



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

December 27, 2012

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The next
release is
January 3, 2013



Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the
Transportation and Marketing Programs/Transportation Services Division

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WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Strike Averted, “for Now”, at the PNW Export Grain Elevators

On December 27, at 6:00 am, United Grain, Columbia Grain, and Louis Dreyfus Commodities—owners of four export grain elevators—implemented the terms of their “last, best and final offer” that was rejected by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) on December 24. This is not a lockout by the employers and the ILWU can choose to accept the offer, call for a strike, or seek further bargaining while working under the new terms. The ILWU spokesperson said they are reviewing the employer’s latest letter and “longshore workers intend to continue working for now.” The ILWU may also choose to challenge this action and the new terms before the **National Labor Relations Board**. On average over the past four years, the Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain elevators moved 21 percent of corn, 41 percent of wheat, and 39 percent of soybeans inspected for export. Most of the grain was destined to Asia.

Soybeans Inspections Increase, Offsetting Lower Corn and Wheat Exports

For the week ending December 20, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, soybeans) from all major export regions totaled 1.97 million metric tons (mmt), up 7 percent from the past week but 23 percent below last year at this time. Soybean inspections (1.2 mmt) increased 20 percent, offsetting the drop in corn and wheat weekly inspections of 10 and 8 percent, respectively. Mississippi and Texas Gulf inspections increased by 5 and 2 percent and PNW inspections dropped 9 percent from the previous week. Most of the shipments were destined for China and other Asian countries. Outstanding export sales are higher than last year for wheat and soybeans, indicating possible increases in future inspections of these grains and the implied transportation demand.

USDA Comments on Proposed STB Paper Barrier Disclosure Rules

On December 18, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) supported the Surface Transportation Board’s (STB) proposed toughening of its rules concerning disclosures on the existence of paper barriers in new sale or lease contracts with smaller railroads. Paper barriers prevent a short line railroad buying or leasing the line from interchanging with a railroad other than the major railroad that is the seller or lessor. USDA also recommended that the STB go further and address any anti-competitive provisions already embedded in existing contracts.

Snapshots by Sector

Rail

U.S. railroads originated 20,342 **carloads of grain** during the week ending December 15, up 9 percent from last week, down 11 percent from last year, and 11 percent lower than the 3-year average.

During the week ending December 20, average January non-shuttle **secondary railcar bids/offers per car** were \$12.50 above tariff, down \$0.50 from last week, and the same as last year. Average shuttle bids/offers were \$38 above tariff, down \$43 from last week, but \$263 higher than last year.

Barge

During the week ending December 22, **barge grain movements** totaled 440,432 tons, 18.5 percent lower than the previous week and 41 percent lower than the same period last year.

During the week ending December 22, 282 grain barges **moved down river**, down 22 percent from last week; the number of grain barges unloaded in New Orleans was not available at time of publication.

Ocean

During the week ending December 20, 25 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 36 percent less than the same period last year. Forty-four vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 4 percent less than the same period last year.

During the week ending December 21, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was \$44.50 per mt, 1 percent less than the previous week. The cost of shipping from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was \$24 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

Fuel

During the week ending December 24, U.S. average **diesel fuel prices** fell 2 cents to \$3.92 per gallon—13 cents higher than the same week last year.

Feature Article/Calendar

To Our Readers:

We sincerely thank our readers for your continued support. We know you think the information we provide is important and we strive to make it insightful, timely, and reliable. Over the past year, we made strides to improve our reporting. In March, we improved our rail cost indices. In April and May, we responded to reader feedback from our customer satisfaction survey by publishing two feature articles on minor grains transportation. In July, we launched an updated website that includes a search engine for archived GTR feature articles. In the last half of the year, we wrote five feature articles about barge issues resulting from drought-impacted navigation conditions.

2012 Agricultural Transportation Overview

Agricultural markets this year were dominated by the historically severe and widespread drought. Despite many challenges and uncertainty, the U.S. transportation system continued to keep U.S. grain and oilseeds moving to world markets. Some of the top 2012 stories help illustrate the relationship between agricultural production, marketing, and transportation:

- Crop prices followed a pattern reflecting reduced crop size expectations. Corn futures averaged \$7.70 per bushel during the second half of the year, up \$1.40/bu from the average of the first half of the year; soybean prices averaged \$15.90/bu, up \$2.40, and wheat prices at \$8.80/bu were \$2.40/bu higher than the average during the first half of the year.
- Despite reduced crop sizes due to drought, 2012 grain exports by December 20 were only 11 percent lower than last year. Soybean exports increased 27 percent, which helped to offset the much lower corn and wheat exports. Year-to-date corn and wheat exports were 32 and 21 percent lower than last year.
- Despite lower exports and difficult navigation conditions caused by the severe drought, Mississippi Gulf exports are expected to end the year only 4-5 percent lower than last year.
- Barge freight rates on the Mississippi River were at or below average during the first half of the year, but have since risen above average because of reduced barge drafts due to low water levels.
- As the year closes, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is conducting navigation improvements south of St. Louis, MO, to remove rock pinnacles that threaten to block navigation in the coming weeks.
- Except for June, rail volumes of grain were below the 3-year average during the first half of 2012, and well below during the second half of 2012. Higher U.S. grain prices resulted in decreased export sales of corn and wheat. Soybean export sales have kept their record pace this fall.
- During 2012, ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan averaged \$49.91 per metric ton (mt)—8.8 percent lower than last year. The cost of shipping from the Pacific Northwest (PNW) to Japan was \$27.60/mt—9.5 percent lower than last year. These rates continued their downward trend due to persistent excess dry bulk vessel supply and weak global demand for shipping bulk commodities. Many analysts expect these rates will likely remain low in the near term, as the bulk market continues to experience an excess supply of vessels.

Happy New Year

We are thankful for our many blessings and look forward to providing uninterrupted weekly reports in the upcoming year to help you make informed marketing and transportation decisions. We appreciate and thank the many industry and Government representatives who regularly and voluntarily provide us with the necessary information and data included in this report. We wish you a healthy and prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

The Grain Transportation Report Team

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators¹

Week ending	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
12/26/12	263	234	213	313	199	170
12/19/12	265	234	212	319	201	170

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)

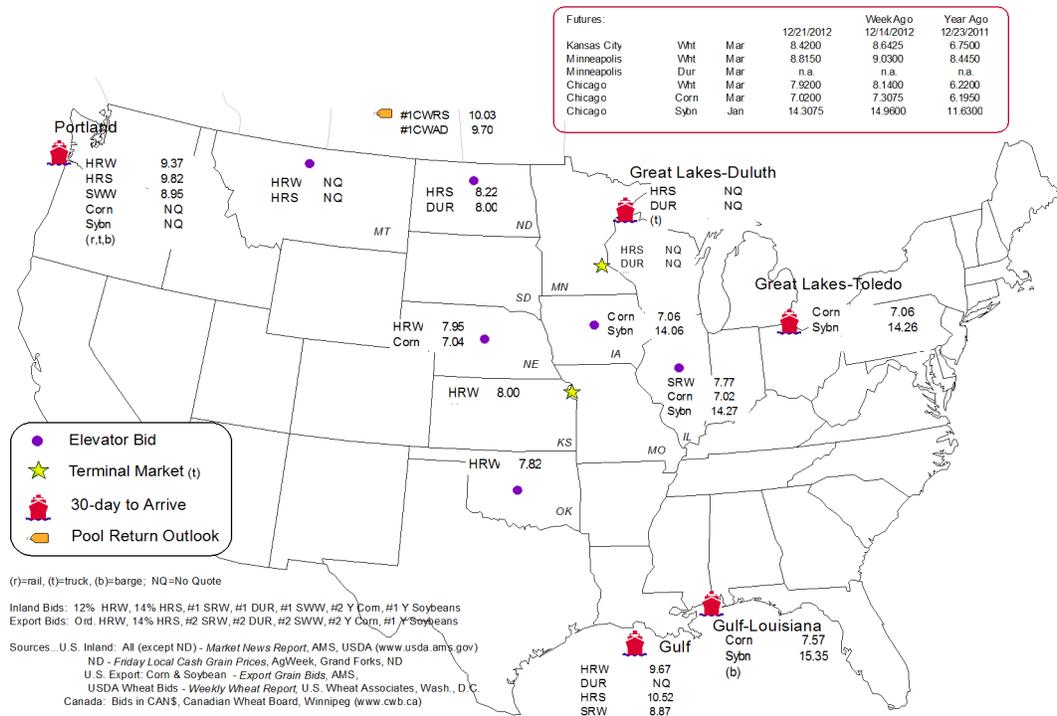
Commodity	Origin--Destination	12/20/2012	12/14/2012
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.55	-0.58
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.53	-0.56
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.29	-1.42
HRW	KS--Gulf	-1.67	-1.60
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.60	-1.61

