



## GRAIN TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Shipper and Exporter Assistance Program  
Transportation and Marketing Division  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

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**Grain Transportation Report Now Available On The Internet.** USDA's *Grain Transportation* report is now available electronically on the Internet. It will be published weekly on our website, <http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/grain.htm>, every Tuesday by 9:00 am (eastern time zone). This will expedite delivery and provide you information in a more timely manner. Also, we will continue to provide a paper copy of the report. We are currently working on a new and expanded version of the newsletter which will be available in the next few weeks.

**Russian Minister Reports On Grain Harvest.** The Russian Agriculture Minister confirmed last week that Russia's grain harvest for 1997 would be approximately 80 million tons. The Prime Minister said that grain yields were generally higher in 11 production regions exceeding 1996 yields. He said milling wheat production would be 1.6 times higher than 1996, when Russian farmers harvested 34.9 million tons.

**STB Extends Time Period For Completing Rail Line Sales.** The Surface Transportation Board (STB) has extended the time period to complete rail line sales by 60 days. This will allow employees who lose their jobs, additional time to consider their options during the sale of the rail line. The STB's decision also provides additional time for shippers and communities to respond to line-sale proposals. Employee groups, and some elected officials say the new plan seems fair to employees who need additional time to make adjustments. Railroad trade associations, some small carriers and other public officials opposed the board's proposal, saying the longer period would harm business. The rules apply to any railroad generating more than \$5 million and less than \$250 million in annual revenue.

**Corn Production.** According to USDA's *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates*, released September 12, forecast the 1997/98 U.S. corn crop at 235 million metric tons or 9.268 billion bushels, down 8 million bushels from the previous monthly estimate, which is slightly below last year (see page 2). Projected exports are down 25 million bushels, due mainly to increased competition from China. Projected corn price range is down 5 cents on each end to \$2.45 to 2.85 per bushel.

**River Situation.** At the Melvin Price Locks and Dam during the previous 24 hours ending midnight Sunday (Sept. 14), 12 tows with 142 barges passed upbound, and 10 tows with 118 barges passed in the downbound direction. On Monday (Sept. 15), at 6:00 a.m., there was one tow waiting to go upbound, and one tow waiting to go downbound. In the Columbia River Basin on Friday (Sept. 12), 5 vessels were at berth loading, while 4 waited.

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**SOUTHBOUND BARGE FREIGHT RATES\***

Week Ended September 5

<b>River/Region</b>	<b>Contract Period</b>	<b>Rate**</b>
		Data not available

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\* Based on Actual Trades from the Merchants Exchange of St. Louis Barge Call Session

\*\* Rates are Quoted as a Percentage of the 1976 Tariff Benchmark

**PROJECTED CORN SUPPLY AND USE**  
**1997/98 MARKETING YEAR**

*million metric tons*

	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Major Exporters</b>	<b>World</b>
<b>Beginning Stocks</b>	23.91	1.50	86.28
<b>Production</b>	235.41	24.70	573.68
<b>Domestic Use</b>	186.19	17.05	589.12
<b>Exports</b>	51.44	8.78	71.91
<b>Ending Stocks</b>	21.95	1.37	70.85

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Major exporters include Argentina, South Africa, and Thailand.

One metric ton equals 39.3 bushels of corn (56 pounds per bushel)

Source: World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, USDA, September 12, 1997

<b>WEEK ENDED</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>COMPARABLE WEEK</b>
		<b>1996</b>

**INSPECTIONS FOR EXPORT***1,000 Bushels*

Aug 7	79,526 *	78,876
Aug 14	62,428 *	69,438
Aug 21	74,877 *	68,389
Aug 28	74,316 *	61,993
Sept 4	58,525	61,240
Calendar Year to Date	2,350,792 *	2,892,848

\* Revised

**RAIL CARLOADINGS***Carloads*

Aug 9	21,306 *	17,311 *
Aug 16	22,981 *	20,209 *
Aug 23	22,751 *	20,413 *
Aug 30	24,817 *	23,153 *
Sept 6	18,071 *	16,879 *
Calendar Year to Date	828,935 *	849,389 *

