



Grain Transportation Report

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

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July 30, 2015

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

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Gulf Grain Vessel Loading Activity Getting Stronger

During the past 3 weeks, grain vessel loading activity in the U.S. Gulf has been getting stronger. As of the week ending July 23, 34 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded during the previous 7 days, while 48 vessels were loading or waiting to load. Fifty-five vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days. While the average number of vessels loaded during the past 3 weeks remained at 31, the average number of vessels due within the next 10 days was 52, compared to 44 during the prior 3 weeks ending July 2. Meanwhile, ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grain remain low. During the week ending July 17, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was \$35.50 per metric ton (mt), down 1 percent from the previous week. The cost of shipping from the PNW to Japan was \$19 per mt, down 3 percent from the previous week.

Grain Inspections Recede

For the week ending July 23, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, soybeans) from all major export regions reached 1.67 million metric tons (mmt), down 14 percent from the past week, up 28 percent from last year, and 27 percent above the 3-year average. Wheat and soybean inspections dropped 11 and 58 percent, respectively, from the previous week. Soybean shipments decreased primarily to Europe and Latin America. Corn inspections decreased 4 percent from the past week. Grain inspections decreased 25 percent in the Pacific Northwest and 6 percent in the Mississippi Gulf. For the last 4 weeks, grain inspections were 11 percent above last year, but 27 percent above the 3-year average.

FMC Approves Northwest Seaport Alliance

Last week the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) announced its approval of the Port of Seattle/Port of Tacoma Alliance Agreement. The agreement became effective on July 23, 2015. FMC reports the Alliance authorizes the two ports to meet, discuss, and reach agreement on the management, use, and operation of their marine cargo business, including joint business planning and marketing to further develop infrastructure and improve productivity. Grain terminals at these two ports are not participants in this agreement.

American Farm Bureau Federation Study Assesses Transportation Infrastructure

On July 22, 2015, the American Farm Bureau Federation released [Insufficient Freight, An Assessment of U.S. Transportation Infrastructure and Its Effects on the Grain Industry](#). The study recommends expanding pipeline capacity for crude oil in order to relieve rail congestion, improve grain movement, and increase farm income, especially in the rail-dependent Upper Midwest States of Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

During the week ending July 16, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 14.3 mmt, down 6 percent from the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** of 0.503 mmt were up 73 percent from the prior week. **Corn export sales** of 0.223 mmt were down 33 percent from the prior week. Soybean net sales, at .081 mmt, were up 78 percent.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 20,493 **carloads of grain** during the week ending July 18, up 10.8 percent from last week, down 0.1 percent from last year, and up 12.0 percent from the 3-year average.

During the week ending July 23, average August shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers per car** were \$86 below tariff, up \$28 from last week, and \$2,552 lower than last year. Non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers were \$13 above tariff, up \$76 from last week, and \$1,088 lower than last year.

Barge

During the week ending July 25, **barge grain movements** totaled 815,959 tons—up 12 percent from last week, down 4 percent from the same period last year.

During the week ending July 25, 525 grain barges **moved down river**, up 12 percent from last week; 556 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, up 10 percent from the previous week..

Fuel

During the week ending July 27, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** decreased 6 cents from the previous week to \$2.72 per gallon—down \$1.14 from the same week last year

Feature Article/Calendar

U.S. Grain Barge Fleet

Barge transportation offers economic and environmental benefits to the U.S. as a major provider of grain to coastal areas for export to foreign markets. In 2013, barges provided 61 percent of the export corn, 40 percent of the export wheat, and 42 percent of the export soybeans.¹ While there are 12,000 miles of Federally- maintained inland waterways, the barges that move grain on the waterways are privately owned. This article will look at the number of the barges that use the system and the major operators.

According to the recent U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) publication *Waterborne Transportation Lines of the United States*,² there were 31,081 non-self-propelled vessels (barges of all categories) on the inland waterways in 2013. Of this number, 10,217 were covered barges, which haul most of the barged grain. The typical grain barge is a 200 foot long by 35 feet wide covered vessel that has an average carrying capacity of 1,633 tons (with a maximum of 2,200 tons) and is 14 years old. The average useful economic life of a dry cargo barge is generally estimated to be between 25 and 30 years. There were 8,605 open barges, which are mostly used for coal, and 4,370 tank barges, which carry liquids such as ethanol and petrochemicals.

Covered Barge Fleet by Company

The Informa Economics annual survey of the Mississippi River barge fleet looks at the number of barges that are operated by individual companies, as published in the *Barge Fleet Profile*. Informa's barge fleet survey data, however, should not be confused with the Corps barge fleet data, which tracks vessel ownership. Some barge companies lease, rather than own their equipment, so the number of barges reported differs between the Corps and Informa. Leased barges often are owned by financial institutions and are not counted as belonging to a barge operator. Although only six companies control over 80 percent of the market, no single company can dominate any given geographic area because the top six only individually control between about 10-20 percent of the barges, so the market remains fairly competitive (see table below). Shippers along the Mississippi River System can rely upon

Covered barges on the Mississippi River System, by operator, 2015

	Number of Barges	Percent of Total Barges	Cumulative Total
Ingram Marine Group	2,399	20.5%	20.5%
AEP River Operations	1,818	15.6%	36.1%
American River Transportation Co.	1,792	15.3%	51.4%
Cargo Carriers	1,272	10.9%	62.3%
American Commercial Lines, LLC	1,256	10.7%	73.1%
SCF Marine, Inc	1,127	9.6%	82.7%
Total Major Operators	9,664	82.7%	
All Others (20+)	2,022	17.3%	
Total	11,686	100.0%	

Source: Informa Economics, www.bargefleet.com, March 2015

a competitive supply of barges during normal navigation conditions. Positioning barges in areas on high demand during peak harvest season, however, depends upon each individual company's planning procedures. All companies have access to all areas of the inland waterway system so a single company cannot dominate the supply of barges in

¹ Sparger, Adam, and Nick Marathon. Transportation of U.S. Grains: A Modal Share Analysis, June 2015. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. Web. <
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5111814>>

² http://www.navigationdatacenter.us/veslchar/pdf/wtlusv1_13.pdf

a given area. Informa estimates that about 26 companies own or operate barges capable of hauling grain. Below is a brief synopsis of each of the largest grain barge companies on the Mississippi River and connecting waterways:

Ingram Marine Group

The Ingram Marine Group is a barge company based in Nashville, TN. Ingram operates nearly 5,000 barges with a fleet of over 150 towboats. Ingram hauls a variety of dry bulk and liquid commodities.

AEP River Operations

Headquartered in St. Louis, MO, AEP River Operations runs about 2,900 hopper barges for the movement of a variety of dry bulk products and some liquid products. AEP has recently taken delivery of new tank barges for transporting liquid products. AEP River Operations is a subsidiary of American Electric Power Company, a major electric utility that serves over 5 million customers in 11 states.

American River Transportation Company (ARTCO)

ARTCO, headquartered in Decatur, IL, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Archer Daniels Midland Company. ARTCO delivers their own products from origin to destination and provide third parties services.

Cargo Carriers

Cargo Carriers is based in Wayzata, MN, and operates barges as a business of Cargill, Inc.

American Commercial Lines, LLC

Headquartered in Jeffersonville, IN, American Commercial Lines, LLC (ACL), has a fleet of approximately 2,000 barges, powered by over 115 towboats. ACL also has its own barge manufacturing Company, Jeffboat, in Jeffersonville.

SCF Marine, Inc.

SCF Marine Inland River Services, headquartered in St. Louis, MO, operates a fleet of barges on the US Inland Waterways. Internationally, Inland River Services has operations on the Magdalena River in Colombia and on the Parana-Paraguay River Waterways. SCF is a subsidiary of SEACOR Holding, Inc.