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			
12/19/2012 ^p	1,448	854	3,950	743	6,995	12/15/12	964
12/12/2012 ^r	1,027	620	3,011	1,194	5,852	12/08/12	1,306
2012 YTD ^r	21,202	40,247	195,598	23,856	280,903	2012 YTD	90,821
2011 YTD ^r	27,354	77,278	187,029	23,636	315,297	2011 YTD	93,344
2012 YTD as % of 2011 YTD	78	52	105	101	89	% change YTD	97
Last 4 weeks as % of 2011 ²	1,259	107	73	189	105	Last 4wks % 2011	74
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. ²	152	64	86	122	94	Last 4wks % 4 yr	74
Total 2011	27,358	77,515	191,187	24,088	320,148	Total 2011	97,118
Total 2010	33,971	83,492	177,896	32,780	328,139	Total 2010	90,175

¹ Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

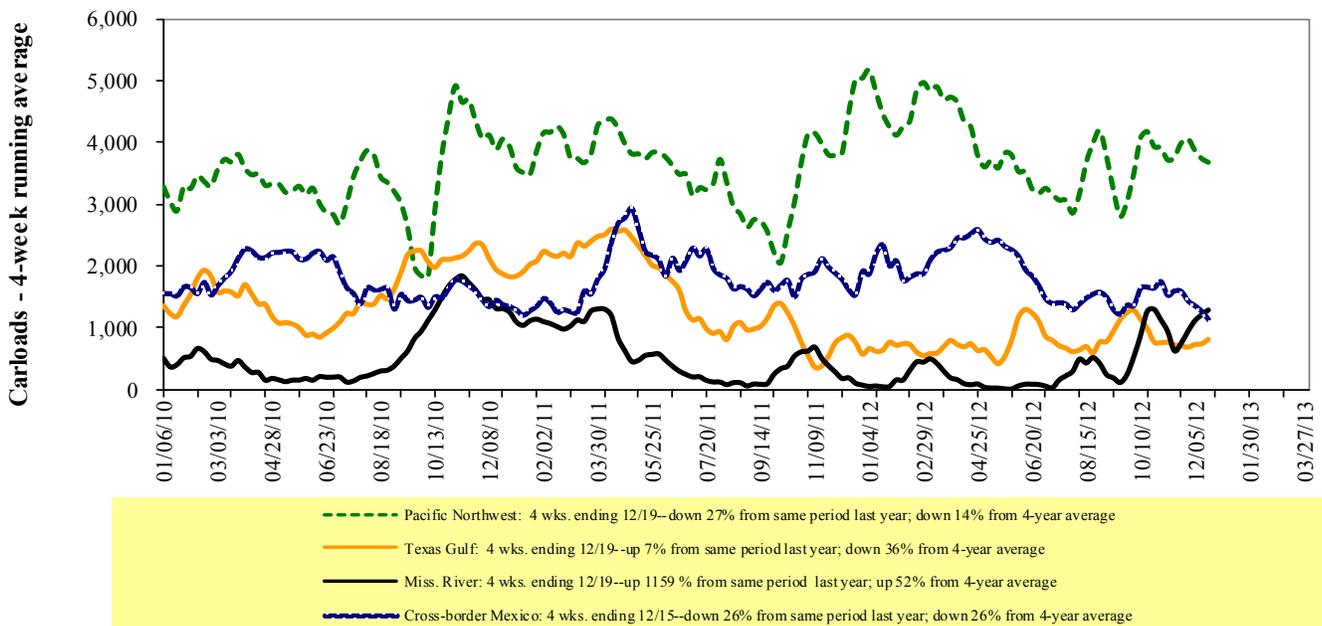
² Compared with same 4-weeks in 2011 and prior 4-year average.

³ Cross-border weekly data is approximately 15 percent below weekly AAR carloads received by Mexican railroads to reflect within switching between KCSM and FerroMe: YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; YTD PNW carloads includes revisions back to August 2011 ; 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

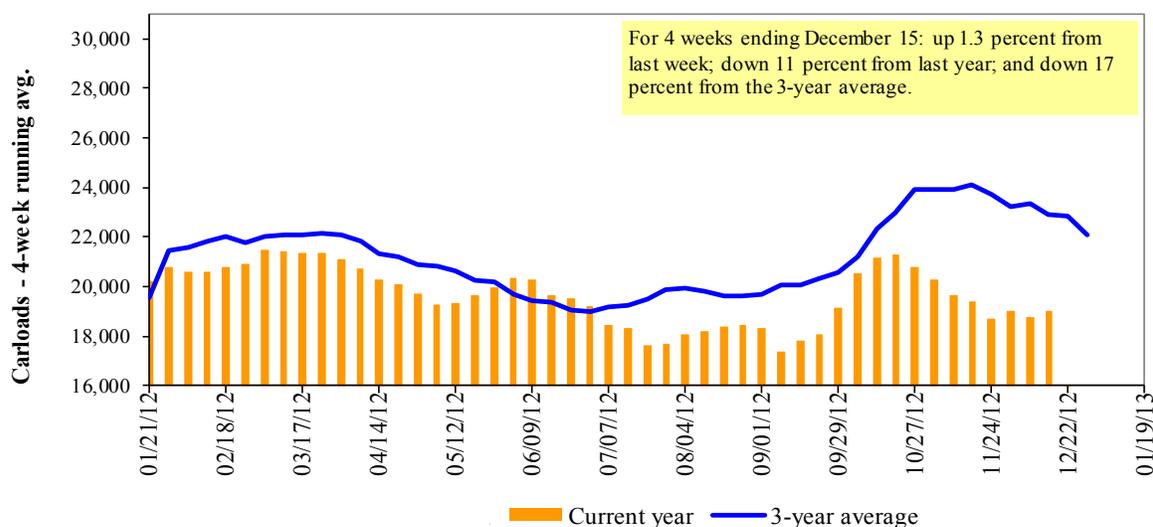
Class I Rail Carrier Grain Car Bulletin (grain carloads originated)

Week ending	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
12/15/12	1,757	3,082	10,625	424	4,454	20,342	4,256	6,683
This week last year	2,185	3,008	11,872	605	5,167	22,837	3,854	6,893
2012 YTD	82,864	140,615	497,279	26,066	237,127	983,951	196,587	255,716
2011 YTD	93,979	145,506	526,927	33,838	283,146	1,083,396	193,357	260,523
2012 YTD as % of 2011 YTD	88	97	94	77	84	91	102	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 2011 ¹	75	108	88	139	80	89	102	108
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg. ¹	75	95	88	89	71	84	104	116
Total 2011	98,506	150,869	546,090	34,683	292,401	1,122,549	200,610	269,399

¹As 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 Offerings¹ (\$/car)²

Week ending	Delivery period							
	Jan-13	Jan-12	Feb-13	Feb-12	Mar-13	Mar-12	Apr-13	Apr-12
12/20/2012								
BNSF ³								
COT grain units	1	no bids	1	no bids	1	no bids	no bids	no bids
COT grain single-car ⁵	6 . . 11	8	0 . . 10	0	0 . . 1	0	0	no bids
UP ⁴								
GCAS/Region 1	no bids	no bids	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
GCAS/Region 2	no bids	no bids	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a

