United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Transportation and Marketing Programs/Transportation Services Division
www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

Contact Us

May 1, 2014

Contents

Article/ Calendar

Grain Transportation Indicators

Rail

Barge

Truck

Exports

Ocean

Brazil

Mexico

Grain Truck/Ocean Rate Advisory

Data Links

Specialists

Subscription Information

The next release is May 8, 2014

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Grain Inspections Down but Remain Above Average

For the week ending April 24, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export grain from all major export regions reached 2.0 million metric tons (mmt), down 11 percent from the past week, 47 percent above last year, and 10 percent above the 3-year average. Wheat (.648 mmt) and soybean (.257 mmt) inspections, however, increased 21 and 66 percent from the past week. Wheat shipments went primarily to South America and soybeans were destined mainly to Asia. The increases in wheat and soybeans, however, could not offset the 30 percent drop in corn inspections (1.1 mmt), caused by lower shipments to Latin America. Despite the drop in the amount of corn inspected for export, shipments remained above the 3-year average by 58 percent.

Planting Preparation Slows Grain Movements

Farmer preparations for the planting season have contributed to slow grain movements and reduced transportation activity during the past week. During the week ending April 26, the total tonnage of grain transiting upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Ohio Rivers to New Orleans was 624,000 tons, down from 672,000 tons the previous week. For the week ending April 23, 7,081 grain carloads were delivered to ports, compared to 8,771 during the previous week. Total grain inspections for the week ending April 24 were down 11 percent from the previous week. Grain-vessel loading activities were down in the U.S. Gulf and Pacific Northwest (PNW) ports. During the week ending April 24, 39 **vessels were loaded** in the U.S. Gulf, compared to 49 a week earlier. The number of vessels in PNW ports as of April 24 was 16, compared to 23 a week earlier. Meanwhile, barge and ocean freight rates for shipping grains are declining. Though corn planting has been delayed in many States this year due to cool, wet weather, field preparations are underway. When possible, farmers are taking advantage of mild weather pockets such as in Illinois last week, when corn planting jumped from 5 to 32 percent planted.

STB Announces South Dakota Meeting on Rail Service Issues

Representatives from the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) Rail Customer and Public Assistance Program will be conducting informal and confidential meetings with railroad shippers in Sioux Falls, SD, on May 6 regarding continuing railroad service issues. This meeting is part of a series connected with the STB hearing *United States Rail Service Issues*, EP 724. Shippers wishing to participate are encouraged to contact the STB by the close of business on Friday, May 2. Additional meetings are planned for Minnesota and Montana soon. See the STB announcement for details.

Snapshots by Sector

Rail

U.S. railroads originated 21,582 **carloads of grain** during the week ending April 19, up 4 percent from last week, 38 percent from last year, and 11 percent from the 3-year average.

During the week ending April 24, average May non-shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers per car** were $875 above tariff, down $1,625 from last week and $875 higher than last year. Average shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were $850 above tariff, down $650 from last week and $954.50 higher than last year.

Barge

During the week ending April 26, **barge grain movements** totaled 623,805 tons—7.2 percent lower than the previous week but 428 percent higher than the same period last year.

During the week ending April 26, 404 grain barges **moved down river**, down 8.4 percent from last week; 544 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 12.7 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

During the week ending April 24, 39 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 56 percent more than the same period last year. Fifty vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 61 percent more than the same period last year.

During the week ending April 25, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was $47.50 per mt, unchanged from the previous week. The cost of shipping from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $26.50 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

Fuel

During the week ending April 28, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** increased less than 1 cent from the previous week to $3.975 per gallon—up 12 cents from with the same week last year.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 1, 2014.
Web: http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-01-2014

Feature Article/Calendar

Seasonal Holidays, and Erratic Demand Kept First Quarter Ocean Rates Low

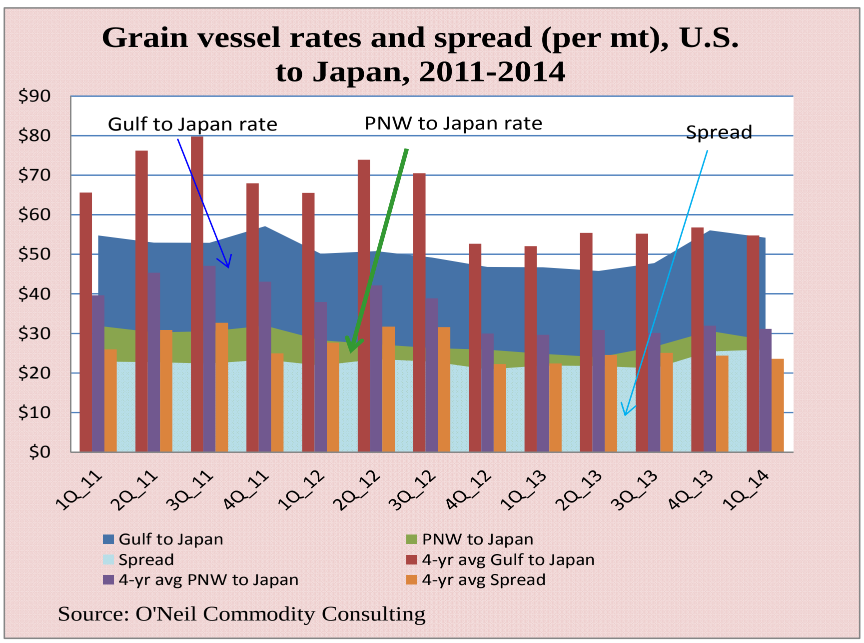
Although higher than the same period last year, first quarter ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grains decreased from the fourth quarter of the previous year. Ocean rates for shipping bulk grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan averaged $54.22 per metric ton (mt) during the quarter, down 3 and 1 percent from the previous quarter and 4-year average, respectively (see table and figure below). The cost of shipping a metric ton of grain from the Pacific Northwest (PNW) at $28.30 was 8 percent less than the previous quarter and 9 percent less than the 4-year average. Shipping grains from the U.S. Gulf to Europe decreased 10 percent from the previous quarter to $23.40 per mt during the first quarter, 7 percent more than the 4-year average. However, the rates were higher than the first quarter of 2013. The spread between the Gulf and PNW rates was higher than the previous quarter, last year, and the 4-year average.

Ocean freight rates for grain routes during first quarter 2014

Route	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	1st quarter 2014	Change from 4th qtr '13	Change from 1st qtr '13	Change from 4-yr avg
	--$/mt--			--$/mt--	Percent		
U.S. Gulf to Japan	56.90	53.38	52.38	54.22	-3.3	16	-1
PNW to Japan	28.40	27.75	28.75	28.30	-7.6	14	-9
Spread	28.50	25.63	23.63	25.92	2	18	10
U.S. Gulf to Europe	24.20	23.00	23.00	23.40	-10	20	7

Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Bulk ocean freight rates started declining in January due to slow activity in the market caused by seasonal holidays, including New Year holidays around the world and the Chinese New Year celebrations. In addition to holidays, other events around the world impacted vessel activity such as bad weather hindering iron ore loading operations in Australia and Brazil, a January 12th Indonesian government export ban on unprocessed minerals, and Chinese central bank restrictions on steel mills' and traders' access to credit for purchasing raw materials.



Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Market activity edged up in the Pacific Basin after the Chinese New Year holidays. There was also improvement in coal cargoes out of Indonesia. However, these improvements in market activities were not enough to prevent the rates from falling further during February. Ocean freight rates continued to fall during March, especially the grain routes from South America to the Far East due to weak Chinese demand for soybeans caused by bird flu problems. The demand for soybeans slowed as poultry farmers reduced their bird inventories in response to a cutback in poultry consumption by the consumers due to concerns about bird flu spreading to humans. In addition, according to April *Drewry Shipping Insight* report, the crisis in Ukraine has triggered the fears of supply shortage, causing the prices of wheat, soybeans, and corn to increase due to huge demand from China and other developing countries. The effect of the crisis is not limited to the grain market only, but extends to the shipping market as well.

Market Outlook: Ocean freight rates remain at moderate levels. As of April 25, the Gulf-to-Japan rate was $47.50 per mt, PNW-to-Japan rate was $26.50 per mt, and Gulf-to-Europe rate was $19 per mt. However, there are several indicators that signal possible increases in rates in 2014. Among the indicators are: the Chinese stimulus plan, increased U.S. grain production, increased Japanese demand for coal for electricity generation, and the European economic recovery. These scenarios combined are expected to boost activities in the bulk market, thereby putting upward pressure on rates. The market is still experiencing excess vessel capacity; vessel demand has not yet caught up with supply. Although at a slower rate, new vessels continue to be added to the existing fleet. During March, 62 vessels were ordered, amounting to 6.6 million deadweight tons. Most are expected to be delivered through 2015. In addition, there were reports of Chinese cancelation of Brazilian soybeans, which is currently dampening the bulk market. It remains to be seen how all these dynamics will play out in the market.
surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
Week ending		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
04/30/14	267	288	252	200	212	188
04/23/14	267	377	280	209	212	188

[1]Indicator: Base year 2000 = 100; Weekly updates include truck = diesel ($/gallon); rail = near-month secondary rail market bid and monthly tariff rate with fuel surcharge ($/car); barge = Illinois River barge rate (index = percent of tariff rate); and ocean = routes to Japan ($/metric ton)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

*No quote for Illinois River as ice accumulation severely limited barge operations.

