,239	224	283	89	3,198
Corn	32	0	n/a	563	590	95	190	76	730
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	2	69	2	0	0	69
Total	**129**	**113**	**115**	**5,590**	**2,898**	**193**	**255**	**86**	**3,997**
Interior									
Wheat	49	13	372	1,377	1,150	120	78	87	1,614
Corn	146	142	103	5,449	6,224	88	88	82	8,650
Soybeans	119	127	94	4,876	4,790	102	108	156	6,729
Total	**314**	**282**	**111**	**11,702**	**12,164**	**96**	**94**	**103**	**16,993**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	32	0	705	533	132	74	83	894
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	342	0	0	0	404
Soybeans	0	22	0	445	554	80	28	58	1,192
Total	**0**	**54**	**0**	**1,150**	**1,428**	**81**	**46**	**57**	**2,491**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	1	n/a	35	68	52	n/a	192	69
Corn	0	0	n/a	94	75	127	38	17	138
Soybeans	3	1	191	986	1,431	69	249	263	2,047
Total	**3**	**2**	**158**	**1,116**	**1,573**	**71**	**228**	**201**	**2,253**
U.S. total from ports*									
Wheat	483	434	111	20,382	16,086	127	111	93	22,986
Corn	414	601	69	29,387	47,788	61	46	47	63,682
Soybeans	701	1,029	68	31,706	30,382	104	115	109	45,879
Total	**1,599**	**2,064**	**77**	**81,474**	**94,257**	**86**	**83**	**80**	**132,547**

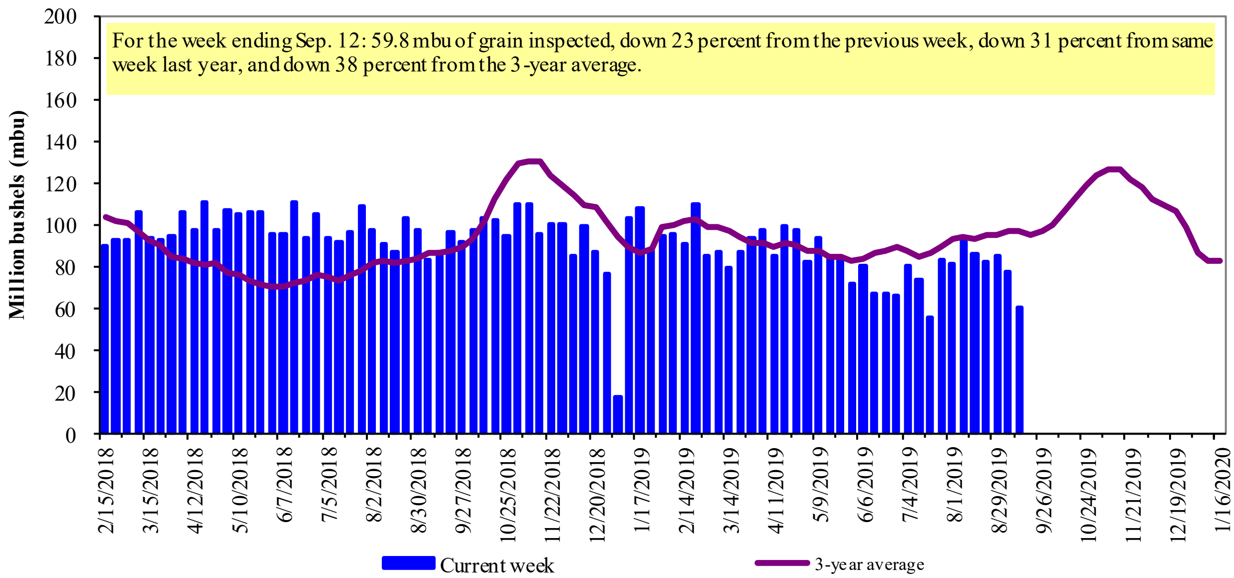
*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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 53 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2018.