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

²Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

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

⁴UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

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

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

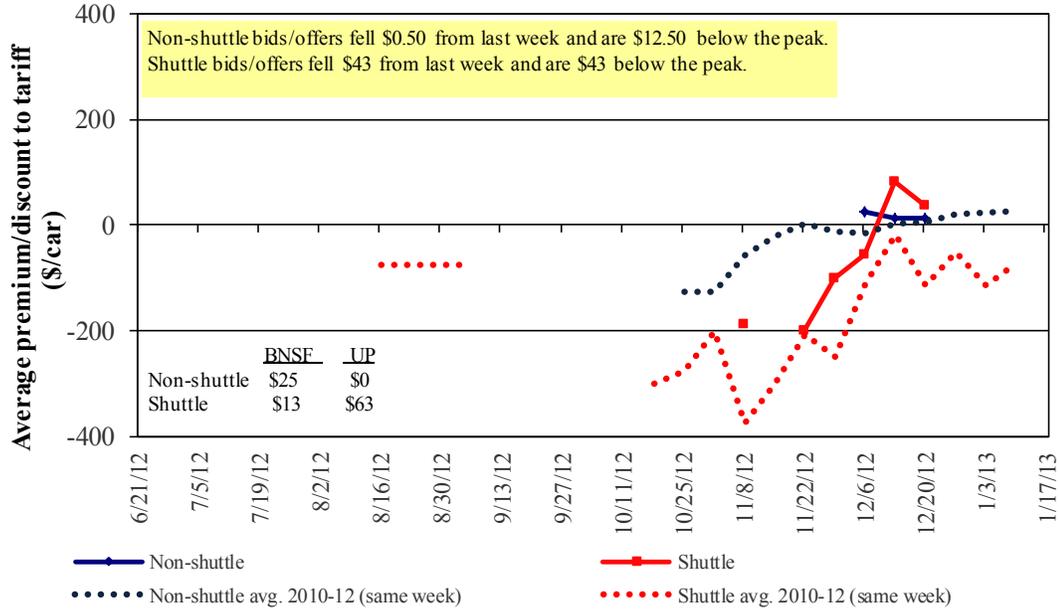
⁵Range is shown because average is not available. Not available = n/a.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA.

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

Figure 4

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in January 2013, Secondary Market

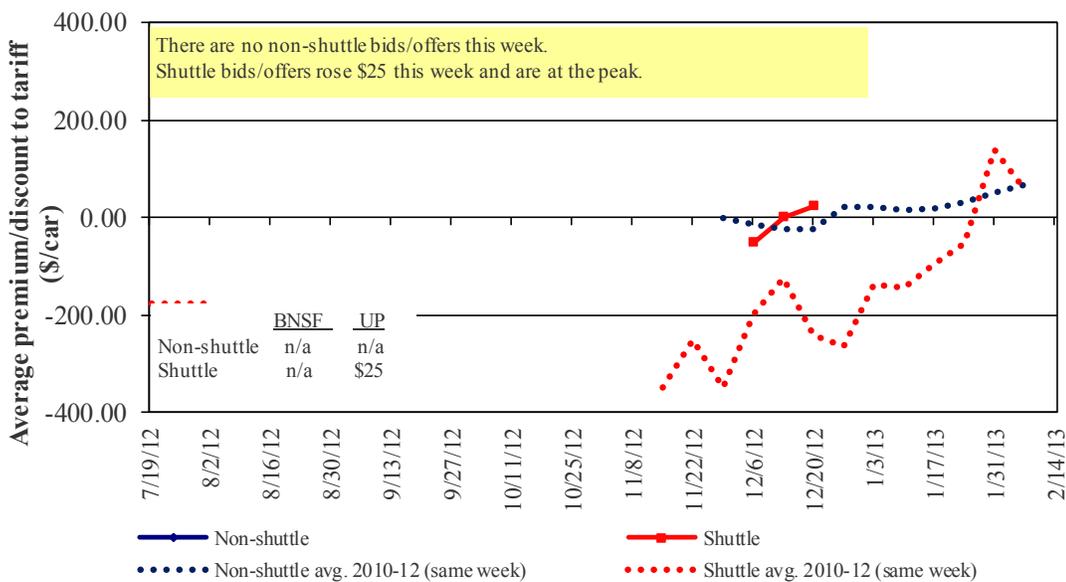


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in February 2013, Secondary Market

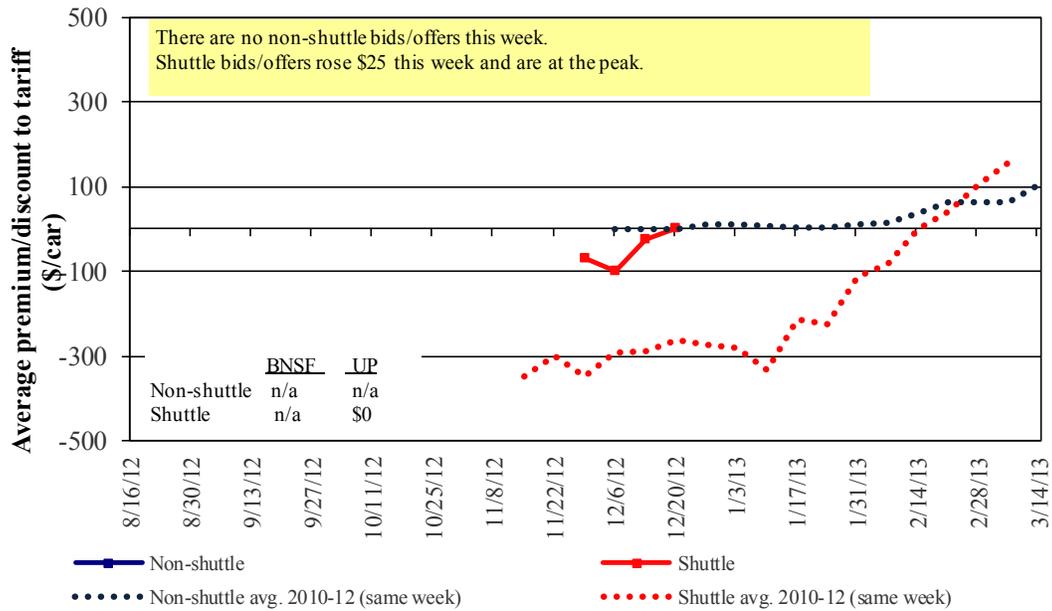


Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in March 2013, 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					
	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13
12/20/2012						
Non-shuttle						
BNSF-GF	25	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 2011	25	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	-	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 2011	(25)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle²						
BNSF-GF	13	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 2011	338	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UP-Pool	63	25	-	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from last week	(18)	25	25	n/a	n/a	n/a
Change from same week 2011	188	200	250	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 Atwood/ConAgra, Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Table 7

Tariff Rail Rates for Unit and Shuttle Train Shipments¹

Effective date:				Fuel	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent
12/1/2012	Origin region*	Destination region*	Tariff rate/car	surcharge per car	metric ton	bushe ²	change Y/Y ³
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	\$3,144	\$202	\$33.23	\$0.90	6
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	\$3,445	\$119	\$35.39	\$0.96	12
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	\$6,026	\$612	\$65.92	\$1.79	7
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	\$3,645	\$356	\$39.73	\$1.08	5
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$5,573	\$502	\$60.33	\$1.64	4
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,912	\$390	\$42.72	\$1.16	5
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	\$4,112	\$543	\$46.22	\$1.26	5
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,110	\$402	\$34.88	\$0.95	3
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	\$4,508	\$459	\$49.32	\$1.34	15
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	\$2,006	\$85	\$20.77	\$0.57	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	\$3,920	\$345	\$42.35	\$1.15	16
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	\$3,354	\$221	\$35.50	\$0.97	18
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	\$3,154	\$250	\$33.81	\$0.92	4
Soybeans	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	\$5,065	\$729	\$57.54	\$1.57	3
	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	\$3,509	\$447	\$39.28	\$1.07	2
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$3,575	\$326	\$38.74	\$1.05	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$4,578	\$462	\$50.05	\$1.36	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	\$3,267	\$221	\$34.64	\$0.94	3
Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,599	\$402	\$39.74	\$1.08	7	
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	\$3,481	\$352	\$38.06	\$1.04	9
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,456	\$274	\$46.97	\$1.28	40
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$3,771	\$430	\$41.72	\$1.14	5
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	\$4,963	\$608	\$55.32	\$1.51	7
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$5,984	\$633	\$65.71	\$1.79	6
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	\$4,793	\$640	\$53.95	\$1.47	3
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$4,800	\$740	\$55.02	\$1.50	2
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$4,760	\$678	\$54.00	\$1.47	2
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$2,857	\$402	\$32.37	\$0.88	1
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,310	\$395	\$36.79	\$1.00	2
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	\$3,430	\$315	\$37.19	\$1.01	1
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	\$4,800	\$734	\$54.96	\$1.50	2
Soybeans	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	\$4,200	\$760	\$49.25	\$1.34	3
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,320	\$678	\$59.56	\$1.62	7
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,330	\$740	\$60.28	\$1.64	8
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	\$5,230	\$603	\$57.92	\$1.58	7
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	\$3,870	\$464	\$43.04	\$1.17	6
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$2,750	\$326	\$30.55	\$0.83	4
Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	\$5,195	\$655	\$58.09	\$1.58	15	