Table 2

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

Commodity	Origin--Destination	4/25/2014	4/17/2014
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.82	-0.83
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.92	-0.96
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-0.98	-1.17
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.44	-1.70
HRS	ND--Portland	-2.47	-2.88

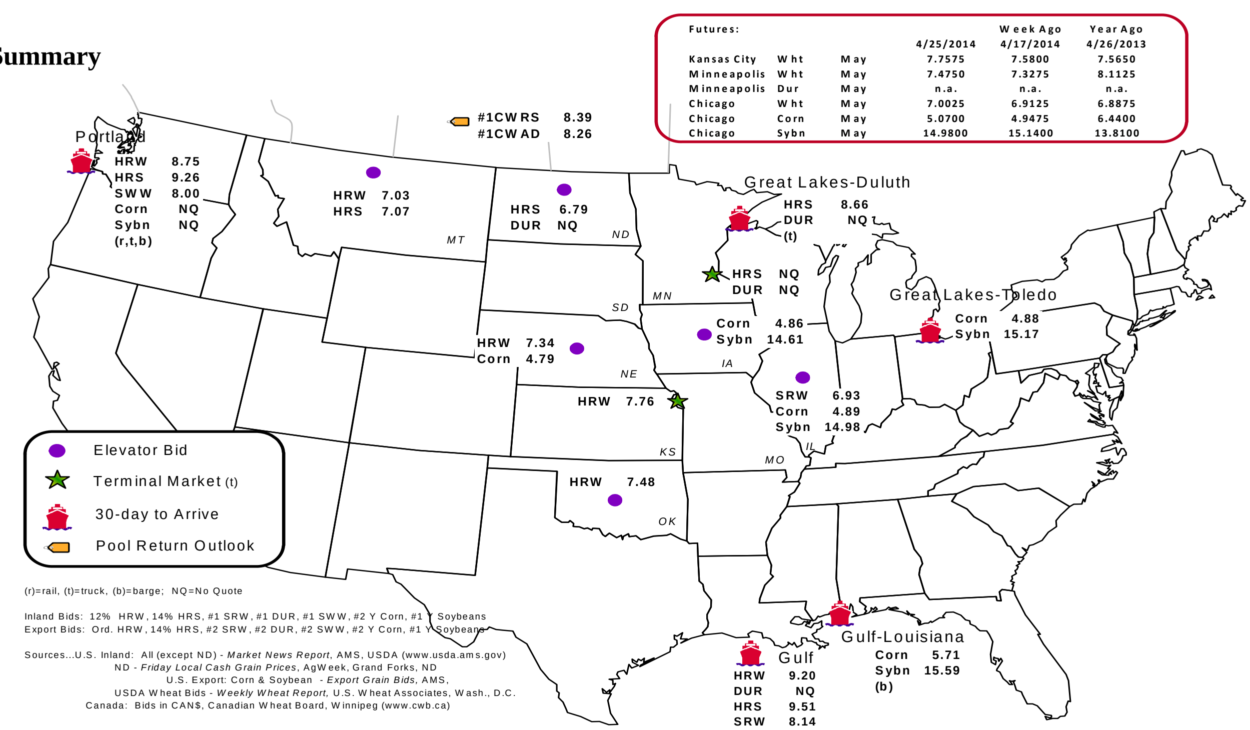
Note: nq = no quote

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 Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border Mexico[3]
4/23/2014[p]	528	806	5,276	471	7,081	4/19/2014	1,921
4/16/2014[r]	766	2,055	5,097	853	8,771	4/12/2014	2,090
2014 YTD[r]	18,509	26,985	88,913	13,731	148,138	2014 YTD	29,822
2013 YTD[r]	7,890	17,510	61,247	8,487	95,134	2013 YTD	19,592
2014 YTD as % of 2013 YTD	235	154	145	162	156	% change YTD	152
Last 4 weeks as % of 2013[2]	1,103	114	278	399	232	Last 4wks % 2013	146
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	359	112	161	153	156	Last 4wks % 4 yr	85
Total 2013	31,646	71,388	168,826	25,176	297,036	Total 2013	70,298
Total 2012	22,604	40,780	199,419	24,659	287,462	Total 2012	92,008

[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 aproximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect switching between KCSM and FerroMex.

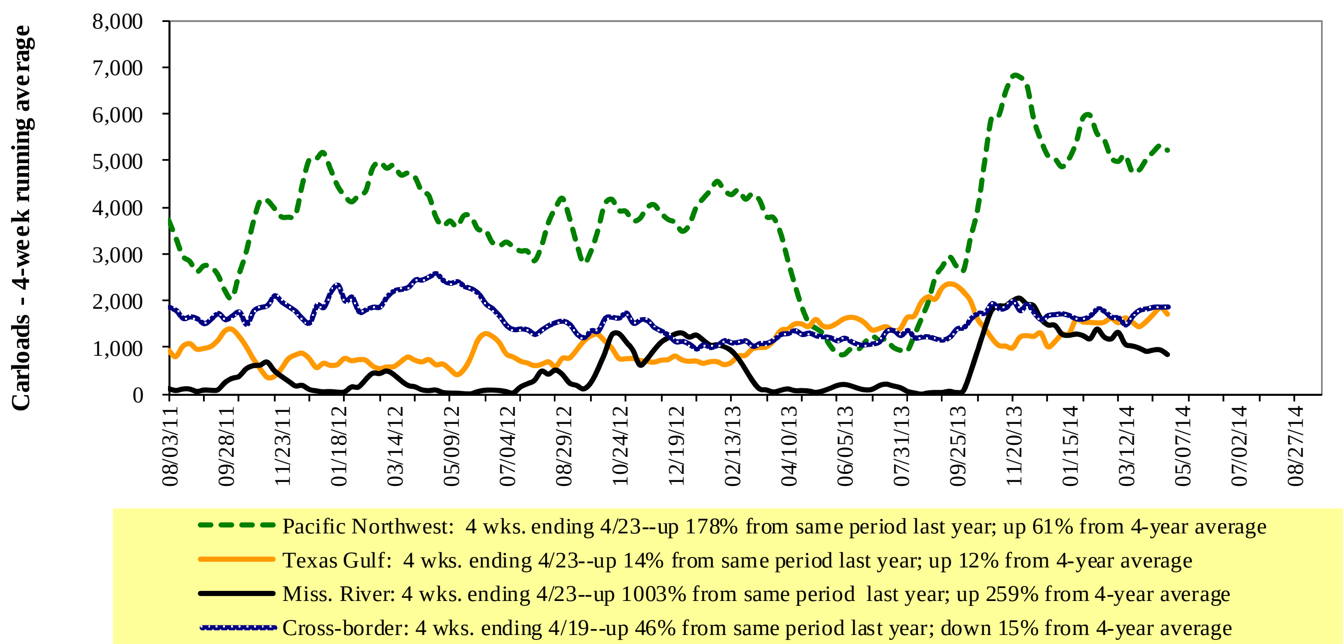
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 29 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)

