



Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the
Transportation and Marketing Programs/Transportation Services Branch
www.ams.usda.gov/tmdtsb/grain

April 8, 2004

Contents

Grain
Transportation
Indicators

Rail
Transportation

Barge
Transportation

Truck
Transportation

Grain Exports

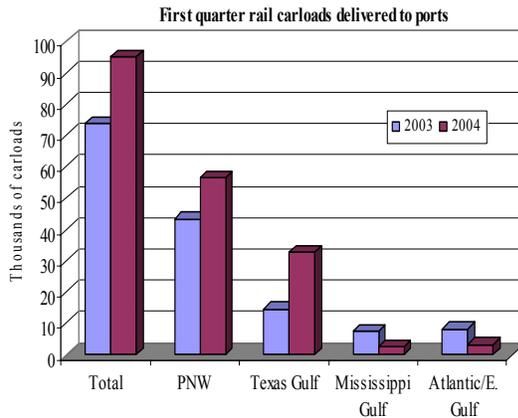
Ocean
Transportation

Contacts
and
Links

Subscription
Information

The next
release is
April 15, '04

First Quarter Rail Grain Deliveries to U.S. Ports Up. For the first quarter of 2004, a total of 94,935 rail carloads (see figure below and table 3 of the report) of grain was delivered to U.S. ports, up 21,222 carloads or 29 percent, compared with last year. This is also 4 percent higher than rail carloads delivered in the fourth quarter of 2003. Rail carloads of grain delivered to the Pacific Northwest (PNW) were up 13,106 carloads or 30 percent, compared with this period last year, and 11 percent, compared with the fourth quarter of 2003. Rail carload grain deliveries to the Texas Gulf were up 17,962 carloads or 122 percent, compared with the previous year, and 11 percent, compared with the previous quarter. However, rail carload grain deliveries to Mississippi and the Atlantic and East Gulf were down 4,958 (77 percent) and 4,888 (60 percent) carloads, respectively, compared with last year. They were also down 42 and 61 percent, respectively, compared with the fourth quarter of 2003.



Source: Grain Transportation Report, AMS, USDA

“spread,” which is the difference between the rates on the two routes, were up during the first quarter of 2004, compared with the same period last year (see figure 13 of the report). Rates were \$67.29 per metric ton (mt) for the U.S. Gulf to Japan route (Gulf) and \$43.98 per mt for the Pacific Northwest to Japan route (PNW). These quarterly rates for the two routes were the highest rates recorded within the last 20 years. The \$67.29-per-mt ocean freight rate recorded for the Gulf was up 141 percent from the first quarter of 2003 and 43 percent higher than the fourth quarter of 2003. For the PNW, the \$43.98-per-mt ocean freight rate in the first quarter of 2004 was 126 percent higher than in the first quarter of 2003 and 11 percent higher than in the third quarter of 2003.

The “spread” between the rates on the two major grain routes was \$23.31 in the first quarter of 2004, increasing from the first quarter of 2003 by 175 percent and from the fourth quarter of 2003 by 210 percent. The surge in the ocean freight rates may be related to the growth in the overall bulk market due to global economic recovery and continued economic expansion in China. The Baltic Dry Index, which tracks the movement in the overall dry bulk market ocean freight rate, was recorded at 5,263 for the first quarter of 2004, up 202 percent from the first quarter of 2003 and 22 percent from the fourth quarter of 2003.

surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov

Union Pacific Slowed by Crew Shortages. According to Union Pacific (UP), a miscalculation concerning the replacement of retiring UP employees, particularly crew members, has forced the railroad to request that some customers temporarily cut back on use of the railroad. The problem stems from a 2002 change in Federal retirement law, allowing employees with 30 years of service to retire at the age of 60, instead of 62. A drastic reduction in train crews and a mandated maximum shift of 12 hours are forcing many trains to sit on passing tracks and main tracks until replacement crews are available.

The company hired and began training roughly 1,000 new crew members last September. Approximately 4,000 new employees are projected to be required, instead of the 3,000 anticipated as of last November. A Union Pacific spokesperson also mentioned an unanticipated business growth as adding to the problem. Railroad traffic grew by 5 percent due to the expansion of the U.S. economy, largely because of an increase in imports and exports through Houston and Los Angeles.

Fortunately, however, the crisis has not reached the magnitude of UP’s service problems experienced during 1997-98, when the average train speed on the system was 13 miles per hour (mph). Currently, UP train speed is 21 mph, compared with 24 mph last year. The time trains spent awaiting departure in both Los Angeles and Houston increased by roughly 60 percent, compared with a year ago. UP is the second largest grain hauling railroad in the United States. NewsEdge 4/5, 4/6, Karl.hacker@usda.gov

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1--Grain transport cost indicators*

Week ending	Truck	Rail	Barge	Ocean	
				Gulf	Pacific
04/07/04	111	199	82	325	294
Compared with last week	↑	unchanged	↓	↑	↓

*Indicator: Base year 2000 = 100; Weekly updates include truck = diesel (\$/gallon); rail = nearby secondary rail market (\$/car); barge = spot Illinois River basis (index = percent of tariff rate); and ocean = routes to Japan (\$/metric ton)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

