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

Contact Us

December 1, 2011

Contents

The next release is Dec. 8, 2011

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Hours of Service of Drivers Final Rule Update

On November 28, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) informed the U.S. District Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that "FMCSA expects to issue the final rule within the next 30 days." The Office of Management and Budget is reviewing the final rule to ensure proper consideration of alternatives and careful analysis of benefits and costs. Of concern to agriculture, the trucking industry, safety advocates, members of Congress and others is whether the final rule addresses their comments on FMCSA's December 29, 2010, notice of proposed rulemaking to reduce truck drivers' maximum hours of service and increase their required off-duty time. On November 30, the House Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight and Government Spending held a hearing on the proposed rule. The statutorily limited 100 air-mile radius agricultural exemption from the hours of service rule is not subject to this rulemaking.

November Ends with Increased Barge Movements

Barge movements have been strong for the week ending November 26. Shipments through the locking portions of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Arkansas rivers were over 1 million tons this week for the first time since early December 2010. Movements were up as barge operators are positioning equipment for the last trips in and out of the upper portions of the Mississippi River before the sections are closed to navigation during the winter season. Four hundred thirty-nine upbound empty barges passed Mississippi River Locks 27, a 37-week high. Last November, 379 empties passed Locks 27 per week, compared to this November's average of 290 per week. The average number of unloaded grain barges in November was 747 per week, compared to 711 per week last November.

Wheat and Soybean Inspections Rebound

For the week ending November 24, total inspections of wheat (.419 mmt) and soybeans (1.13 mmt) rebounded, increasing 12 and 7 percent, respectively, from the the previous week, despite a 3 percent drop in **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export. Shipments of wheat to Africa and Mexico increased as did soybean shipments to Japan and the Netherlands. Mississippi River and Texas Gulf inspections increased 9 and 90 percent, respectively, due mainly to more shipments of wheat from each region. However, grain inspections dropped 45 percent in the Pacific Northwest.

Snapshots by Sector

Rail

U.S. railroads originated 22,570 **carloads of grain** during the week ending November 19, up 4 percent from last week, down 12 percent from last year, and 6 percent lower than the 3-year average.

During the week ending November 24, average December non-shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers** were $16.50 below tariff, down $2 from last week and $31.50 higher than last year. Average shuttle rates were $306.50 below tariff, up $70.50 from last week and $185 higher than last year.

Barge

During the week ending November 26, **barge grain movements** totaled 1,089,488 tons, 23 percent higher than the previous week and 34 percent higher than the same period last year.

During the week ending November 26, 692 grain barges **moved down river**, up 22 percent from last week; 667 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 20.6 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

During the week ending November 24, 35 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, down 30 percent from last year. Fifty-eight vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 8 percent less than the same period last year.

During the week ending November 25, ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was $57 per metric ton (mt), 1 percent less than the previous week. The cost of shipping from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was $31 per mt—3 percent less than the previous week

Fuel

During the week ending November 28, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** decreased 5 cents to $3.96 per gallon—down 1 percent from the previous week but 25 percent higher than the same week last year.

Feature Article/Calendar

Higher Wheat Transportation Costs Continue During Third Quarter

Higher third quarter trucking rates, the result of increasing demand for moving grain by truck, caused total wheat transportation costs to continue to climb during the quarter. Increased quarter-to-quarter rail and ocean rates were also contributing factors. Transportation costs for shipping wheat from Kansas (KS) to Japan through the Pacific Northwest (PNW) increased 3 percent from the second quarter 2011, and the costs to ship from North Dakota (ND) to Japan via the PNW increased 2 percent from the same period. Compared to last year, the cost to ship through each route increased over 5 percent (see table). The costs of shipping from KS and ND to Japan through the U.S. Gulf increased about 2 percent from the second quarter, but were down slightly from last year (see table). Third quarter wheat transportation costs represented 23 to 29 percent of the landed costs, greater than the previous quarter but below last year.

Quarterly rate comparisons for shipping KS & ND wheat to Japan through the PNW

	KS					ND				
Mode	2010 3rd qtr	2011 2nd qtr	2011 3rd qtr	Year-to-Year change	Quarterly change	2010 3rd qtr	2011 2nd qtr	2011 3rd qtr	Year-to-Year change	Quarterly change
				%	%				%	%
Truck	9.74	11.34	12.62	29.57	11.29	9.74	11.34	12.62	29.57	11.29
Rail[1]	47.65	51.89	52.92	11.06	1.98	47.29	51.93	52.28	10.55	0.67
Ocean vessel	33.77	30.24	30.55	-9.54	1.03	33.77	30.24	30.55	-9.54	1.03
Transportation Costs	91.16	93.47	96.09	5.41	2.80	90.80	93.51	95.45	5.12	2.07
Farm Value[2]	198.91	288.68	272.64	37.07	-5.56	189.72	345.88	318.08	67.66	-8.04
Total Landed Cost	290.07	382.15	368.73	27.12	-3.51	280.52	439.39	413.53	47.42	-5.89
Transport % of landed cost	31.43	24.46	26.06			32.37	21.28	23.08		

Quarterly rate comparisons for shipping KS & ND wheat to Japan through the Gulf

	KS					ND				
Mode	2010 3rd qtr	2011 2nd qtr	2011 3rd qtr	Year-to-Year change	Quarterly change	2010 3rd qtr	2011 2nd qtr	2011 3rd qtr	Year-to-Year change	Quarterly change
				%	%				%	%
Truck	9.74	11.34	12.62	29.57	11.29	9.74	11.34	12.62	29.57	11.29
Rail[1]	31.44	33.58	33.78	7.44	0.60	56.65	61.54	62.23	9.85	1.12
Ocean vessel	61.45	52.97	52.92	-13.88	-0.09	61.45	52.97	52.92	-13.88	-0.09
Transportation Costs	102.63	97.89	99.32	-3.23	1.46	127.84	125.85	127.77	-0.05	1.53
Farm Value[2]	198.91	288.68	272.64	37.07	-5.56	189.72	345.88	318.08	67.66	-8.04
Total Landed Cost	301.54	386.57	371.96	23.35	-3.78	317.56	471.73	445.85	40.40	-5.49
Transport % of landed cost	34.04	25.32	26.70			40.26	26.68	28.66		

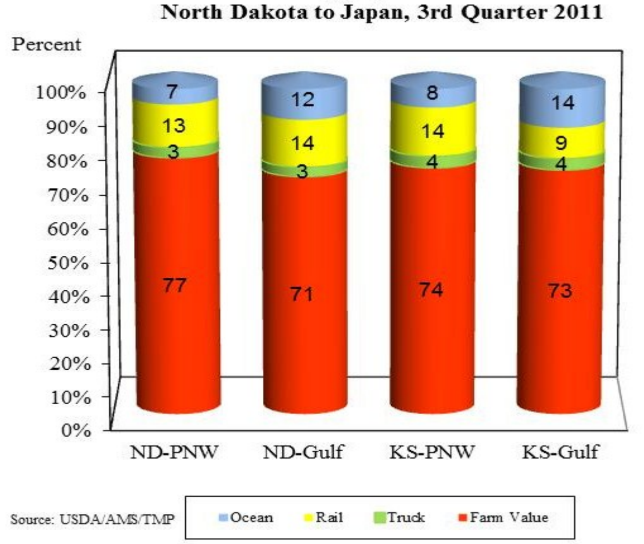
Source: USDA/AMS/TMP

[1] Rail tariff rates include fuel surchrages and revisions for heavy axle railcars and shuttle trains.

[2] Source: USDA/NASS, wheat prices for North Dakota (mainly HRS) and Kansas (mainly HRW)

The total landed cost (farm value plus transportation costs) for shipping wheat to Japan ranged from $369 to $446 per mt, below the previous quarter but well above last year (see table). Total landed costs from quarter to quarter dropped because of the decrease in farm values for wheat. Farm values, however, continued to represent a significant share of the total landed cost during the third quarter. Third quarter farm values for wheat produced in KS accounted for 74 and 73 percent of total landed cost in PNW and the Gulf, respectively (see figure). ND wheat farm values accounted for 77 and 71 percent of the total landed cost during the third quarter. U.S. wheat farm values had been increasing since the third quarter 2010. Year-to-year landed costs increased 27 and 23 percent for KS, and ND costs increased 47 and 40 percent from last year because of higher farm values in addition to higher truck and rail rates for shipping wheat (see table).

