



Grain Transportation Report

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

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March 3, 2016

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

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El Niño Conditions May Lead to Draft Restrictions for the Panama Canal in April

On February 17, and subsequently on March 1, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) announced the possibility of draft restrictions on transiting vessels sometimes during April 2016 based on weather forecasts and water consumption estimates during the upcoming months. ACP said an unusually dry season in 2015 caused by the El Niño phenomenon prevented Gatun and Alajuela Lakes from reaching their optimum levels prior to the beginning of the 2016 dry season period. The runoff in the Canal's watershed in 2015 was the second worst in its 103 year history, and the rainfall was 36 percent below average. Below normal precipitation was recorded in 26 of the last 29 months. ACP indicated the information was provided at this time for planning purposes only and that further actions will be announced in a timely manner.

New Panama Canal Transit Reservation System to be Launched

On February 22, The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) announced it is developing a new Transit Reservation System that will be available to Canal users within the next few weeks. With the new system, local shipping agents can manage their booking transactions on-line. It will also allow charterers, owners or operators, and other interested parties to access booking transactions as query only. ACP will create system users from the current authorized booking requestors' list. These users will receive their new credentials in the following weeks and will have the authority to submit booking requests. ACP encourages customers to begin on-line training as soon as possible to be prepared for the implementation of the new system. On-line training guides are available at <https://www.pancanal.com/eng/op/user-guides/index.html>.

BNSF Capital Investments for 2016

In January, BNSF Railway Co. (BNSF) announced a \$4.3 billion network-wide capital expenditure program for 2016. In individual news releases made over the last two weeks, BNSF announced plans for \$140 million in Missouri, nearly \$100 million in Colorado, more than \$110 million in Nebraska, nearly \$100 million in New Mexico, \$130 million in Minnesota, and \$220 million in Washington State. BNSF is an important carrier of grain, originating 536,173 carloads in 2015 (49 percent of U.S. Class I railroads). In States like Nebraska with limited access to waterways, rail transportation is critical for connecting grain shippers to more distant markets.

Wheat Inspections Rebound

For the week ending February 25, total inspections of wheat reached .392 million metric tons (mmt) up 38 percent from the past week, but 22 percent below the same time last year. Wheat shipments primarily increased to Asia. Soybean and corn inspections, however, decreased 36 and 19 percent from the past week, as shipments to Asia and Latin America receded. **Total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, soybeans) for export from all major export regions reached 2.2 mmt, down 23 percent from the past week, 12 percent below last year, and 9 percent below the 3-year average. Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain inspections were down 2 percent from the previous week, and Mississippi Gulf grain inspections decreased 27 percent for the same period. Outstanding export sales (unshipped) were up for wheat and corn but down for soybeans.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

During the week ending February 18, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 21.8 mmt, down 25 percent from the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** of .388 mmt were up 53 percent from the previous week. Net **corn export sales** were .934 mmt, down 11 percent from the previous week, and net **soybean export sales** were .259 mmt, down 45 percent from the past week.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 22,387 **grain carloads** for the week ending February 20, unchanged from the previous week, down 2 percent from last year, and up 11 percent from the 3-year average.

Average March shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers** per car were \$163 below tariff for the week ending February 25, down \$31 from last week, and \$13 higher than last year. Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers were \$50 below tariff, unchanged from last week. There were no non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers this week last year.

Barge

For the week ending February 27, **barge grain movements** totaled 452,250 tons, 21 percent higher than last week, and down 3 percent from the same period last year.

For the week ending February 27, 281 grain barges **moved down river**, up 20 percent from last week; 734 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 20 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending February 25, 38 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 3 percent less than the same period last year. Fifty-five vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 31 percent more than the same period last year.

Feature Article/Calendar

Corn and Soybean Transportation Costs Down in the Gulf and Pacific Northwest

Transportation costs for shipping corn and soybeans from Minneapolis, MN, through the Gulf and the Pacific Northwest (PNW) to Japan during the fourth quarter 2015 decreased from the previous quarter. The transportation costs for shipping grain from the Gulf decreased mainly because of lower ocean rates, which have resulted from lower demand for bulk shipping and ample vessel supplies (*see Grain Transportation Report (GTR) 2/18/2016*). Transportation costs through the PNW were down primarily due to lower ocean and rail rates from quarter to quarter. Total landed costs for shipping corn and soybeans through the Gulf also decreased from quarter to quarter, as truck and ocean rates and farm values decreased. Quarter-to-quarter landed costs for shipping corn and soybeans through the PNW were down as well due to lower transportation costs for each mode and lower farm values (*see Tables 1, 2*). Total fourth-quarter landed costs for shipping corn and soybeans from the Midwest to Japan via the PNW and Gulf were the lowest since 2006 (*see figure*).

U.S. Gulf Costs: In the fourth quarter, total transportation costs for shipping grain from Minneapolis through the Gulf to Japan decreased 4 percent for corn and soybeans from the previous quarter (*Table 1*). Ocean rates decreased 16 percent from last quarter, as demand for shipping remained low due to high vessel supply, but barge rates increased 9 percent as demand for barge services increased during the latter part of the year. Trucking rates decreased 1 percent from the previous quarter, but were down 31 percent from the fourth quarter 2014, due in part to the drop in diesel prices. Year-to-year transportation costs for shipping corn and soybeans through the Gulf were down 33 percent due to a significant drop in trucking, barge, and ocean rates (*see Table 1*).

Table 1: Cost of Shipping Corn and Soybeans from Minneapolis to Japan through the U.S. Gulf

	Corn					Soybeans				
	S/metric ton		Percent change			S/metric ton		Percent Change		
	4thQtr 14	3rdQtr 15	4thQtr 15	Yr. to Yr.	Qtr to Qtr	4thQtr 14	3rdQtr 15	4thQtr 15	Yr. to Yr.	Qtr to Qtr
Truck	12.06	8.50	8.38	-30.51	-1.41	12.06	8.50	8.38	-30.51	-1.41
Barge	50.35	31.33	34.05	-32.37	8.68	50.35	31.33	34.05	-32.37	8.68
Ocean	44.00	34.71	29.31	-33.39	-15.56	44.00	34.71	29.31	-33.39	-15.56
Total Transportation Cost	106.41	74.54	71.74	-32.58	-3.76	106.41	74.54	71.74	-32.58	-3.76
Farm Value ²	141.07	138.31	135.95	-3.63	-1.71	368.05	344.90	314.77	-14.48	-8.74
Total Landed Cost	247.48	212.85	207.69	-16.08	-2.42	474.46	419.44	386.51	-18.54	-7.85
Transportation % Landed Cost	43.00	35.02	34.54			22.43	17.77	18.56		

Table 2: Cost of Shipping Corn and Soybeans from Minneapolis to Japan through the U.S. PNW

	Corn					Soybeans				
	S/metric ton		Percent change			S/metric ton		Percent Change		
	4thQtr 14	3rdQtr 15	4thQtr 15	Yr. to Yr.	Qtr to Qtr	4thQtr 14	3rdQtr 15	4thQtr 15	Yr. to Yr.	Qtr to Qtr
Truck	12.06	8.50	8.38	-30.51	-1.41	12.06	8.50	8.38	-30.51	-1.41
Rail ¹	55.59	53.16	49.96	-10.13	-6.02	60.86	58.42	55.02	-9.60	-5.82
Ocean	23.88	18.57	15.97	-33.12	-14.00	23.88	18.57	15.97	-33.12	-14.00
Total Transportation Cost	91.53	80.23	74.31	-18.81	-7.38	96.80	85.49	79.37	-18.01	-7.16
Farm Value ²	141.07	138.31	135.95	-3.63	-1.71	368.05	344.90	314.77	-14.48	-8.74
Total Landed Cost	232.60	218.54	210.26	-9.60	-3.79	464.85	430.39	394.14	-15.21	-8.42
Transportation % Landed Cost	39.35	36.71	35.34			20.82	19.86	20.14		