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

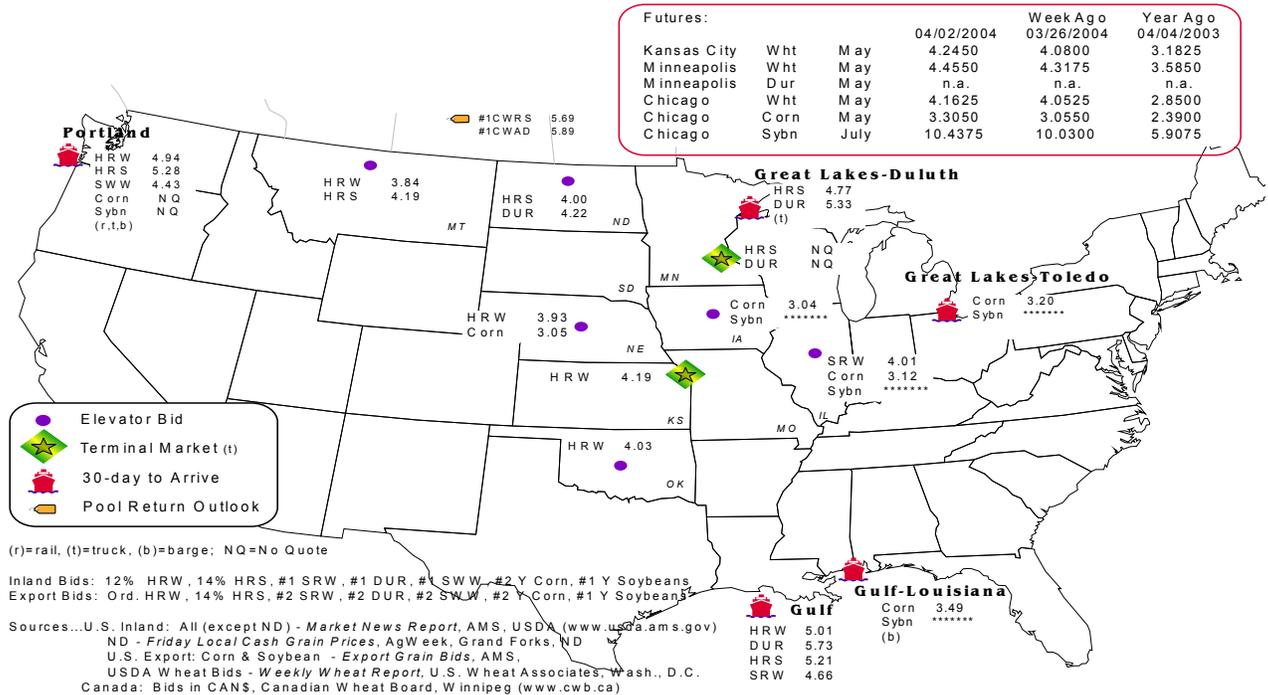
Commodity	Origin--destination	4/2/2004	3/26/2004
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.37	-0.38
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.44	-0.46
Soybean	IA--Gulf	n/a	n/a
HRW	KS--Gulf	-0.82	-0.83
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.28	-1.30

Note: nq = no quote

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **grain bid summary** illustrates the market relationships for commodities. Positive and negative adjustments in differential between terminal and futures markets, and the relationship to inland market points, are indicators of changes in fundamental market supply and demand. The map may be used to monitor market and time differentials.

Figure 1
Grain bid summary



Rail Transportation

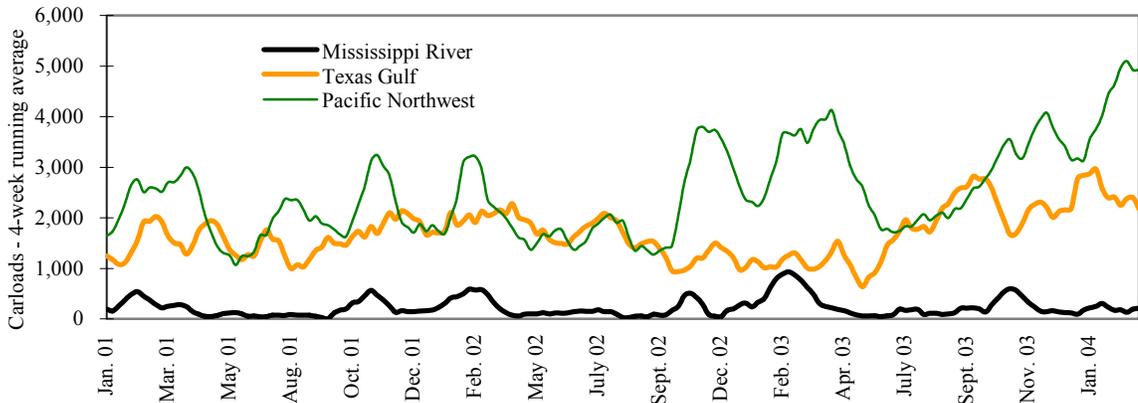
Table 3--Rail deliveries to port (carloads)*

Week ending	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total
3/31/2004 ^p	2	2,368	4,045	46	6,461
3/24/2004 ^r	113	2,118	5,113	76	7,420
2004 YTD	2,427	32,664	56,517	3,327	94,935
2003 YTD	7,385	14,702	43,411	8,215	73,713
2004 as % of 2003	33	222	130	40	129
Total 2003**	14,934	88,118	150,530	20,509	274,091
Total 2002	10,937	84,625	111,832	20,842	228,236

(* Incomplete Data; (**) Excludes 53rd week; YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

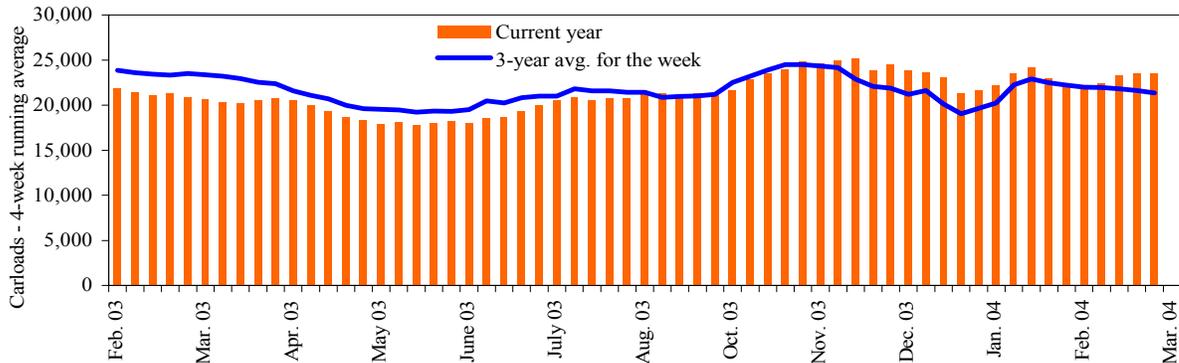
Railroads originate approximately 40 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