Landed costs for shipping wheat from Kansas and North Dakota to Japan, 3rd Quarter 2011



Ocean rates for wheat shipped from the PNW to Japan increased just over 1 percent from the second quarter but dropped 10 percent from last year due to the slowdown in grain shipping (**GTR, dated 11/10/11**). Ocean rates for wheat shipped from the Gulf to Japan decreased slightly from the second quarter, and dropped 14 percent from last year due primarily to excess vessel supply and the slowdown in shipping of U.S. grain.

Third quarter rail rates were up despite decreased demand for rail service during this period. Rail rates from KS and ND to the PNW during the third quarter increased about 2 and 1 percent from the previous quarter and 11 percent from last year. Rail rates from each State to the Gulf also increased 1 percent from the previous quarter, but KS and ND rates increased 7 and 10 percent year-to-year (see table). The cost of moving wheat from both States by truck to rail-served grain elevators increased over 11 percent due to relatively higher diesel prices and increased demand for trucking. Truck rates for moving grain are currently at the highest level on record since 2004.

According to the Foreign Agricultural Service, third quarter wheat exports to Japan totaled .893 million metric tons, up 6 percent from last year at this time, and represent about 16 percent of total U.S. wheat exports. For the same period, total U.S. wheat exports reached 7.70 million metric tons, 10 percent below last year. For the 2011/12 marketing year, year-to-date shipped export sales of all wheat are down 5 percent from the past year (**Table 12**). *Johnny.Hill@ams.usda.gov*

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

Week ending	Truck	Rail[2]	Barge	Ocean Gulf	Ocean Pacific
11/30/11	266	79	225	255	220
11/23/11	269	81	235	257	227

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

[2]The rail indicator is not an index. It is the difference between the nearby secondary rail market bid for this week and the average bid for year 2000 (+) 100.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2

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

Commodity	Origin--Destination	11/25/20111	11/18/20111
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.72	-0.70
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.79	-0.77
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.16	-1.13
HRW	KS--Gulf	n/a	-1.42
HRS	ND--Portland	n/a	-1.62

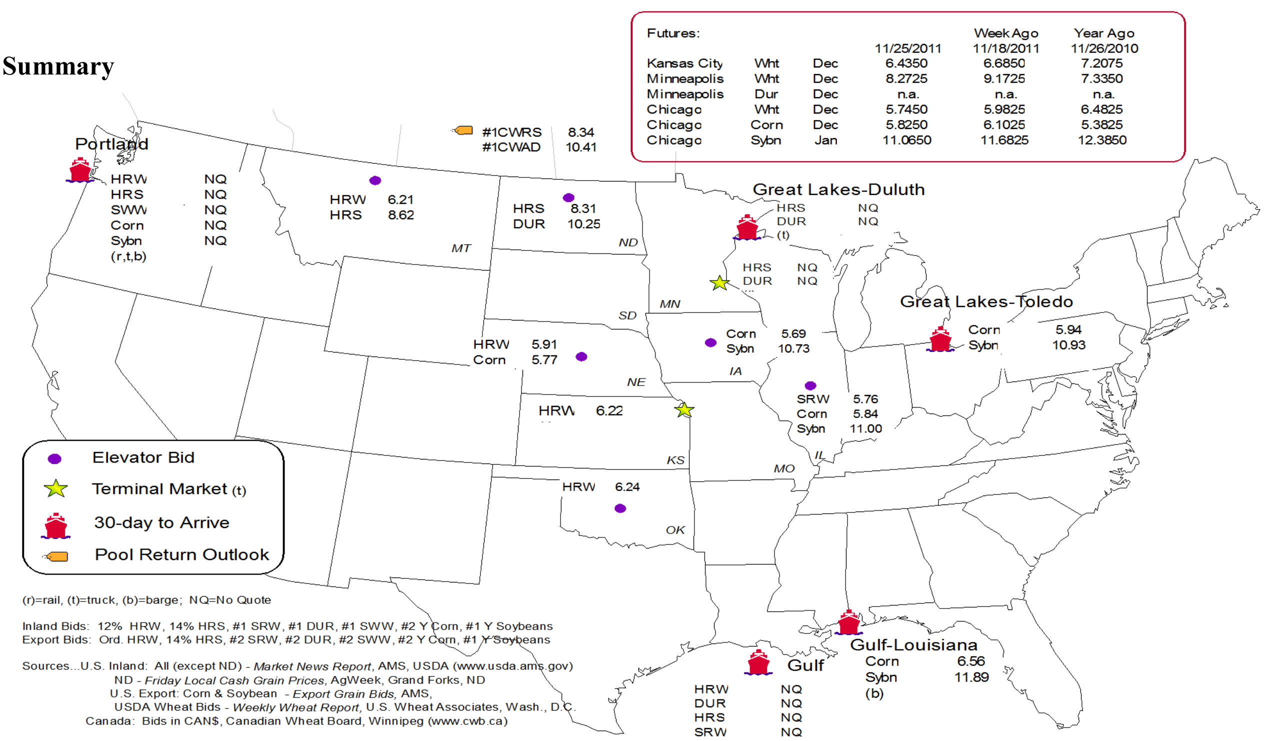
Note: nq = no quote

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	Cross-Border Mexico	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total
11/23/2011[p]	405	648	862	2,824	693	5,432
11/16/2011[r]	76	639	1,298	3,122	732	5,867
2011 YTD	26,945	73,788	44,358	160,895	21,576	327,562
2010 YTD	27,643	74,380	39,604	158,500	29,021	329,148
2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	97	99	112	102	74	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[2]	24	18	144	77	58	58
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	25	18	120	73	64	56
Total 2010	33,971	83,492	42,794	177,896	32,780	370,933
Total 2009	33,423	57,646	36,738	175,965	30,328	334,100

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2010 and prior 4-year average.

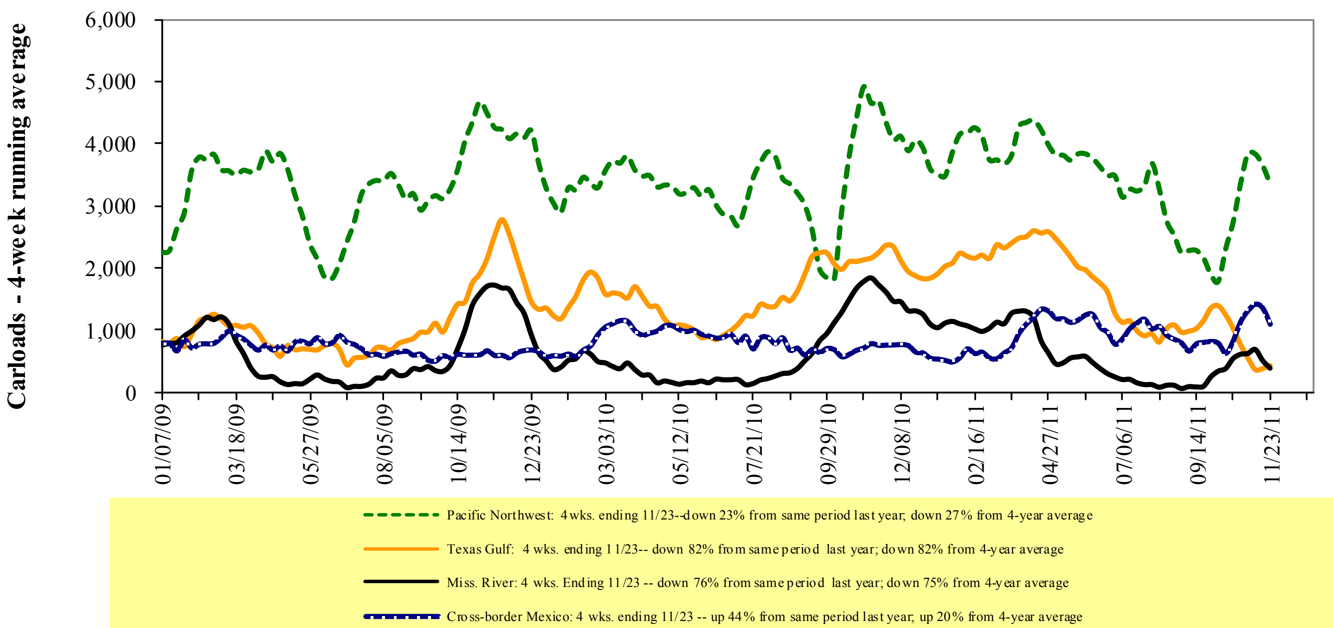
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 35 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)