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Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators¹

Week ending	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
07/29/15	183	255	209	194	159	135
07/22/15	187	251	208	208	161	138

¹Indicator: 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)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2

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

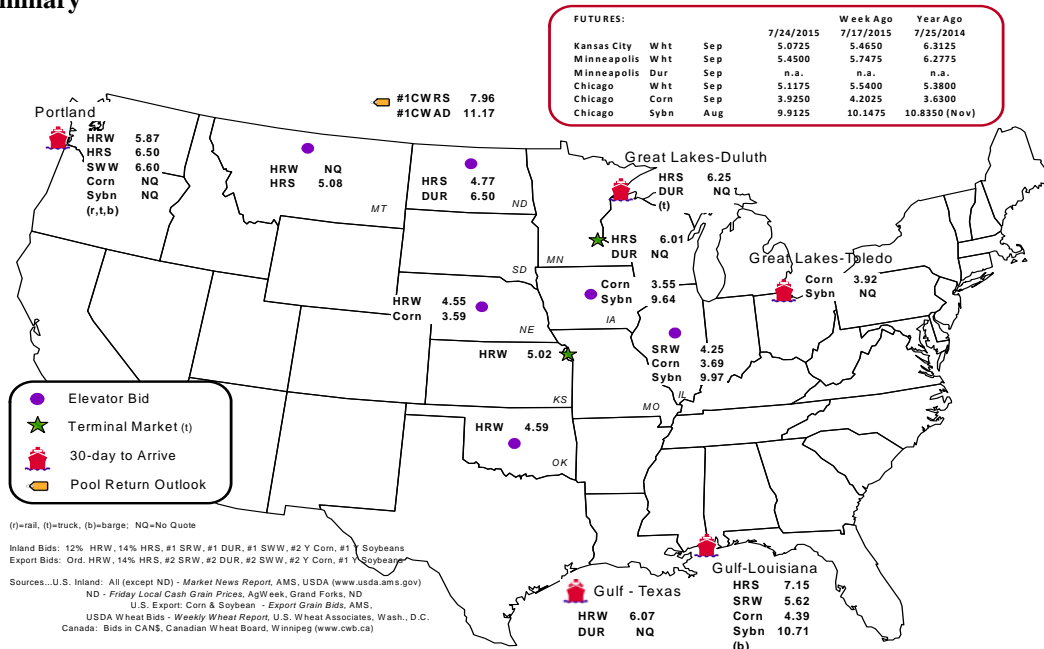
Commodity	Origin--Destination	7/24/2015	7/17/2015
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.70	-0.71
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.80	-0.82
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.07	-1.07
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.05	-1.21
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.73	-1.90

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)¹

Week ending	Mississippi		Pacific	Atlantic &	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border Mexico ³
	Gulf	Texas Gulf	Northwest	East Gulf			
7/22/2015 ^p	436	374	2,489	209	3,508	7/18/2015	1,540
7/15/2015 ^r	147	356	3,021	352	3,876	7/11/2015	1,938
2015 YTD ^f	12,375	35,869	123,370	14,260	185,874	2015 YTD	51,264
2014 YTD ^f	20,444	48,167	132,357	16,293	217,261	2014 YTD	55,309
2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	61	74	93	88	86	% change YTD	93
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014 ²	766	36	94	203	89	Last 4wks % 2014	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. ²	227	42	115	155	101	Last 4wks % 4 yr	113
Total 2014	44,621	83,674	256,670	32,107	417,072	Total 2014	96,467
Total 2013	31,646	71,388	168,826	25,176	297,036	Total 2013	71,397

¹ Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

² Compared with same 4-weeks in 2013 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.

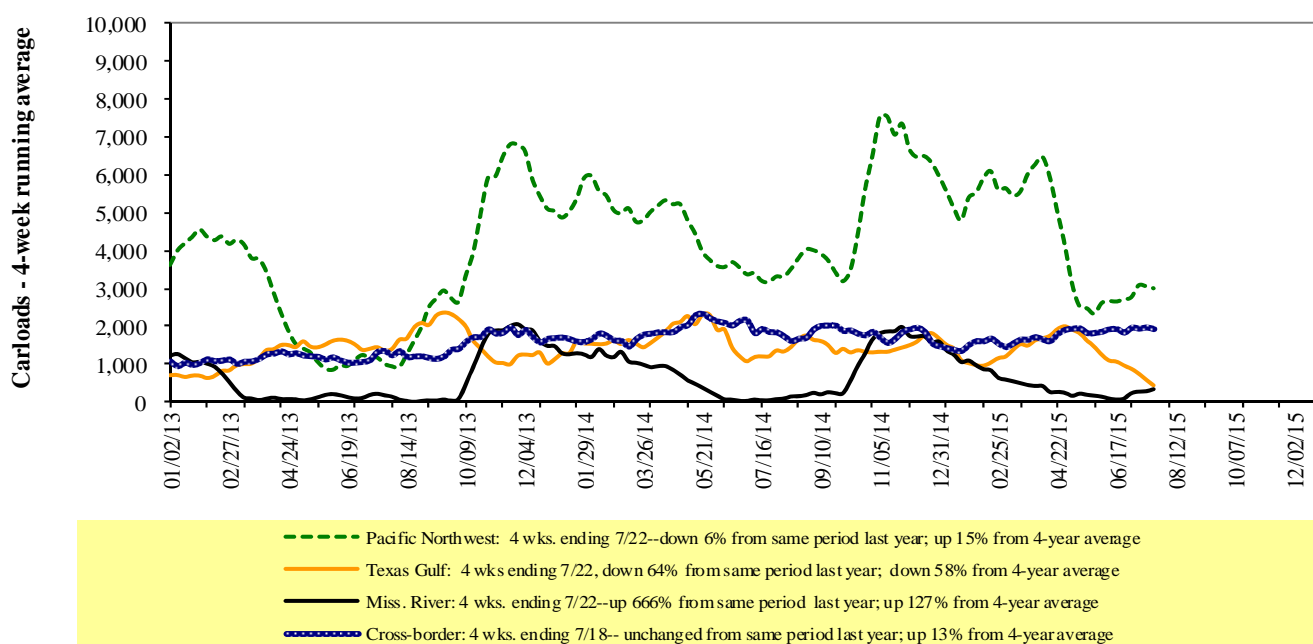
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

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

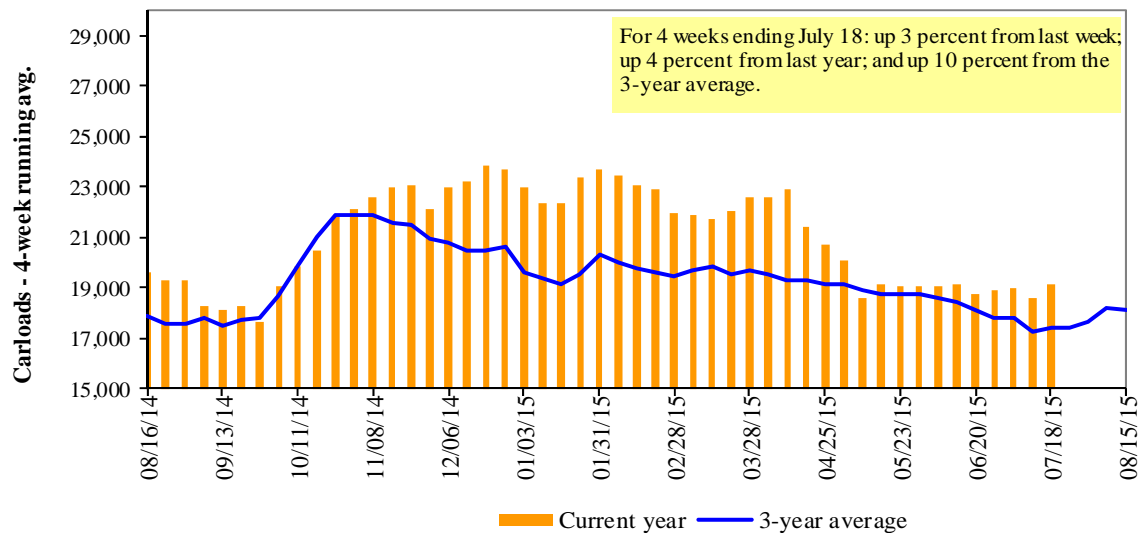
Table 4

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

Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
07/18/15	1,913	2,361	9,979	715	5,525	20,493	4,132	4,413
This week last year	1,970	2,602	8,465	622	6,846	20,505	4,193	5,611
2015 YTD	57,253	84,141	273,694	24,380	143,894	583,362	115,070	123,042
2014 YTD	52,756	82,339	243,541	24,044	159,084	561,764	123,394	148,191
2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	109	102	112	101	90	104	93	83
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014 ¹	109	96	113	106	92	104	88	85
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg. ²	131	98	109	144	106	110	106	93
Total 2014	103,331	153,771	482,431	47,510	297,969	1,085,012	242,616	276,322

¹The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

²The past 4 weeks as a percent of the same period from the prior 3-year average. YTD = year-to-date.