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: 12/1/2012

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car ¹	Fuel		Percent change Y/Y ⁴	
				surcharge per car ²	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton ³ bushel ³		
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	\$7,741	\$643	\$85.67	\$2.33	1
	OK	Cuatitlan, EM	\$6,837	\$781	\$77.83	\$2.12	4
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,444	\$755	\$83.77	\$2.28	-1
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$3,553	\$294	\$39.31	\$1.07	-2
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,699	\$888	\$87.73	\$2.23	1
	SD	Celaya, GJ ⁵	\$7,356	\$842	\$83.76	\$2.13	n/a
	NE	Queretaro, QA	\$7,153	\$788	\$81.15	\$2.06	2
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$5,700	\$640	\$64.78	\$1.64	3
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	\$6,592	\$766	\$75.18	\$1.91	7
	SD	Torreon, CU	\$6,522	\$705	\$73.84	\$1.87	2
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	\$7,580	\$749	\$85.10	\$2.31	8
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,134	\$856	\$91.86	\$2.50	3
	IA	El Castillo, JA	\$8,555	\$836	\$95.96	\$2.61	5
	KS	Torreon, CU	\$6,651	\$531	\$73.39	\$2.00	3
Sorghum	OK	Cuatitlan, EM	\$5,730	\$639	\$65.07	\$1.65	3
	TX	Guadalajara, JA	\$6,653	\$548	\$73.57	\$1.87	1
	NE	Celaya, GJ ⁵	\$6,937	\$764	\$78.68	\$2.00	n/a
	KS	Queretaro, QA	\$6,460	\$480	\$70.91	\$1.80	1
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$5,178	\$562	\$58.64	\$1.49	3
	NE	Torreon, CU	\$6,068	\$627	\$68.41	\$1.74	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

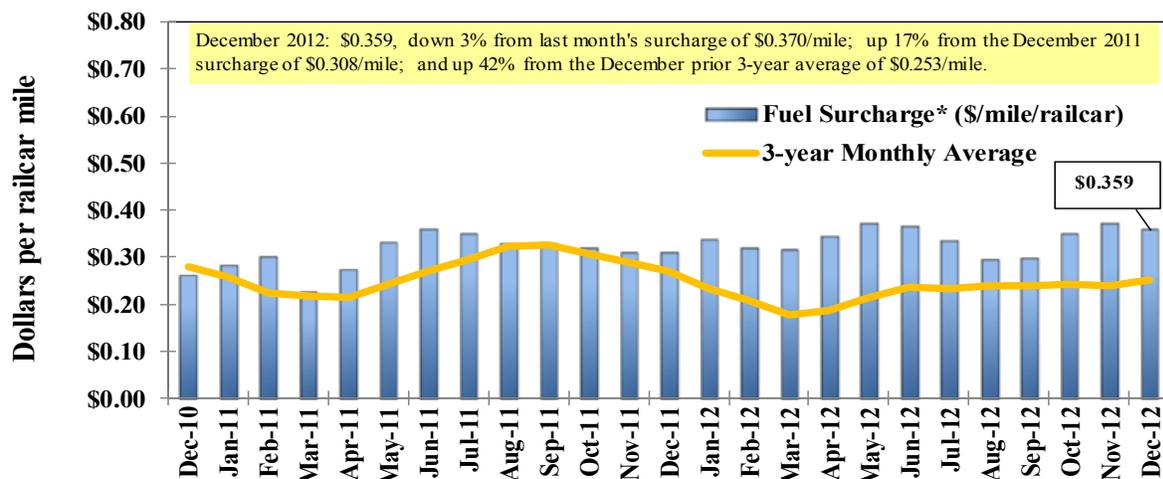
³Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

⁴Percentage change year over year calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge

⁵Beginning 11/1/12, Celaya, GJ, replaced Penjamo, GJ, as the destination.

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.

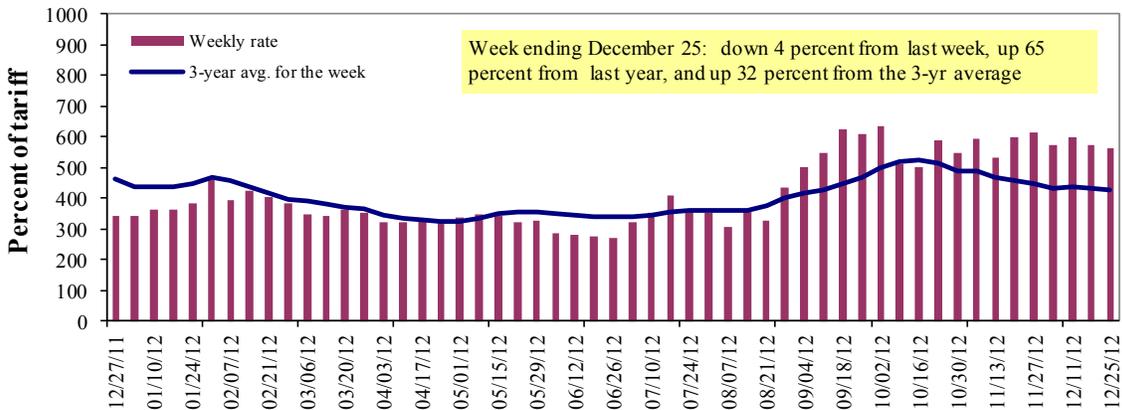
** BNSF strike price (diesel price when fuel surcharges begin) changed from \$1.25/gal. to \$2.50/gal. starting March 1, 2011. As a result, the weighted average fuel surcharge for March 2011 was \$0.227/mile instead of \$0.331/mile.

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.cpr.ca, www.esx.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

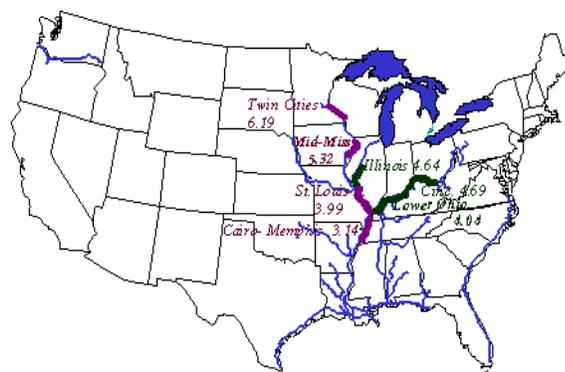
Weekly Barge Freight Rates: Southbound Only

		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate¹	12/25/2012	-	-	563	500	413	413	313
	12/18/2012	-	-	575	500	445	445	353
\$/ton	12/25/2012	-	-	26.12	19.95	19.37	16.69	9.83
	12/18/2012	-	-	26.68	19.95	20.87	17.98	11.08
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-	-	65	107	25	25	36
	3-year avg. ²	-	-	32	58	11	11	8
Rate¹	January	-	-	-	-	388	388	300
	March	-	-	395	325	358	358	263

¹Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); ²4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; - closed for winter or no rates