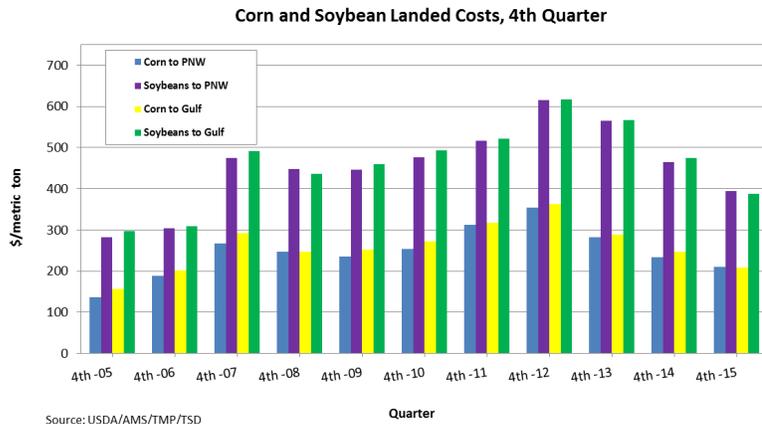
Source: USDA/AMS/TMP

¹ Rail tariffs include fuel surcharges and revisions for heavy axle rail cars and shuttle trains. The rail tariff rate is a base price of rail freight rates, but during periods of high rail demand or car shortages, high auction and secondary market rates could exceed the base rail tariffs per car

² Source: USDA/NASS, Agricultural Prices

During the fourth quarter, the total landed costs for shipping corn and soybeans through the Gulf reached \$208 per metric ton (mt) and \$387 per mt, respectively. Quarter-to-quarter landed costs for shipping through the Gulf decreased 2 percent for corn and 8 percent for soybeans, primarily because of lower ocean rates and farm values (*Table 1*). Year-to-year landed costs for shipping from the Gulf decreased 16 percent for corn and 19 percent for soybeans because of lower transportation costs and lower farm values (*see*

Table 1). Transportation costs for shipping corn from the Gulf to Japan accounted for 35 percent of the total landed cost during the fourth quarter, unchanged from the previous quarter, but below last year. Soybean transportation costs accounted for 19 percent of the total landed cost, above the previous quarter but below last year (see Table 1).



Pacific Northwest Costs:

Fourth quarter transportation costs from Minneapolis via the PNW to Japan decreased 7 percent from quarter to quarter for corn and soybeans (see Table 2). Lower ocean and rail rates caused quarter-to-quarter transportation costs to the PNW to drop. Rail rates for shipping grain to the PNW decreased 6 percent from the third quarter of 2015 for corn and soybeans. Year-to-year

transportation costs for shipping grain from Minneapolis through the PNW to Japan decreased 19 percent for corn and 18 percent for soybeans because of lower rates for each mode.

The total landed costs for shipping grain from the PNW to Japan decreased 4 percent from the previous quarter for corn and 8 percent for soybeans primarily because of lower rates for ocean and rail and lower farm values. Total fourth-quarter landed costs ranged from \$210/mt to \$394/mt, respectively (see Table 2). Year-to-year total landed cost decreased 10 percent for corn and 15 percent for soybeans. Rates for each mode decreased from last year, together with a larger drop in farm values. Transportation costs for corn shipped through the PNW accounted for about 35 percent of the total landed cost during the fourth quarter, and is both below the third quarter and last year (see Table 2). Fourth quarter transportation costs for soybeans shipped through the PNW were 20 percent of the landed cost, unchanged from the past quarter but below last year.

According to USDA’s Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, export inspections of corn in the fourth quarter decreased 20 percent from the previous year and were 26 percent below the 5-year average (see [GTR 01/14/16](#)). In the fourth quarter, total exports of corn to Asia decreased 38 percent from 2014, with shipments to Japan down 40 percent from the previous year as competition abroad increased. Fourth quarter soybean inspections were down 4 percent from the past year, but were 31 percent above the 5-year average. Shipments to China were down 6 percent from the fourth quarter of 2014.

According to USDA’s February [World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report](#), the forecast for 2015/16 corn exports is down 3 percent from the January estimate and 11 percent below the previous marketing year. The forecast for corn exports is down due to high global stocks and increased competition from Latin America and the Ukraine. The forecast for 2015/16 soybean exports is unchanged from January, but is 8 percent below the previous marketing year. From March to September, U.S. soybean exports normally slow due to the South America’s soybean harvest. Johnny.Hill@ams.usda.gov

Rail Transportation

Table 3
Rail Deliveries to Port (carloads)¹

For the Week Ending	Mississippi		Pacific	Atlantic &	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border
	Gulf	Texas Gulf	Northwest	East Gulf			Mexico ³
2/24/2016 ^p	457	1,731	6,217	795	9,200	2/20/2016	2,457
2/17/2016 ^r	566	1,531	6,597	862	9,556	2/13/2016	1,969
2016 YTD ^r	4,682	12,239	47,752	6,003	70,676	2016 YTD	14,537
2015 YTD ^r	6,936	8,737	43,981	7,144	66,798	2015 YTD	12,459
2016 YTD as % of 2015 YTD	68	140	109	84	106	% change YTD	117
Last 4 weeks as % of 2015 ²	106	146	116	114	119	Last 4wks % 2015	128
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. ²	97	161	132	101	125	Last 4wks % 4 yr	129
Total 2015	29,054	60,819	239,029	26,730	355,632	Total 2015	97,736
Total 2014	44,617	83,674	256,670	32,107	417,068	Total 2014	98,422

¹ Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

² Compared with same 4-weeks in 2015 and prior 4-year average.

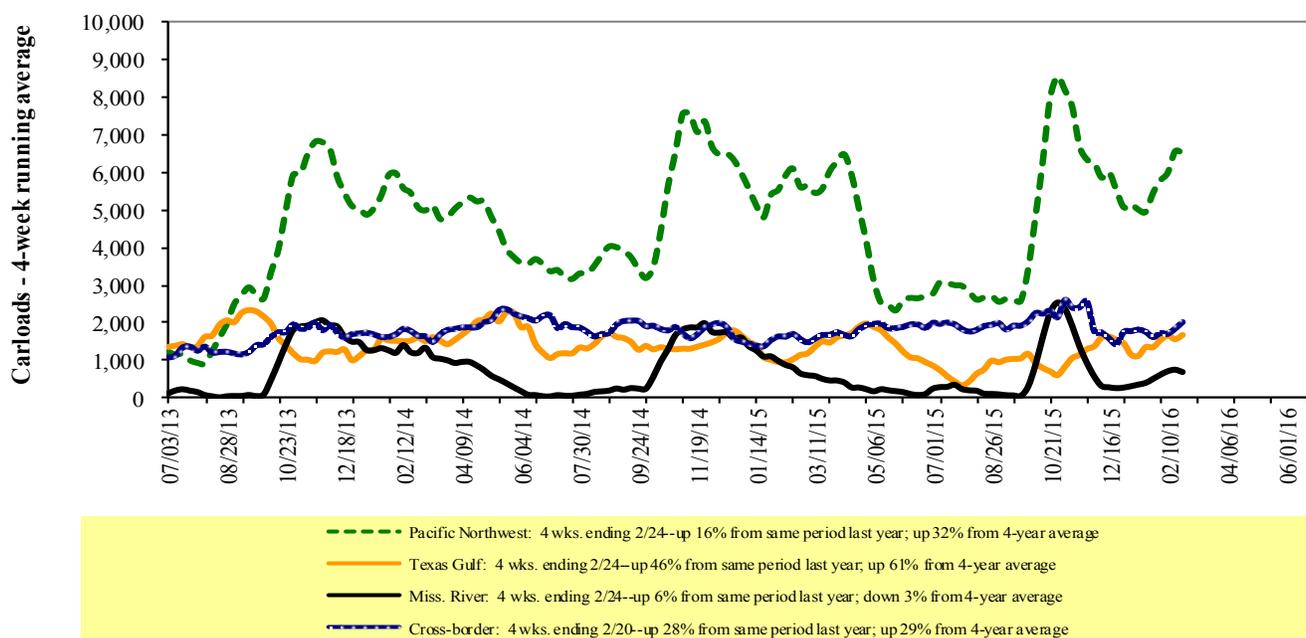
³ Cross-border weekly data is approximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads' reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect switching between KCSM and FerroMex.