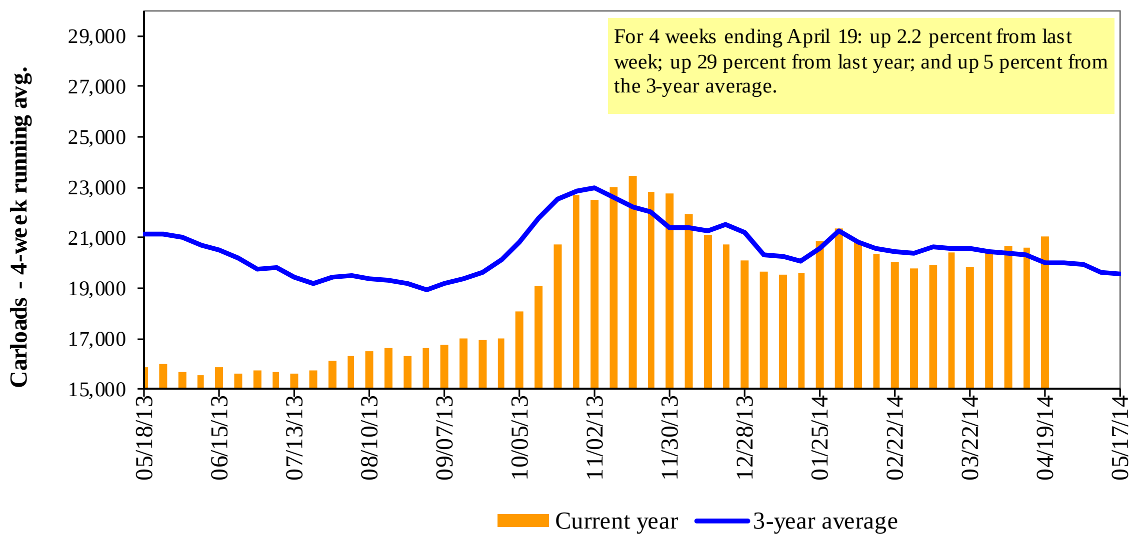
	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
Week ending	**CSXT**	**NS**	**BNSF**	**KCS**	**UP**		**CN**	**CP**
04/19/14	1,846	2,819	10,055	1,035	5,827	21,582	5,111	5,810
This week last year	1,841	2,140	7,313	623	3,753	15,670	3,879	5,766
2014 YTD	31,950	48,398	138,567	15,284	92,921	327,120	66,316	78,275
2013 YTD	24,690	39,899	145,765	7,735	61,526	279,615	54,733	86,427
2014 YTD as % of 2013 YTD	129	121	95	198	151	117	121	91
Last 4 weeks as % of 2013	131	139	113	195	148	129	150	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.[1]	105	121	93	167	115	105	123	109
Total 2013	86,466	137,915	454,262	34,412	222,258	935,313	190,125	272,753

[1]As a percent of the same period in 2009 and 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 Offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

Week ending	Delivery period							
4/24/2014	**May-14**	**May-13**	**Jun-14**	**Jun-13**	**Jul-14**	**Jul-13**	**Aug-14**	**Aug-13**
BNSF[3]								
COT grain units	no offer	0	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids
COT grain single-car[5]	no offer	0	no offer	no bids	no offer	0	no offer	0
UP[4]								
GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	n/a	n/a

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

[2]Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

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

[4]UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

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

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

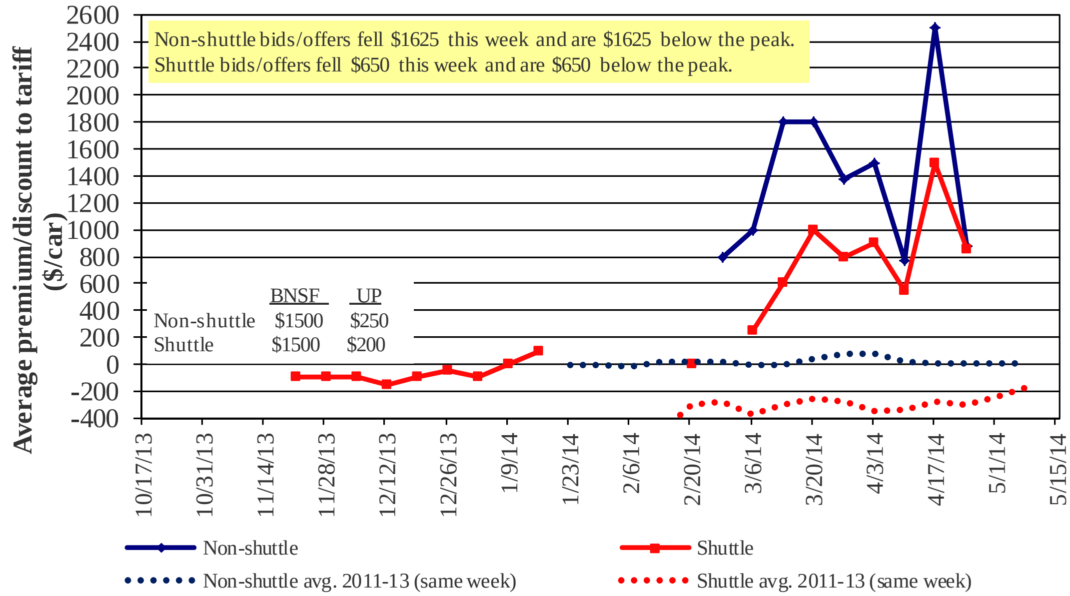
[5]Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

Source: 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 May 2014, Secondary Market

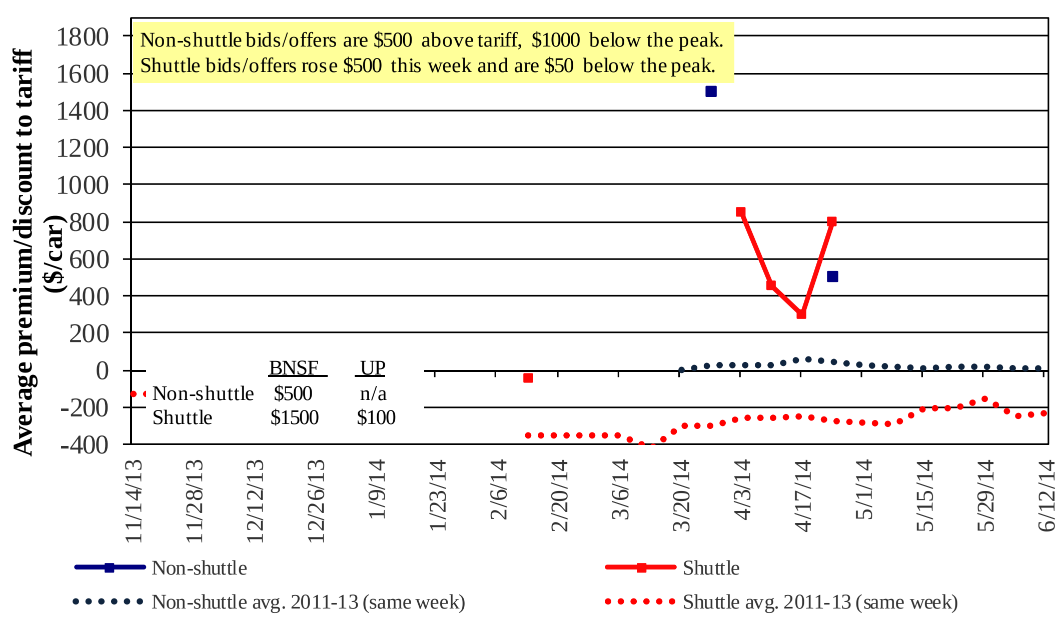


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in June 2014, Secondary Market

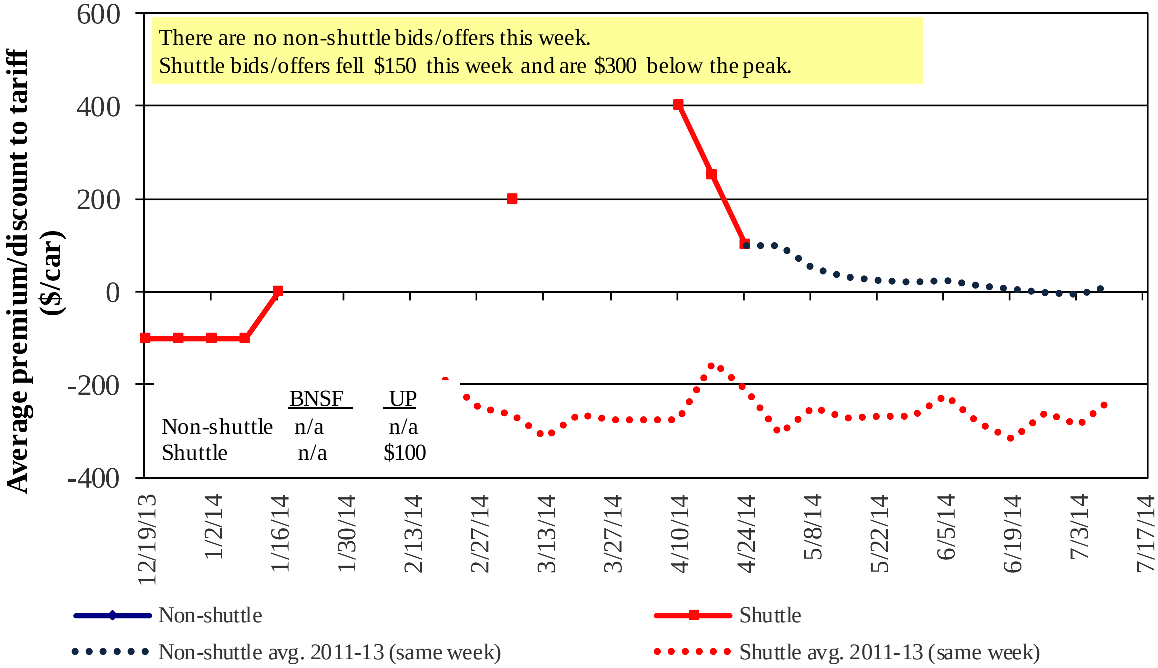


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in July 2014, 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 4/24/2014	Delivery period May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	1,500	500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(1,000)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2013	1,500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	250	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 2013	250	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle[2]						
BNSF-GF	1,500	1,500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(1,000)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2013	1,567	1,725	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	200	100	100	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(300)	(200)	(150)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2013	342	275	275	n/a	n/a	n/a

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

[2]Shuttle 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.