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 9
Benchmark tariff rates



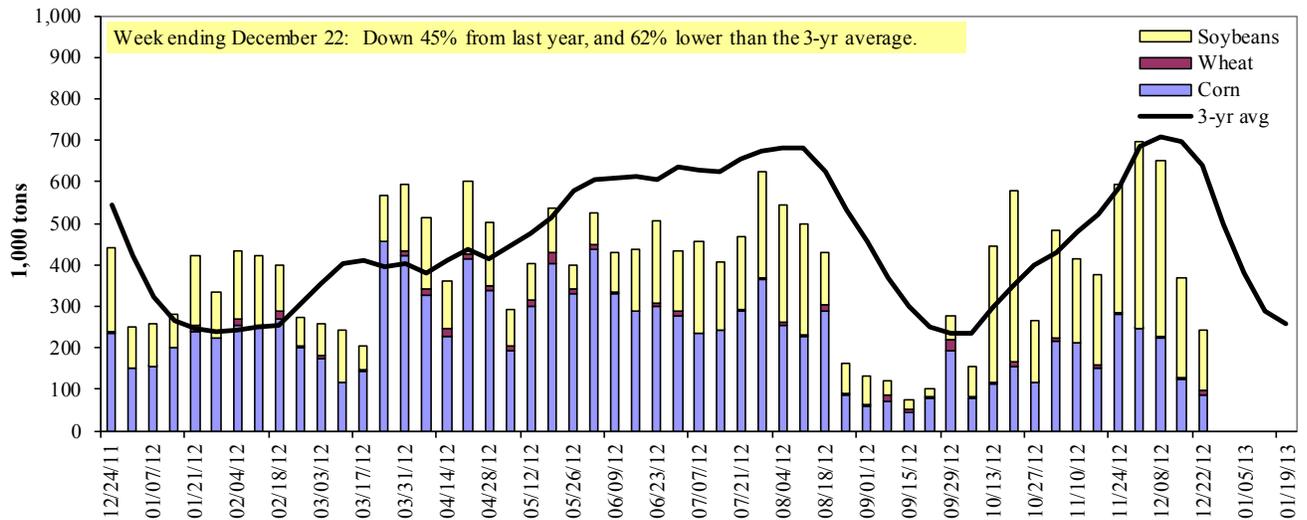
Calculating barge rate per ton:

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

Select applicable index from market quotes included in tables on this page. The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map (see figure 9).

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 12/22/2012	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	2	0	3	0	5
Alton, IL (L26)	50	9	120	0	179
Granite City, IL (L27)	87	9	147	0	244
Illinois River (L8)	36	24	65	0	125
Ohio River (L52)	44	5	116	0	166
Arkansas River (L1)	0	14	17	0	31
Weekly total - 2012	131	29	280	0	440
Weekly total - 2011	407	30	308	1	747
2012 YTD ¹	14,778	1,781	12,409	229	29,197
2011 YTD	19,688	1,438	8,356	422	29,904
2012 as % of 2011 YTD	75	124	149	54	98
Last 4 weeks as % of 2011 ²	41	46	144	9	77
Total 2011	19,921	1,460	8,553	422	30,356

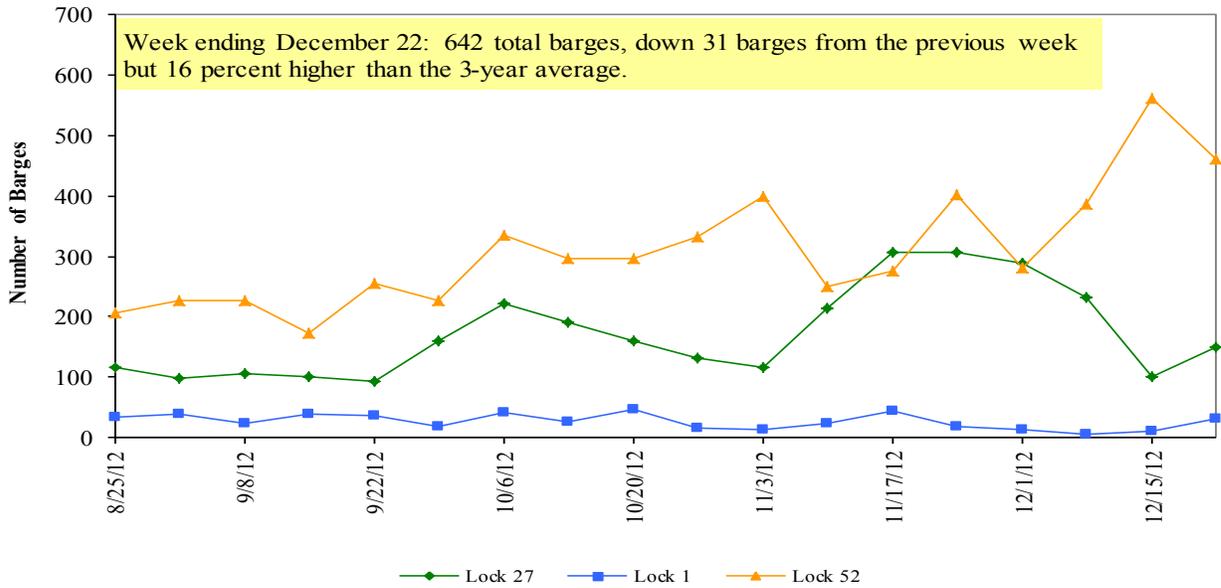
¹ Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

² As a percent of same period in 2011.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

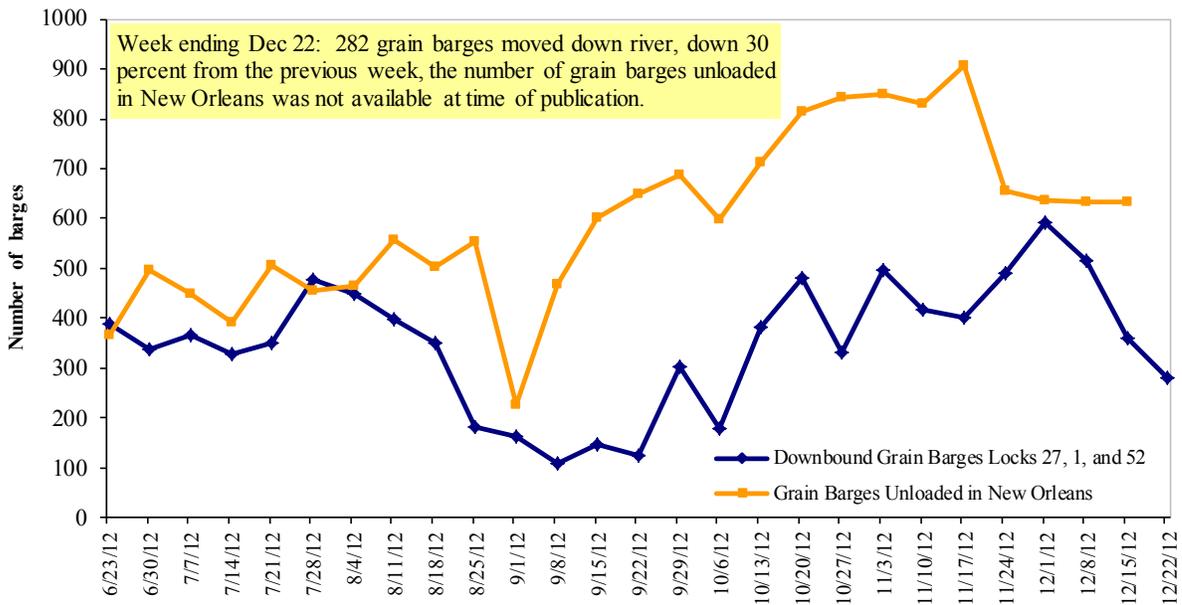
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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 12/24/2012 (US \$/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	4.006	-0.021	0.166
	New England	4.153	-0.002	0.180
	Central Atlantic	4.112	-0.022	0.187
	Lower Atlantic	3.899	-0.024	0.147
II	Midwest ²	3.893	-0.025	0.187
III	Gulf Coast ³	3.833	-0.014	0.125
IV	Rocky Mountain	3.791	-0.075	-0.070
V	West Coast	3.989	-0.008	0.011
	West Coast less California	3.915	-0.018	0.009
	California	4.052	0.001	0.013
Total	U.S.	3.923	-0.022	0.132