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

Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 5

Railcar Auction Offerings¹ (\$/car)²

Week ending	Delivery period							
	Aug-15	Aug-14	Sep-15	Sep-14	Oct-15	Oct-14	Nov-15	Nov-14
7/23/2015								
BNSF ³								
COT grain units	24	no offer	12	3012	16	3300	1	2882
COT grain single-car ⁵	0..33	no offer	0..1	2118..2966	3..15	2700..3618	0..10	2515..3105
UP ⁴								
GCAS/Region 1	no bids	602	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no bids	1501	no bids	no offer	10	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.

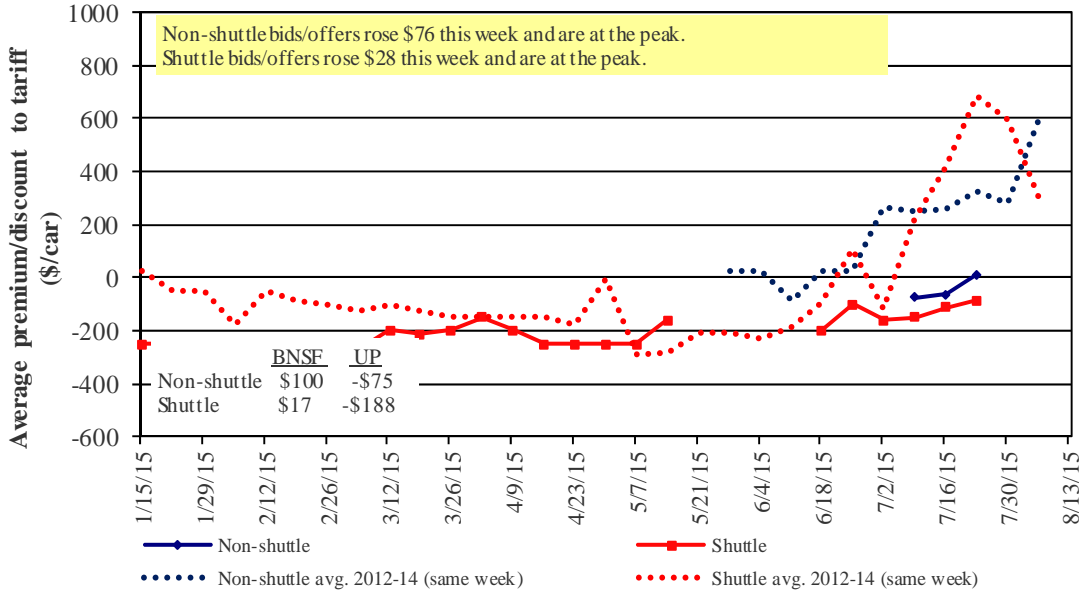
⁵Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

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 August 2015, Secondary Market

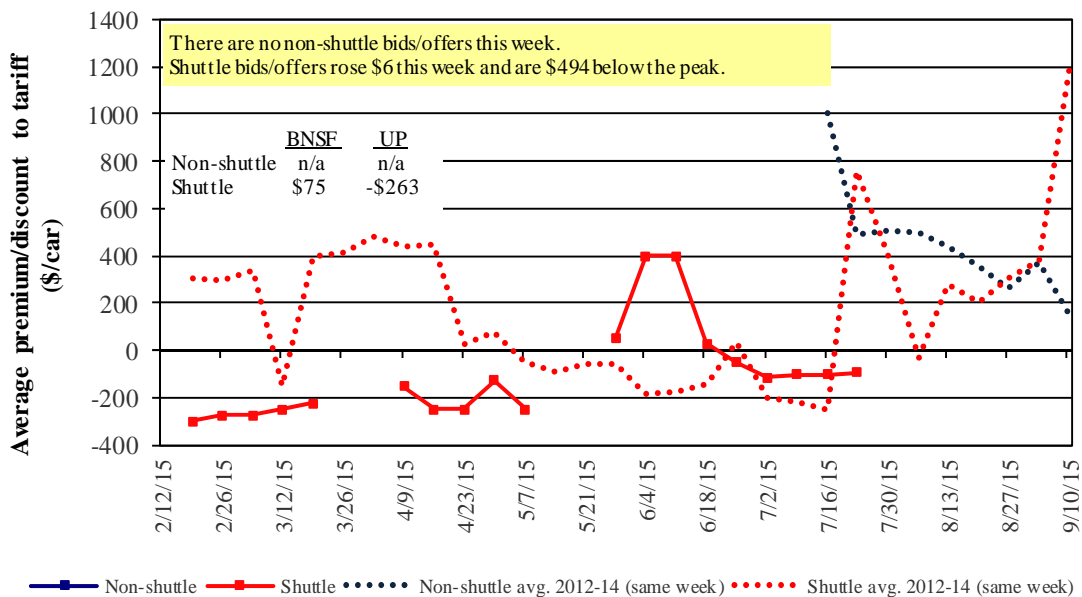


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in September 2015, Secondary Market

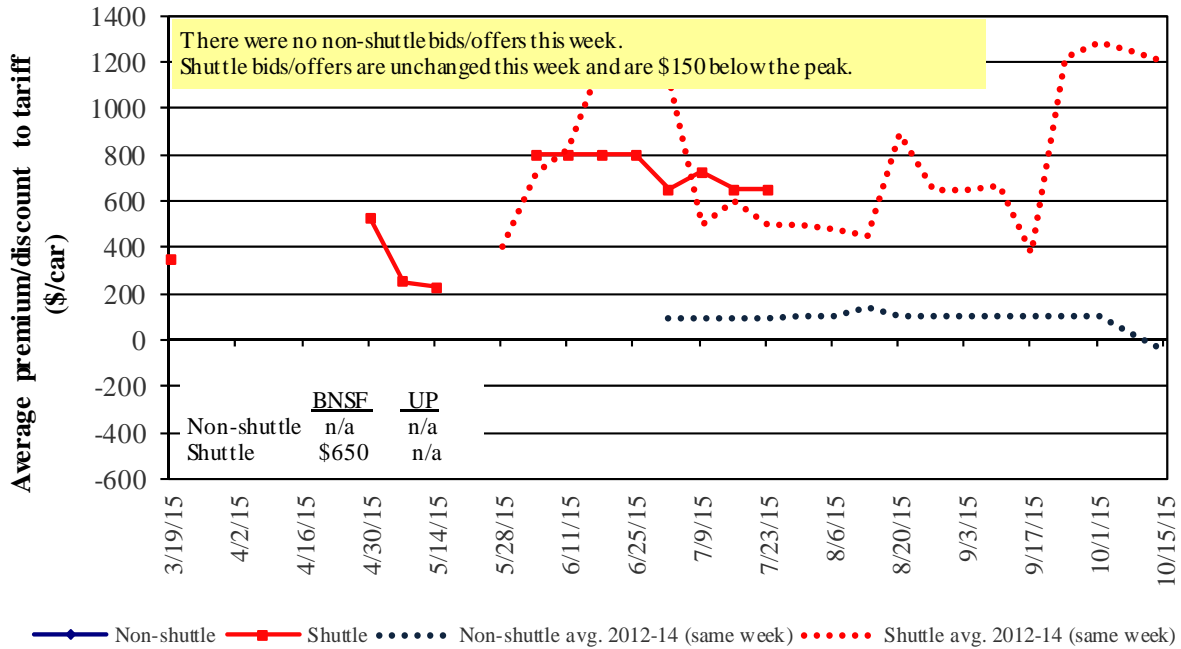


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in October 2015, 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

Week ending	Delivery period					
	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	100	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 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(75)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(12)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(1,175)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle²						
BNSF-GF	17	75	650	100	100	n/a
Change from last week	30	75	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(3,416)	(2,675)	(2,850)	n/a	(2,400)	n/a
UP-Pool	(188)	(263)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	25	(63)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2014	(1,688)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

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

²Shuttle bids are a new data series; prior to this we provided only non-shuttle rates.