**Figure 2
Rail deliveries to port**



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

**Figure 3
Total weekly U.S. grain car loadings for Class I railroads**



Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 4--Class I rail carrier grain car bulletin (grain carloads originated)

Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
03/27/04	2,962	2,915	9,508	389	6,411	22,185	5,191	3,887
This week last year	2,619	3,342	7,948	349	6,430	20,688	4,001	4,071
2004 YTD	36,309	40,883	113,429	6,852	80,633	278,106	56,132	41,174
2003 YTD	35,324	39,432	95,137	4,249	79,019	253,161	40,796	42,024
2004 as % of 2003	103	104	119	161	102	110	138	98
Total 2003*	146,395	171,260	416,371	24,506	336,079	1,094,611	197,993	198,185

Source: Association of American Railroads (www.aar.org); YTD = year-to-date; * Excludes 53rd week

Table 5--Rail car auction offerings (\$/car)*

Delivery for:	May 04	June 04	July 04
BNSF ¹			
COT/N. grain	no offer	no offer	no offer
COT/S. grain	no offer	no offer	no offer
UP ²			
GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no offer
GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no offer	\$75

*Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

¹BNSF - COT = Certificate of Transportation

N includes: ID, MN, MT, ND, OR, SD, WA, WI, WY, and Manitoba, Canada.

S includes: CO, IA, IL, KS, MO, NE, OK, TX, NM, AZ, CA, UT, and NV.

²UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

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

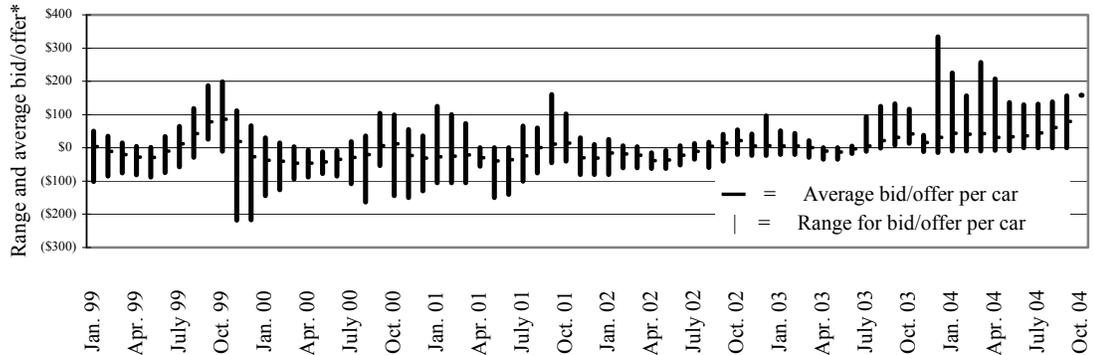
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Rail service may be ordered directly from the railroad via **auction** for guaranteed service or tariff for nonguaranteed service or through the secondary market.

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
Secondary rail car market, delivery month-year



*up to 6 months of trading
 Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Average bid/offer is the simple average of all the weekly bids/offers over the entire period (up to 6 months) for guaranteed railcars that are traded for delivery in a particular month.

Range for bid/offer shows the range of average weekly bids/offers over the entire period (up to 6 months) for guaranteed railcars that are traded for delivery in a particular month.

Table 6--Weekly secondary rail car market (\$/car)*

Week ending	Delivery period			
	May 04	June 04	July 04	Aug. 04
BNSF-GF				
4/1/2004	\$78	\$87	\$89	\$102
Change from last week	-\$8	-\$3	-\$12	\$2
UP-Pool				
4/1/2004	\$130	\$101	\$98	\$70
Change from last week	\$8	\$2	\$0	-\$25

*Average premium/discount to tariff, \$/car-last week

Note: Bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices,

Missing value = no bid quoted; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool

Sources: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Data from Atwood/ConAgra, Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Table 7--Tariff rail rates for unit and shuttle train shipments*

Effective date:					
4/5/2004	Origin	Destination	Rate/car	Rate/metric ton	Rate/bushel**
<u>Unit train*</u>					
Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Houston, TX	\$2,020	\$22.27	\$0.61
	Kansas City, MO	Galveston, TX	\$1,820	\$20.06	\$0.55
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$4,148	\$45.72	\$1.24
	St. Louis, MO	Houston, TX	\$1,945	\$21.44	\$0.58
	Kansas City, MO	Laredo, TX	\$2,280	\$25.13	\$0.68
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$1,834	\$20.22	\$0.55
	Chicago, IL	Richmond, VA	\$1,961	\$21.62	\$0.59
	Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,240	\$35.71
Chicago, IL		Baton Rouge, LA	\$2,736	\$30.16	\$0.77
Council Bluffs, IA		Baton Rouge, LA	\$2,170	\$23.92	\$0.61
Evansville, IN		Raleigh, NC	\$1,841	\$20.29	\$0.52
Council,Bluffs, IA		Stockton, CA	\$3,496	\$38.54	\$0.98
Kansas City		Dalhart, TX	\$1,745	\$19.24	\$0.49
Columbs, OH		Raleigh, NC	\$1,750	\$19.29	\$0.49
Des Moines, IA		Laredo, TX	\$2,930	\$32.30	\$0.82
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,310	\$36.49	\$0.99
	Chicago, IL	Baton Rouge, LA	\$2,736	\$30.16	\$0.82
	Council Bluffs, IA	Baton Rouge, LA	\$2,799	\$30.85	\$0.84
	Des Moines, IA	Laredo, TX	\$2,930	\$32.30	\$0.88
	Evansville, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$1,841	\$20.29	\$0.55
Chicago, IL	Raleigh, NC	\$2,441	\$26.91	\$0.73	
<u>Shuttle Train*</u>					
Wheat	St. Louis, MO	Houston, TX	\$1,795	\$19.79	\$0.54
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,993	\$44.01	\$1.20
Corn	Fremont, NE	Houston, TX	\$2,425	\$26.73	\$0.68
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,090	\$34.06	\$0.87
Soybeans	Council Bluffs, IA	Houston, TX	\$2,255	\$24.86	\$0.63
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$3,110	\$34.28	\$0.87