Table 7

Tariff Rail Rates for Unit and Shuttle Train Shipments[1]

Effective date: 4/1/2014	Origin region*	Destination region*	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[2]	Percent change Y/Y[3]
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	$3,191	$192	$33.60	$0.91	1
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,596	$113	$36.83	$1.00	1
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$6,244	$581	$67.78	$1.84	3
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$3,808	$338	$41.17	$1.12	3
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,824	$477	$62.57	$1.70	4
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,076	$371	$44.16	$1.20	3
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$4,275	$516	$47.57	$1.29	3
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,192	$382	$35.49	$0.90	1
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$4,686	$433	$50.83	$1.29	3
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,078	$81	$21.44	$0.54	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$4,061	$325	$43.56	$1.11	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$3,469	$209	$36.52	$0.93	3
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,218	$238	$34.32	$0.87	1
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,215	$693	$58.67	$1.49	2
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,424	$425	$38.22	$1.04	-2
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$3,687	$308	$39.67	$1.08	2
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$4,756	$436	$51.56	$1.40	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$3,379	$209	$35.63	$0.97	3
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,748	$382	$41.02	$1.12	3
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,678	$334	$39.85	$1.08	2
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,798	$260	$40.30	$1.10	4
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$3,950	$406	$43.26	$1.18	4
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,159	$578	$56.97	$1.55	1
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,084	$602	$66.39	$1.81	-1
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$5,043	$608	$56.11	$1.53	2
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,000	$703	$56.64	$1.44	3
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,960	$644	$55.65	$1.41	3
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,011	$382	$33.70	$0.86	2
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,510	$375	$38.58	$0.98	5
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,590	$299	$38.62	$0.98	1
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,000	$698	$56.58	$1.44	3
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,400	$722	$50.86	$1.29	3
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,520	$644	$61.21	$1.67	2
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,530	$703	$61.90	$1.68	2
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,430	$573	$59.61	$1.62	3
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,175	$441	$45.84	$1.25	4
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$2,862	$308	$31.47	$0.86	3
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,110	$622	$56.92	$1.55	-2

[1]A 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.

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

[3]Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

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: 4/1/2014

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car[1]	Fuel surcharge per car[2]	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton[3]	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[3]	Percent change Y/Y[4]
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$6,360	$611	$71.23	$1.94	1
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,156	$742	$70.48	$1.92	-6
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$6,741	$717	$76.20	$2.07	-9
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$3,688	$280	$40.54	$1.10	3
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$7,974	$843	$90.09	$2.29	2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,656	$800	$86.40	$2.19	3
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$7,317	$749	$82.41	$2.09	1
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$5,880	$608	$66.29	$1.68	2
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$6,755	$728	$76.46	$1.94	1
	SD	Torreon, CU	$6,722	$670	$75.52	$1.92	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$7,868	$711	$87.66	$2.38	3
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$8,447	$814	$94.62	$2.57	3
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$8,855	$795	$98.60	$2.68	3
	KS	Torreon, CU	$6,864	$505	$75.28	$2.05	2
Sorghum	TX	Guadalajara, JA	$6,953	$520	$76.36	$1.94	6
	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,212	$726	$81.10	$2.06	2
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$6,650	$456	$72.60	$1.84	-3
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$5,368	$534	$60.30	$1.53	-2
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,243	$596	$69.88	$1.77	1

[1]Rates are based upon published tariff rates for high-capacity shuttle trains. Shuttle trains are available for qualified shipments of 75--110 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

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

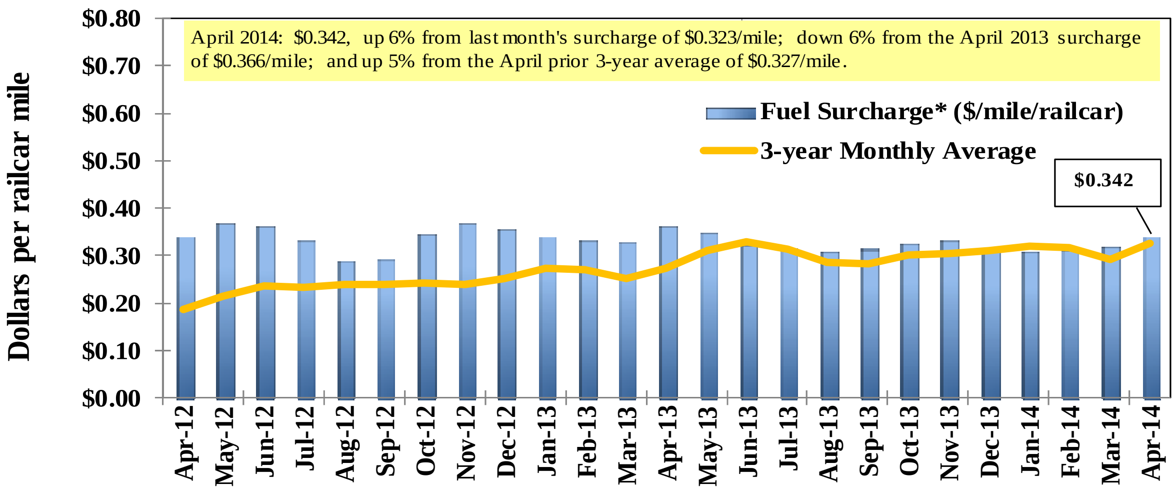
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

[4]Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

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

Figure 7

Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average[1]



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

* 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.

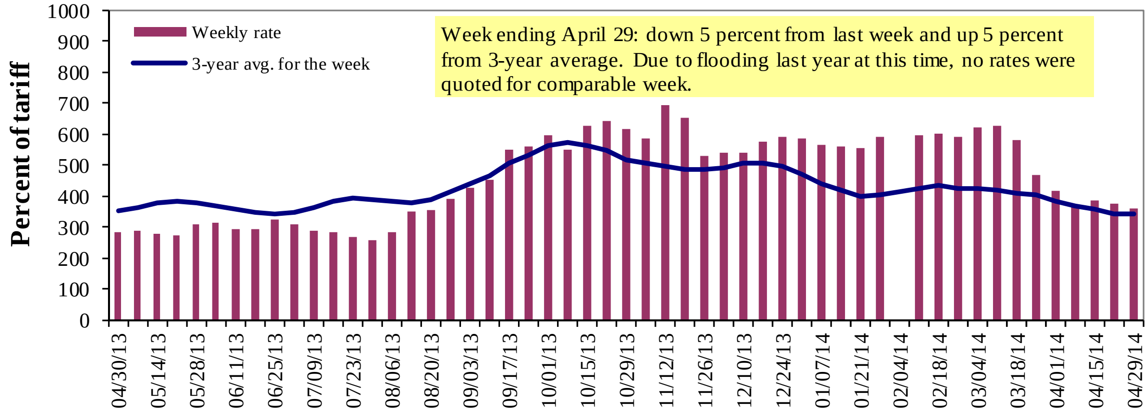
** BNSF strike price (diesel price when fuel surcharges begin) changed from $1.25/gal. to $2.50/gal starting March 1, 2011. As a result, the weighted average fuel surcharge for March 2011 was $0.227/mile instead of $0.331/mile.

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]



[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-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
Rate[1]	4/29/2014	463	375	360	243	273	273	207
	4/22/2014	475	402	377	238	282	282	208
$/ton	4/29/2014	28.66	19.95	16.70	9.70	12.80	11.03	6.50
	4/22/2014	29.40	21.39	17.49	9.50	13.23	11.39	6.53
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	9	20	n/a	11	42	42	15
	3-year avg. [2]	13	0	5	-5	4	4	18
Rate[1]	May	455	363	355	235	273	273	210
	July	453	360	355	245	290	290	240

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; Due to past flooding events, certain data not ava

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Calculating barge rate per ton:
(Index * 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 (see figure 9).