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:		Origin region*	Destination region*	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent change Y/Y ³
7/1/2015	metric ton					bushel ²		
Unit train								
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	\$3,605	\$81	\$36.60	\$1.00	3	
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	\$4,143	\$30	\$41.44	\$1.13	13	
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	\$6,950	\$153	\$70.54	\$1.92	4	
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	\$4,243	\$142	\$43.55	\$1.19	1	
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,486	\$126	\$65.66	\$1.79	5	
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,511	\$156	\$46.35	\$1.26	0	
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,710	\$217	\$48.93	\$1.33	-1	
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,328	\$161	\$34.65	\$0.88	-2	
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	\$5,555	\$199	\$57.14	\$1.45	13	
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	\$2,168	\$34	\$21.87	\$0.56	2	
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	\$4,761	\$150	\$48.76	\$1.24	12	
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	\$4,104	\$96	\$41.71	\$1.06	14	
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	\$3,308	\$100	\$33.84	\$0.86	-1	
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,852	\$292	\$51.08	\$1.30	-13	
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	\$3,719	\$149	\$38.41	\$1.05	1	
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$4,676	\$141	\$47.84	\$1.30	21	
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$5,625	\$201	\$57.85	\$1.57	12	
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	\$4,368	\$96	\$44.33	\$1.21	25	
Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,974	\$161	\$41.06	\$1.12	0		
Shuttle Train								
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	\$3,953	\$88	\$40.13	\$1.09	1	
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,919	\$69	\$39.60	\$1.08	7	
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$4,723	\$187	\$48.76	\$1.33	13	
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	\$5,611	\$152	\$57.23	\$1.56	1	
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,532	\$158	\$66.44	\$1.81	0	
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	\$5,478	\$256	\$56.94	\$1.55	-2	
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,180	\$185	\$53.28	\$1.35	-6	
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,130	\$170	\$52.63	\$1.34	-5	
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,147	\$161	\$32.85	\$0.83	-2	
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,610	\$99	\$36.83	\$0.94	-4	
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	\$3,690	\$126	\$37.89	\$0.96	-2	
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	\$5,180	\$184	\$53.26	\$1.35	-6	
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	\$4,600	\$190	\$47.57	\$1.21	-6	
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,690	\$170	\$58.19	\$1.58	-5	
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,710	\$185	\$58.54	\$1.59	-5	
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	\$5,580	\$151	\$56.91	\$1.55	-4	
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	\$4,425	\$186	\$45.79	\$1.25	0	
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$3,851	\$141	\$39.65	\$1.08	26	
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	\$5,360	\$262	\$55.83	\$1.52	-2	

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

Effective date: 7/1/2015

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car ¹	Fuel		Percent change Y/Y ⁴	
				surchage per car ²	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton ³ bushel ³		
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	\$7,599	\$161	\$79.29	\$2.16	10
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	\$6,714	\$195	\$70.59	\$1.92	-2
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,159	\$189	\$75.07	\$2.04	-3
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$4,086	\$74	\$42.50	\$1.16	2
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,427	\$222	\$88.37	\$2.24	-2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	\$7,780	\$210	\$81.64	\$2.07	-5
	NE	Queretaro, QA	\$7,618	\$197	\$79.86	\$2.03	-3
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$6,035	\$160	\$63.30	\$1.61	-4
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	\$6,963	\$192	\$73.11	\$1.86	-4
	SD	Torreon, CU	\$7,050	\$176	\$73.83	\$1.87	-2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	\$8,365	\$187	\$87.38	\$2.38	0
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,929	\$214	\$93.42	\$2.54	-1
	IA	El Castillo, JA	\$9,270	\$209	\$96.85	\$2.63	-2
	KS	Torreon, CU	\$7,226	\$133	\$75.19	\$2.04	0
Sorghum	TX	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,150	\$137	\$74.45	\$1.89	-2
	NE	Celaya, GJ	\$7,404	\$191	\$77.60	\$1.97	-4
	KS	Queretaro, QA	\$7,255	\$120	\$75.35	\$1.91	4
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$5,883	\$141	\$61.54	\$1.56	2
	NE	Torreon, CU	\$6,662	\$157	\$69.67	\$1.77	0

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

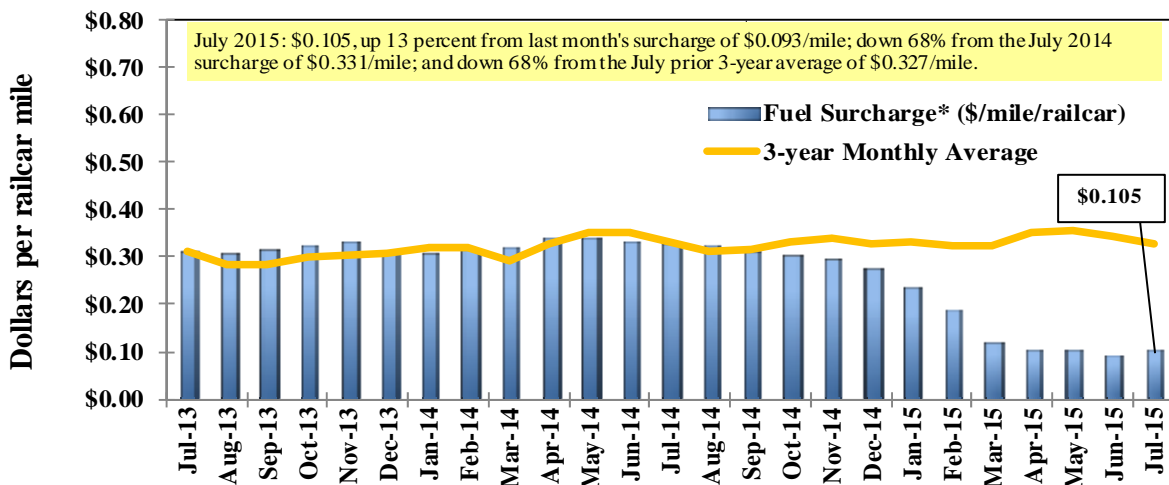
³Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

⁴Percentage change year over year 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.

* Mileage-based fuel surcharges for March and April 2007 are estimated. Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

** BNSF strike price (diesel price when fuel surcharges begin) changed from \$1.25/gal. to \$2.50/gal. starting March 1, 2011.

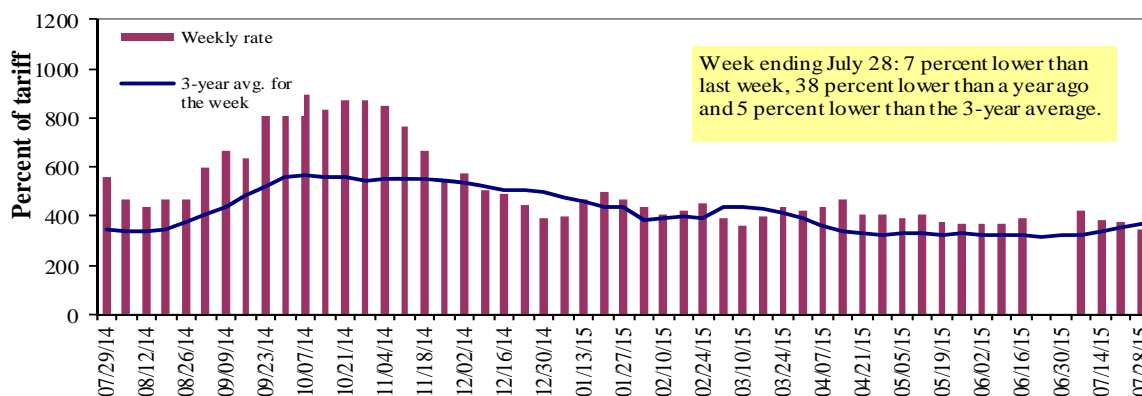
***CSX strike price changed from \$2.00/gal. to \$3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

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	7/28/2015	413	375	350	258	303	303	235
	7/21/2015	438	390	375	268	313	313	220
\$/ton	7/28/2015	25.56	19.95	16.24	10.29	14.21	12.24	7.38
	7/21/2015	27.11	20.75	17.40	10.69	14.68	12.65	6.91
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-34	-38	-37	-34	-34	-36
	3-year avg. ²	-8	10	-5	-14	2	2	-8
Rate¹	August	438	400	375	313	320	320	288
	October	613	613	613	538	613	613	500

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

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.