*A unit train refers to shipments of at least 52 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of more than 100 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

**Approximate load per car = 100 short tons: corn 56 lbs./bu., wheat & soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.uprr.com

Table 9--Barge futures market (US\$)*

Week ending	River/region	Contract period	Index rate	
			Futures	Cash
4/6/2004	St. Louis	May	n/a	135
		July	n/a	145
		Sep.	n/a	210
		Nov.	n/a	185
		Dec.	n/a	153
		May	n/a	148
	Illinois River	July	n/a	160
		Sep.	n/a	225
		Nov.	n/a	215
		Dec.	n/a	180

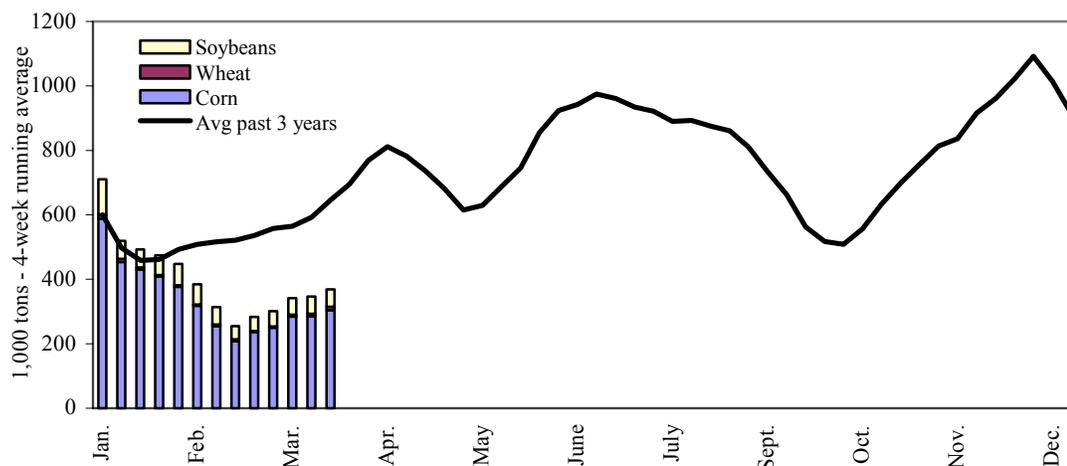
*Southbound barge freight nominal/cash basis values (US\$)

Note: Index = percent of tariff, based on 1976 tariff benchmark rate

Source: Merchants Exchange of Chicago (www.merchants-exchange.com)

Figure 7

Barge movements on the Mississippi River (Lock 27 - Granite City, IL)



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 10--Barge grain movements (1,000 tons)

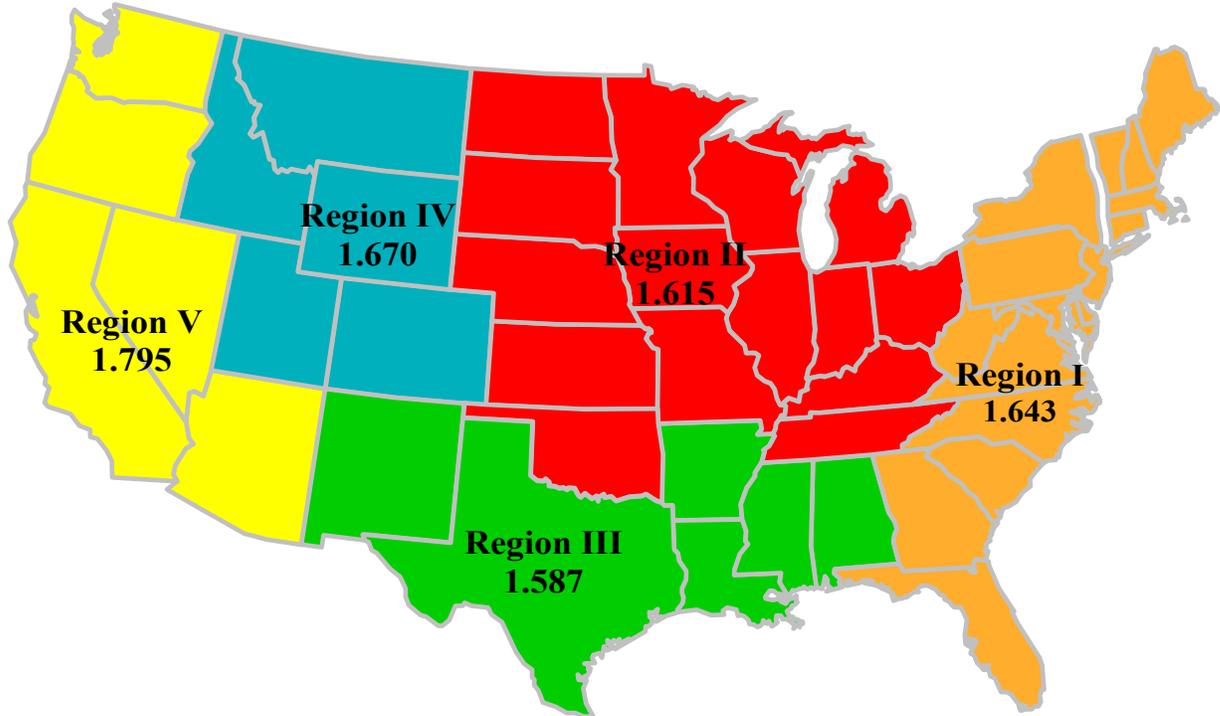
Week ending 03/27/04	Corn	Wheat	Soybean	Total
Mississippi River				
Rock Island, IL (L15)	90	0	11	101
Winfield, MO (L25)	240	0	36	279
Alton, IL (L26)	467	13	83	562
Granite City, IL (L27)	426	12	81	520
Illinois River (L8)	170	12	46	228
Ohio River (L52)	36	0	22	63
Arkansas River (L1)	0	27	3	30
2004 YTD	5,493	593	1,624	7,952
2003 YTD	5,955	474	2,741	9,490
2004 as % of 2003 YTD	92	125	59	84
Total 2003	29,898	2,787	9,146	42,526

YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1.