Figure 14

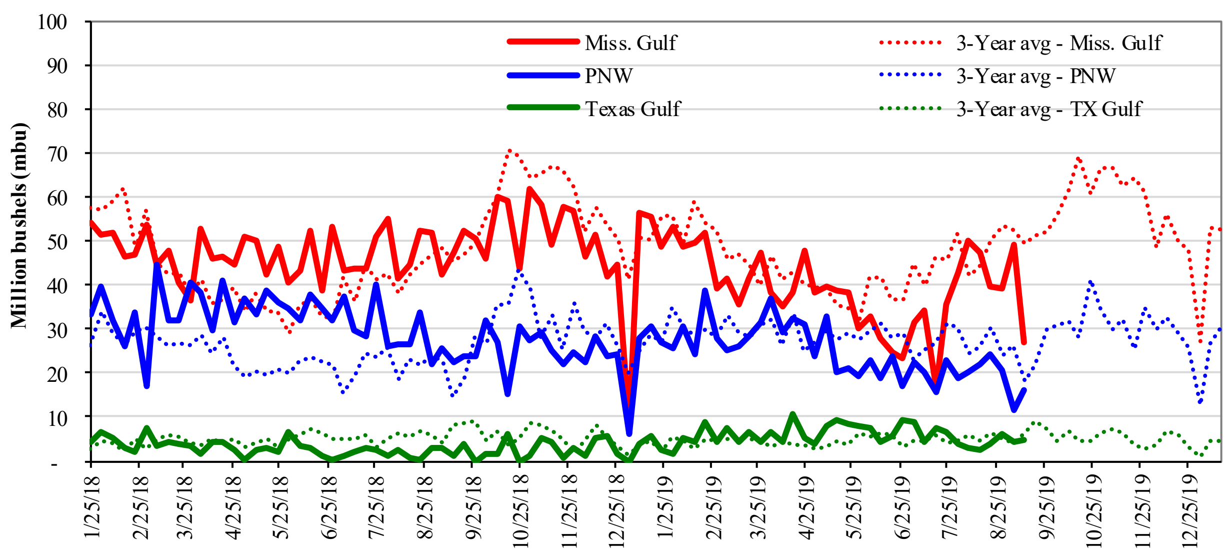
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service
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 09/12/19 inspections (mbu):		Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf:	27.0	Last Week:	down 45	up 17	down 40	up 39
PNW:	15.9	Last Year (same week):	down 43	up 399	down 34	down 29
Texas Gulf:	4.8	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 47	down 12	down 44	down 36

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

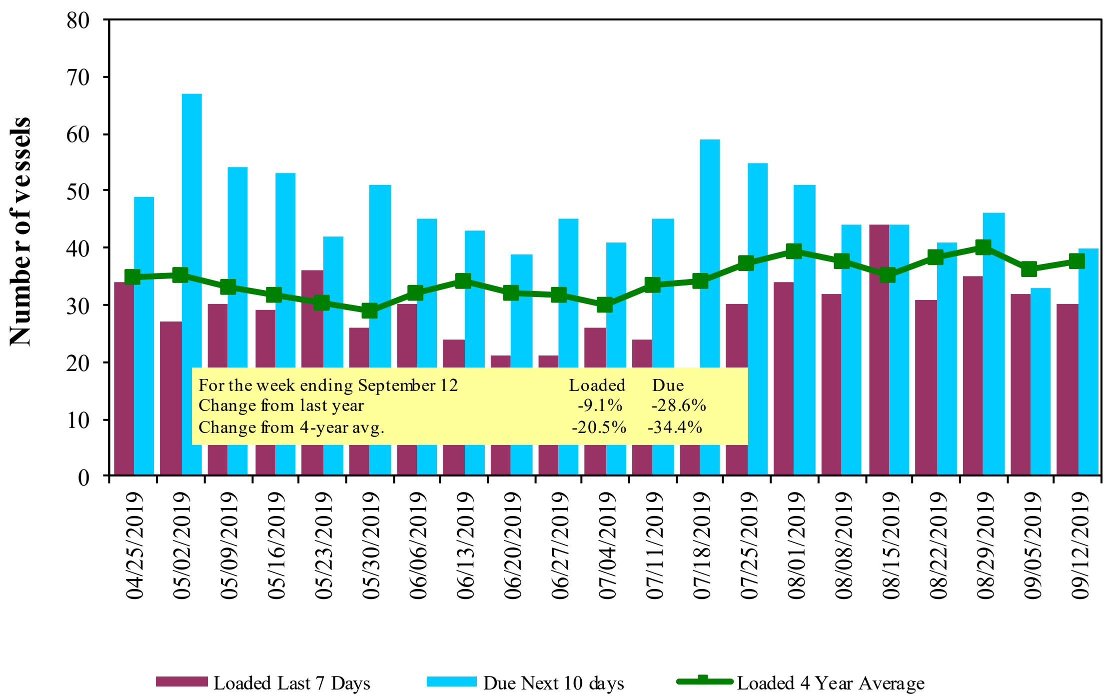
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf In port	Gulf Loaded 7-days	Gulf Due next 10-days	Pacific Northwest In port
9/12/2019	31	30	40	14
9/5/2019	38	32	33	9
2018 range	(23..88)	(24..41)	(38..67)	(4..30)
2018 avg.	40	34	54	17