\* Revised - Soo Line Not Included

**RAIL DELIVERIES TO PORT***Carloads*

	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast
Aug 6	20	3,013 *	3,113	126	3,323	1,093
Aug 13	49	2,285	3,456	53	3,200	1,368
Aug 20	11	3,603	2,502	4	2,710	1,663
Aug 27	2	2,585	2,734	0	2,097	1,710
Sept 3	2	2,042	3,662	9	1,975	1,242
CY to Date	1,157	77,974 *	129,560	2,608	107,171	143,051

\* Revised

**BARGE GRAIN MOVEMENTS***1,000 Tons*

River / Lock Number	Week ending 9/6/97					Week ending 9/7/96				
	CORN	WHT.	SOY	OTHER	TOTAL	CORN	WHT.	SOY	OTHER	TOTAL
Miss./15	312	18	29	0	359	92	69	100	5	265
Miss./25	352	38	64	2	456	79	54	107	8	248
Miss./26	545	33	85	2	665	93	44	119	8	263
Miss./27	642	51	104	2	799	56	41	99	9	205
Ill./8	81	3	14	0	99	17	5	30	0	52
Ohio/52	29	21	6	24	80	27	9	7	37	80
Ark./1	3	49	1	0	53	5	20	0	0	25

Calendar year totals for Miss./27, Ohio/52 and Ark./1:

Year	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other Grains	Total
1997	19,786	1,656	4,796	2,261	28,497
1996	23,541	1,653	4,950	2,816	32,960

Other grains include barley, sorghum and oats. Totals may not add due to rounding. Data source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**MAJOR EXPORT SALES \****1,000 Metric Tons*

WEEK ENDED	1997			COMPARABLE WEEK 1996		
	WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS	WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS
Aug 7	5,574	8,133	6,775	6,527	15,348	4,545
Aug 15	5,552	8,268	6,993	6,256	14,499	4,524
Aug 22	5,252	7,765	7,295	5,964	14,381	4,438
Aug 29	5,292	7,705	7,641	5,652	13,975	4,637
Sept 5	5,336	7,730	7,759	5,275	14,289	4,589

\*Unshipped Balances-Current &amp; Next Marketing Year

**GULF COAST OCEAN GRAIN VESSELS**

	1997			1996		
	IN PORT	LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS	IN PORT	LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS
Aug 14	35	37	64	36	46	44
Aug 21	34	61	54	31	43	45
Aug 28	28	52	55	26	41	45
Sept 4	33	39	55	34	38	42
Sept 11	33	46	59	28	36	49

**AVERAGE GRAIN PRICES***Dollars Per Bushel*

	1997			1996		
	WHEAT	CORN <sup>1</sup>	SOYBEANS <sup>2</sup>	WHEAT	CORN <sup>1</sup>	SOYBEANS <sup>2</sup>
Aug 8	3.78	2.61	7.54	4.96	4.38	7.74
Aug 15	3.78	2.62	7.58	5.07	4.86	8.23
Aug 22	3.86	2.71	7.38	5.03	4.72	8.12
Aug 29	3.95	2.75	7.30	4.94	4.14	8.12
Sept 5	3.98	2.72	6.65	4.76	3.63	8.07

(Wheat-#1 HRW-ORD., Kansas City; Corn-#2 Yellow, Chicago; Soybeans-#1 Yellow, Chicago)

<sup>1</sup> Bought to arrive 15 days; <sup>2</sup> Bought to arrive 30 days.**OCEAN FREIGHT RATES\****Dollars/Tons - Basis Vessel Size/Ton*

U.S. Loading Port	Destination	Estimated Freight Rates	Dates of Movement
St. Lawrence	Morocco	\$15.00 - (25M)	September
Gulf	Antwerp/Hamburg	\$07.70 - (50M)	September
Gulf	Algeria	\$18.00 - (20M)	September
Gulf	Japan	\$24.00 - 24.55 (52M - 54M))	September
Gulf	Morocco	\$15.00 - (25M)	September.

\*These ocean fixtures are based on full ship charters.