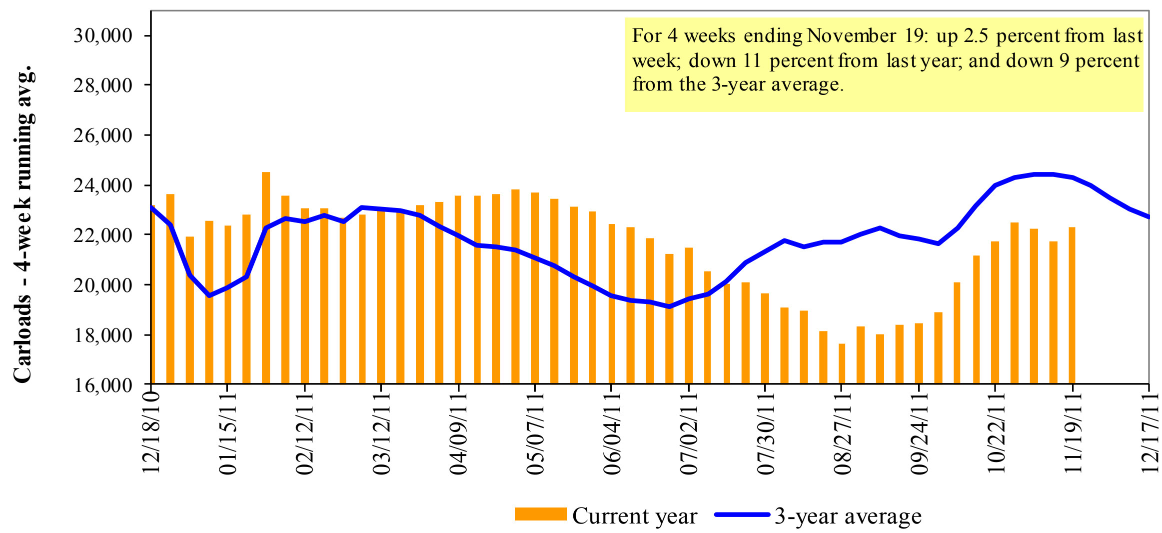
Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
11/19/11	2,365	3,585	10,855	648	5,117	22,570	3,681	6,769
This week last year	2,086	3,753	12,403	736	6,673	25,651	4,243	5,568
2011 YTD	84,944	134,522	482,463	32,288	263,353	997,570	177,284	237,390
2010 YTD	98,601	141,480	483,636	32,224	261,100	1,017,041	179,957	238,009
2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	86	95	100	100	101	98	99	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[1]	105	93	90	100	77	89	94	115
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.[1]	98	94	96	78	81	91	91	105
Total 2010	111,935	159,836	546,901	35,807	295,361	1,149,840	203,038	265,835

[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 11/24/2011	Delivery period							
	Dec-11	Dec-10	Jan-12	Jan-11	Feb-12	Feb-11	Mar-12	Mar-11
BNSF[3]								
COT grain units	no bids	no bids	0	1	0	no bids	0	0
COT grain single-car[5]	0 . . 5	0	0	5	0	5	no bids	no bids
UP[4]								
GCAS/Region 1	no bids	no bids	no bids	no bids	no offer	1	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no bids	no bids	no bids	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.

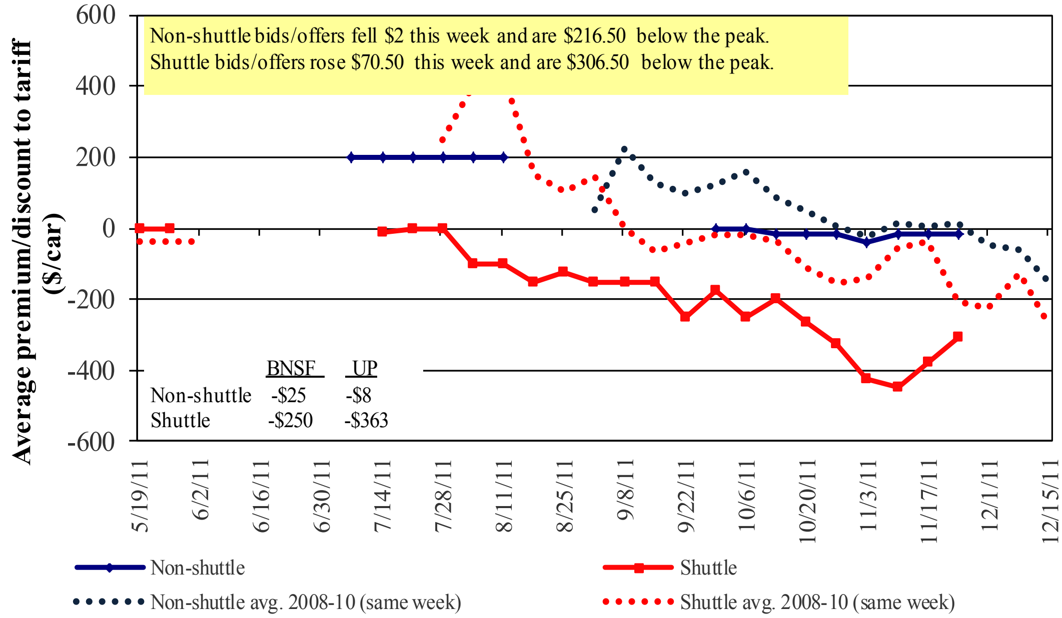
[5]Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

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 December 2011, Secondary Market

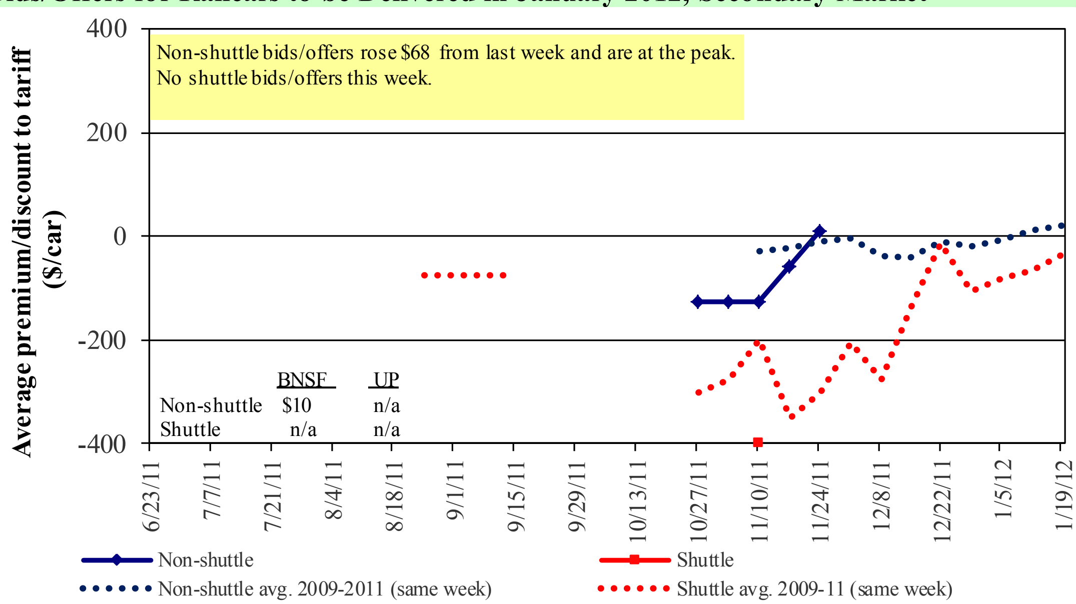


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in January 2012, Secondary Market