Figure 9

Benchmark tariff rates

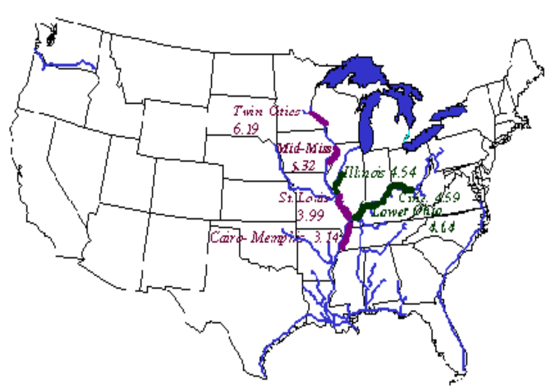
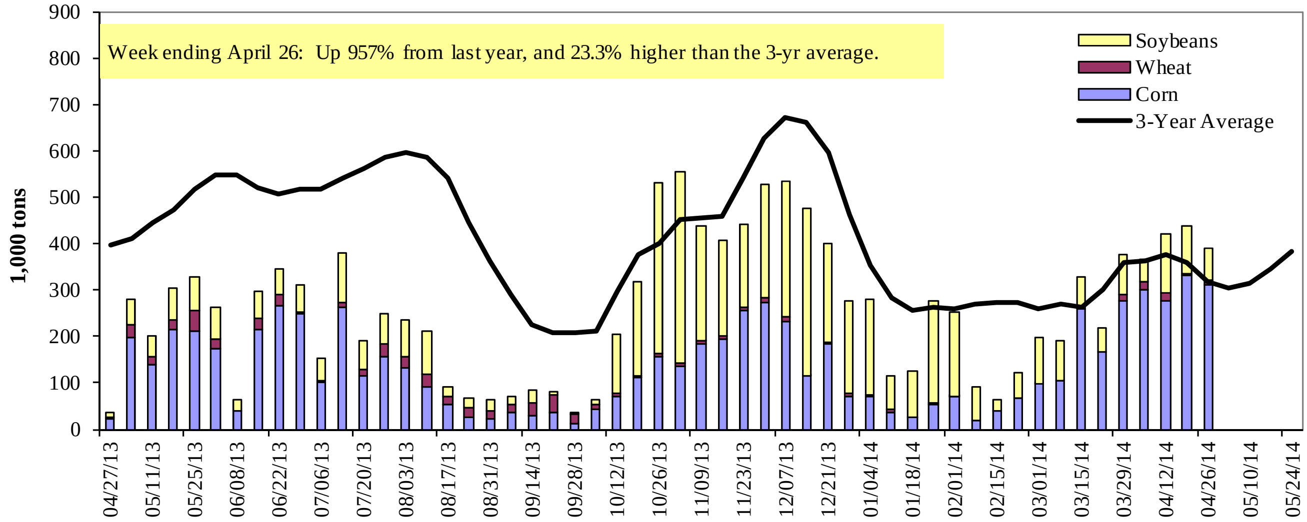


Figure 10

Barge Movements on the Mississippi River[1] (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)



[1] The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

Week ending 4/26/2014	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	57	0	14	0	71
Winfield, MO (L25)	120	0	51	0	171
Alton, IL (L26)	308	9	63	6	386
Granite City, IL (L27)	321	9	70	6	406
Illinois River (L8)	118	5	5	6	133
Ohio River (L52)	172	0	21	0	192
Arkansas River (L1)	4	18	3	0	25
Weekly total - 2014	497	27	93	6	624
Weekly total - 2013	42	43	34	0	118
2014 YTD[1]	6,056	580	3,885	66	10,587
2013 YTD	2,029	1,375	3,173	90	6,667
2014 as % of 2013 YTD	298	42	122	73	159
Last 4 weeks as % of 2013[2]	418	84	176	112	269
Total 2013	9,504	4,111	10,065	255	23,935

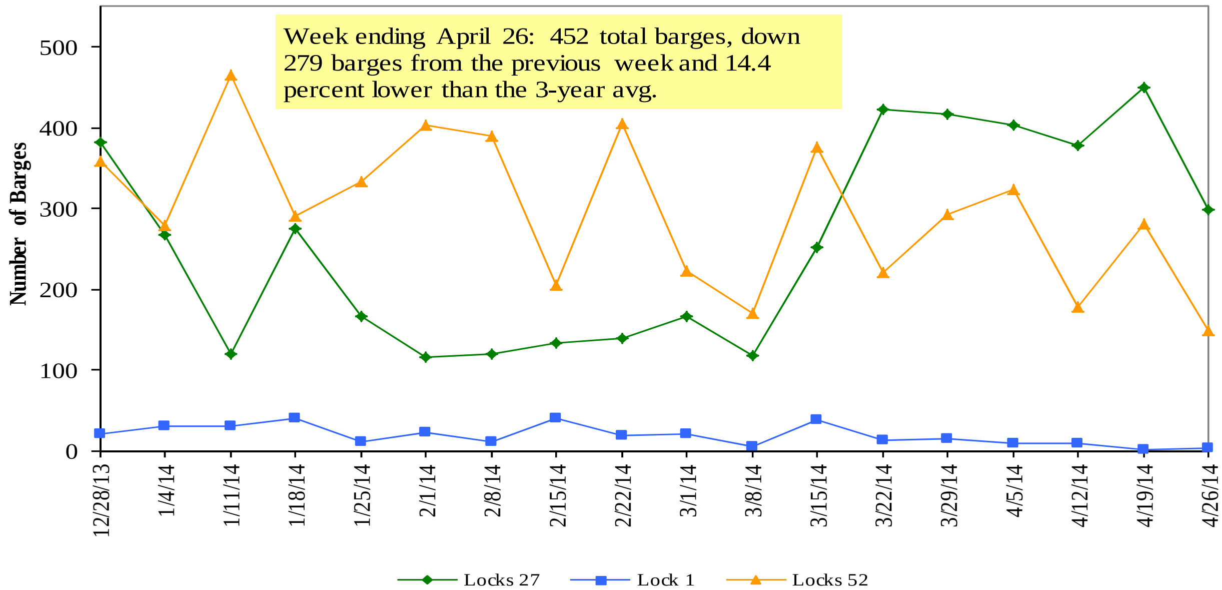
[1] Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

[2] As a percent of same period in 2013.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11

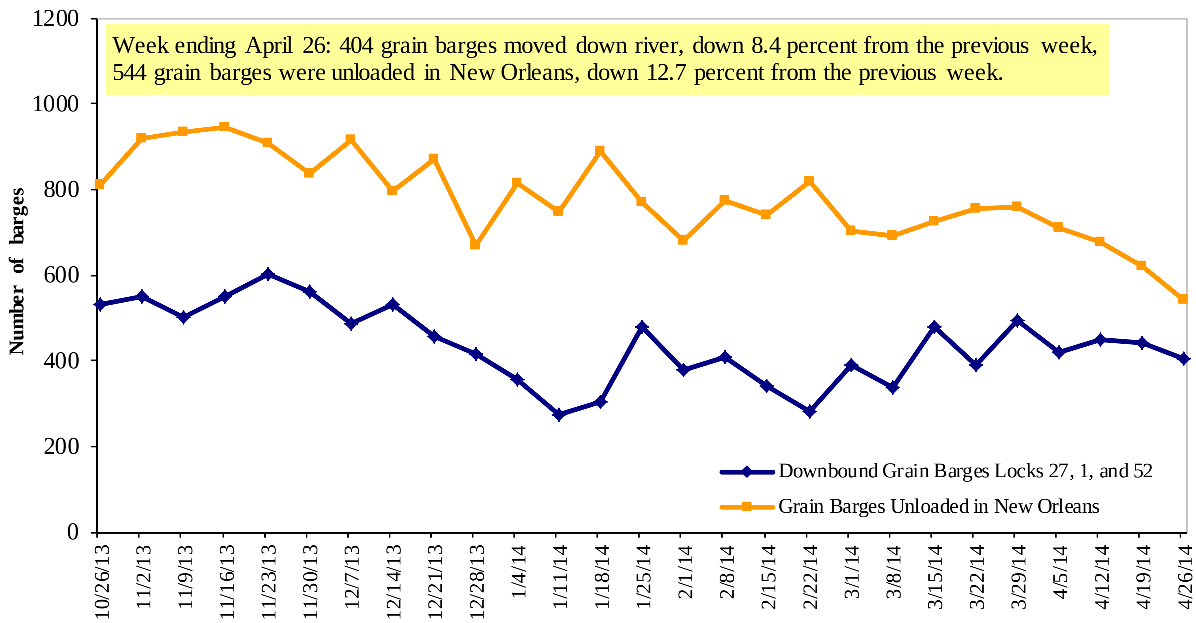
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



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 Prices[1], Week Ending 4/28/2013 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	4.065	-0.005	0.179
	New England	4.208	-0.004	0.215
	Central Atlantic	4.185	-0.006	0.251
	Lower Atlantic	3.949	-0.004	0.118
II	Midwest[2]	3.947	0.001	0.108
III	Gulf Coast[3]	3.824	0.004	0.067
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.982	0.006	0.172
V	West Coast	4.055	0.025	0.106
	West Coast less California	3.954	0.009	0.121
	California	4.140	0.038	0.093
Total	U.S.	3.975	0.004	0.124