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 24 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

Figure 2
Rail Deliveries to Port



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 4

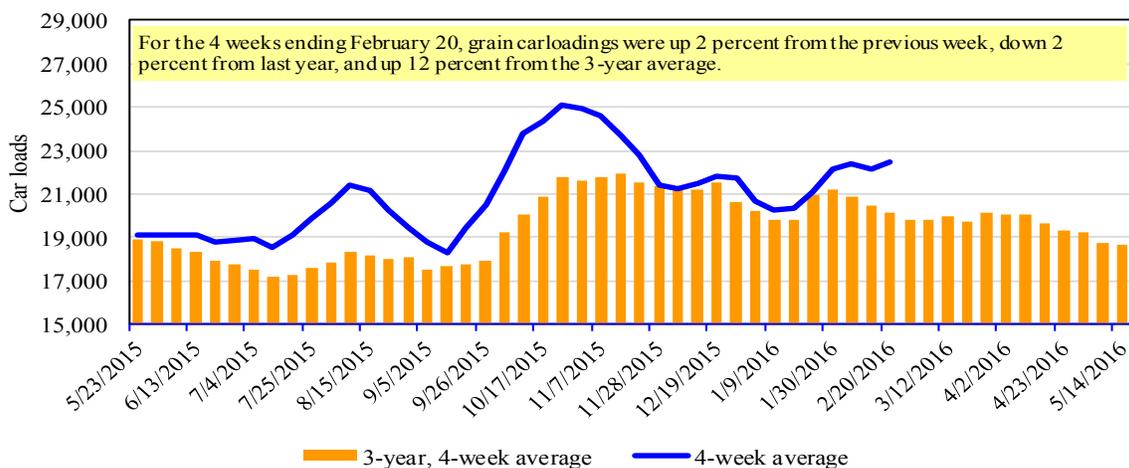
Class I Rail Carrier Grain Car Bulletin (grain carloads originated)

For the week ending: 2/20/2016	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,984	2,694	11,191	784	5,734	22,387	3,360	4,271
This week last year	1,801	2,796	11,891	773	5,616	22,877	4,068	4,179
2016 YTD	14,279	19,811	77,862	6,116	37,498	155,566	24,409	30,150
2015 YTD	16,369	21,680	77,315	5,965	40,639	161,968	28,671	30,890
2016 YTD as % of 2015 YTD	87	91	101	103	92	96	85	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 2015*	95	104	100	98	94	98	80	103
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg**	105	108	115	110	109	112	90	93
Total 2015	104,039	149,043	536,173	45,445	267,720	1,102,420	211,868	236,263

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

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

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

Figure 3**Total Weekly U.S. Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings**

Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 5

Railcar Auction Offerings¹ (\$/car)²

For the week ending: 2/25/2016		Delivery period							
		Mar-16	Mar-15	Apr-16	Apr-15	May-16	May-15	Jun-16	Jun-15
BNSF ³	COT grain units	no bids	no offer	no bids	5	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer
	COT grain single-car ⁵	0	no offer	no bids	no bids	no bids	no offer	0	no offer
UP ⁴	GCAS/Region 1	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a

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

²Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

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

⁴UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

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

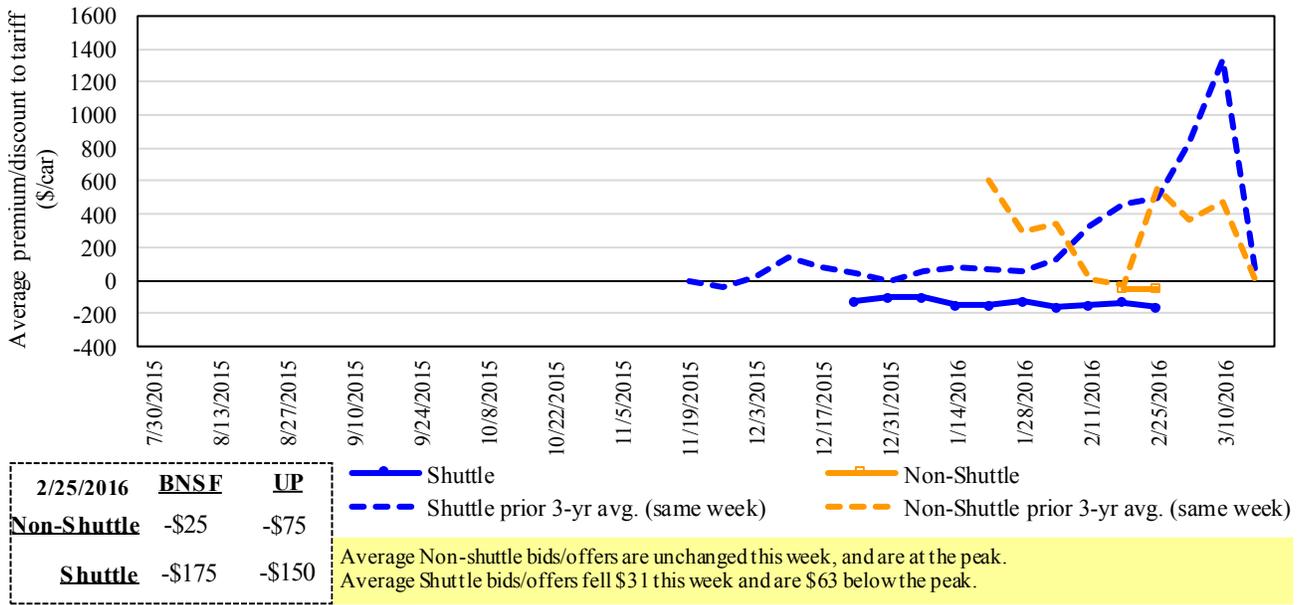
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA.

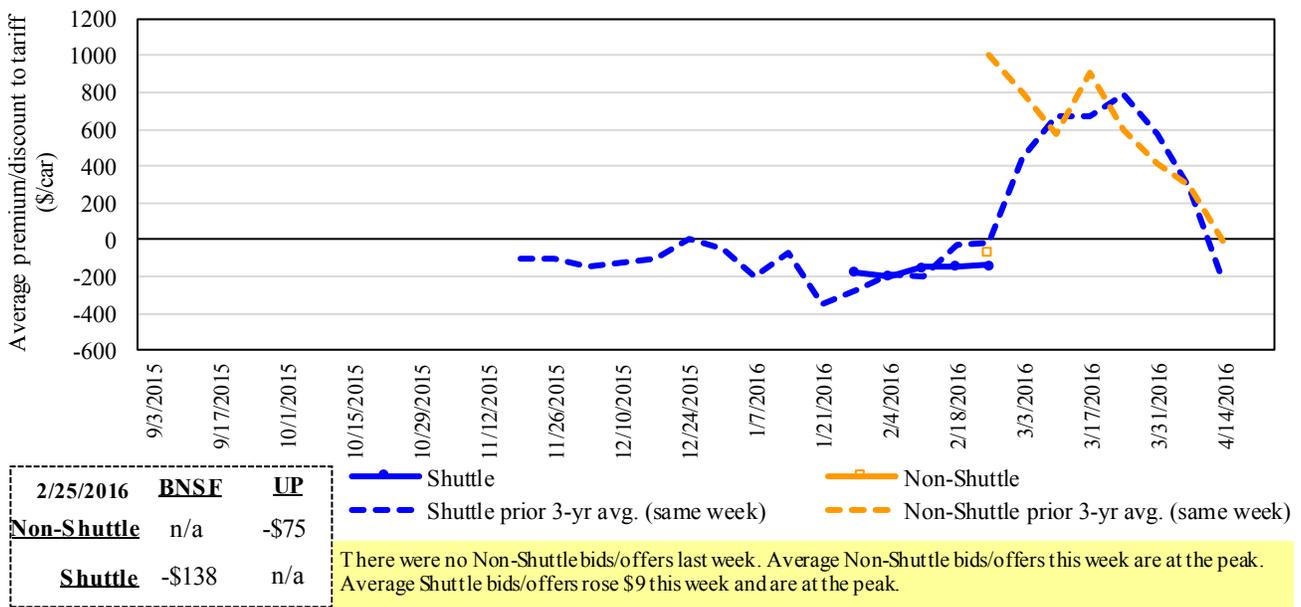
The **secondary rail market** information reflects trade values for service that was originally purchased from the railroad carrier as some form of guaranteed freight. The **auction and secondary rail** values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/supply.