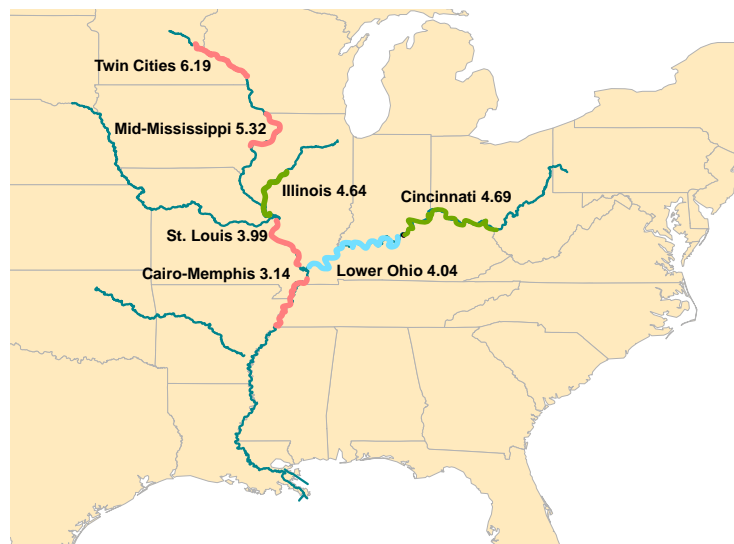
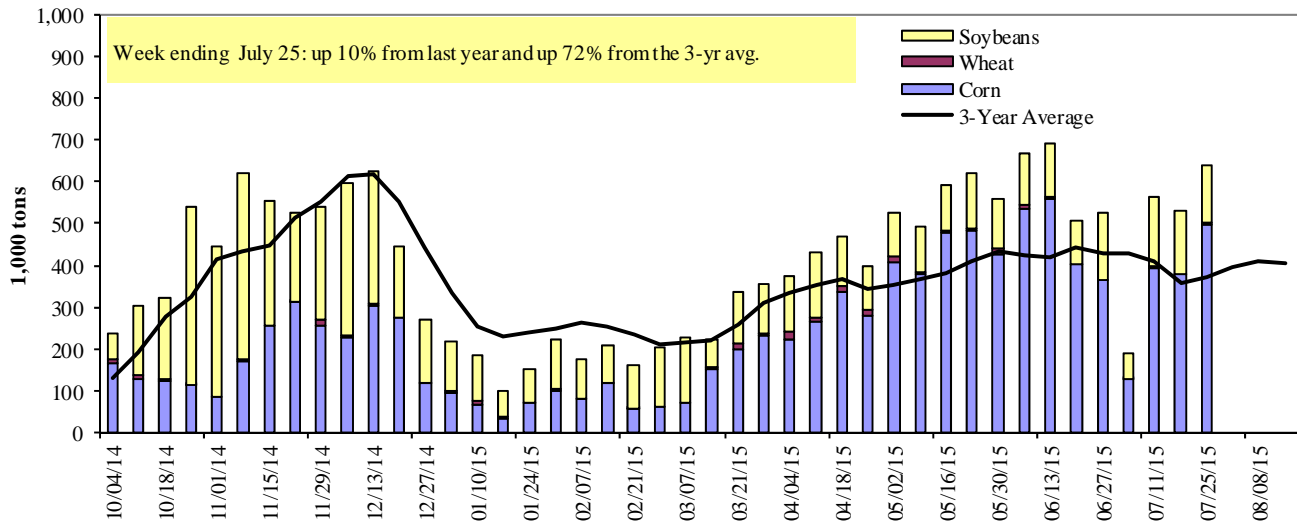


Figure 10

Barge Movements on the Mississippi 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)

Week ending 07/25/2015	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	173	5	46	2	225
Winfield, MO (L25)	436	2	58	3	499
Alton, IL (L26)	551	5	132	2	690
Granite City, IL (L27)	498	3	138	0	639
Illinois River (L8)	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio River (L52)	106	21	32	0	159
Arkansas River (L1)	0	15	3	0	18
Weekly total - 2015	604	39	172	0	816
Weekly total - 2014	571	116	98	0	786
2015 YTD ¹	12,145	908	5,879	133	19,065
2014 YTD	13,091	1,389	4,541	117	19,139
2015 as % of 2014 YTD	93	65	129	114	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 2014 ²	107	52	283	127	114
Total 2014	20,693	2,181	11,813	258	34,946

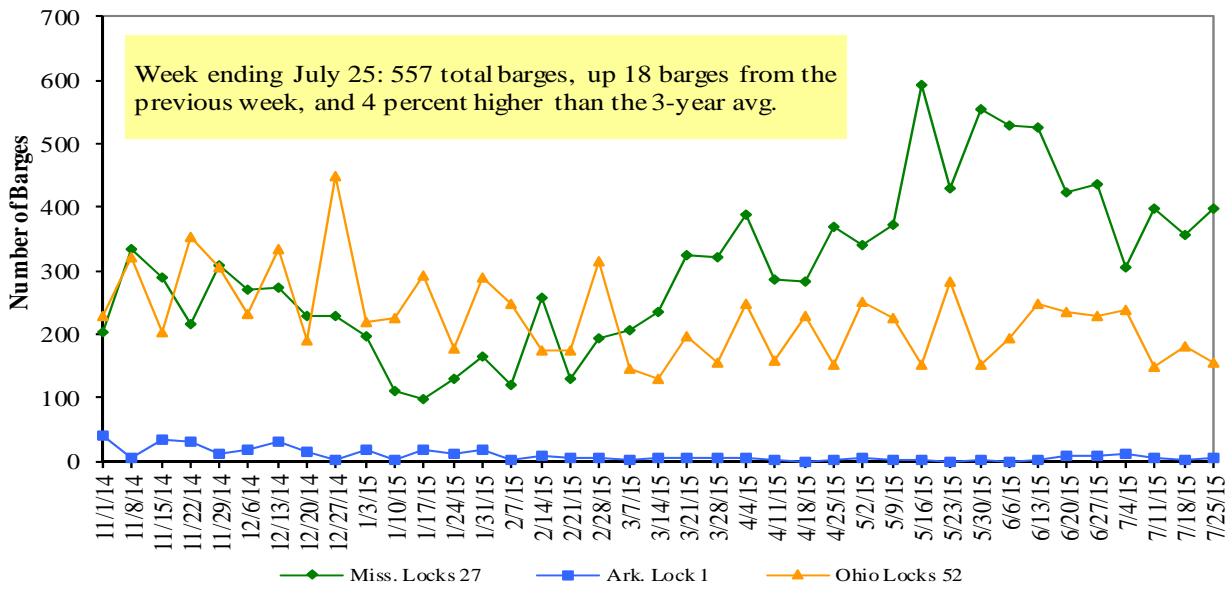
¹ Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

² As a percent of same period in 2014.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

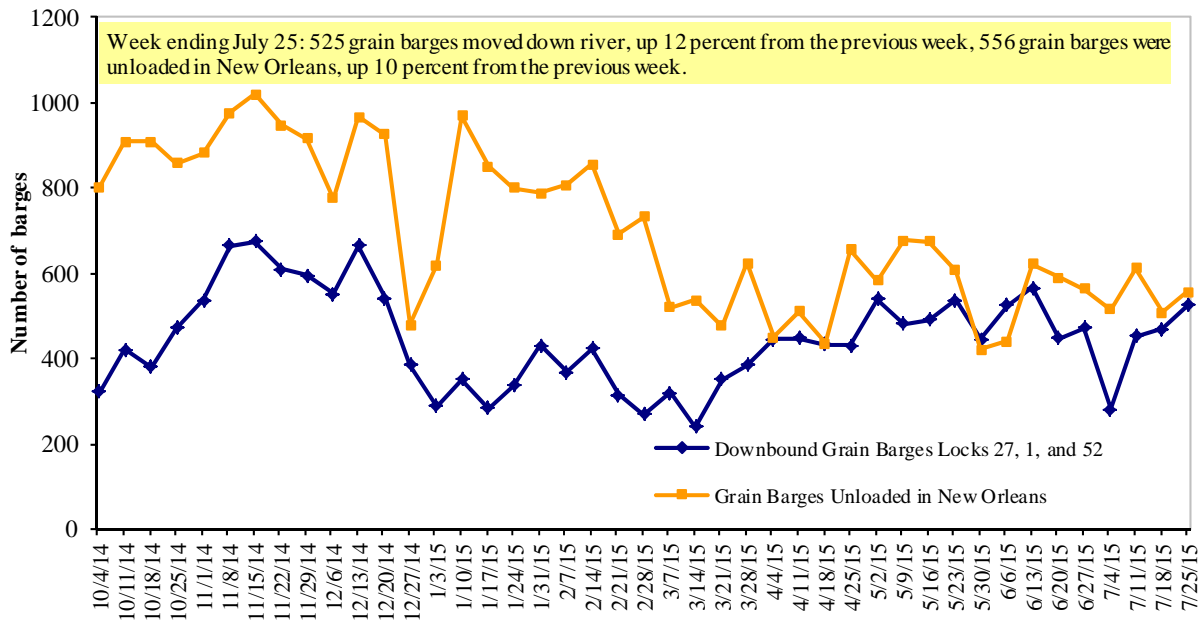
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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 7/27/2015 (US \$/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	2.809	-0.064	-1.101
	New England	2.932	-0.064	-1.112
	Central Atlantic	2.918	-0.067	-1.075
	Lower Atlantic	2.701	-0.061	-1.116
II	Midwest ²	2.619	-0.060	-1.182
III	Gulf Coast ³	2.611	-0.063	-1.156
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.735	-0.035	-1.153
V	West Coast	2.957	-0.047	-1.060
	West Coast less California	2.814	-0.059	-1.114
	California	3.072	-0.039	-1.018
Total	U.S.	2.723	-0.059	-1.135