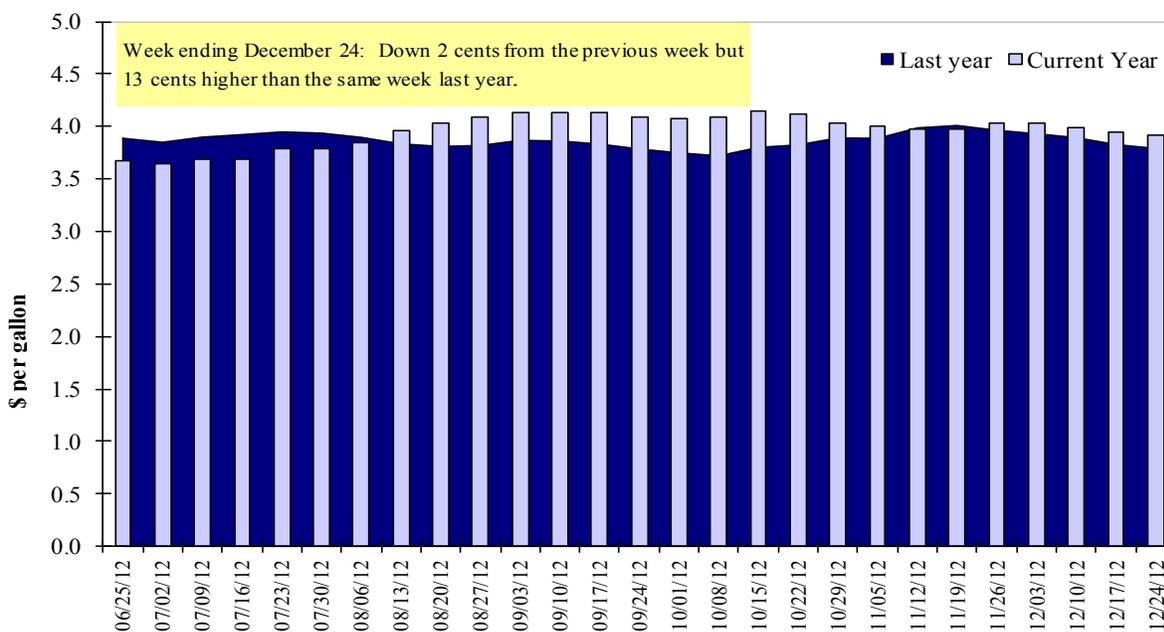
¹Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

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						Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
Export Balances¹									
12/13/2012	1,453	846	1,287	1,223	94	4,904	6,511	11,435	22,850
This week year ago	1,339	709	1,188	1,071	50	4,358	11,804	10,184	26,347
Cumulative exports-marketing year²									
2012/13 YTD	5,169	1,718	3,183	2,408	286	12,763	6,091	18,908	37,762
2011/12 YTD	5,874	1,920	3,830	2,715	323	14,662	12,249	12,991	39,902
YTD 2012/13 as % of 2011/12	88	89	83	89	88	87	50	146	95
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2011/12	108	102	105	107	133	106	57	118	89
2011/12 Total	9,904	4,319	6,312	5,601	491	26,627	37,900	36,727	101,254
2010/11 Total	15,837	2,828	8,623	4,717	979	32,984	44,569	39,753	117,306

¹ Current unshipped export sales to date

² Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year begins for corn and soybeans

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

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

Table 13

Top 5 Importers¹ of U.S. Corn

Week ending 12/13/12	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 2011/12
	2012/13 Current MY	2011/12 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	4,049	5,932	(32)	12,367
Mexico	2,849	5,370	(47)	9,617
China	1,359	2,837	(52)	5,414
Korea	421	2,407	(83)	3,639
Venezuela	277	261	6	1,332
Top 5 importers	8,956	16,807	(47)	32,369
Total US corn export sales	12,603	24,053	(48)	39,180
% of Projected	43%	61%		
Change from prior week	114	715		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	71%	70%		83%
USDA forecast, December 2012	29,210	39,180	(25)	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, Ethanol December 2012	114,300	127,000	(10)	

(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 Importers¹ of U.S. Soybeans

Week Ending 12/13/2012	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 2011/12
	2012/13 Current MY	2011/12 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	18,965	16,385	16	24,602
Mexico	1,291	1,406	(8)	3,180
Japan	1,016	998	2	1,891
Indonesia	568	628	(10)	1,741
Egypt	409	363	13	1,292
Top 5 importers	22,249	19,781	12	32,706
Total US soybean export sales	30,343	23,176	31	37,060
% of Projected	83%	63%		
Change from prior week	620	653		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	73%	85%		
USDA forecast, December 2012	36,610	37,060	(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/>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 12/13/2012	Total Commitments ²		% change current MY from last MY	Exports ³ 2011/12
	2012/13 Current MY	2011/12 Last MY		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	2,534	2,454	3	3,512
Mexico	2,269	2,553	(11)	3,496
Nigeria	2,039	2,205	(8)	3,248
Philippines	1,545	1,657	(7)	2,039
Korea	1,216	1,083	12	1,983
Egypt	443	247	80	950
Taiwan	730	620	18	888
Indonesia	368	524	(30)	830
Venezuela	532	458	16	594
Iraq	209	572	(63)	572
Top 10 importers	11,886	12,373	(4)	18,111
Total US wheat export sales	17,667	19,020	(7)	28,560
% of Projected	62%	67%		
Change from prior week	651	362		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	67%	65%		63%
USDA forecast, December 2012	28,580	28,560	0.1	

(n) indicates negative number.

¹Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31.²Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--<http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/>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 12/20/12	Previous Week ¹	Current Week as % of Previous	2012 YTD ¹	2011 YTD ¹	2012 YTD as % of 2011 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of		Total ¹ 2011
							2011	3-yr. avg.	
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	160	313	51	12,504	13,785	91	84	96	13,995
Corn	109	55	199	5,454	9,029	60	20	25	9,198
Soybeans	130	77	168	10,021	7,187	139	79	62	7,321
Total	399	445	90	27,979	30,001	93	59	60	30,513
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	102	28	367	5,382	4,952	109	146	93	5,031
Corn	206	327	63	17,949	25,905	69	39	45	26,267
Soybeans	831	720	115	24,073	18,603	129	173	123	19,262
Total	1,139	1,074	106	47,404	49,460	96	103	90	50,560
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	100	100	100	5,834	10,763	54	104	86	10,837
Corn	0	0	n/a	336	1,018	33	0	0	1,021
Soybeans	52	50	104	626	926	68	150	62	926
Total	153	150	102	6,796	12,707	53	95	68	12,784
Interior									
Wheat	12	5	247	1,175	1,110	106	144	147	1,110
Corn	28	0	n/a	6,002	7,416	81	95	21	7,509
Soybeans	69	17	404	4,107	4,219	97	29	67	4,273
Total	109	22	487	11,283	12,745	89	130	47	12,892
Great Lakes									
Wheat	38	0	n/a	481	1,038	46	52	32	1,038
Corn	0	0	n/a	56	178	31	0	0	178
Soybeans	73	0	n/a	659	361	182	100	94	382
Total	110	0	n/a	1,196	1,577	76	75	56	1,598
Atlantic									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	341	686	50	0	0	686
Corn	0	0	n/a	143	280	51	28	18	295
Soybeans	57	144	40	1,411	1,031	137	170	125	1,042
Total	57	144	40	1,895	1,997	95	144	110	2,022
U.S. total from ports²									
Wheat	412	446	92	25,717	32,333	80	95	89	32,697
Corn	343	382	90	29,939	43,827	68	29	35	44,466
Soybeans	1,212	1,008	120	40,897	32,327	127	135	100	33,205
Total	1,967	1,836	107	96,553	108,487	89	82	76	110,369