Figure 4
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in March 2016, Secondary Market



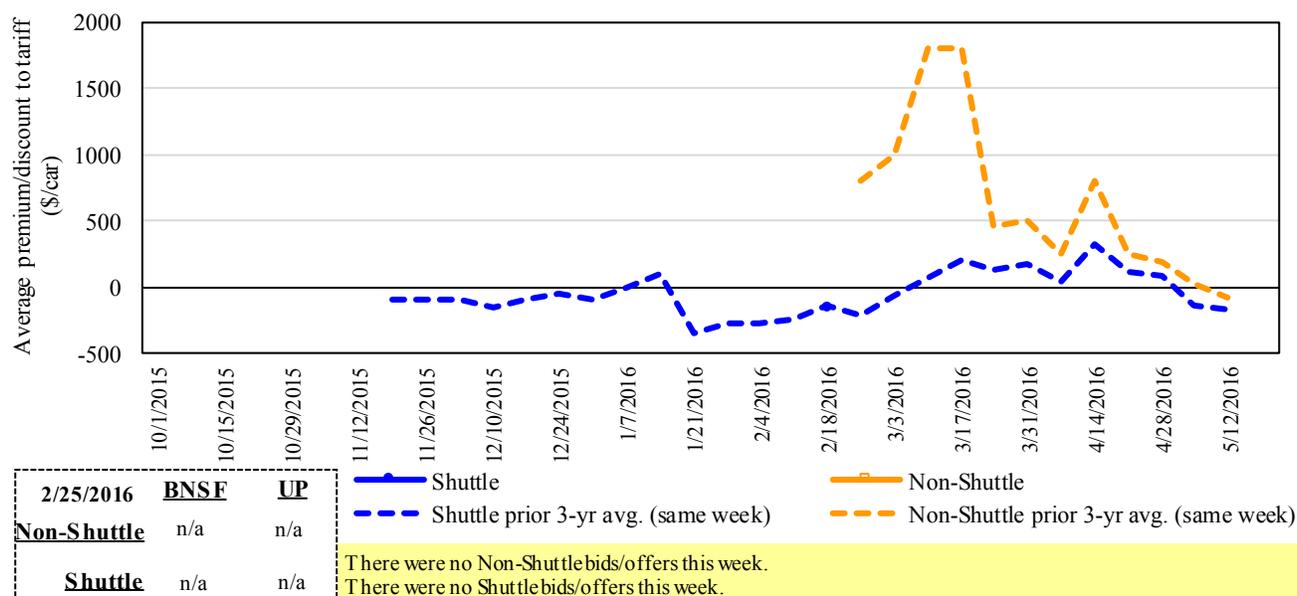
Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
 Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in April 2016, Secondary Market



Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
 Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in May 2016, Secondary Market



Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
 Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 6
Weekly Secondary Railcar Market (\$/car)¹

For the week ending:		Delivery period					
		Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16
Non-shuttle	BNSF-GF	(25)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2015	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	(75)	(75)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2015	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	BNSF-GF	(175)	(138)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	(62)	9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2015	(100)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	(150)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from last week	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2015	125	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

¹Average 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

Sources: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

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

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 Shipments¹

Effective date:			Tariff	Fuel	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent
3/1/2016	Origin region*	Destination region*	rate/car	surcharge per car	metric ton	bushel ²	change Y/Y ³
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	\$3,605	\$0	\$35.80	\$0.97	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	\$3,563	-\$24	\$35.15	\$0.96	-3
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	\$6,950	-\$122	\$67.80	\$1.85	6
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	\$4,243	\$0	\$42.14	\$1.15	1
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,486	-\$100	\$63.41	\$1.73	7
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,511	\$0	\$44.80	\$1.22	1
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,710	\$0	\$46.77	\$1.27	-1
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,681	\$0	\$36.55	\$0.93	5
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	\$6,061	\$0	\$60.19	\$1.53	5
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	\$2,168	\$0	\$21.53	\$0.55	-2
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	\$5,004	\$0	\$49.69	\$1.26	2
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	\$4,311	\$0	\$42.81	\$1.09	2
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	\$3,444	\$0	\$34.20	\$0.87	1
Soybeans	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	\$5,052	\$0	\$50.17	\$1.27	-2
	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	\$3,929	\$0	\$39.02	\$1.06	0
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$5,051	\$0	\$50.16	\$1.37	5
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$6,178	\$0	\$61.35	\$1.67	6
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	\$4,529	\$0	\$44.98	\$1.22	1
Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$4,395	\$0	\$43.64	\$1.19	6	
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	\$3,953	-\$70	\$38.56	\$1.05	2
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,871	-\$55	\$37.90	\$1.03	7
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$5,492	\$0	\$54.54	\$1.48	11
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	\$5,611	-\$122	\$54.51	\$1.48	2
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$5,931	-\$127	\$57.64	\$1.57	-8
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	\$5,478	\$0	\$54.40	\$1.48	-1
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,000	-\$148	\$48.18	\$1.22	-7
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$4,960	-\$136	\$47.91	\$1.22	-7
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,481	\$0	\$34.57	\$0.88	5
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,600	-\$79	\$34.96	\$0.89	-3
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	\$3,795	\$0	\$37.69	\$0.96	-1
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	\$5,000	-\$147	\$48.19	\$1.22	-7
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	\$4,640	-\$152	\$44.57	\$1.13	-3
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,490	-\$136	\$53.17	\$1.45	-7
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,510	-\$148	\$53.25	\$1.45	-7
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	\$5,380	-\$121	\$52.23	\$1.42	-7
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	\$4,425	\$0	\$43.94	\$1.20	10
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$4,226	\$0	\$41.97	\$1.14	6
Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	\$5,360	\$0	\$53.23	\$1.45	-1	

¹A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of 75-120 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

²Approximate load per car = 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons): corn 56 lbs./bu., wheat & soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

³Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge

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

*Regional economic areas defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

Table 8

Tariff Rail Rates for U.S. Bulk Grain Shipments to Mexico

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car ¹	Fuel surcharge per car ²	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent change ⁴ Y/Y
					metric ton ³	bushel ³	
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	\$7,459	\$0	\$76.21	\$2.07	4
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	\$6,514	\$0	\$66.55	\$1.81	-4
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	\$6,995	\$70	\$72.19	\$1.96	-3
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$4,142	\$0	\$42.32	\$1.15	4
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,397	\$49	\$86.30	\$2.19	-2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	\$7,840	\$0	\$80.11	\$2.03	-1
	NE	Queretaro, QA	\$7,879	\$0	\$80.50	\$2.04	0
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$6,545	\$0	\$66.87	\$1.70	8
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	\$7,238	\$0	\$73.96	\$1.88	0
	SD	Torreon, CU	\$7,240	\$0	\$73.98	\$1.88	1
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	\$8,652	\$54	\$88.95	\$2.42	2
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	\$9,142	\$52	\$93.93	\$2.55	0
	IA	El Castillo, JA	\$9,470	\$0	\$96.76	\$2.63	0
	KS	Torreon, CU	\$7,439	\$30	\$76.31	\$2.07	1
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	\$7,344	\$41	\$75.45	\$1.91	-3
	KS	Queretaro, QA	\$7,563	\$0	\$77.27	\$1.96	8
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$6,168	\$0	\$63.02	\$1.60	8
	NE	Torreon, CU	\$6,672	\$25	\$68.42	\$1.74	-1

¹Rates 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.

²Fuel surcharge adjusted to reflect the change in Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V railroad fuel surcharge policy as of 10/01/2009

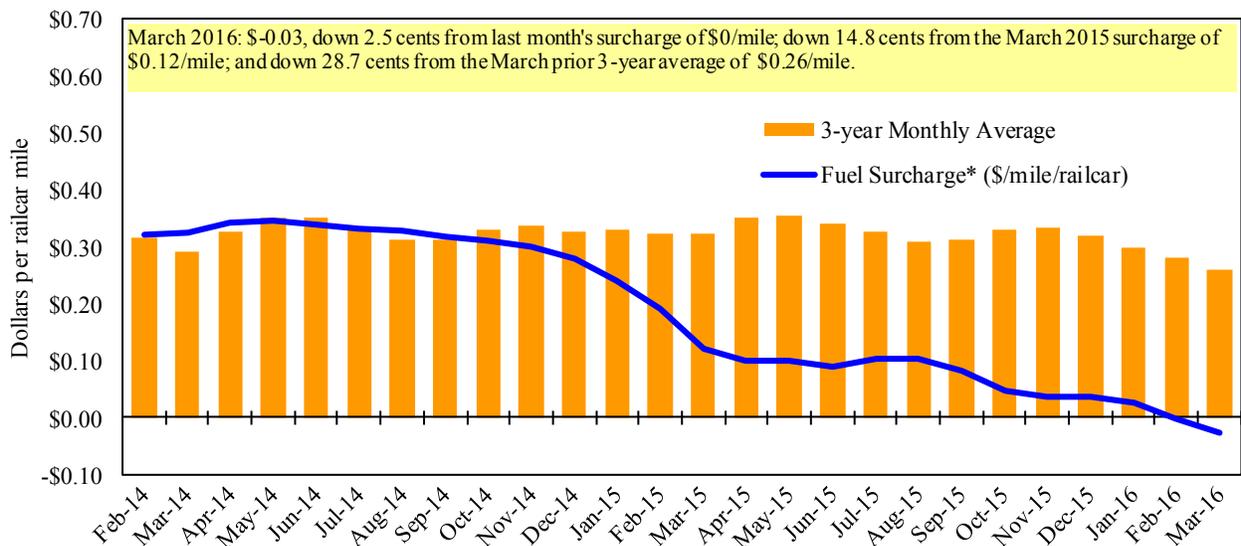
³Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

⁴Percentage change calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge

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

Figure 7

Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average¹



¹ Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.