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

Figure 16

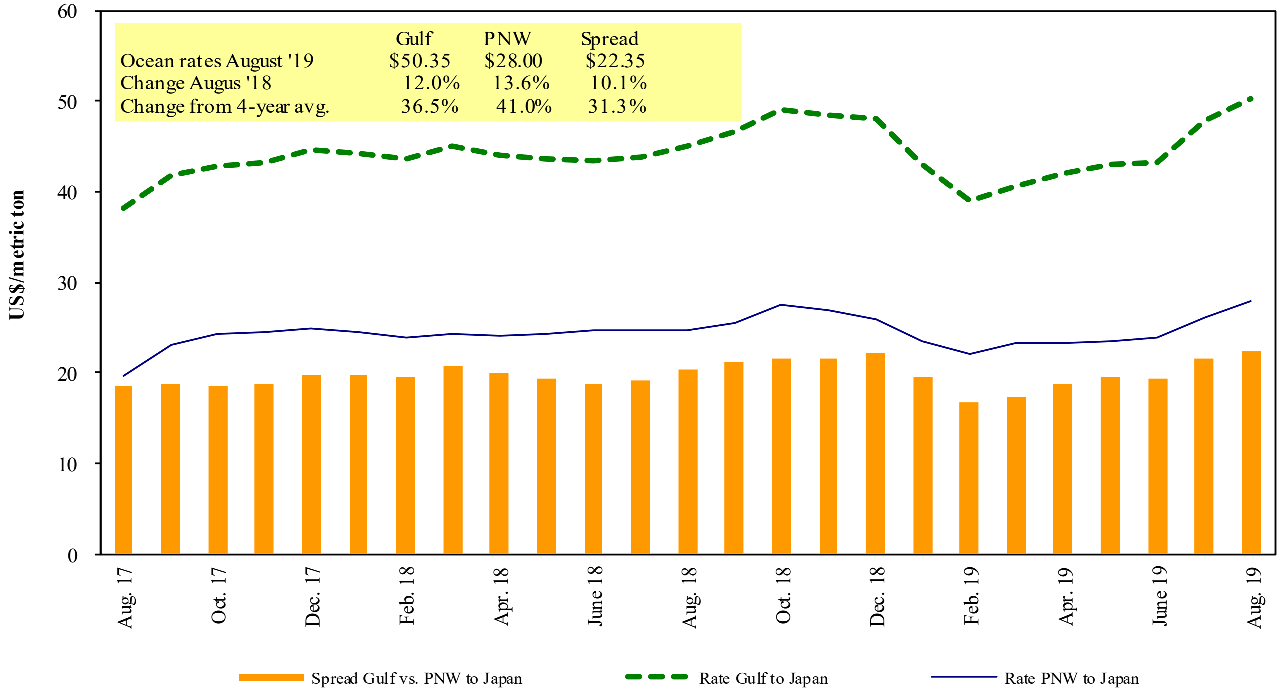
U.S. Gulf[1] Vessel Loading Activity



Source:USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
[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 09/14/2019

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	Pt Sudan	Sorghum	Sep 20/30	24,960	58.15*
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti	Wheat	Aug 19/29	20,000	85.66*
U.S. Gulf	Somaliland	Sorghum	Sep 20/30	32,240	61.75*
PNW	Philippines	Soybean Meal	Oct 31/31	15,390	49.82*
PNW	Vietnam	Soybean Meal	Oct 21/31	3,200	49.82*
PNW	Yemen	Wheat	Sep 5/15	35,380	59.59*
PNW	Yemen	Wheat	Sep 20/30	35,000	62.19*
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 10/20	65,000	33.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 20/May 5	63,000	33.00