Source: U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrirmi/omni/webrrpts/default.asp)

Truck Transportation

Figure 8
Retail on-highway diesel prices (US\$/gallon), week ending 04/05/04



Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

The weekly **diesel price** provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates. Diesel fuel is a significant expense for truck grain movements, accounting for 37 percent of the estimated variable cost.

Table 11--Retail on-highway diesel prices*, week ending 04/05/04 (US\$/gallon)

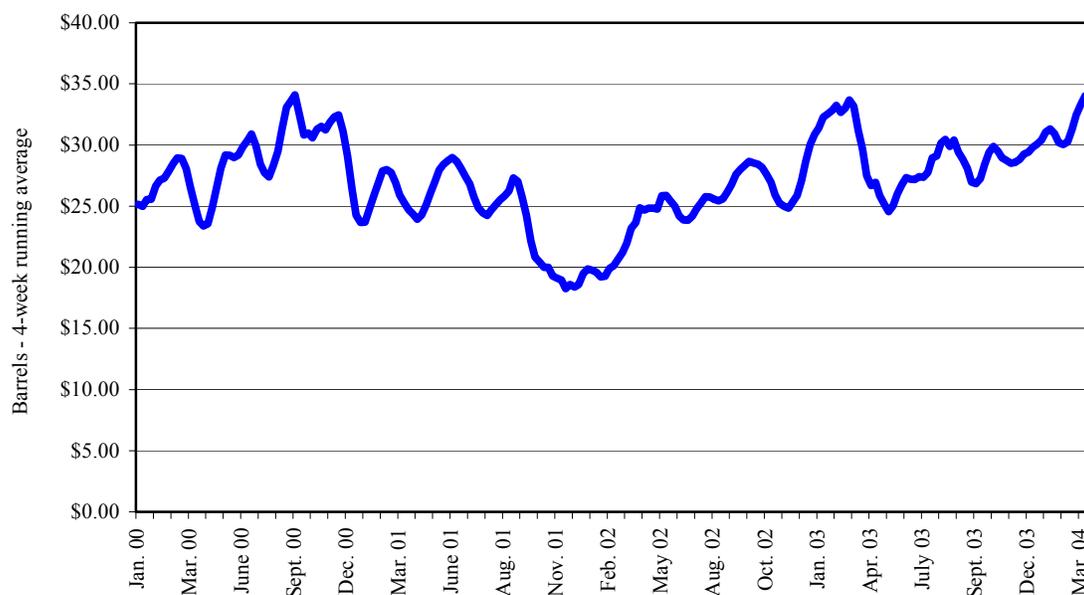
Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	1.636	-0.002	0.002
	New England	1.755	-0.002	0.009
	Central Atlantic	1.720	-0.009	-0.013
	Lower Atlantic	1.589	0.001	0.007
II	Midwest	1.610	-0.006	0.114
III	Gulf Coast	1.586	0.003	0.121
V	West Coast	1.885	0.068	0.223
	California	2.014	0.125	0.319
Total	U.S.	1.648	0.006	0.094

*Diesel fuel prices include all taxes.

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Figure 9

Weekly Brent crude price, Friday close (US\$/barrel)



Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Crude oil price is an indicator in future diesel price trends.

Light sweet crude is exchanged on the New York Mercantile Exchange. **Brent Crude**, a blend of North Sea oils, is traded on the International Petroleum Exchange in London.

Table 12--Crude oil prices* (US\$/barrel)

	4/5/2004	3/29/2004	% Change
Light Sweet Crude (NYMEX)	33.68	34.46	-2.26
Brent Crude	31.16	32.38	-3.77

*U.S. refiner crude acquisition cost, composite domestic & import; n/a = data not available

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Grain Exports

Table 13--U.S. unshipped export balances (1,000 metric tons)

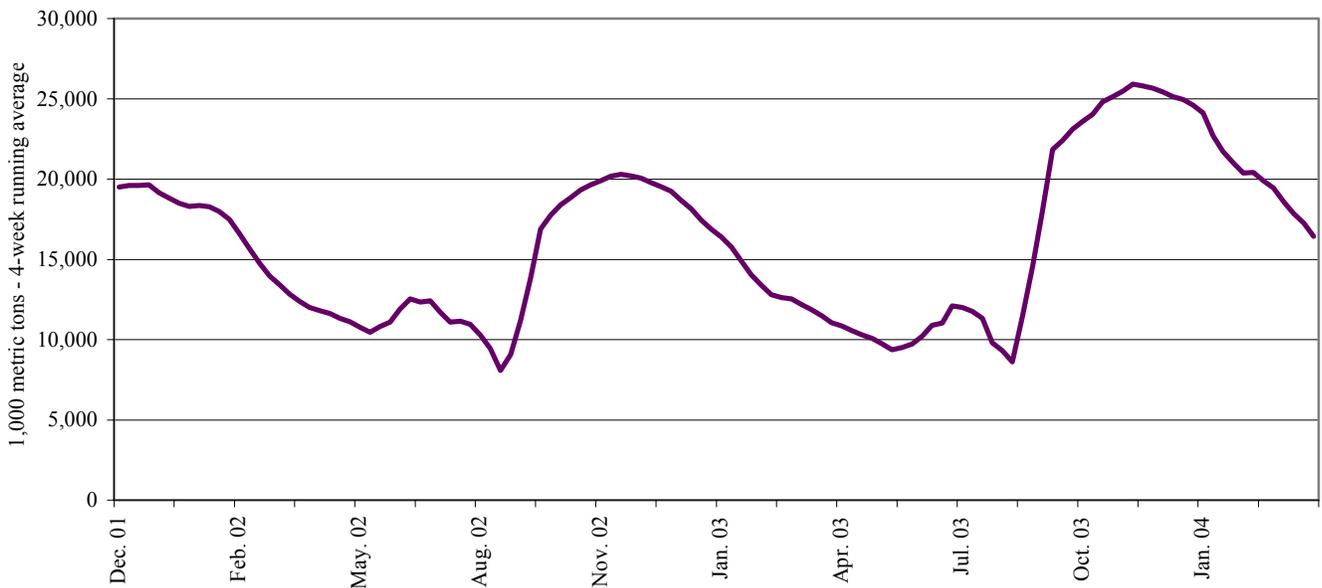
Week ending	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
3/25/2004	2,004	789	1,256	904	123	5,074	8,450	2,027	15,551
This week year ago	1,056	217	1,033	521	71	2,896	5,571	2,841	11,308
Commulative exports-crop year									
2003/04 YTD	10,469	3,145	5,486	4,148	874	24,122	28,139	21,421	73,682
2002/03 YTD	5,887	2,546	5,458	2,989	637	17,517	22,732	23,311	63,560
2003/04 as % of 2002/03	178	124	101	139	137	138	124	92	116
2002/03 Total	6,896	2,899	6,645	3,517	720	20,677	39,646	28,908	89,231
2001/02 Total	8,704	5,485	5,554	3,127	1,133	24,003	47,460	29,838	101,301