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

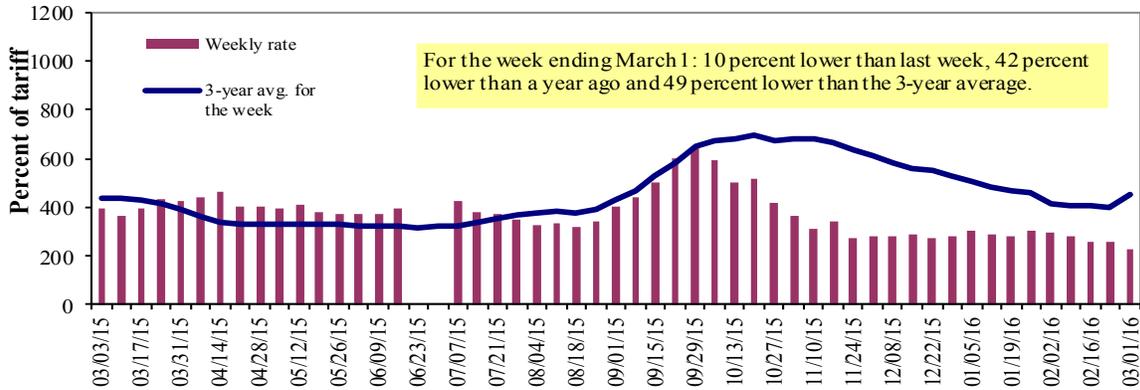
**CSX strike price changed from \$2.00/gal. to \$3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.kcsi.com, www.nscorp.com, www.uprr.com

Barge Transportation

Figure 8

Illinois River Barge Freight Rate^{1,2}



¹Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); ²4-week moving average of the 3-year average.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 9

Weekly Barge Freight Rates: Southbound Only

		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate¹	3/1/2016	-	-	230	158	200	200	160
	2/23/2016	-	-	255	173	208	208	170
\$/ton	3/1/2016	-	-	10.67	6.30	9.38	8.08	5.02
	2/23/2016	-	-	11.83	6.90	9.76	8.40	5.34
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-	-42	-42	-31	-31	-20
	3-year avg. ²	-	-	-49	-54	-42	-42	-38
Rate¹	April	-	250	225	158	183	183	153
	June	315	250	233	158	190	190	168

¹Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); ²4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; missing data due to winter closure or flooding

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 9

Benchmark tariff rates

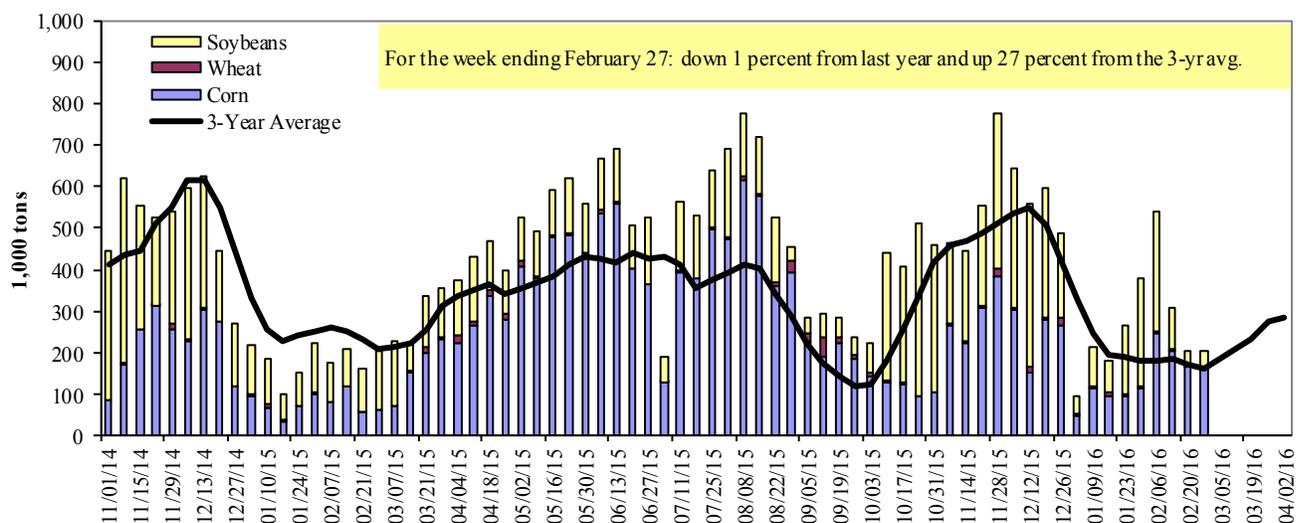
Calculating barge rate per ton:

$$(\text{Rate} * 1976 \text{ tariff benchmark rate per ton}) / 100$$

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 River¹ (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 2/27/2016	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	0	0	0	0	0
Alton, IL (L26)	156	11	31	0	198
Granite City, IL (L27)	143	5	34	0	182
Illinois River (L8)	139	5	19	0	162
Ohio River (L52)	116	3	82	0	201
Arkansas River (L1)	1	24	44	0	69
Weekly total - 2016	260	32	160	0	452
Weekly total - 2015	180	20	267	0	468
2016 YTD ¹	2,333	151	2,409	23	4,915
2015 YTD	2,049	163	2,295	43	4,549
2016 as % of 2015 YTD	114	93	105	54	108
Last 4 weeks as % of 2015 ²	127	126	100	141	114
Total 2015	19,215	1,686	14,191	359	35,451

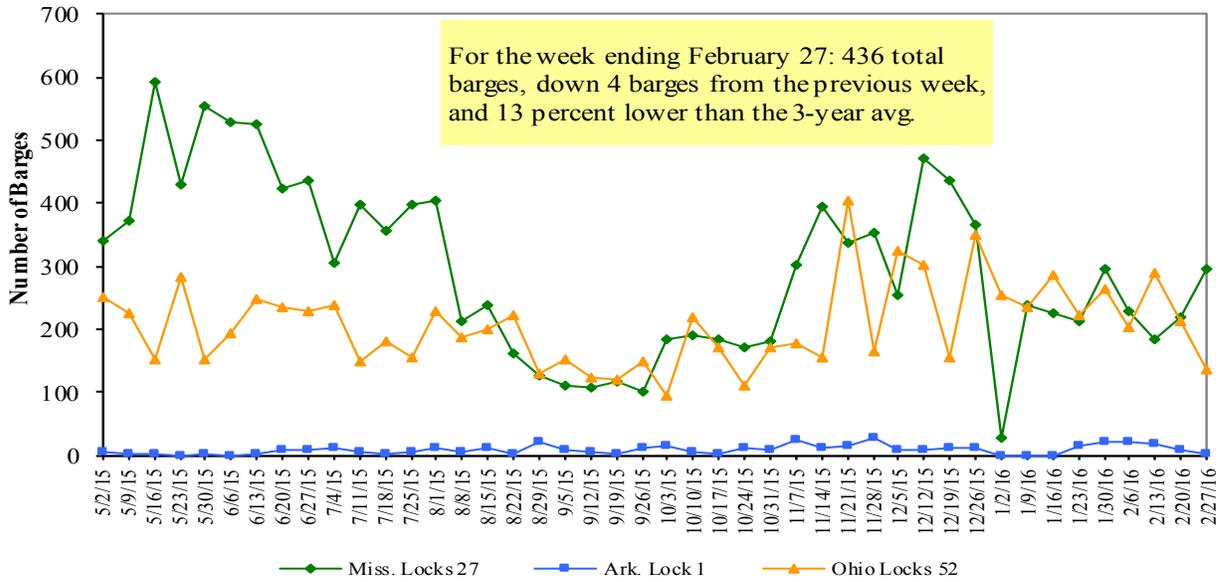
¹ Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

² As a percent of same period in 2015.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