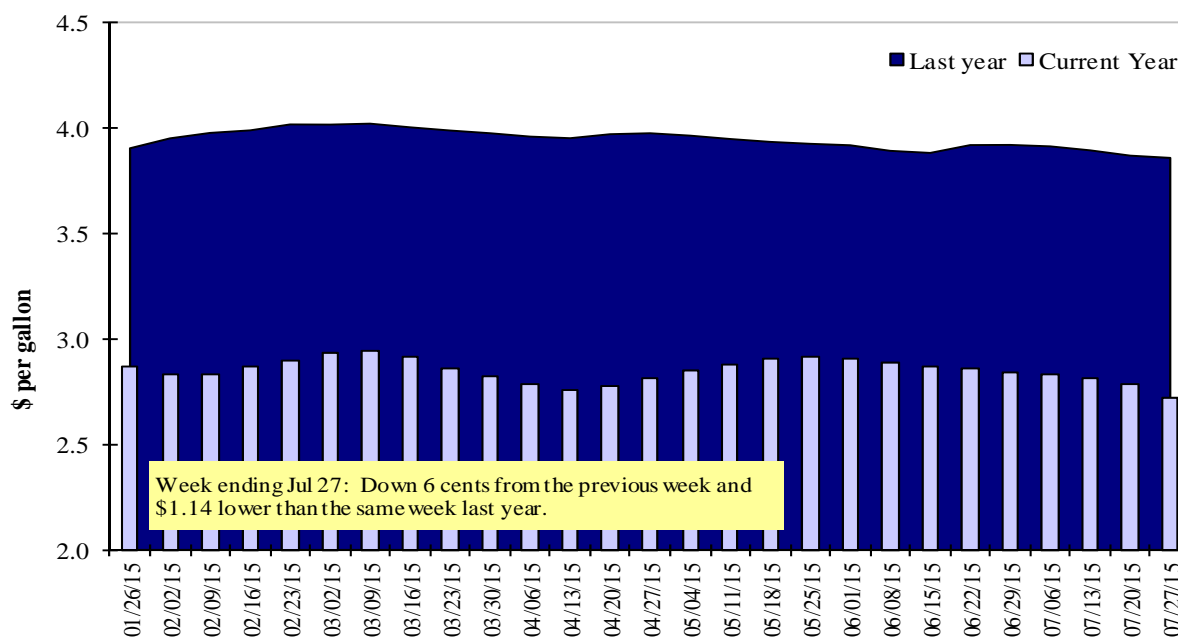
¹Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

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)

Week ending	Wheat					All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR				
Export Balances¹									
7/16/2015	1,084	867	1,609	974	187	4,721	7,294	2,330	14,345
This week year ago	1,575	968	2,069	1,060	121	5,792	7,372	1,997	15,161
Cumulative exports-marketing year²									
2014/15 YTD	765	540	570	276	114	2,265	39,470	48,342	90,077
2013/14 YTD	1,022	584	1,004	478	46	3,134	41,069	43,840	88,043
YTD 2014/15 as % of 2013/14	75	92	57	58	248	72	96	110	102
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2013/14	78	92	72	90	161	82	115	132	105
2013/14 Total	11,465	7,307	6,338	4,367	486	29,963	46,868	44,478	121,309
2012/13 Total	10,019	5,039	5,825	4,619	591	26,093	17,980	36,220	80,293

¹ Current unshipped export sales to date

² Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year in effect for wheat

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

Week ending 07/16/2015	Total Commitments ²			% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-year avg 2011-2013
	2015/16 Next MY	2014/15 Current MY	2013/14 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -				- 1,000 mt -
Japan	804	11,486	11,454	0	10,079
Mexico	1,857	10,639	10,504	1	8,145
Korea	1	3,735	4,427	(16)	2,965
Colombia	40	4,285	3,253	32	3,461
Taiwan	41	2,032	1,997	2	1,238
Top 5 Importers	2,743	32,176	31,635	2	25,887
Total US corn export sales	3,544	46,764	48,441	(3)	34,445
% of Projected	7%	100%	99%		
Change from prior week	1	223	292		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	77%	69%	65%		75%
USDA forecast, July 2015	47,628	46,993	48,695	(3)	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, July 2015	132,715	132,080	130,404	1	

(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 Ranking Reports - http://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myrkaug.htm; 3-yr average

Table 14

Top 5 Importers¹ of U.S. Soybeans

Week Ending 07/16/2015	Total Commitments ²			% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 3-yr avg. 2011-13
	2015/16 Next MY	2014/15 Current MY	2013/14 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -				- 1,000 mt -
China	2,498	29,984	27,824	8	24,211
Mexico	648	3,411	3,265	4	2,971
Indonesia	49	1,804	2,391	(25)	1,895
Japan	347	2,119	1,903	11	1,750
Taiwan	50	1,329	1,283	4	1,055
Top 5 importers	3,592	38,647	36,666	5	31,882
Total US soybean export sales	7,093	50,672	45,837	11	39,169
% of Projected	15%	103%	102%		
Change from prior week	242	81	227		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	51%	76%	80%		81%
USDA forecast, July 2015	48,308	49,260	44,824	10	

(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/³ FAS 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

Week Ending 07/16/2015	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	564	993	(43)	3,113
Mexico	681	1,083	(37)	2,807
Nigeria	670	605	11	2,512
Philippines	552	664	(17)	2,105
Brazil	175	1,003	(83)	2,091
Korea	379	567	(33)	1,273
Taiwan	291	325	(11)	1,007
Indonesia	136	283	(52)	751
Colombia	171	186	(8)	662
Thailand	136	161		618
Top 10 importers	3,618	5,708	(37)	16,939
Total US wheat export sales	6,986	8,927	(22)	26,361
% of Projected	28%	38%		
Change from prior week	503	443		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	52%	64%		64%
USDA forecast, July 2015	25,170	23,270	8	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹ Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31² 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 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	Week ending 07/23/15	Previous Week ¹	Current Week as % of Previous	2015 YTD ¹	2014 YTD ¹	2015 YTD as % of 2014 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of		Total ¹ 2014
							2014	3-yr. avg.	
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	194	274	71	6,045	7,226	84	88	86	12,436
Corn	241	311	78	5,807	5,212	111	129	200	7,781
Soybeans	8	6	136	4,068	4,486	91	n/a	18	12,887
Total	444	591	75	15,919	16,925	94	111	128	33,104
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	161	118	137	2,479	2,705	92	103	86	4,495
Corn	669	640	105	17,461	18,927	92	97	169	30,912
Soybeans	97	226	43	11,321	10,320	110	302	116	29,087
Total	928	983	94	31,260	31,953	98	111	139	64,495
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	0	72	0	2,292	3,792	60	64	43	6,120
Corn	0	0	n/a	400	370	108	397	1,192	580
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	210	257	82	n/a	0	949
Total	0	72	0	2,901	4,420	66	82	59	7,649
Interior									
Wheat	38	13	304	785	685	115	65	150	1,400
Corn	123	129	96	3,427	3,116	110	94	136	5,677
Soybeans	16	61	27	1,846	2,166	85	108	81	4,312
Total	178	203	88	6,059	5,966	102	181	122	11,389
Great Lakes									
Wheat	66	0	n/a	334	263	127	410	306	935
Corn	51	40	129	281	90	311	294	830	288
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	86	51	170	n/a	146	988
Total	117	40	296	701	404	173	359	415	2,211
Atlantic									
Wheat	2	42	5	356	248	144	89	165	553
Corn	0	8	0	89	444	20	17	34	816
Soybeans	3	5	49	930	992	94	251	52	2,119
Total	5	55	8	1,375	1,684	82	65	95	3,487
U.S. total from ports²									
Wheat	462	519	89	12,290	14,919	82	94	81	25,939
Corn	1,085	1,127	96	27,465	28,160	98	108	178	46,054
Soybeans	124	298	42	18,461	18,273	101	216	98	50,342
Total	1,672	1,944	86	58,216	61,352	95	111	127	122,335