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

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service/USDA (www.fas.usda.gov)

Figure 10

U.S. grain, unshipped export balance, including wheat, corn, and soybean sales



Source: Foreign Agricultural Service/USDA (www.fas.usda.gov)

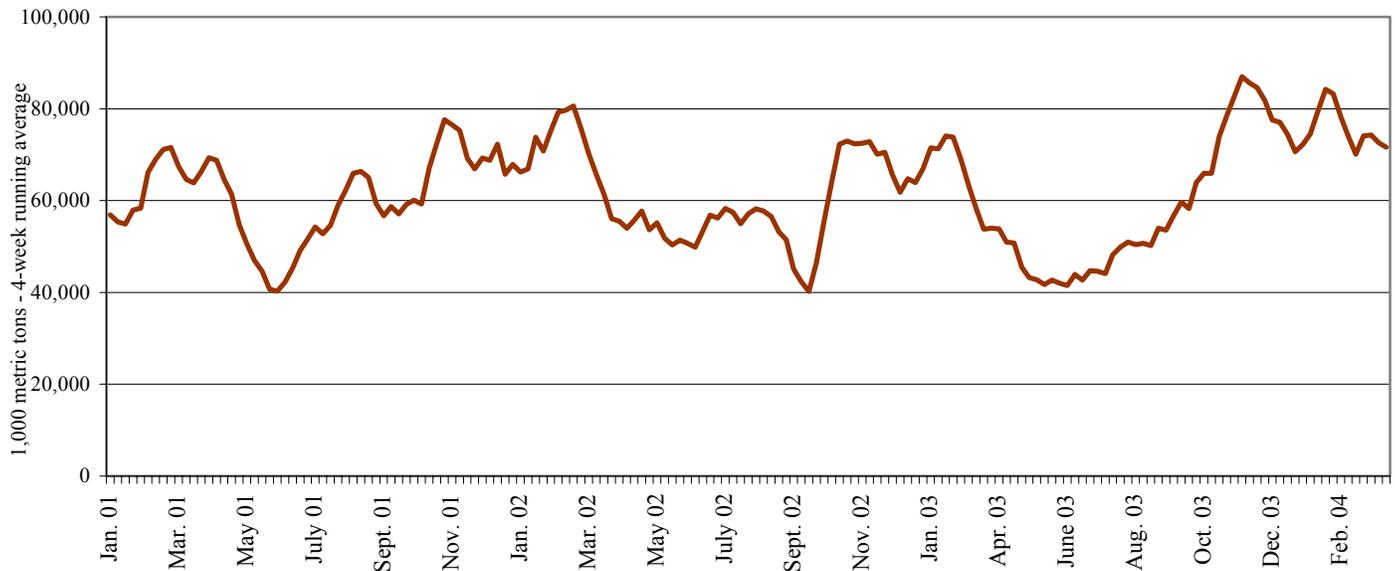
Table 14--Select U.S. port regions - grain inspections for export (1,000 metric tons)

Week ending	Pacific Region			Mississippi Gulf			Texas Gulf			Port Region total		
	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Pacific	Mississippi	Texas
04/01/04	168	291	0	100	387	0	268	0	0	459	487	268
2004 YTD	3,169	2,692	1,614	2,004	9,331	4,915	3,015	44	7	7,474	16,251	3,066
2003 YTD	2,185	1,615	1,968	1,328	6,982	7,788	1,157	526	50	5,768	16,097	1,733
2004 as % of 2003	145	167	82	151	134	63	261	8	14	130	101	177
2003 Total	8,764	5,450	5,114	5,855	30,352	18,972	7,032	746	103	19,328	55,179	7,880

Source: Federal Grain Inspection Service/USDA (www.usda.gov/gipsa); YTD: year-to-date

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, it includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 35 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Over 60 percent of these U.S. export grain shipments departed through the Mississippi Gulf region in 2003.