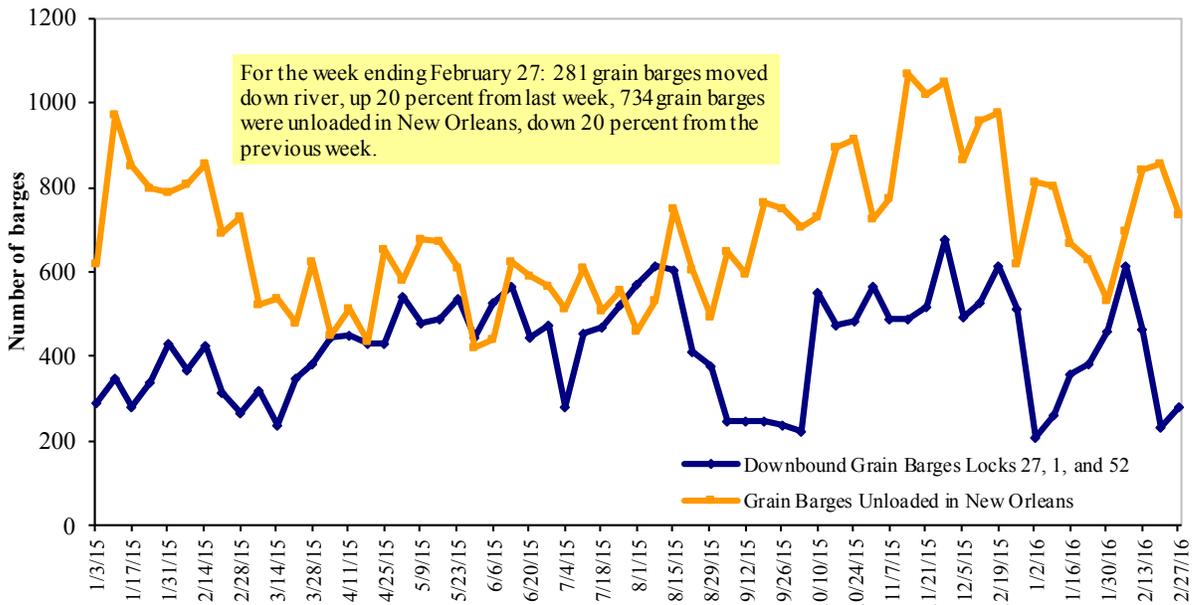
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



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 GIPSA

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 Prices¹, Week Ending 2/29/2016 (US \$/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	2.054	-0.005	-1.029
	New England	2.154	-0.006	-1.137
	Central Atlantic	2.171	-0.013	-1.122
	Lower Atlantic	1.945	0.001	-0.935
II	Midwest ²	1.937	0.016	-0.913
III	Gulf Coast ³	1.874	0.001	-0.922
IV	Rocky Mountain	1.881	0.020	-0.898
V	West Coast	2.191	0.010	-0.906
	West Coast less California	2.054	0.004	-0.880
	California	2.302	0.014	-0.927
Total	U.S.	1.989	0.006	-0.947

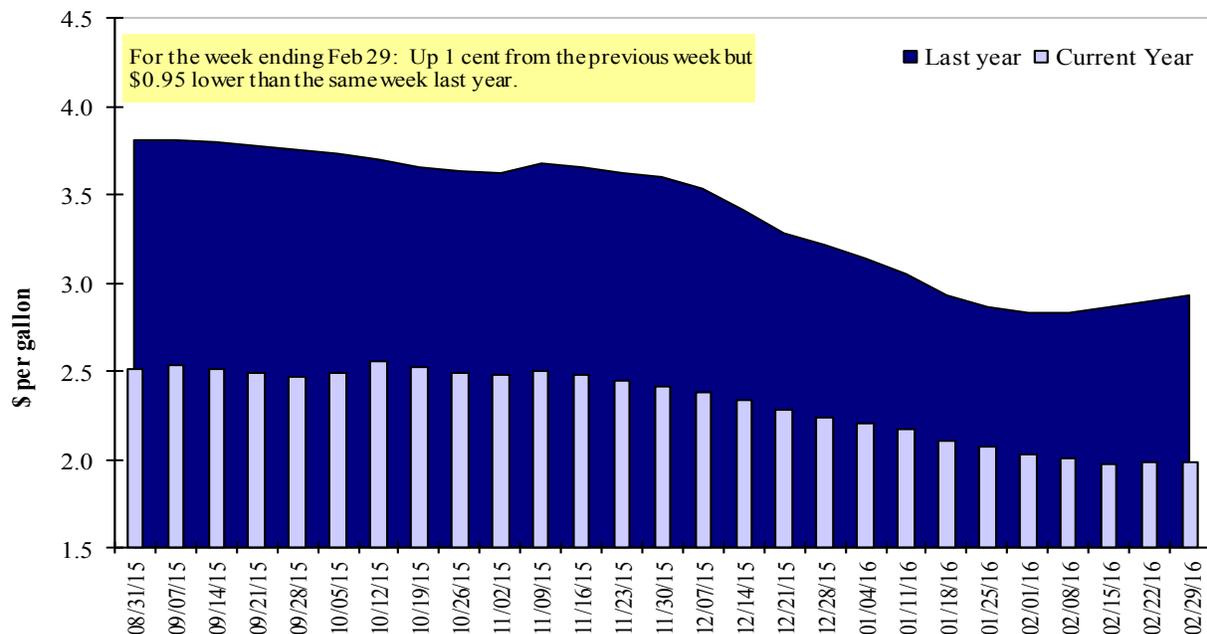
¹Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

²Same as North Central ³Same as South Central

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

Figure 13

Weekly Diesel Fuel Prices, U.S. Average



Source: Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices, Energy Information Administration, Dept. of Energy

Grain Exports

Table 12

U.S. Export Balances and Cumulative Exports (1,000 metric tons)

For the week ending	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances¹									
2/18/2016	1,157	446	1,496	810	90	3,999	12,567	5,205	21,771
This week year ago	1,543	786	1,687	865	142	5,022	17,295	6,544	28,861
Cumulative exports-marketing year²									
2015/16 YTD	3,938	2,428	4,283	2,485	548	13,682	14,048	36,805	64,535
2014/15 YTD	4,958	2,726	5,277	2,851	506	16,317	17,503	40,469	74,289
YTD 2015/16 as % of 2014/15	79	89	81	87	108	84	80	91	87
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2014/15	72	68	78	93	63	77	70	110	81
2014/15 Total	7,009	3,654	7,250	3,758	665	22,336	45,205	49,614	117,155
2013/14 Total	11,465	7,307	6,338	4,367	486	29,963	46,868	44,478	121,309

¹ Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales to date

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

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

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

Table 13

Top 5 Importers¹ of U.S. Corn

For the week ending 2/18/2016	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-year avg 2011-2013
	2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	4,491	6,907	(35)	10,079
Mexico	9,556	8,159	17	8,145
Korea	714	2,041	(65)	2,965
Colombia	2,902	2,568	13	3,461
Taiwan	569	1,011	(44)	1,238
Top 5 Importers	18,232	20,685	(12)	25,887
Total US corn export sales	26,616	34,799	(24)	34,445
% of Projected	63%	73%		
Change from prior week	934	716		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	69%	59%		75%
USDA forecast, February 2016	41,985	47,430	(11)	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, February 2016	132,715	132,309	0	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹ Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

² Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>

³ FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - <http://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myrkaug.htm>; 3-yr average

Table 14

Top 5 Importers¹ of U.S. Soybeans

For the week ending 2/18/2016	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-yr avg. 2011-13
	2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	26,436	29,549	(11)	24,211
Mexico	2,300	2,507	(8)	2,971
Indonesia	980	1,310	(25)	1,895
Japan	1,554	1,435	8	1,750
Taiwan	936	1,109	(16)	1,055
Top 5 importers	32,205	35,910	(10)	31,882
Total US soybean export sales	42,010	47,013	(11)	39,169
% of Projected	91%	94%		
Change from prior week	259	363		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	77%	76%		81%
USDA forecast, February 2016	46,049	50,218	(8)	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.²Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>³FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 15

Top 10 Importers¹ of All U.S. Wheat

For the week ending 2/18/2016	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-yr avg 2012-2014
	2015/16 Current MY	2014/15 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	2,143	2,829	(24)	3,113
Mexico	1,959	2,441	(20)	2,807
Nigeria	1,380	1,911	(28)	2,512
Philippines	1,856	2,044	(9)	2,105
Brazil	385	1,506	(74)	2,091
Korea	1,056	1,194	(12)	1,273
Taiwan	832	905	(8)	1,007
Indonesia	426	544	(22)	751
Colombia	559	553	1	662
Thailand	444	604		618
Top 10 importers	10,596	13,928	(24)	16,939
Total US wheat export sales	17,681	21,339	(17)	26,361
% of Projected	84%	92%		
Change from prior week	388	328		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	60%	65%		64%
USDA forecast, February 2016	21,117	23,270	(9)	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31.²Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>³FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm.