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

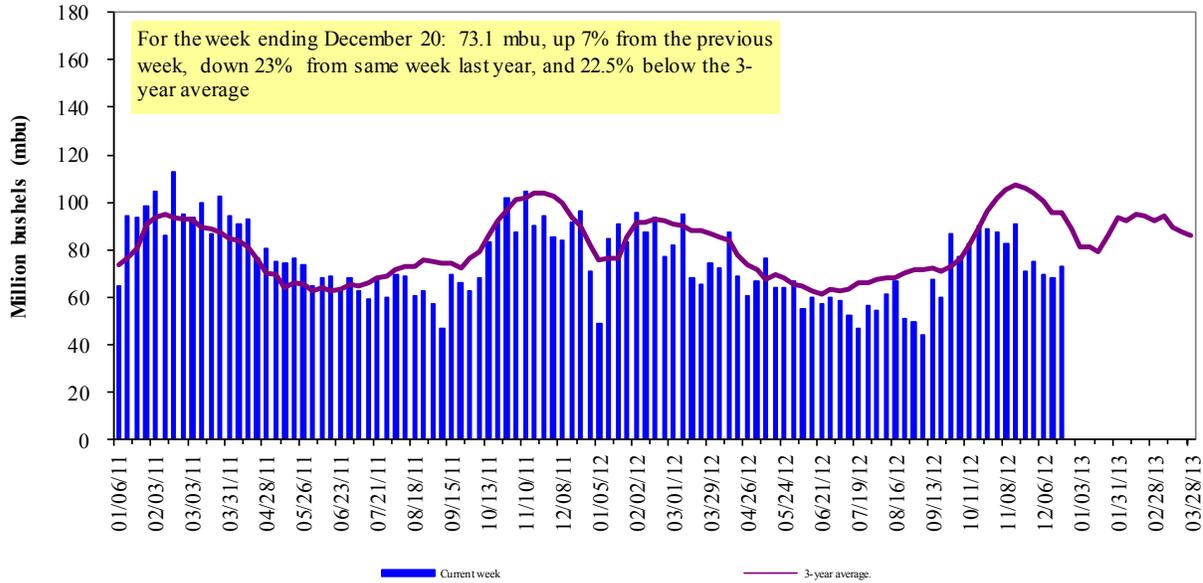
² Total includes only port regions shown above; Interior land-based shipments now included.

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 59 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2011.

Figure 14

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

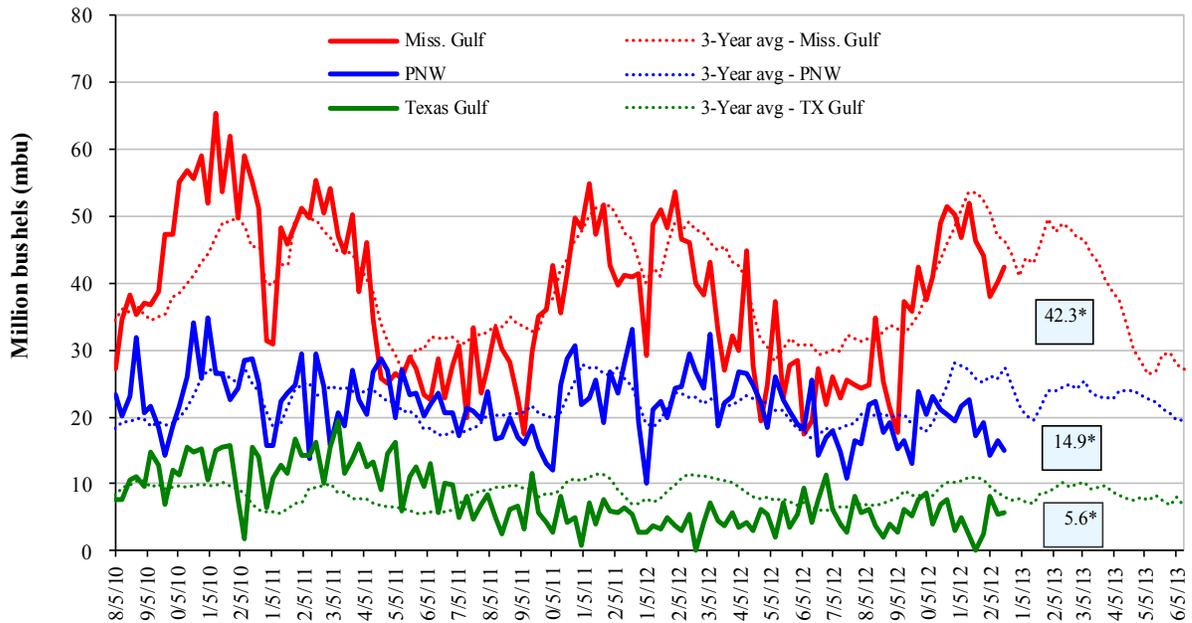


Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)

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.

December 20 % change from:	MSGulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Last week	up 5	up 2	up 5	down 9
Last year (same week)	up 4	up 3	up 3.5	down 55
3-yr avg (4-wk mov. avg)	down 8	down 31	down 12	down 48.5

Ocean Transportation

Table 17

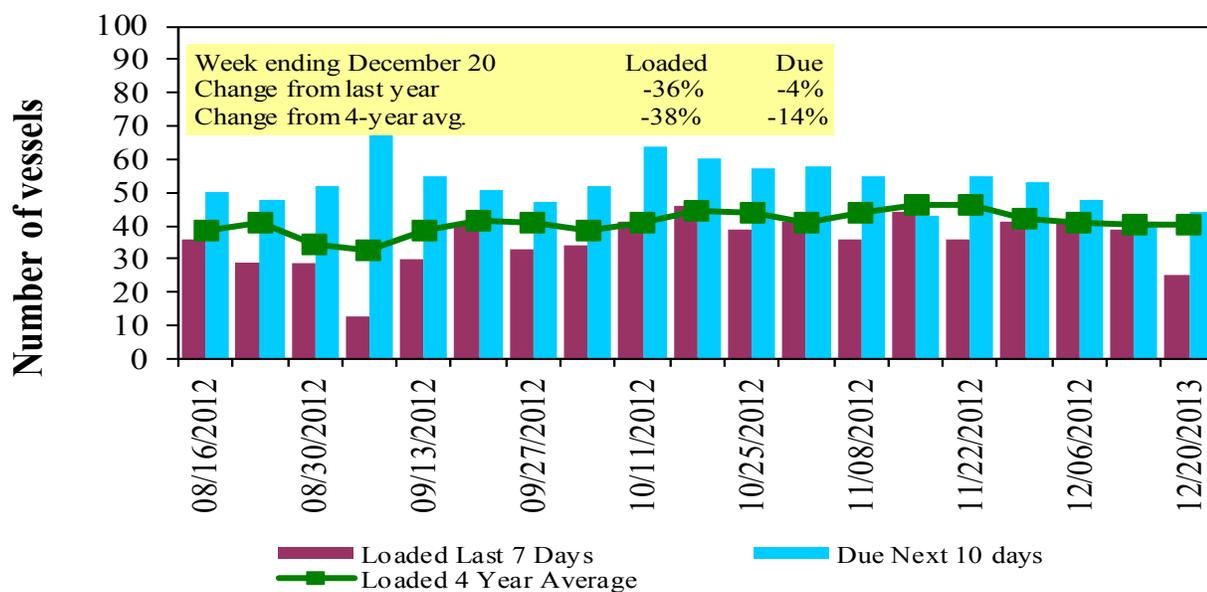
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
12/20/2012	39	25	44	15	n/a
12/13/2012	39	39	41	9	n/a
2011 range	(14..65)	(28..54)	(34..83)	(5..25)	(1..20)
2011 avg.	31	38	53	15	12