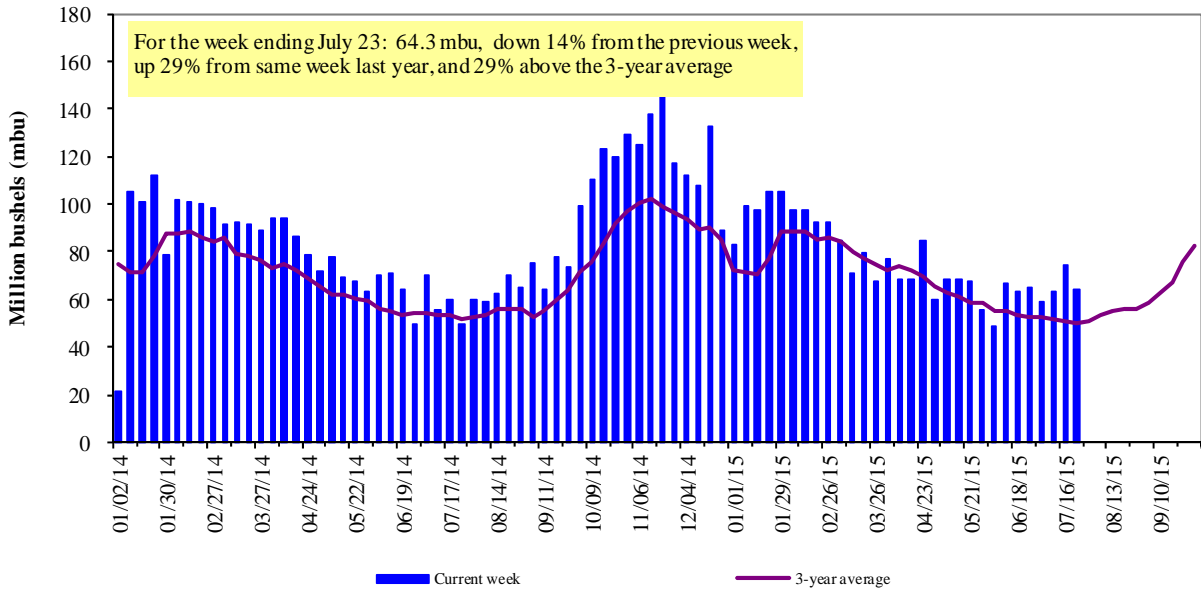
¹ Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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 2014.

Figure 14

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

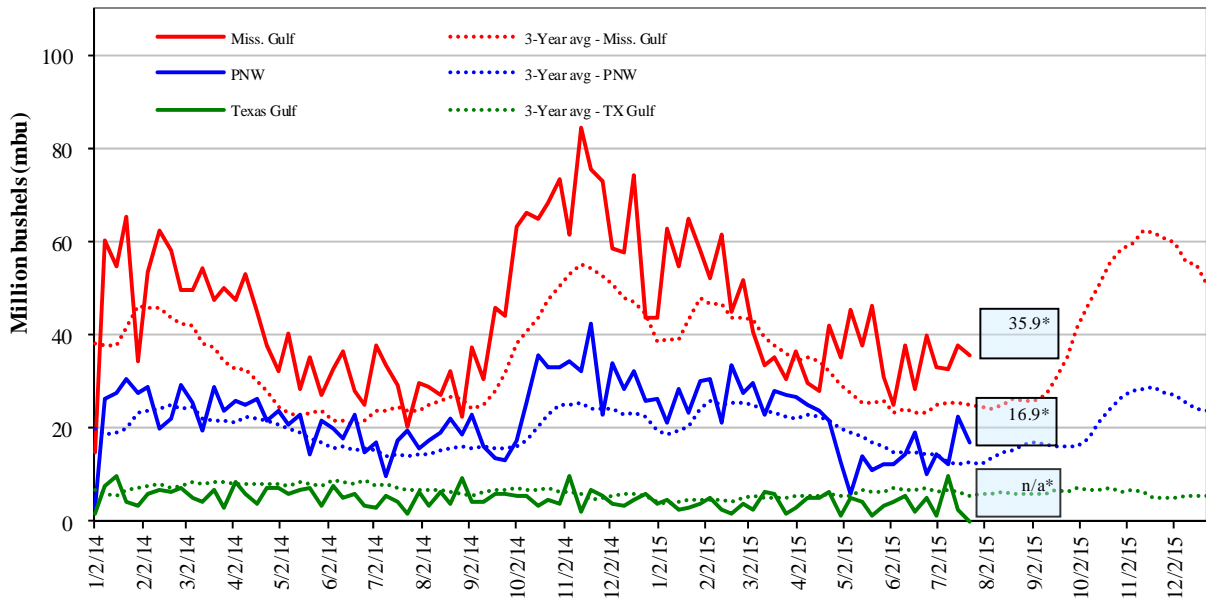


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

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)



Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov); *mbu, this week.

July 23: % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	down 5	down 82	down 11	down 25
Last year (same week)	up 74	n/a	up 62	down 13
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.)	up 44	n/a	up 17	up 17

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

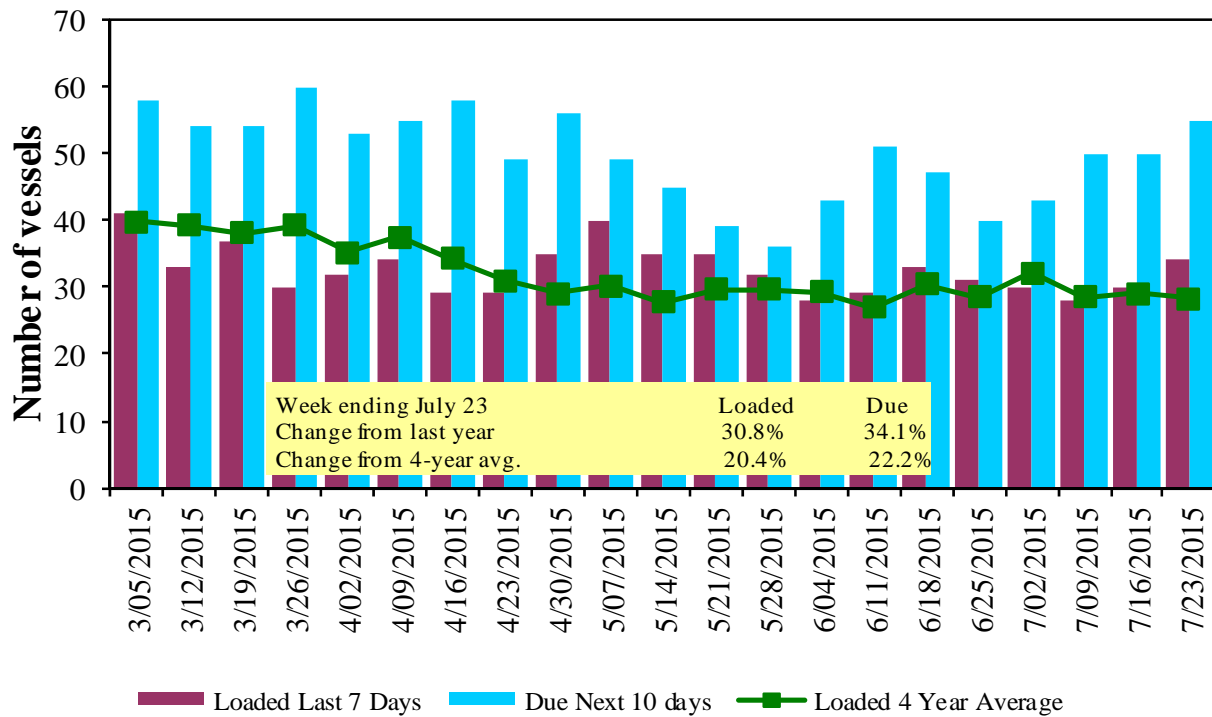
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
7/23/2015	48	34	55	7	n/a
7/16/2015	37	30	50	12	n/a
2014 range	(18..88)	(24..52)	(27..97)	(6..26)	n/a
2014 avg.	47	39	60	15	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