Table 16

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

Port Regions	For the Week Ending 02/25/16	Previous Week*	Current Week as % of Previous	2016 YTD*	2015 YTD*	2016 YTD as % of 2015 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of:		2015 Total*
							Last Year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	237	162	147	1,685	2,019	83	76	84	10,985
Corn	204	149	137	798	969	82	82	103	7,232
Soybeans	316	463	68	3,320	2,837	117	151	146	11,809
Total	757	774	98	5,803	5,826	100	108	115	30,027
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	118	22	535	512	570	90	98	68	4,504
Corn	386	582	66	3,394	4,388	77	71	94	26,701
Soybeans	639	971	66	6,415	7,018	91	121	126	29,593
Total	1,143	1,576	73	10,321	11,975	86	98	109	60,797
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	29	23	125	347	409	85	73	39	3,724
Corn	32	31	105	128	95	134	298	431	596
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	92	210	44	47	49	864
Total	61	54	114	567	714	79	89	56	5,184
Interior									
Wheat	6	41	16	166	190	87	75	96	1,388
Corn	96	128	75	825	837	99	88	111	6,201
Soybeans	62	110	56	674	753	89	107	98	3,518
Total	164	279	59	1,664	1,781	93	93	104	11,106
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	12	0	0	0	997
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	485
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	733
Total	0	0	n/a	0	12	0	0	0	2,216
Atlantic									
Wheat	1	36	3	70	68	103	135	99	520
Corn	5	0	n/a	5	0	n/a	n/a	71	277
Soybeans	24	85	28	581	650	89	105	97	2,053
Total	30	121	24	655	718	91	109	97	2,850
U.S. total from ports**									
Wheat	392	284	138	2,780	3,268	85	79	71	22,118
Corn	723	890	81	5,149	6,289	82	77	100	41,492
Soybeans	1,041	1,629	64	11,081	11,469	97	126	127	48,570
Total	2,155	2,803	77	19,011	21,026	90	100	107	112,180

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

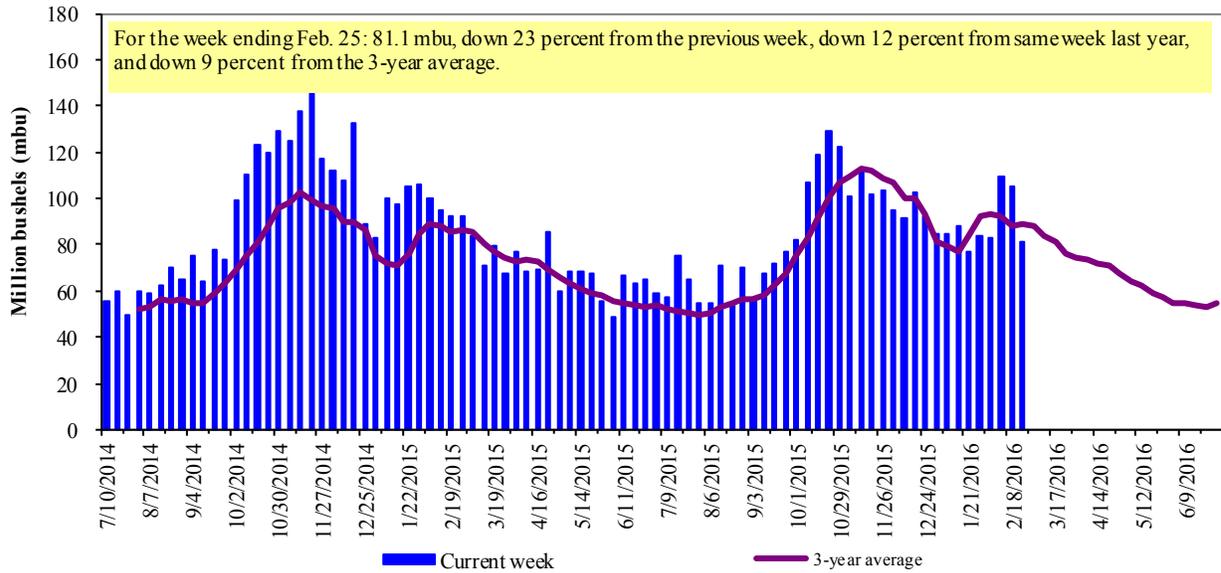
**Total only includes regions shown above

Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov); YTD=year-to-date; n/a = not applicable

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, this includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 35 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Approximately 59 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2015.

Figure 14

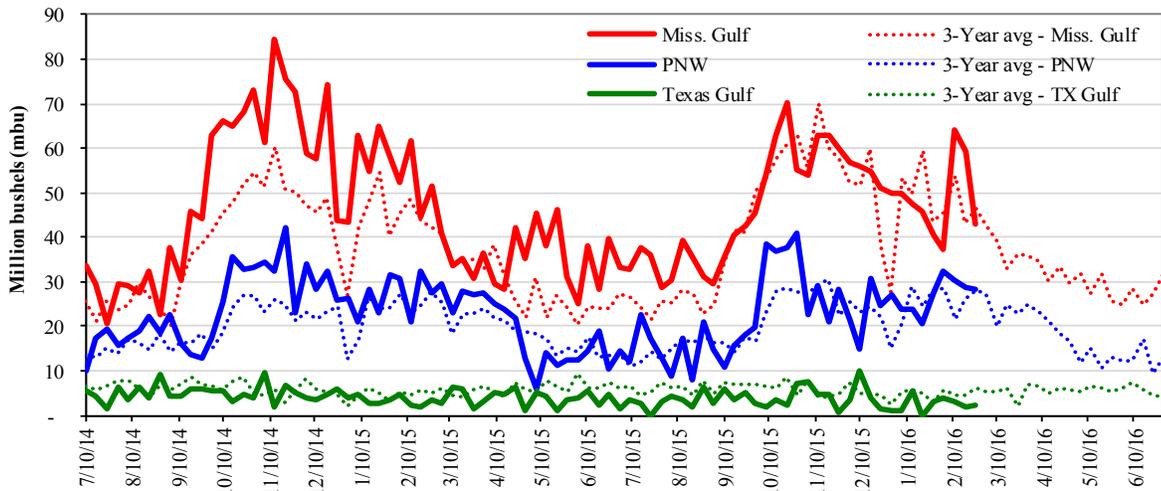
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)
 Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average

Figure 15

U.S. Grain Inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW¹ (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Week ending 02/25/16 inspections (mbu):	Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf: 43.0	Last Week:	down 28	up 13	down 26	down 2
PNW: 28.4	Last Year (same week):	down 17	down 36	down 18	up 3
Texas Gulf: 2.3	3-yr avg (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 9	down 54	down 13	up 9

Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

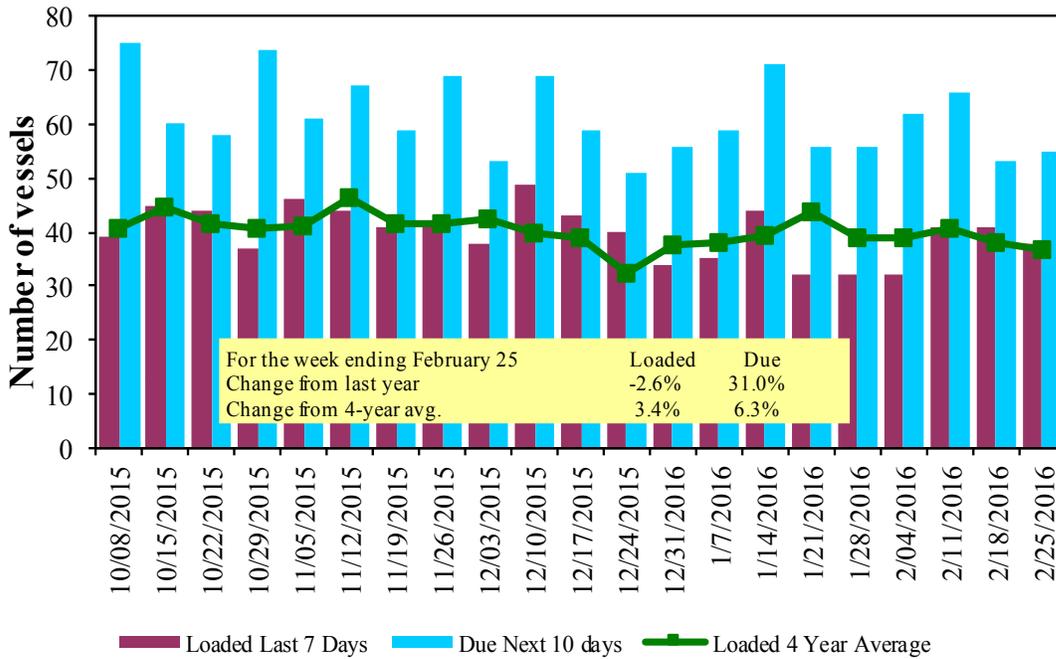
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
2/25/2016	50	38	55	19	n/a
2/18/2016	49	41	53	19	n/a
2015 range	(25..54)	(28..54)	(36..80)	(3..26)	n/a
2015 avg.	42	38	56	11	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