Figure 11
U.S. grain inspected for export, including wheat, corn, and soybeans



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

Ocean Transportation

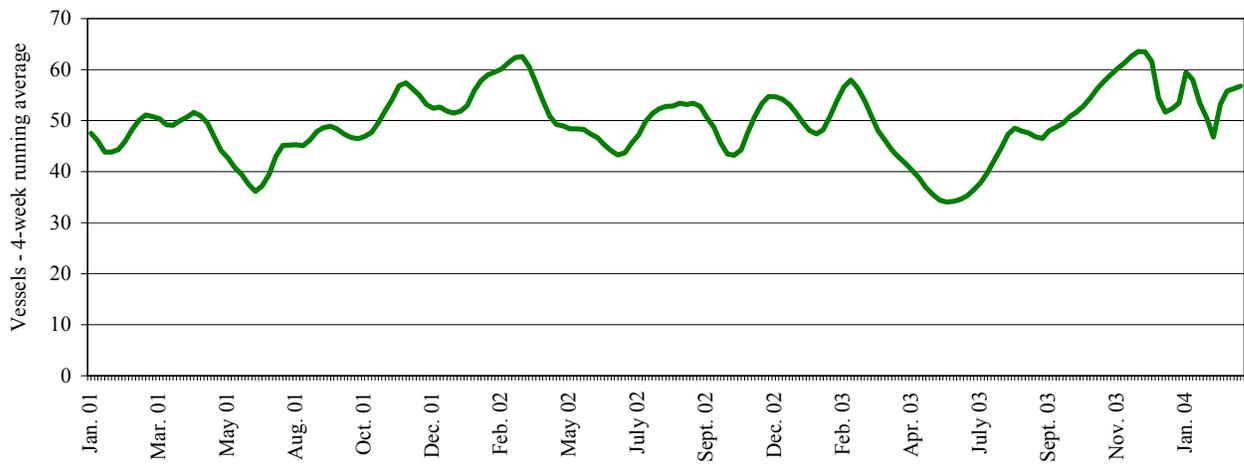
Table 15--Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
4/1/2004	17	40	56	7	3
3/25/2004	18	47	53	9	0
2003 range	(11..47)	(30..76)	(39..93)	(3..13)	(1..15)
2003 avg.	31	49	62	9	6

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 12

Gulf Port grain vessel loading (past 7 days)



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

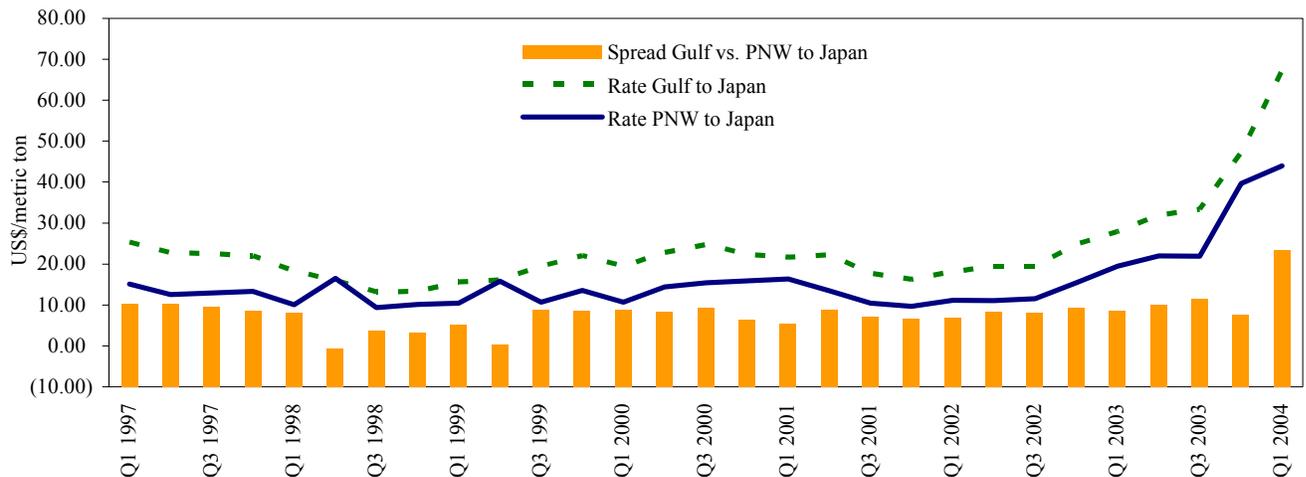
Table 16--Quarterly ocean freight rates (average rates & percentage changes) (US\$/metric ton)

Countries/ regions	2004 1st qtr	2003 1st qtr	Percent change	Countries/ regions	2004 1st qtr	2003 1st qtr	Percent change
Gulf to				Pacific NW to			
Japan	\$73.75	\$27.91	164	Japan	---	\$19.43	---
Taiwan	\$68.00	\$26.50	157	Argentina/Brazil to			
N. Europe	---	\$14.50	---	N. Africa	\$61.17	\$25.35	141
N. Africa	\$46.25	---	---	Med. Sea	---	\$25.35	---
Med. Sea	\$46.50	\$14.50	221				

Source: Maritime Research, Inc. (www.maritime-research.com)

Figure 13

Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan



Source: Baltic Exchange (www.balticexchange.com)

Table 17--Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 04/03/04

Export region	Import region	Grain	Month	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (\$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Haiti	Wheat	Apr 20/30	8,300	29.00
U.S. Gulf	Turkey	Wheat	Apr. 15/25	55,000	52.00
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Hvy grain	Apr 1/10	54,000	72.50
U.S. Gulf	Egypt Med	Hvy grain	Mar 18/25	55,000	46.50
U.S. Gulf	Albania*	Wheat	Apr. 1/10	9,000	106.34
St. Lawrence	Morocco	Wheat	Apr. 10/20	21,000	45.00
Spain	Venezuela	Wheatflour Bggd	Apr. 1/10	4,800	59.50
River plate	Algeria	Corn	Apr. 5/10	24,000	62.25
River plate	Tunisia	Grains	Mar. 10/20	22,000	72.00
River plate	Adriatic	Grains	Apr. 10/20	50,000	62.50
Argentina	Algeria	Wheat	Mar. 15/22	25,000	59.00