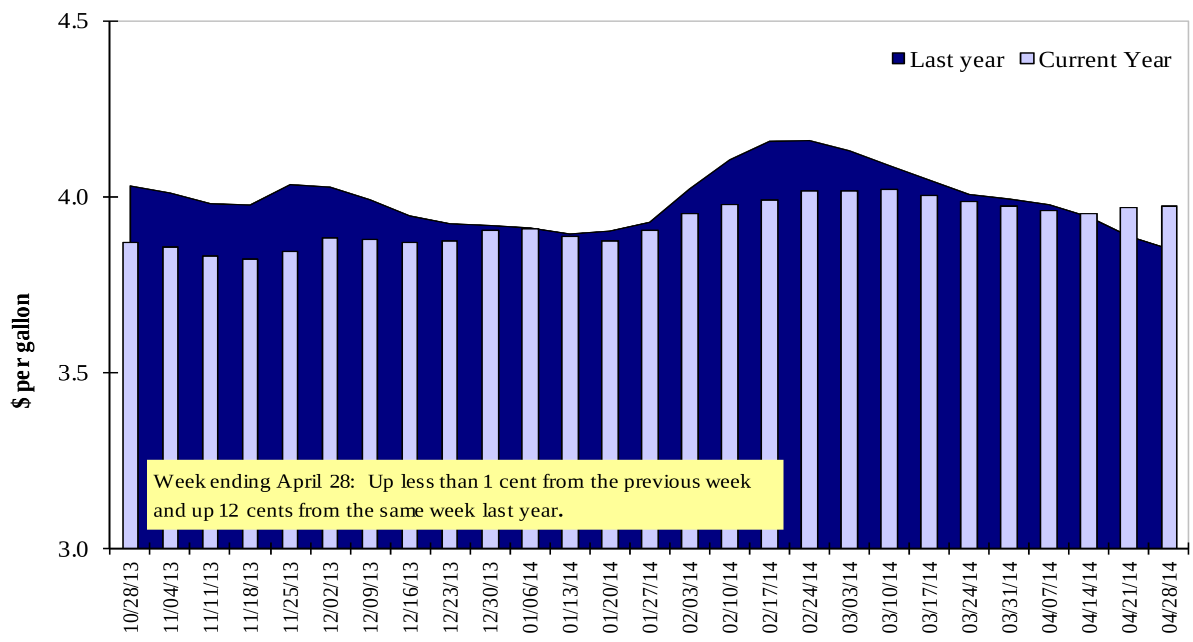
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[2]Same as North Central [3]Same 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 HRW	Wheat SRW	Wheat HRS	Wheat SWW	Wheat DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
4/17/2014	1,504	637	1,472	712	138	4,464	16,440	2,893	23,797
This week year ago	1,711	884	771	409	100	3,875	4,303	2,556	10,734
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2013/14 YTD	10,160	6,882	5,447	3,707	398	26,594	26,834	41,717	95,145
2012/13 YTD	8,340	4,331	5,155	4,162	447	22,435	12,118	33,843	68,396
YTD 2013/14 as % of 2012/13	122	159	106	89	89	119	221	123	139
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2012/13	95	84	185	211	138	124	409	131	240
2012/13 Total	10,019	5,039	5,825	4,619	591	26,093	17,980	36,220	80,293
2011/12 Total	9,904	4,319	6,312	5,601	491	26,627	37,900	36,727	101,254

[1] Current unshipped export sales to date

[2] Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year in 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 Importers[1] of U.S. Corn

Week ending 4/17/2014	Total Commitments[2] 2013/14 Current MY	Total Commitments[2] 2012/13 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2012/13
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	9,329	5,732	63	7,000
Mexico	9,371	3,807	146	4,370
China	3,551	2,474	44	2,450
Venezuela	808	605	34	1,158
Taiwan	1,499	449	234	512
Top 5 Importers	**24,558**	**13,067**	**88**	**15,490**
Total US corn export sales	**43,123**	**16,421**	**163**	**18,670**
% of Projected	97%	88%		
Change from prior week	556	315		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	57%	80%		83%
USDA forecast, April 2014	**44,529**	**18,601**	**139**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, April 2014	**127,000**	**118,059**	**8**	

(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 Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm (Carry-over plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 14

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

Week Ending 4/17/2014	Total Commitments[2] 2013/14 Current MY	2012/13 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2012/13
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	27,603	22,171	24	21,522
Mexico	3,016	2,253	34	2,565
Japan	1,709	1,570	9	1,751
Indonesia	1,979	1,286	54	1,682
Taiwan	1,101	1,049	5	1,120
Top 5 importers	**35,407**	**28,329**	**25**	**28,641**
Total US soybean export sales	**44,610**	**36,399**	**23**	**37,060**
% of Projected	104%	101%		
Change from prior week	1	(206)		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	79%	78%		
USDA forecast, April 2014	**43,052**	**35,967**	**20**	

(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 Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 15

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

Week Ending 4/17/2014	Total Commitments[2] 2013/14 Current MY	2012/13 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2012/13
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	2,994	3,632	(18)	3,544
Nigeria	2,655	2,903	(9)	3,002
Mexico	3,043	2,720	12	2,761
Philippines	2,035	1,833	11	1,965
Egypt	1,550	324	378	1,678
Korea	1,307	1,399	(7)	1,385
Taiwan	1,020	1,034	(1)	1,038
China	4,259	804	430	743
Brazil	4,067	477	752	527
Colombia	724	611	19	600
Top 10 importers	**23,655**	**15,736**	**50**	**17,243**
Total US wheat export sales	**31,057**	**26,310**	**18**	**26,348**
% of Projected	97%	96%		
Change from prior week	325	72		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	76%	60%		65%
USDA forecast, April 2014	**32,016**	**27,439**	**17**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 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 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 04/24/14	Previous Week[1]	Current Week as % of Previous	2014 YTD[1]	2013 YTD[1]	2014 YTD as % of 2013 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of 2013	Last 4-weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.	Total[1] 2013
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	357	356	100	4,184	4,268	98	115	113	11,585
Corn	202	337	60	2,390	1,195	200	531	168	2,973
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	4,468	3,683	121	70	55	9,090
Total	**558**	**693**	**81**	**11,042**	**9,146**	**121**	**148**	**113**	**23,647**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	115	51	224	1,550	3,078	50	61	72	9,711
Corn	717	1,054	68	11,064	3,581	309	382	232	14,828
Soybeans	143	41	345	9,417	6,636	142	187	81	21,462
Total	**975**	**1,147**	**85**	**22,031**	**13,295**	**166**	**232**	**159**	**46,002**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	151	92	165	2,263	2,256	100	71	67	9,039
Corn	30	11	267	215	72	300	n/a	67	255
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	255	122	208	n/a	0	908
Total	**181**	**103**	**176**	**2,733**	**2,450**	**112**	**76**	**67**	**10,203**
Interior									
Wheat	26	36	72	404	289	140	495	151	1,244
Corn	99	105	93	1,738	858	202	201	81	3,943
Soybeans	83	104	80	1,572	1,395	113	475	103	3,212
Total	**207**	**245**	**84**	**3,714**	**2,543**	**146**	**257**	**95**	**8,399**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	154	0	0	0	884
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0
Soybeans	26	0	n/a	26	4	690	n/a	0	699
Total	**26**	**0**	**n/a**	**26**	**158**	**16**	**0**	**0**	**1,583**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	53	297	18	117	43	645
Corn	50	53	94	209	2	n/a	n/a	1,106	242
Soybeans	6	10	61	956	653	146	320	261	1,652
Total	**56**	**63**	**89**	**1,218**	**952**	**128**	**495**	**250**	**2,540**
U.S. total from ports[2]									
Wheat	648	535	121	8,454	10,342	82	201	158	33,108
Corn	1,097	1,561	70	15,616	5,709	274	475	223	22,241
Soybeans	257	155	166	16,694	12,493	134	29	31	37,024
Total	**2,003**	**2,251**	**89**	**40,764**	**28,544**	**143**	**138**	**115**	**92,373**