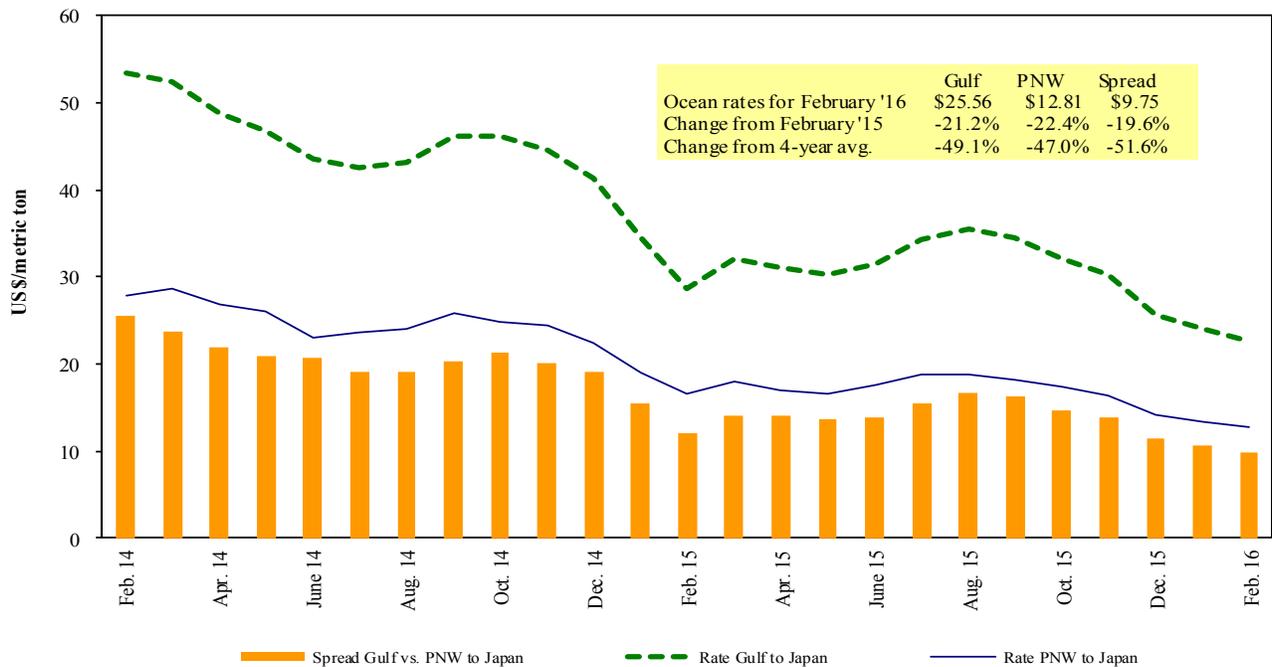
U.S. Gulf¹ Vessel Loading Activity



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA
¹U.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 2/27/2016

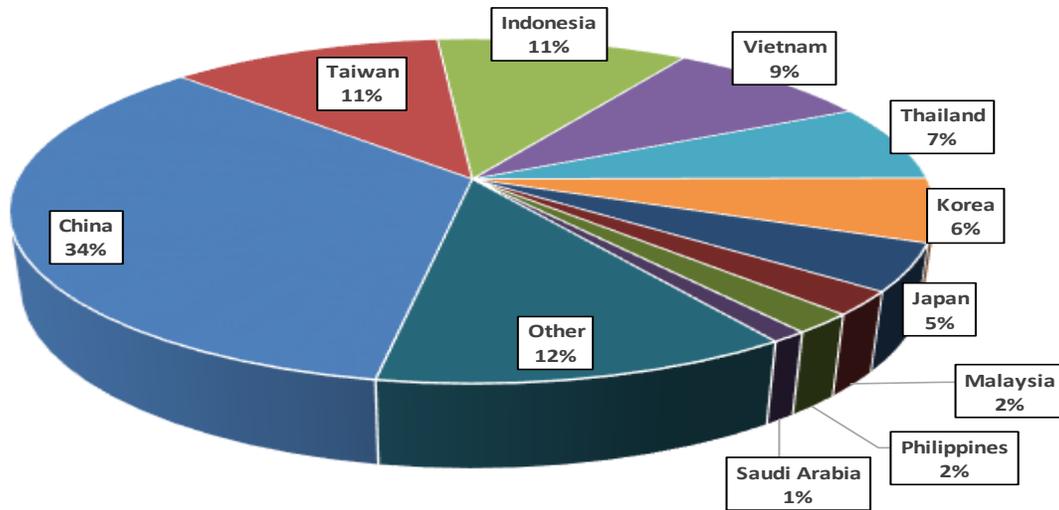
Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US\$/metric ton)
U.S.Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 15/20	53,000	20.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Grain	Feb 10/20	55,000	19.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jan 28/Feb 7	54,000	23.10
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jan 15/25	54,000	22.50
U.S Gulf	Mombasa	Sorghum ¹	Feb 24/Mar 4	16,750	161.15
PNW	Algeria	Wheat	Feb 10/20	51,500	13.15
Argentina	Vietnam	Heavy Grain	Jan 25/Feb 5	50,000	19.00
Argentina	Capetown	Corn	Jan 25/30	40,000	12.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Mar 1/10	60,000	13.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 20/29	60,000	13.85 op 14.60
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 22/25	60,000	14.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 15/20	60,000	12.60
Brazil	Iran	Grain	Jan 25/Feb 5	55,000	17.90
EC S America	China	Heavy Grain	May/June	60,000	14.75
EC S America	China	Heavy Grain	Feb/Mar 16	60,000	18.50
Odessa	Ghent	Grain	Feb 10/14	60,000	7.35
Paranagua	China	Heavy Grain	Feb 1/10	60,000	15.00
River Plate	Vietnam	Heavy Grain	Feb 23/29	68,000	17.50

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

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

In 2014, containers were used to transport 7 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 63 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2014 went to Asia, of which 11 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 95 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

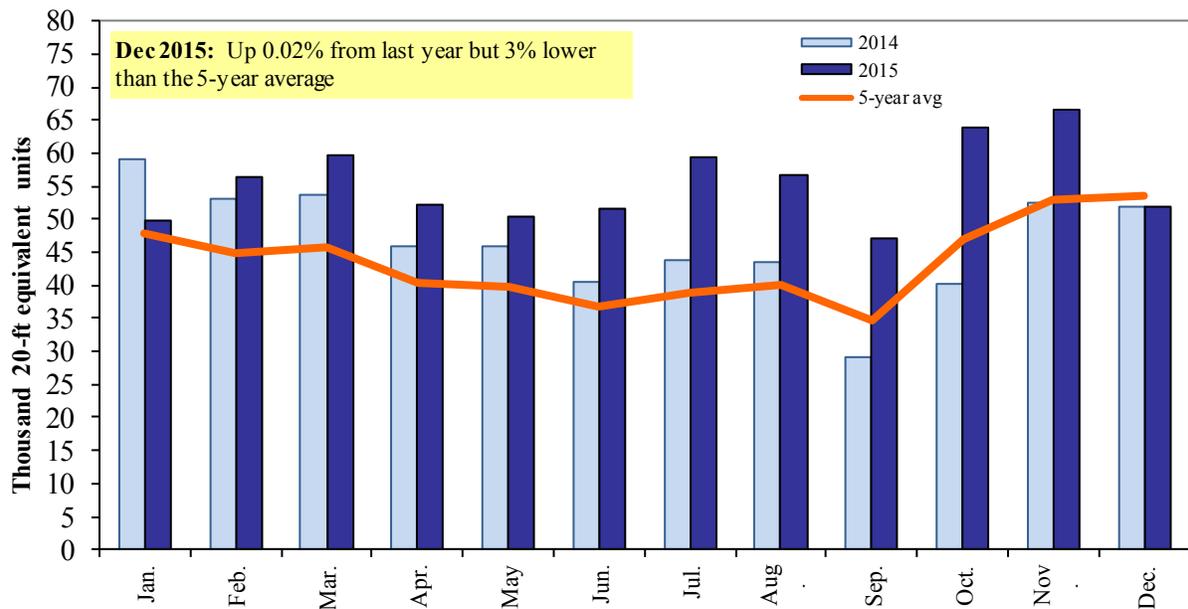
Figure 18
Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, January-December 2015



Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

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

Figure 19
Monthly Shipments of Containerized Grain to Asia



Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data.

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

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