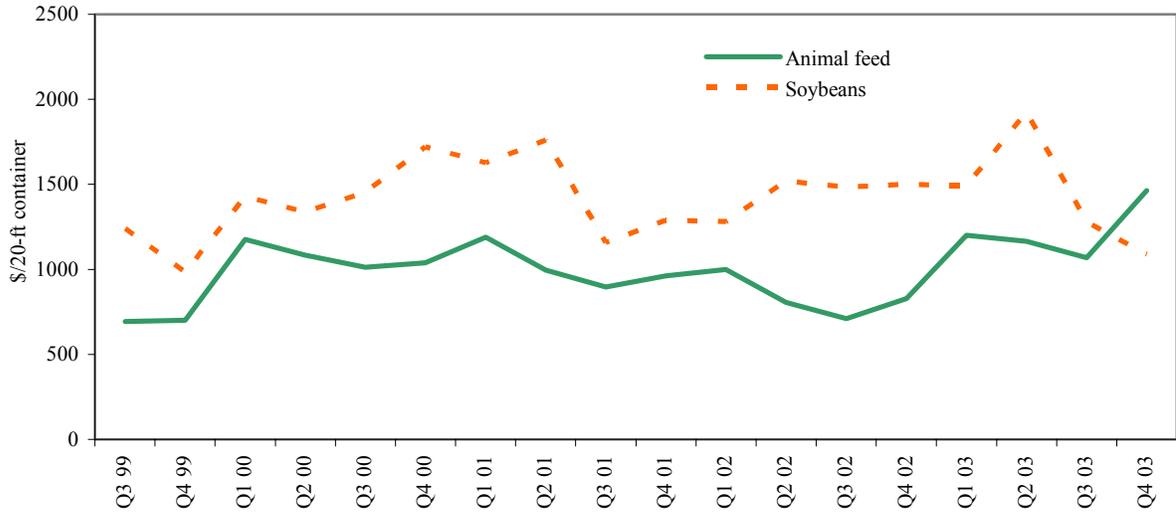
Rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicates; op = option

*Most food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S. flag vessels. The vessels are limited in availability resulting in higher rates. In addition, destinations receiving food aid generally lack adequate port unloading facilities, requiring the vessel to remain in port for a longer duration than normal.

Source: Maritime Research Inc. (www.maritime-research.com)

Figure 14

Weighted average rates¹ for containerized shipments of animal feed and soybeans to selected Asian countries



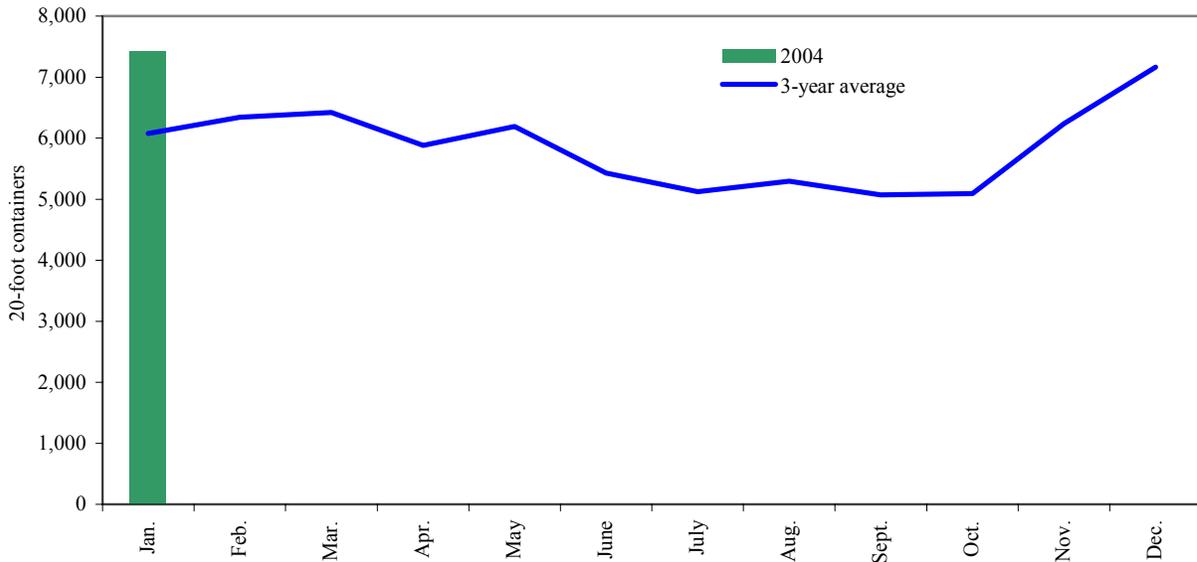
¹Animal Feed: Bangkok-Thailand (4%), Busan-Korea (24%), Hong Kong (14%), Keelung-Taiwan (14%), Tokyo-Japan (44%), and soybeans: Bangkok-Thailand (3%), Busan-Korea (7%), Hong Kong (1%), Keelung-Taiwan (24%), Tokyo-Japan (65%) January-December 2003.

Source: Ocean Rate Bulletin, Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Container ocean freight rates – average rate per twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) weighted by shipping line market share and trade route.

Figure 15

Monthly shipments of containerized grain for 2004 compared with a 3-year average



Note: PIERs data is available with a lag of approximately 40 days

Source: Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS), *Journal of Commerce*, January 2004

Contacts and Links

Contact Information

Coordinator Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov	(202) 690-1328
Grain Transportation Indicators Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov	(202) 690-1328
Rail Marvin Prater Johnny Hill	marvin.prater@usda.gov johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 690-6290 (202) 720-4211
Barge Transportation Nicholas Marathon Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo Johnny Hill	nick.marathon@usda.gov surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 690-0331 (202) 690-1328 (202) 720-4211
Truck Transportation Karla Martin John Batson	karla.martin@usda.gov john.batson@usda.gov	(202) 720-8264 (202) 690-1312
Grain Exports Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 720-4211
Ocean Transportation Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo (Freight rates and vessels) April Taylor (Container rates) Johnny Hill (Vessels)	surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov april.taylor@usda.gov johnny.hill@usda.gov	(202) 690-1328 (202) 690-1326 (202) 720-4211

Subscription Information: To subscribe to the weekly GTR for a weekly email copy, please contact Deen Olowolayemo at surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov or 202-690-1328 (1303) (*printed copies are also available upon request*).

Related Websites

Agricultural Container Indicators – a Quarterly Report
Ocean Rate Bulletin

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd2/agci/>
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/Ocean/index.asp>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (Voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.