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

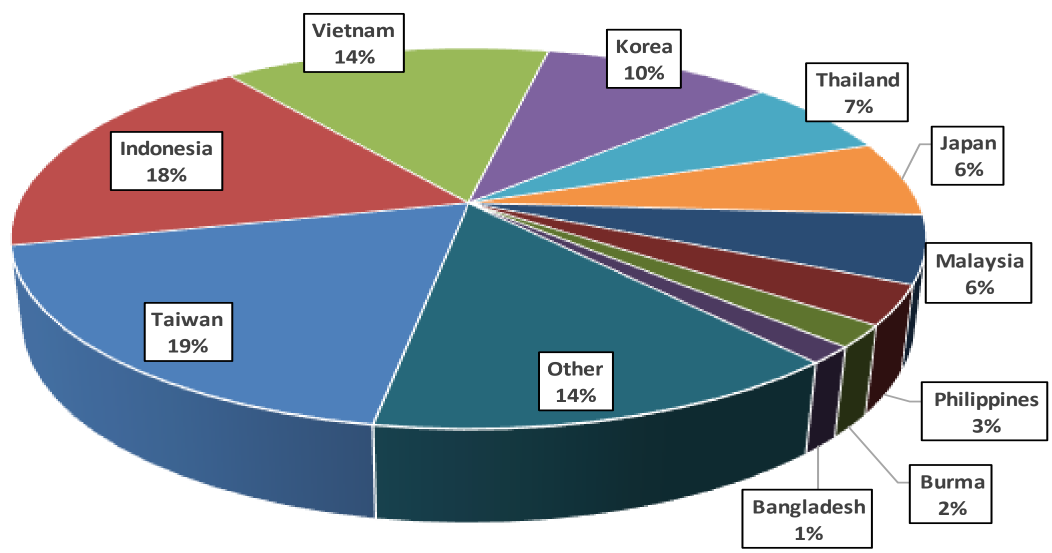
*50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

Source: Maritime Research Inc.

In 2018, containers were used to transport 8 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 55 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2018 went to Asia, of which 13 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 94 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

Figure 18

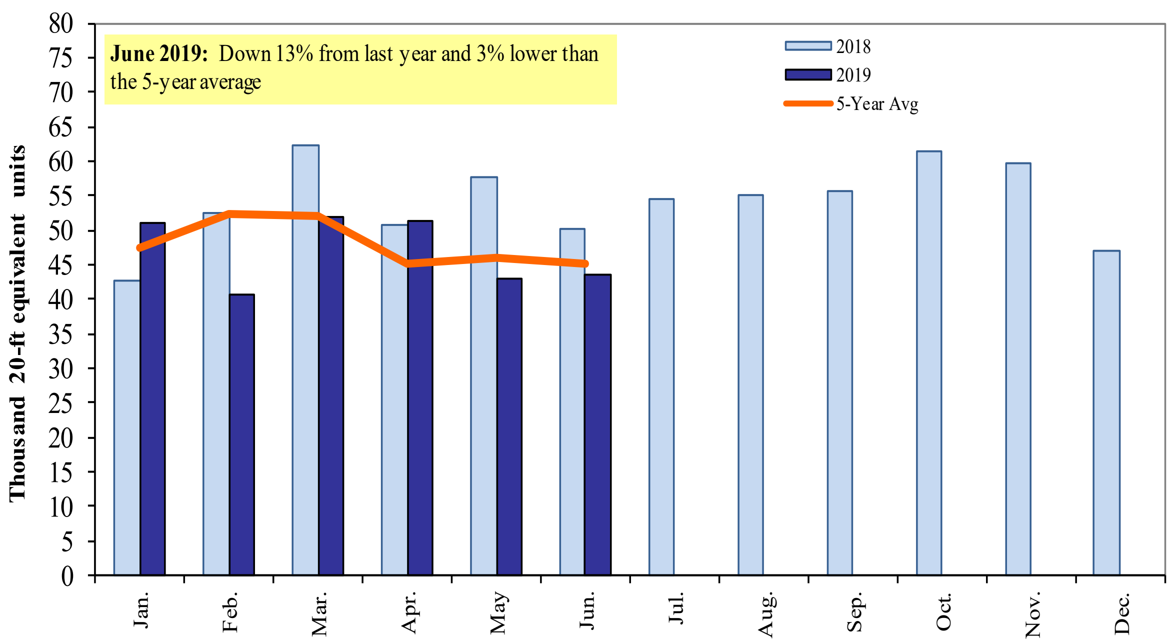
Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, Jan-Jun 2019



Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of 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 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
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		
April Taylor	april.taylor@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Kuo-Liang (Matt) Chang	matt.chang@usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Kelly P. Nelson	kelly.nelson@usda.gov	(202) 690 - 0992
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
Editor		
Maria Williams	maria.williams@usda.gov	(202) 690-4430

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.* September 19, 2019. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.09-19-2019**