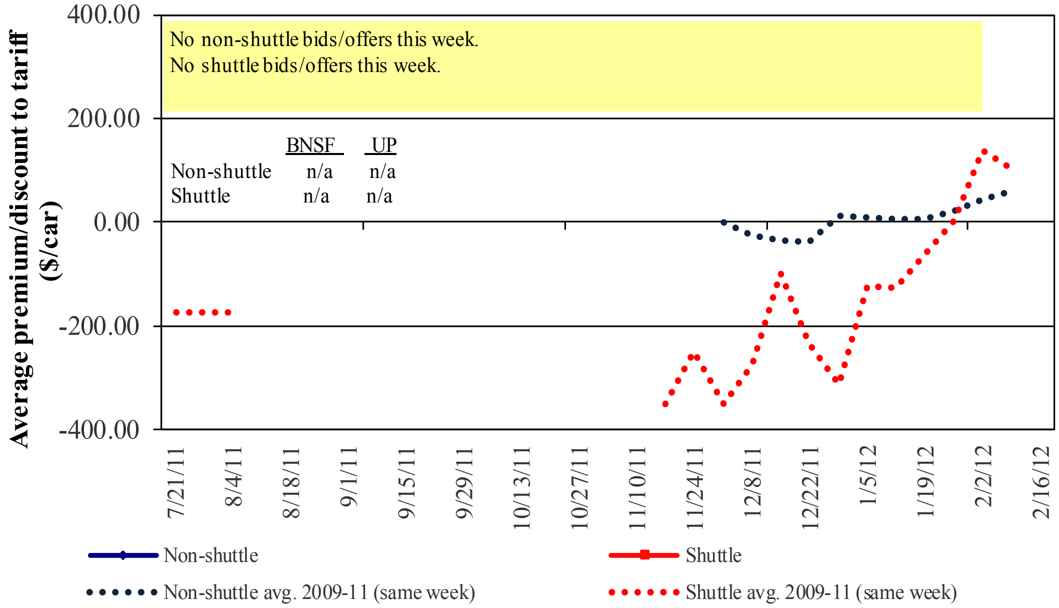


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in February 2012, 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					
11/24/2011	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	(25)	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(4)	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	33	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(8)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	30	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle[2]						
BNSF-GF	(250)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	29	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	233	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	(363)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	112	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2010	137	n/a	n/a	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 Atwood/ConAgra, Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Table 7

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

Effective date: 11/7/2011	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	$2,992	$177	$31.47	$0.86	11
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$3,097	$101	$31.76	$0.86	19
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$5,710	$520	$61.87	$1.68	9
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$3,492	$312	$37.77	$1.03	11
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,410	$427	$57.96	$1.58	6
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,760	$341	$40.73	$1.11	11
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$3,959	$475	$44.03	$1.20	12
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,062	$352	$33.90	$0.92	14
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$3,942	$398	$43.10	$1.17	9
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$1,934	$75	$19.95	$0.54	7
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$3,381	$299	$36.54	$0.99	10
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$2,833	$192	$30.04	$0.82	6
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,074	$219	$32.70	$0.89	8
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$4,985	$638	$55.84	$1.52	20
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,349	$387	$37.10	$1.01	7
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$3,057	$283	$33.17	$0.90	9
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$4,013	$401	$43.83	$1.19	9
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$2,749	$192	$29.20	$0.79	8
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,406	$352	$37.32	$1.02	13
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,239	$299	$35.14	$0.96	9
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,144	$233	$33.53	$0.91	7
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$3,645	$374	$39.91	$1.09	9
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$4,702	$517	$51.83	$1.41	9
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,745	$538	$62.40	$1.70	10
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$4,727	$560	$52.50	$1.43	11
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$4,800	$629	$53.92	$1.47	13
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,760	$576	$52.99	$1.44	13
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$2,877	$352	$32.07	$0.87	13
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,310	$336	$36.21	$0.99	10
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,430	$275	$36.80	$1.00	7
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$4,800	$624	$53.87	$1.47	13
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,200	$646	$48.12	$1.31	13
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,040	$576	$55.77	$1.52	11
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,030	$629	$56.20	$1.53	12
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$4,930	$512	$54.05	$1.47	11
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$3,710	$406	$40.87	$1.11	11
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$2,672	$283	$29.34	$0.80	10
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$4,520	$573	$50.58	$1.38	8

[1]A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of 90-110 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: 11/7/2011 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	$7,741	$547	$84.68	$2.30	12
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,804	$573	$75.37	$2.05	12
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,411	$848	$84.39	$2.29	10
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$3,753	$233	$40.73	$1.11	11
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$7,699	$860	$87.45	$2.22	10
	SD	Penjamo, GJ	$7,776	$715	$86.76	$2.20	14
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$7,048	$739	$79.57	$2.02	15
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$5,650	$544	$63.28	$1.61	13
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$6,227	$721	$70.99	$1.80	17
	SD	Torreon, CU	$6,522	$599	$72.76	$1.85	12
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$6,986	$753	$79.07	$2.15	14
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$7,904	$860	$89.55	$2.43	17
	IA	El Castillo, JA[5]	$8,255	$711	$91.61	$2.49	18
	KS	Torreon, CU	$6,396	$586	$71.34	$1.94	18
Sorghum	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$5,885	$543	$65.68	$1.67	19
	TX	Guadalajara, JA	$6,653	$465	$72.73	$1.85	14
	NE	Penjamo, GJ	$7,446	$805	$84.30	$2.14	15
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$6,353	$508	$70.10	$1.78	14
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$5,103	$483	$57.07	$1.45	16
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,068	$622	$68.36	$1.73	12

[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

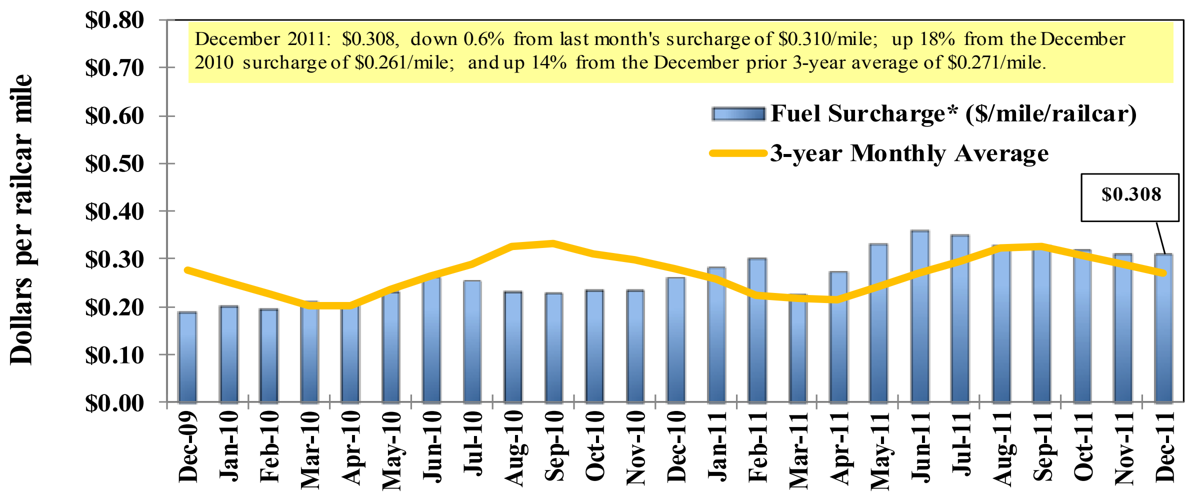
[4]Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surchage

[5] Beginning 12/6/10, El Castillo, JA replaced Penjamo, GJ as the destination

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.

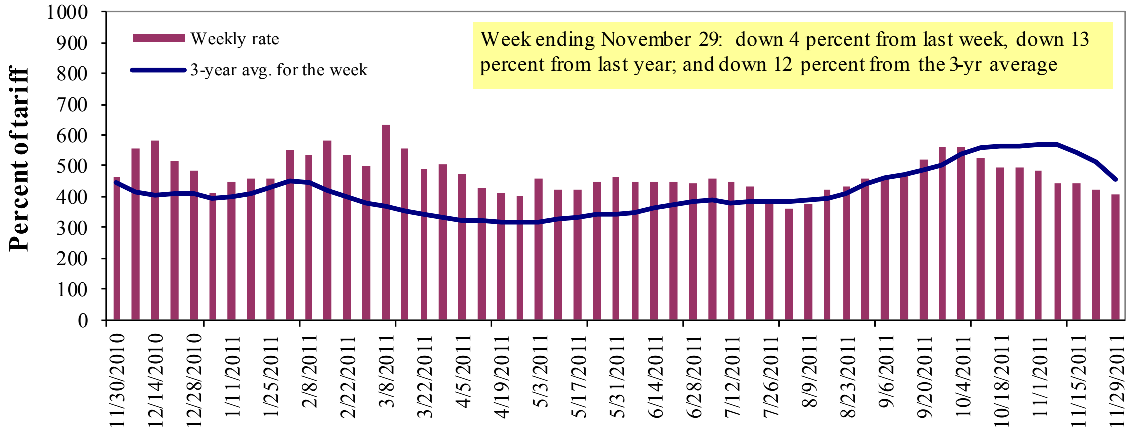
** BNSF strike price (diesel price when fuel surcharges begin) changed from $1.25/gal. to $2.50/gal starting March 1, 2011. As a result, the weighted average fuel surcharge for March 2011 was $0.227/mile instead of $0.331/mile.