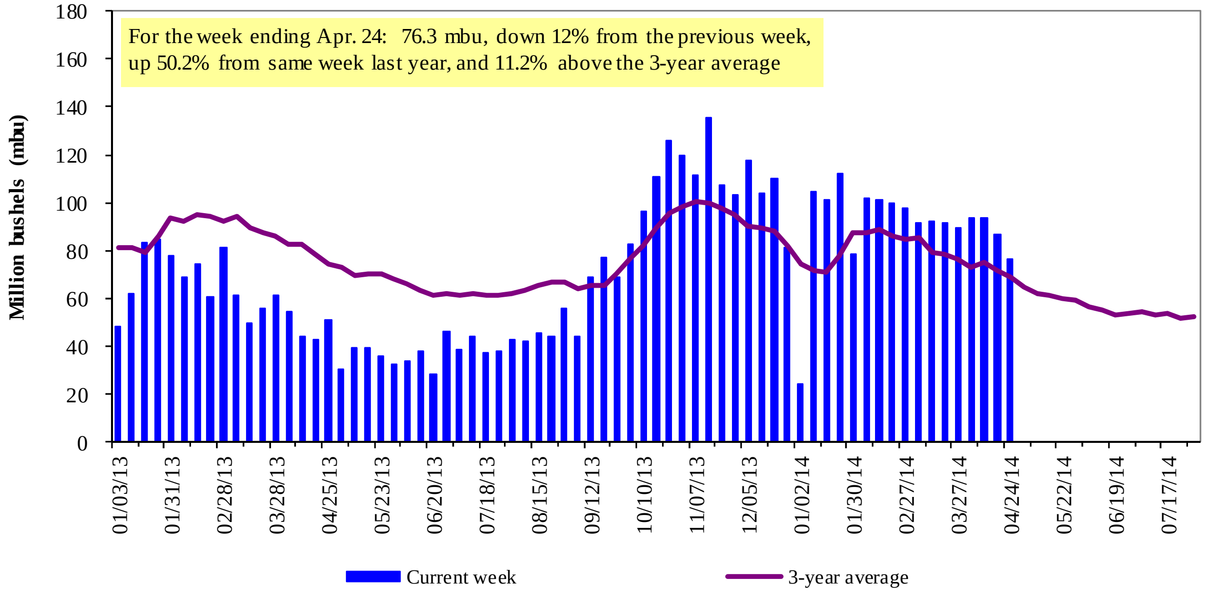
[1] Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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 61 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2013.

Figure 14

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

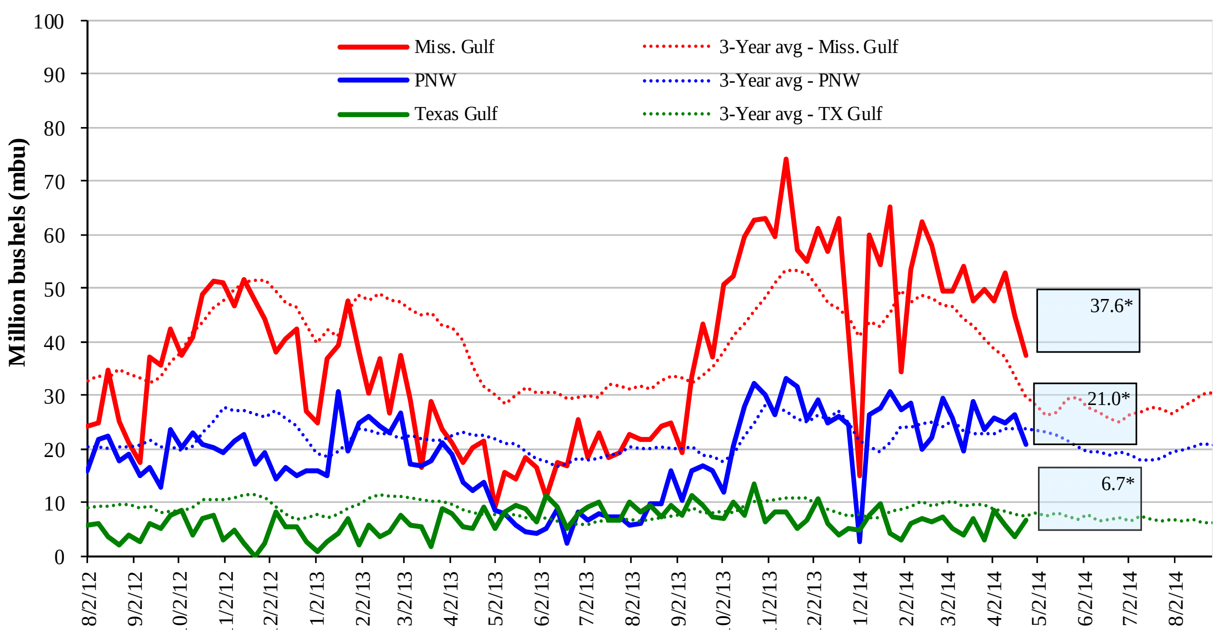


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average

Figure 15

U.S. Grain Inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW[1] (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



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

Apr. 24: % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	down 16	up 77	down 9	down 20
Last year (same week)	up 75	down 26	up 45	up 53
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.)	up 35	down 15	up 24	up 0.7

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

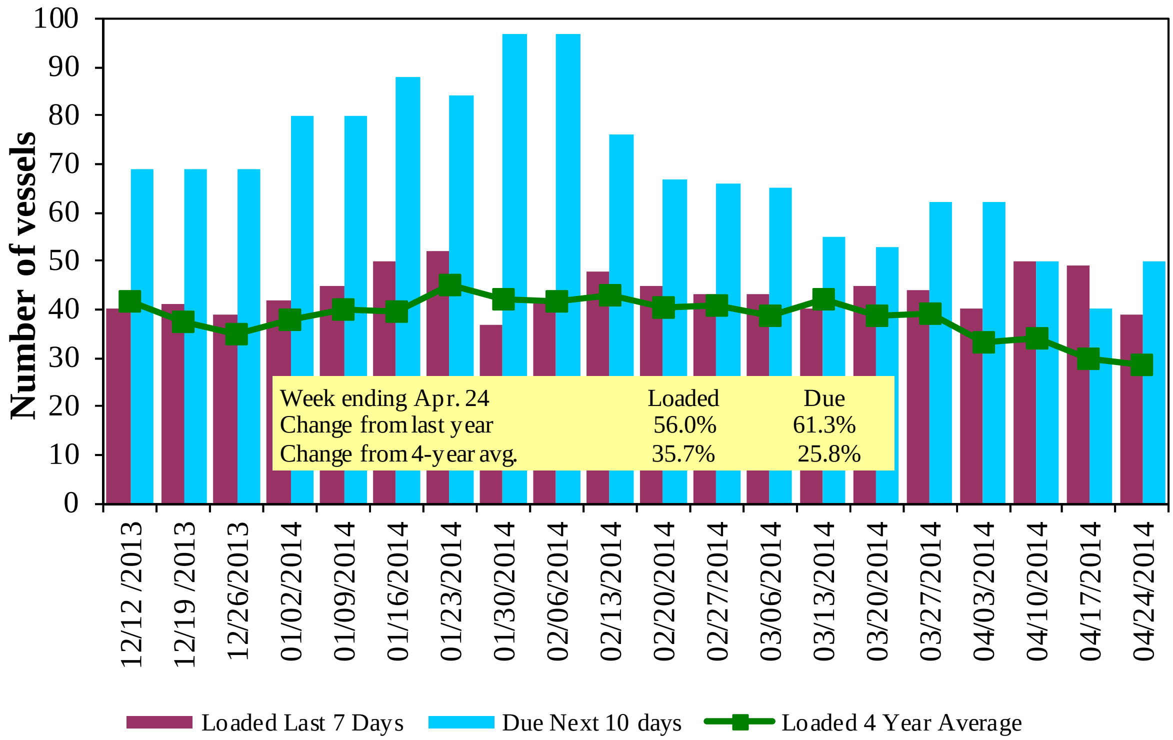
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
4/24/2014	42	39	50	16	n/a
4/17/2014	50	49	40	23	n/a
2013 range	(16..60)	(20..56)	(31..81)	(0..24)	n/a
2013 avg.	32	33	51	12	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