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 16

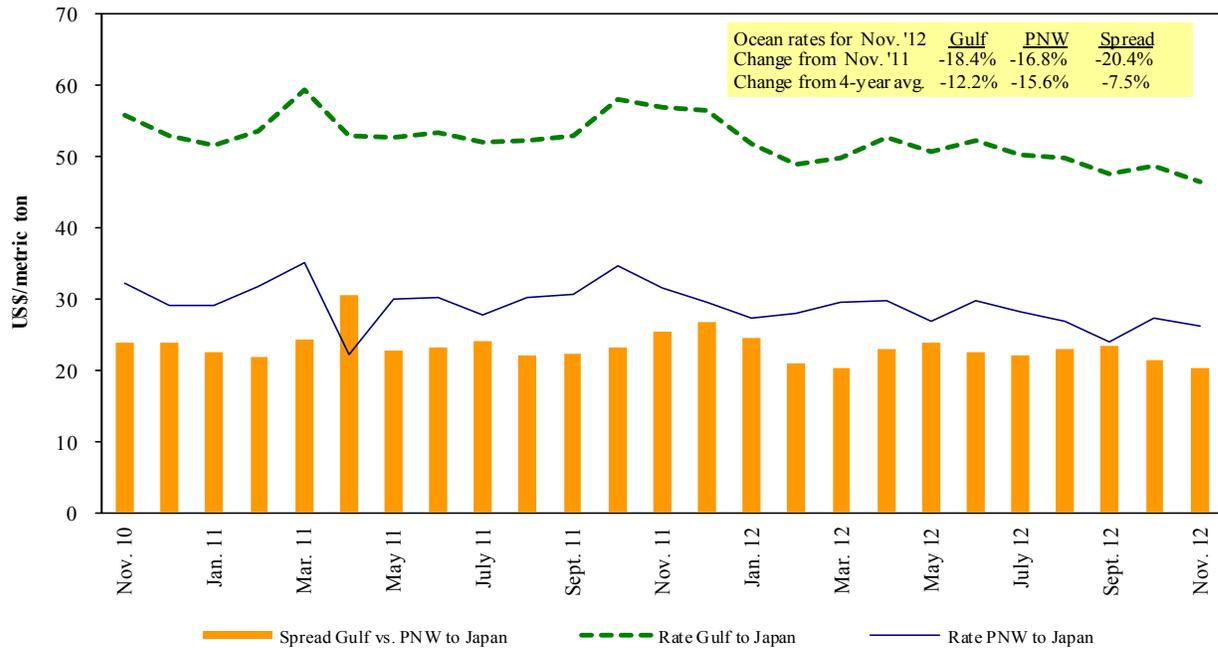
U.S. Gulf^d Vessel Loading Activity



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 12/22/2012

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US\$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Dec 5/10	55,000	42.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 20/30	55,000	43.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 20/25	55,000	44.85
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 15/25	55,000	49.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 10/20	55,000	46.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 9/19	55,000	48.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Nov 5/10	55,000	46.00
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 20/30	55,000	43.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Oct 15/24	55,000	43.00
Black Sea	Spain Mediterranean	Heavy Grain	Nov 30/Dec 3	50,000	11.00
Brazil	Portugal	Heavy Grain	Dec 10/20	60,000	19.50
Brazil	Portugal	Heavy Grain	Nov 10/20	60,000	15.50
France	Algeria	Wheat	Nov 2/7	25,000	22.00
India	S.Korea	Wheat	Oct5/15	55,000	15.00
River Plate	Tunisia	Heavy Grain	Oct 5/15	30,000	28.50
River Plate	Algeria	Wheat	Nov 7/9	40,000	25.00
Ukraine	Rotterdam	Rapeseed	Dec 8/17	60,000	14.80
Ukraine	S. Arabia	Barley	Oct 25/30	56,500	25.25

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

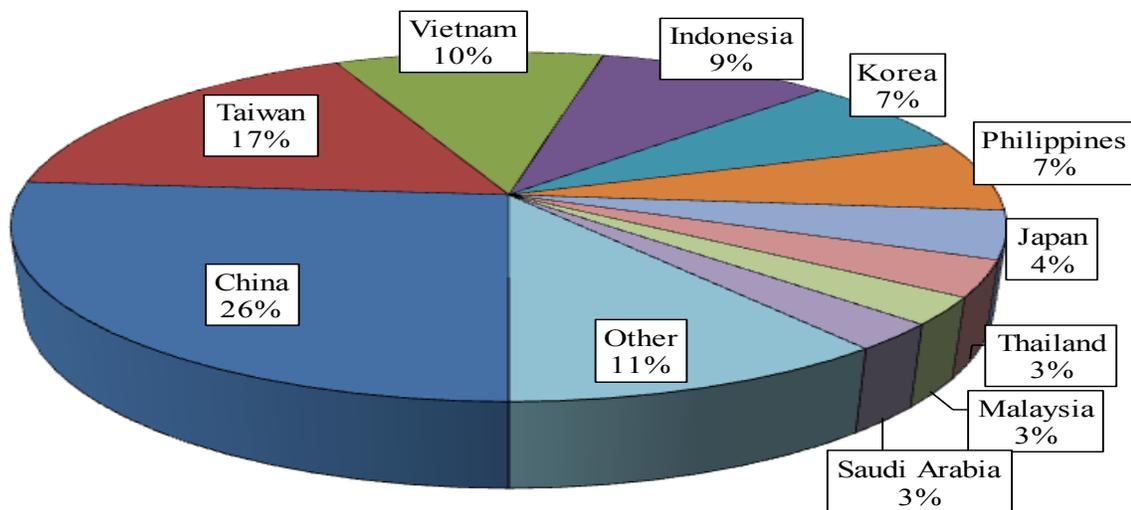
¹50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

In 2011, containers were used to transport 7 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports, up 2 percentage points from 2010. Approximately 11 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2011 went to Asia in containers, up 4 percentage points from 2010. Asia is the top destination for U.S. containerized grain exports—96 percent in 2011.

Figure 18

Top 10 Destination Markets for U.S. Containerized Grain Exports, September 2012

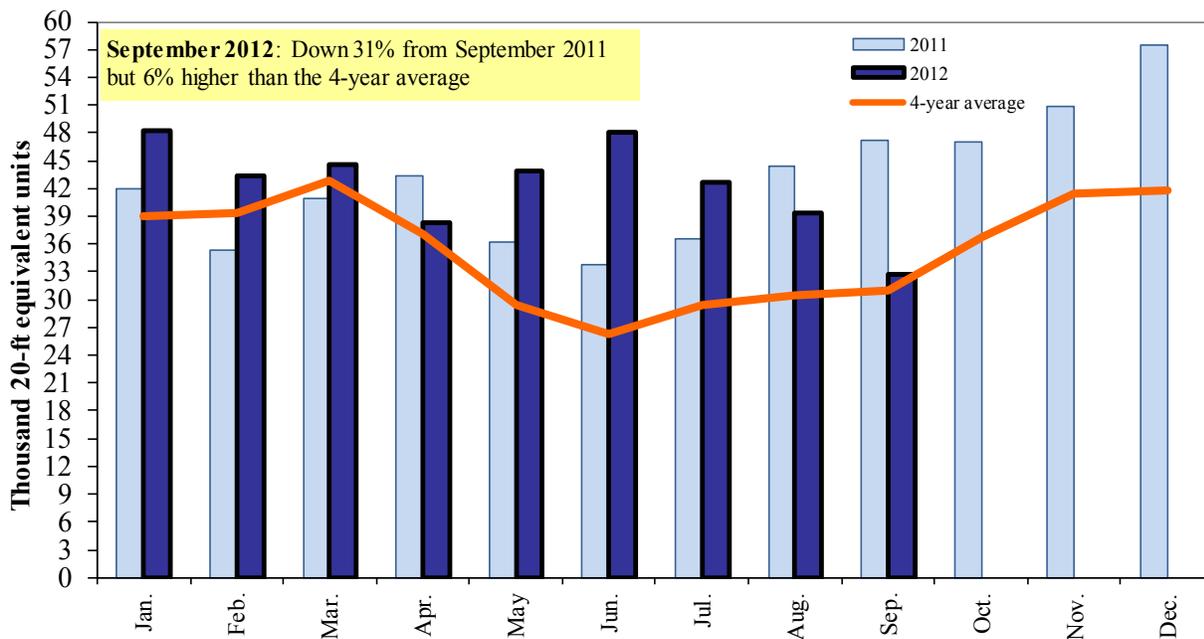


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

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*. December 27, 2012. Web: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.12-27-2012>

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