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]	11/29/2011	--	--	405	292	387	387	268
	11/22/2011	--	423	423	312	418	418	275
$/ton	11/29/2011	--	--	18.79	11.65	18.15	15.63	8.42
	11/22/2011	--	22.50	19.63	12.45	19.60	16.89	8.64
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	--	--	-13	-20	-18	-18	-21
	3-year avg. [2]	--	--	-12	-26	-10	-9	-26
Rate[1]	December	--	--	400	295	385	385	270
	February	--	--	413	302	378	378	278

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds

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

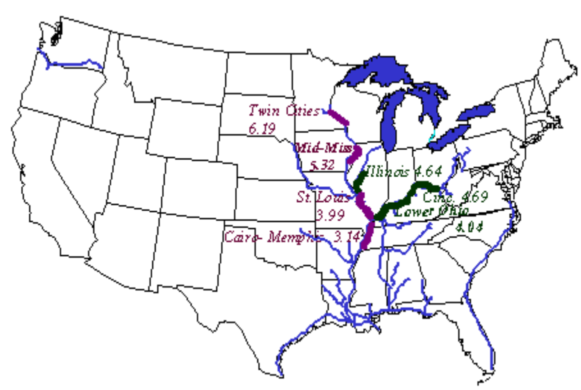
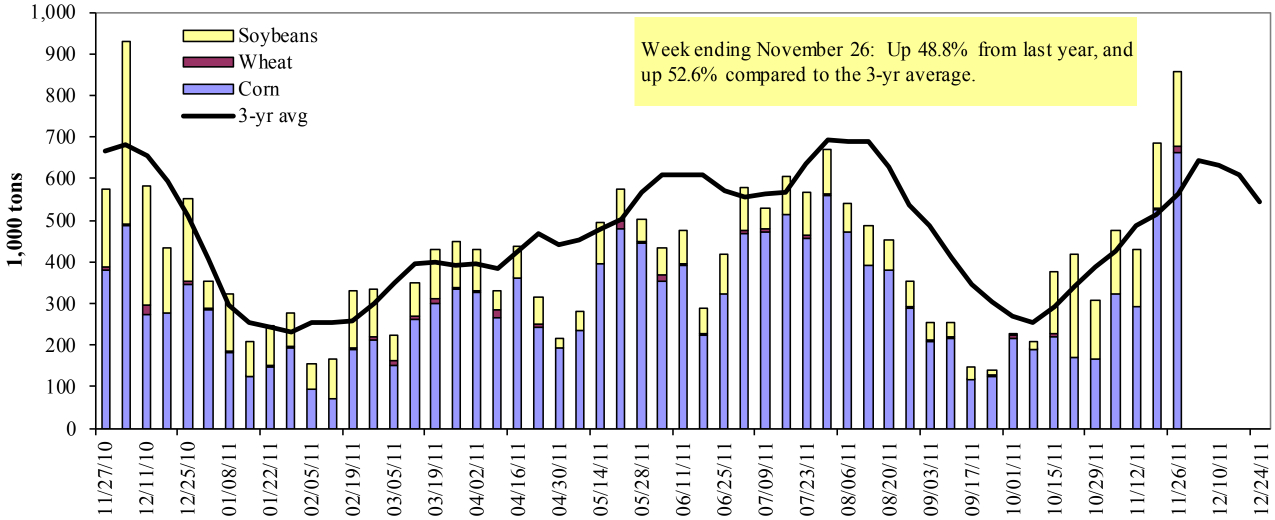


Figure 10

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 (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrimi/omni/webrpts/default.asp)

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

Week ending 11/26/2011	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	188	11	56	33	288
Winfield, MO (L25)	337	10	127	21	495
Alton, IL (L26)	531	16	153	21	721
Granite City, IL (L27)	662	16	179	24	881
Illinois River (L8)	181	3	26	0	210
Ohio River (L52)	41	4	149	0	193
Arkansas River (L1)	0	6	7	3	15
Weekly total - 2011	702	25	335	27	1,089
Weekly total - 2010	442	15	351	3	811
2011 YTD[1]	17,472	1,355	7,177	386	26,390
2010 YTD	20,817	1,110	8,507	434	30,869
2011 as % of 2010 YTD	84	122	84	89	85
Last 4 weeks as % of 2010[2]	127	205	102	85	117
Total 2010	22,768	1,220	10,373	481	34,841

[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.

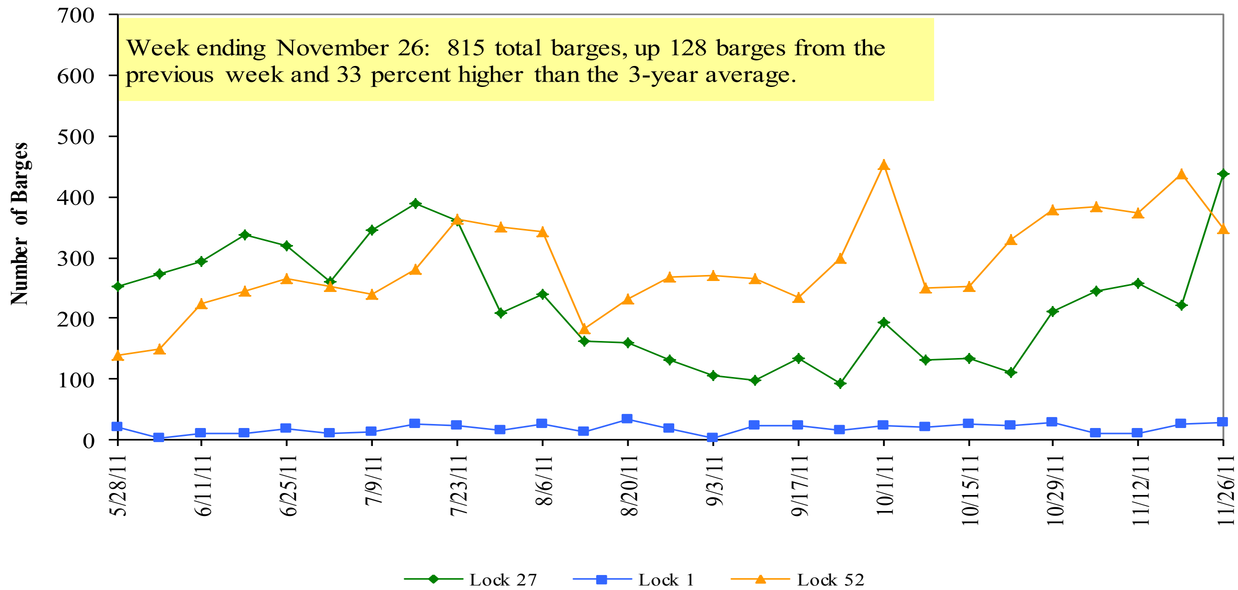
[2] As a percent of same period in 2010.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrimi/omni/webrpts/default.asp)

Figure 11

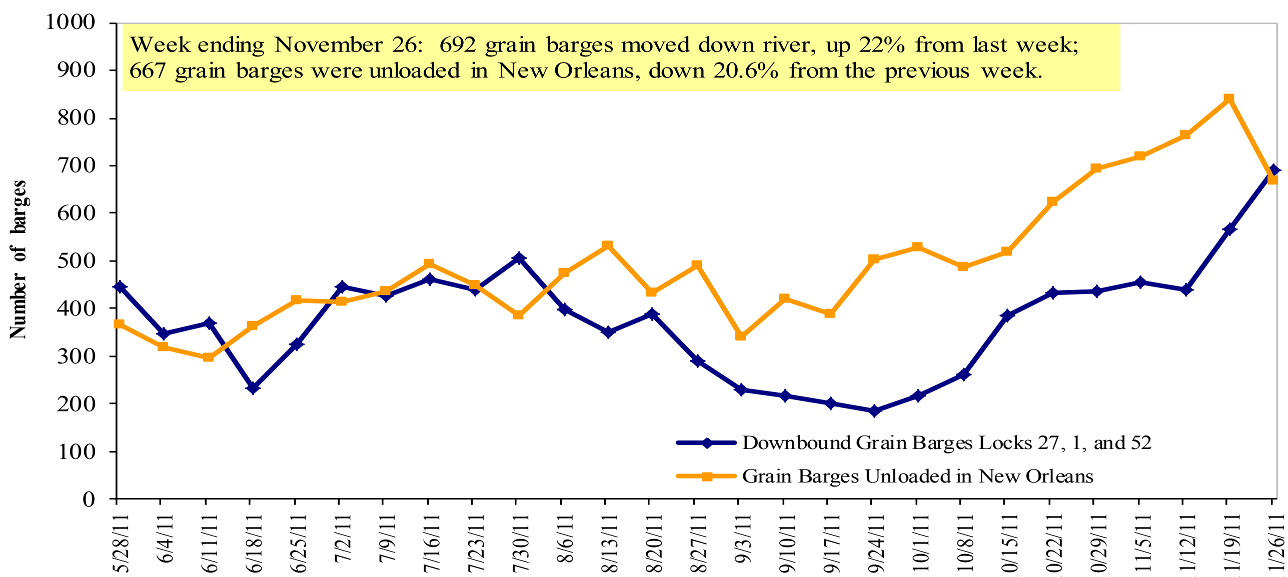
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