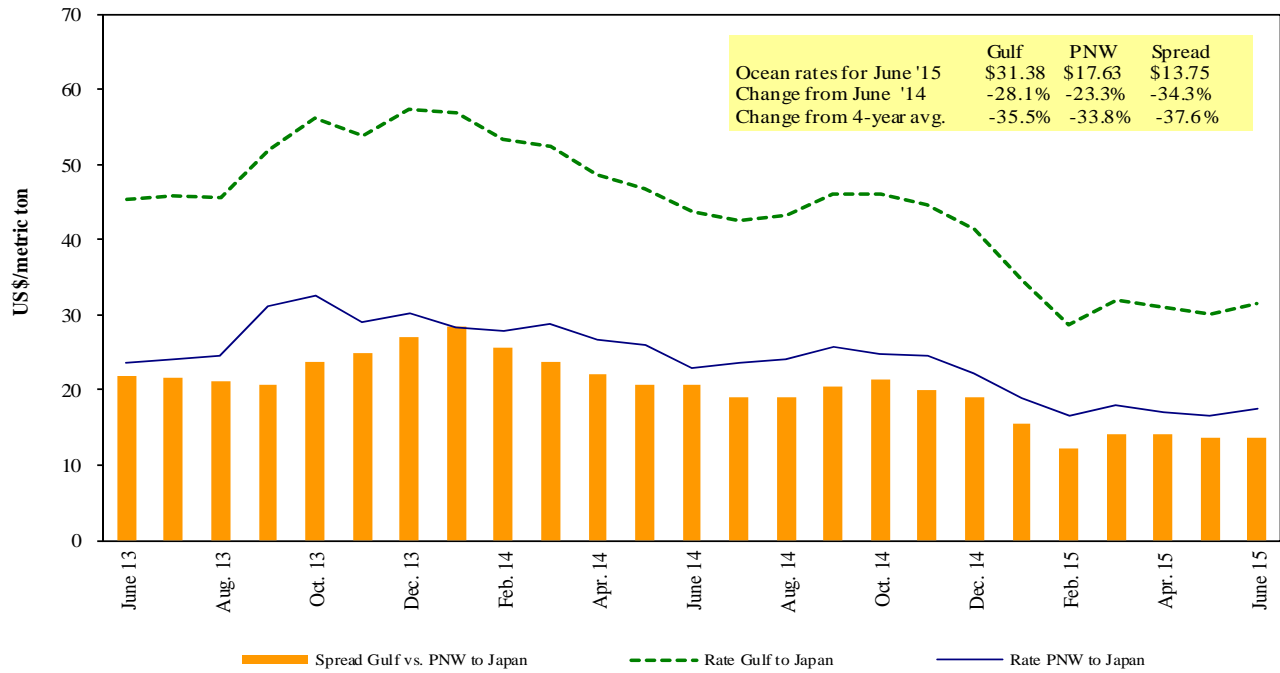
U.S. Gulf¹ Vessel Loading Activity



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 7/25/2015

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US\$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 25/Aug 5	54,000	37.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 10/15	53,000	31.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Grain	Jun 1/10	50,000	35.75
U.S. Gulf	Guatemala ¹	Corn	Jul 20/30	10,000	108.18
PNW	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 1/10	60,000	14.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 15/25	60,000	24.50
Brazil	China	Grain	Aug 1/30	60,000	23.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 10/15	60,000	24.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 1/10	60,000	22.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 25/30	60,000	26.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 20/30	60,000	21.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 20/30	60,000	21.75
Brazil	Egypt Med	Corn	Jul 5/15	50,000	19.50
Brazil	Thailand	Grain	Aug 1/5	60,000	28.50
River Plate	South Africa	Corn	Jul 1/10	25,000	24.25
River Plate	Vietnam	Corn	Jun 13/18	60,000	30.00
Thailand	Senegal	Rice Bggd	Jun 11/16	23,000	34.00
Uruguay	Syria	Soybean Meal	Jun 10/15	26,000	38.80

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

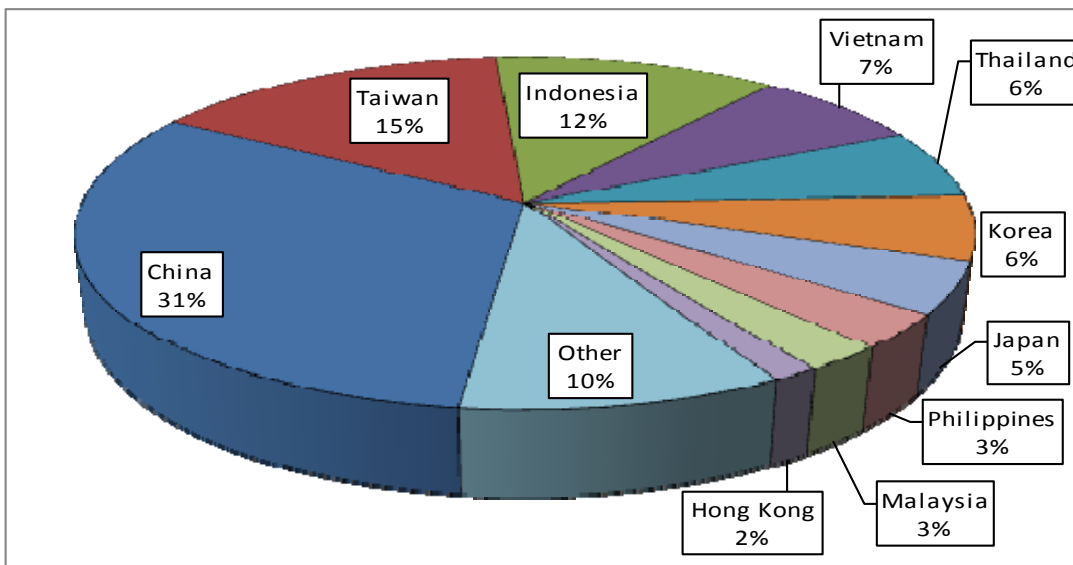
¹50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

In 2013, containers were used to transport 10 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, up 2 percentage points from 2012. Approximately 61 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2013 went to Asia, of which 16 percent were moved in containers. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—97 percent in 2013.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, January-December 2014

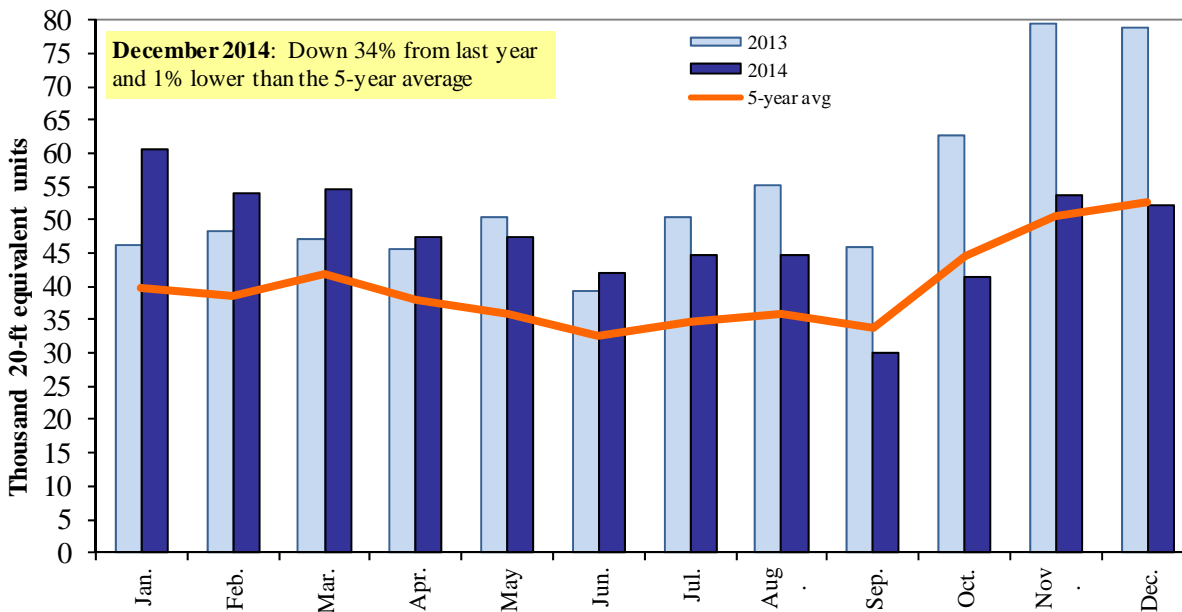


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

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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Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report*. July 30, 2015. Web: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.07-30-2015>

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