U.S. Gulf[1] Vessel Loading Activity

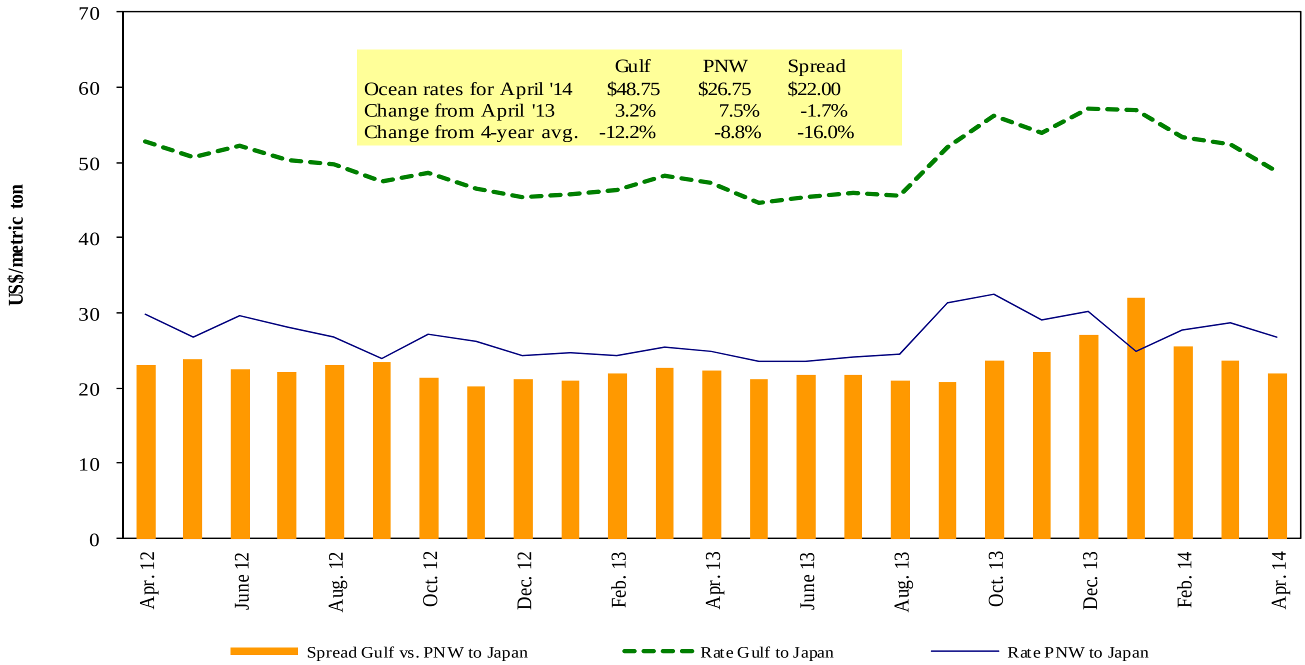


Source:Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

[1]U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.

Figure 17

Grain Vessel Rates, U.S. to Japan



Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean Freight Rates For Selected Shipments, Week Ending 4/26/2014

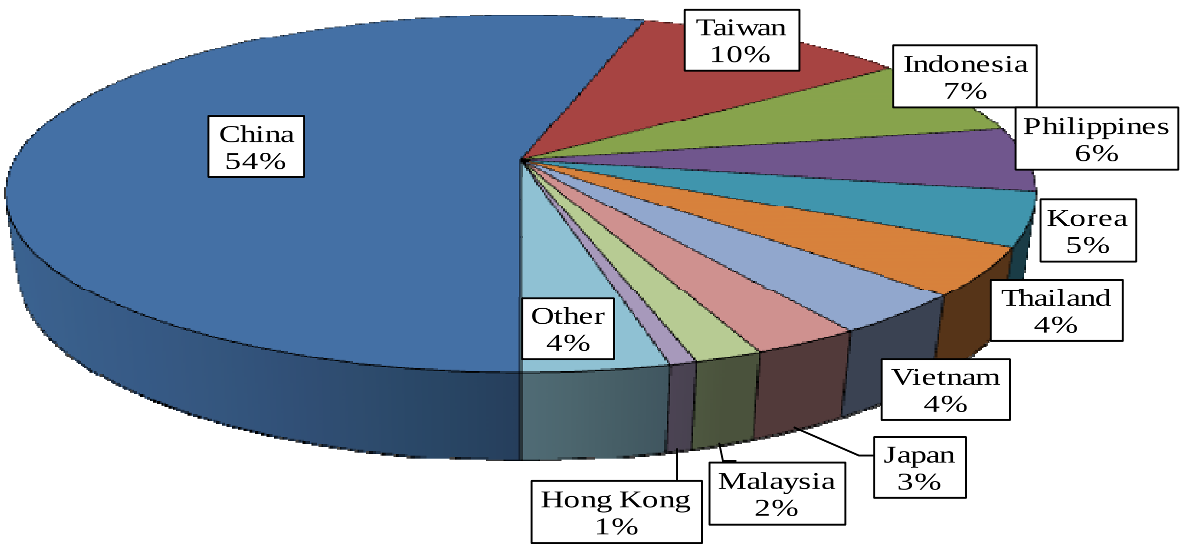
Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Tanzania[1]	Wheat	Mar 24/Apr 4	16,100	133.31
PNW	Bangladesh	Wheat	Apr 22/May 1	13,900	79.44
PNW	Bangladesh	Wheat	Apr 22/May 1	11,150	79.44
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 1/5	60,000	40.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 15/Aug 15	60,000	40.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 5/15	60,000	36.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 15/24	60,000	37.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 15/30	60,000	38.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 15/24	60,000	41.50
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 1/30	60,000	42.25
France	Algeria	Wheat	Apr 5/10	23,000	26.00
Hamburg	Iran	Wheat	May 16/28	60,000	38.00
River Plate	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 1/31	60,000	44.50
River Plate	China	Heavy Grain	May 1/10	60,000	41.75
River Plate	China	Heavy Grain	Apr 12/30	65,000	43.50
Ukraine	Saudi Arabia	Heavy Grain	Apr 15/25	60,000	21.85

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

In 2012, containers were used to transport 8 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, up 1 percentage point from 2011. Approximately 66 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2012 went to Asia, of which 11 percent were moved in containers. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—96 percent in 2012.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, December 2013

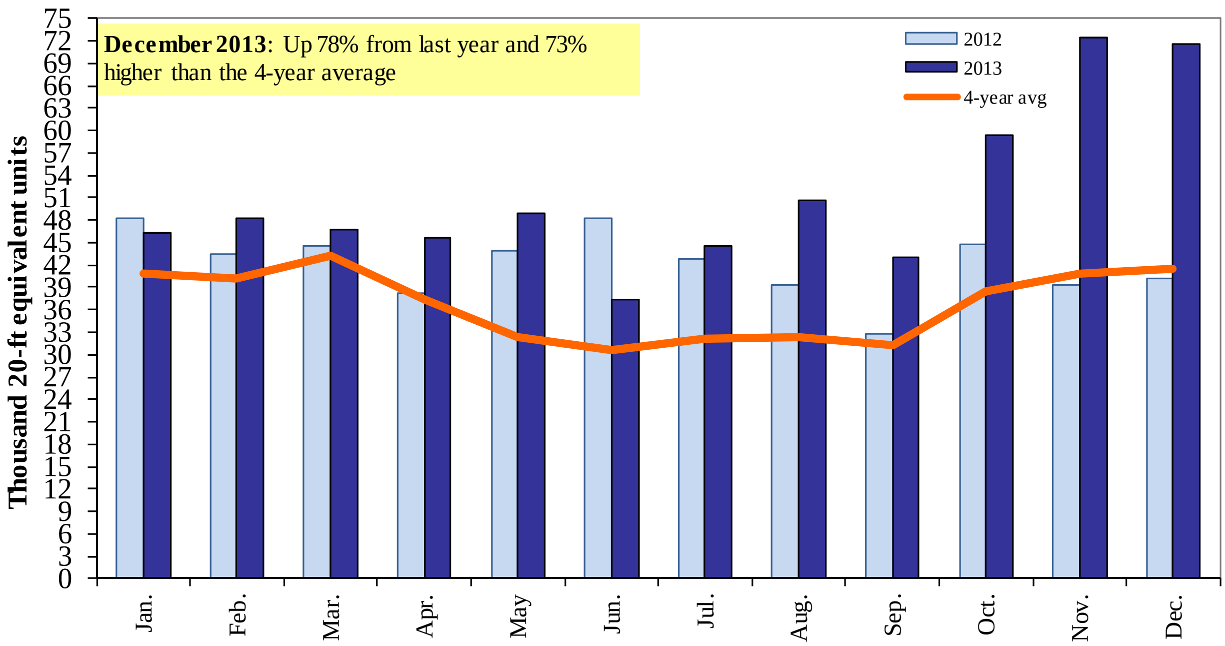


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

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.

Contacts and Links

Coordinators

Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Pierre Bahizi	pierre.bahizi@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 0992
Adam Sparger	adam.sparger@ams.usda.gov	(202) 205 - 8701

Weekly Highlight Editors

Marina Denicoff	marina.denicoff@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3244
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 295 - 7374
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430

Grain Transportation Indicators

Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119

Rail Transportation

Marvin Prater	marvin.prater@ams.usda.gov	(540) 361 - 1147
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Adam Sparger	adam.sparger@ams.usda.gov	(202) 205 - 8701

Barge Transportation

Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 295 - 7374

Truck Transportation

April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 295 - 7374

Grain Exports

Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Marina Denicoff	marina.denicoff@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3244

Ocean Transportation

Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo (Freight rates and vessels)	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor (Container movements)	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 295 - 7374

Subscription Information: Send relevant information to **GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov** for an electronic copy *(printed copies are also available upon request)*.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* May 1, 2014. Web: http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.05-01-2014