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 11/28/2011 (US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	3.953	-0.031	0.787
	New England	4.045	-0.011	0.808
	Central Atlantic	4.057	-0.043	0.769
	Lower Atlantic	3.882	-0.036	0.774
II	Midwest[2]	3.949	-0.061	0.805
III	Gulf Coast[3]	3.859	-0.044	0.781
IV	Rocky Mountain	4.094	-0.050	0.822
V	West Coast	4.142	-0.049	0.842
	California	4.224	-0.047	0.896
Total	U.S.	3.964	-0.046	0.802

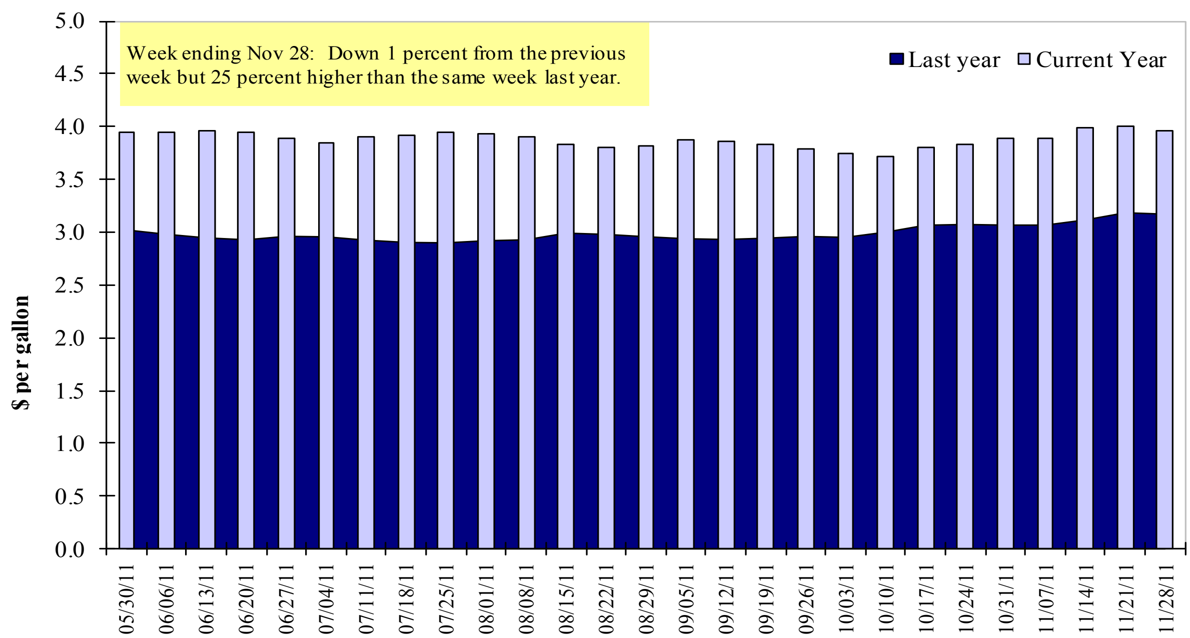
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[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)

	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
Week ending	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances [1]									
11/17/2011	1,461	722	1,184	986	65	4,419	13,643	11,809	29,871
This week year ago	3,660	694	2,772	1,344	195	8,665	12,416	17,885	38,966
Cumulative exports-marketing year [2]									
2011/12 YTD	5,302	1,744	3,339	2,343	271	12,999	8,219	8,985	30,203
2010/11 YTD	6,562	934	3,654	2,198	526	13,873	9,695	13,537	37,105
YTD 2011/12 as % of 2010/11	81	187	91	107	52	94	85	66	81
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2010/11	38	102	42	69	31	49	117	69	80
2010/11 Total	15,837	2,828	8,623	4,717	979	32,984	44,569	39,753	117,306
2009/10 Total	8,458	2,733	5,329	3,897	983	21,400	47,700	39,285	108,385

[1] Current unshipped export sales to date

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

Week ending 11/17/11	**Total Commitments[2]**		**% change**	**Exports[3]**
	2011/12	**2010/11**	**current MY**	
	Current MY	**Last MY**	**from last MY**	**2010/11**
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	5,118	6,453	(21)	14,279
Mexico	4,210	3,159	33	7,019
Korea	2,067	2,609	(21)	6,104
Egypt	328	1,538	(79)	3,302
Taiwan	886	940	(6)	2,393
Top 5 importers	**12,608**	**14,699**	**(14)**	**33,096**
Total US corn export sales	**21,862**	**22,110**	**(1)**	**46,610**
% of Projected	54%	47%		
Change from Last Week	312	823		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	58%	66%		
USDA forecast, November 2011	**40,712**	**46,692**	**(13)**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, Ethanol November 2011	**127,000**	**127,534**	**(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.

[3]FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm.

Table 14

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

Week Ending 11/17/2011	Total Commitments[2] 2011/12 Current MY	2010/11 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2010/11
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	14,757	19,505	(24)	24,445
Mexico	1,257	1,414	(11)	3,215
Japan	35	1,261	(97)	1,887
EU-25	143	233	(38)	2,607
Indonesia	480	668	(28)	1,397
Top 5 importers	**16,672**	**23,081**	**(28)**	**33,551**
Total US soybean export sales	**20,794**	**31,422**	**(34)**	**40,690**
% of Projected	58%	77%		
Change from last week	922	674		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	80%	73%		
USDA forecast, November 2011	**36,104**	**40,899**	**(12)**	
Soybean Use for Biodiesel USDA forecast, November 2011	**8,632**	**6,115**	**41**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS 2008/09 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.

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm.

Table 15

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

Week Ending 11/17/2011	Total Commitments[2] 2011/12 Current MY	2010/11 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 2010/11
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Nigeria	1,972	2,068	(5)	3,233
Japan	2,242	2,203	2	3,148
Mexico	2,346	1,957	20	2,601
Philippines	1,525	1,664	(8)	1,518
Korea	951	1,187	(20)	1,111
Peru	544	688	(21)	923
Taiwan	499	544	(8)	913
Colombia	403	480	(16)	783
Indonesia	473	381	24	781
Yemen	272	296		659
Top 10 importers	**11,226**	**11,469**	**(2)**	**15,670**
Total US wheat export sales	**16,676**	**20,227**	**(18)**	**33,439**
% of Projected	63%	58%		
Change from last week	-127	-1,566		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	67%	57%		
USDA forecast, November 2011	**26,567**	**35,123**	**(24)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Modified from the FAS **2010/11** 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.

[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 11/24/11	Previous Week[1]	Current Week as % of Previous	2011 YTD[1]	2010 YTD[1]	2011 YTD as % of 2010 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of 2010	Last 4-weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.	Total[1] 2010
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	112	208	54	12,790	10,007	128	89	83	11,062
Corn	60	344	18	7,785	9,061	86	111	107	9,950
Soybeans	194	120	161	6,269	8,867	71	53	59	10,191
Total	**366**	**672**	**55**	**26,843**	**27,936**	**96**	**73**	**76**	**31,203**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	84	42	198	4,762	3,649	131	116	83	4,199
Corn	481	480	100	23,670	27,191	87	88	96	29,794
Soybeans	806	734	110	16,707	19,148	87	84	100	22,519
Total	**1,371**	**1,256**	**109**	**45,140**	**49,988**	**90**	**87**	**98**	**56,512**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	182	104	175	10,350	8,509	122	46	61	9,339
Corn	25	5	530	914	1,746	52	39	66	1,859
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	814	1,633	50	11	11	1,916
Total	**207**	**109**	**191**	**12,079**	**11,888**	**102**	**34**	**42**	**13,115**
Interior									
Wheat	12	20	61	1,042	844	123	109	162	926
Corn	204	130	157	6,736	5,923	114	69	154	6,388
Soybeans	49	85	58	3,839	3,307	116	101	101	3,641
Total	**265**	**235**	**113**	**11,617**	**10,073**	**115**	**102**	**135**	**10,954**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	30	0	n/a	966	1,703	57	29	45	1,897
Corn	8	0	n/a	167	100	167	57	35	119
Soybeans	0	27	0	260	512	51	70	62	655
Total	**39**	**27**	**143**	**1,393**	**2,315**	**60**	**45**	**52**	**2,672**
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	659	314	210	n/a	51	343
Corn	0	5	0	264	445	59	165	156	469
Soybeans	78	89	88	806	1,144	70	104	134	1,417
Total	**78**	**93**	**84**	**1,729**	**1,904**	**91**	**109**	**133**	**2,229**
U.S. total from ports[2]									
Wheat	419	374	112	30,568	25,026	122	69	75	27,765
Corn	779	963	81	39,536	44,467	89	101	107	48,580
Soybeans	1,128	1,055	107	28,696	34,611	83	73	83	40,340
Total	**2,326**	**2,392**	**97**	**98,800**	**104,104**	**95**	**79**	**88**	**116,684**

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

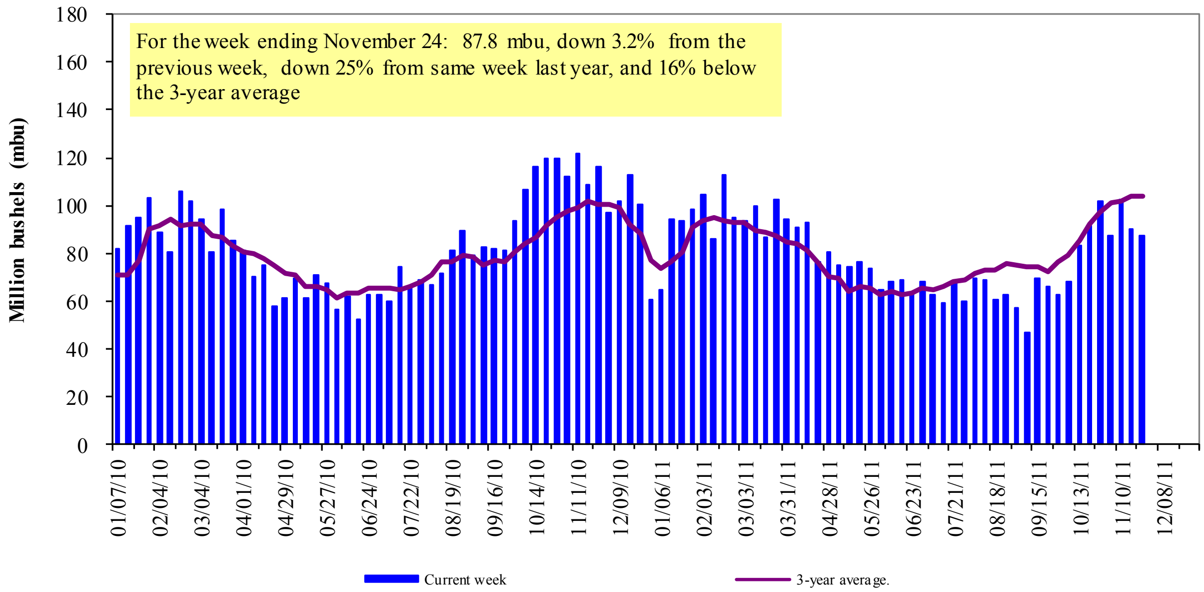
[2] Total includes only port regions shown above; Interior land-based shipments now included.

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 2010.

Figure 14

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

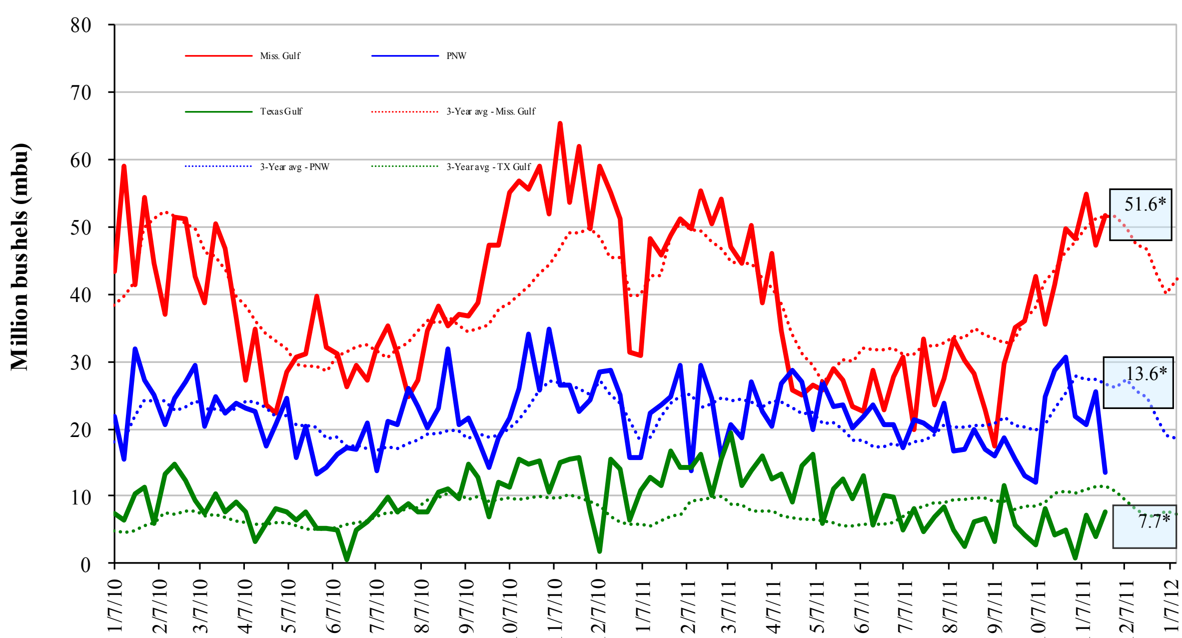


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

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.

November 24 % change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	up 9	up 92	up 15	down 47
Last year (same week)	down 17	down 51	down 24	down 40
3-yr avg. (4-wk mov. avg.)	unchanhged	down 33	down 6	down 46

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

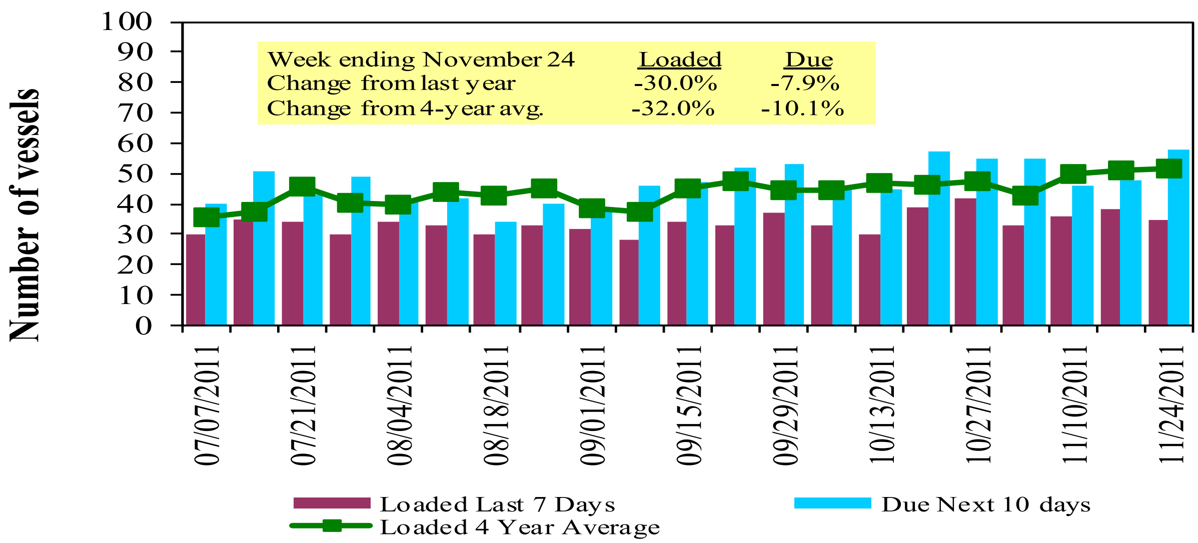
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
11/24/2011	21	35	58	12	n/a
11/17/2011	33	38	48	12	14
2010 range	(15..69)	(30..57)	(33..84)	(4..24)	(2..20)
2010 avg.	41	42	58	12	11

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

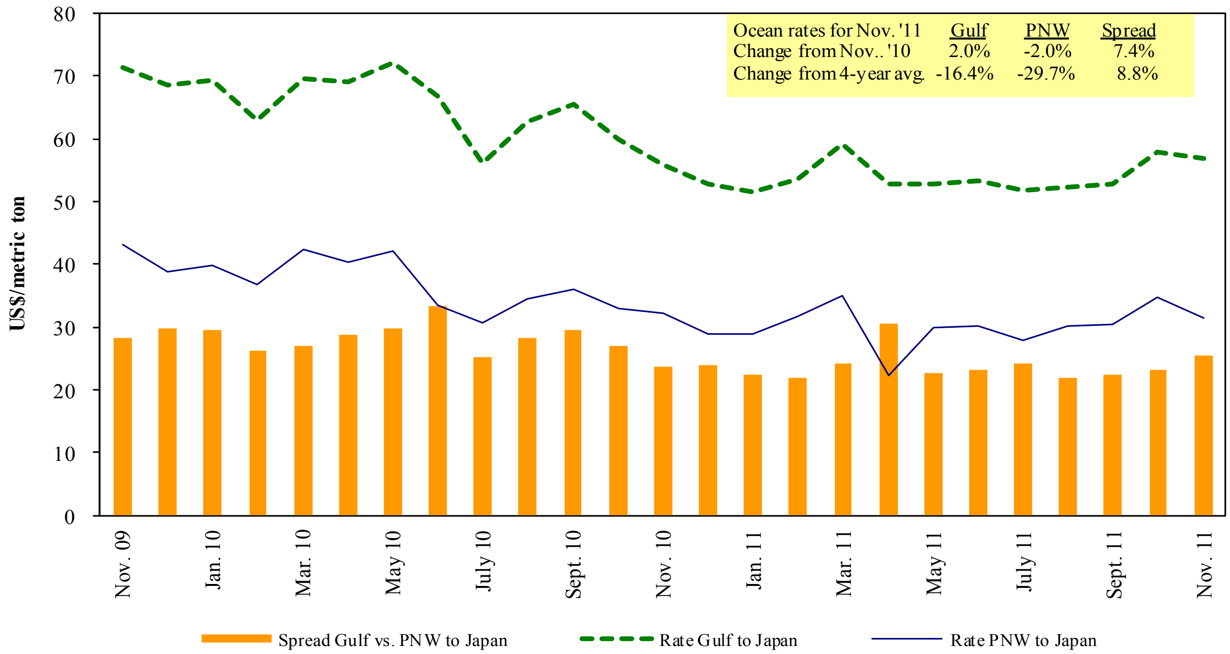
U.S. Gulf[1] Vessel Loading Activity



Source:Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 17

Grain Vessel Rates, U.S. to Japan



Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean Freight Rates For Selected Shipments, Week Ending 11/26/2011

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 15/30	55,000	55.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 10/20	55,000	56.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 1/30	55,000	51.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 21/30	55,000	52.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 5/10	60,000	59.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Sep 15/30	60,000	54.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Sep 1/10	60,000	48.25
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 17/Sep 30	60,000	49.00
U.S. Gulf	Korea	Grain	Nov 25/Dec 5	55,000	57.00
U.S. Gulf	Djibouti[1]	Wheat	Dec 5/15	35,800	125.25
PNW	China	Grain	Jan 10/20	55,000	26.75
PNW	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 5/20	6,500	26.00
France	Algeria	Wheat	Nov 1/2	20,000	35.00
France	Algeria	Wheat	Sep 25/30	25,000	24.50
River Plate	Algeria	Maize	Oct 20/30	25,000	36.00
River Plate	Algeria	Maize	Oct 1/5	25,000	34.50
River Plate	Algeria	Wheat	Aug 18/25	25,000	49.00
South Africa	Taiwan	Corn	Aug 5/15	55,000	31.00

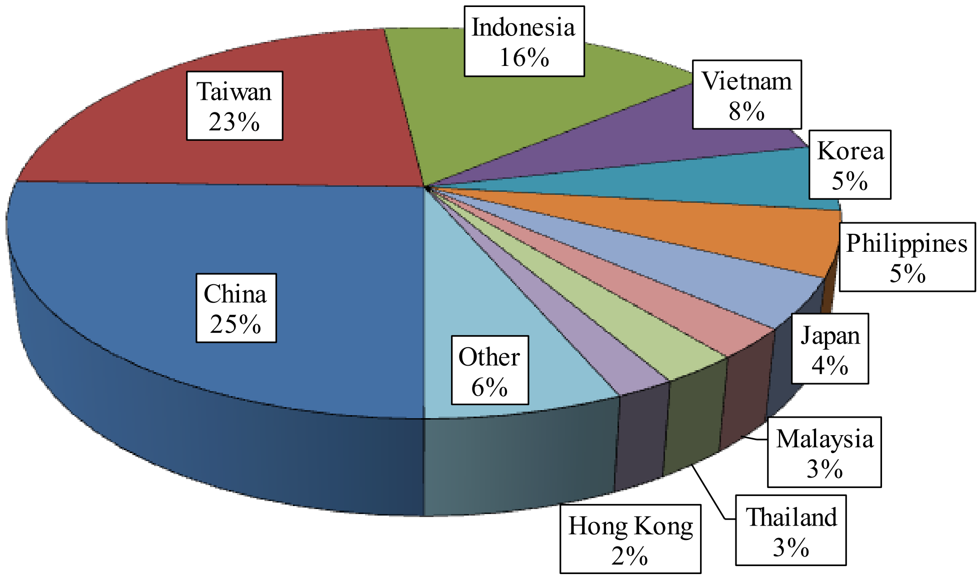
Rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicates; op = option

[1]75 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

In 2010, containers were used to transport 5 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, and 7 percent of U.S. grain exports to Asia. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—94 percent in 2010.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, August 2011

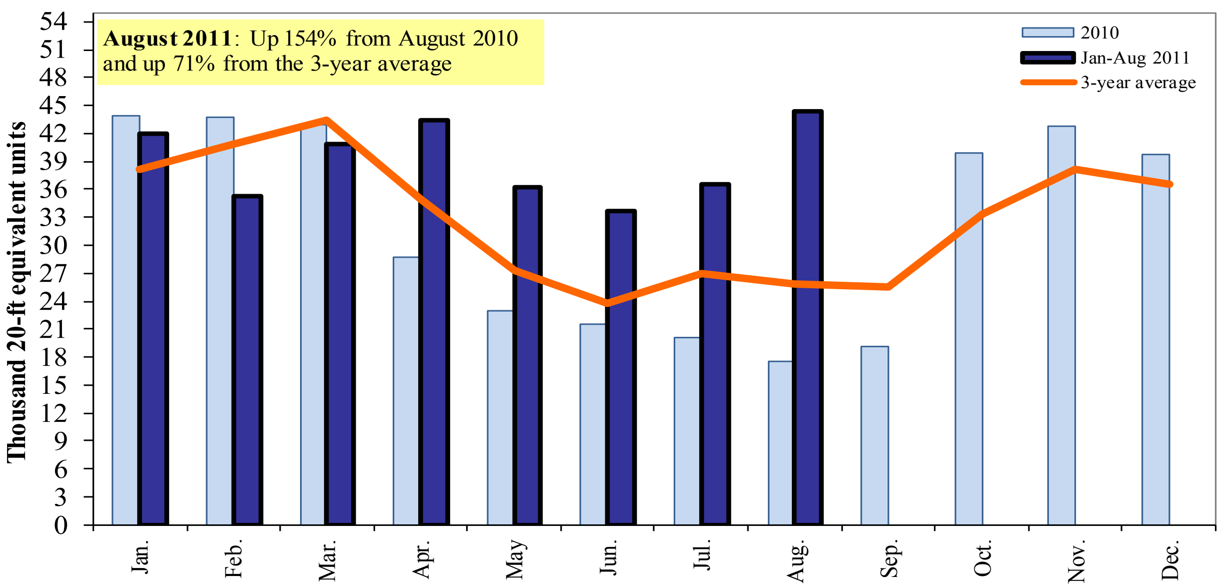


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements (recently added codes are highlighted in bold type): 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 (recently added codes are highlighted in bold type): 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
Weekly Highlight Editors		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 295 - 7374
Grain Transportation Indicators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Rail Transportation		
Marvin Prater	marvin.prater@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
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
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)*.

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

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