



United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Truck and Ocean Rate Advisory



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Grain Truck and Ocean Rate Advisory

TRUCK ADVISORY

Truck advisory presents overall situation of grain truck transportation market including national and regional truck rates, truck availability, truck usage and diesel fuel prices.

Table 1. U.S. grain truck market, 2nd quarter 2020

	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	Truck availability	Truck use	Future truck use
	¹ Rate per mile, per truckload			Quarterly index*		
				1 = Very easy to 5 = Very difficult	1 = Much lower to 5 = Much higher	
National average²	4.14	2.50	2.09	2.50	3.50	3.36
North Central	3.82	2.42	2.00	2.50	3.50	3.38
East	3.56	NA	NA	1.50	4.00	4.00
South Central	3.20	2.97	2.30	4.00	3.00	3.00
West	3.72	NA	NA	2.00	3.00	3.00
Rocky Mountain	5.16	NA	NA	3.00	3.50	3.00

¹ Rates are based on trucks with 80,000-pound (lb) gross vehicle weight limit, and are quoted in U.S. dollars

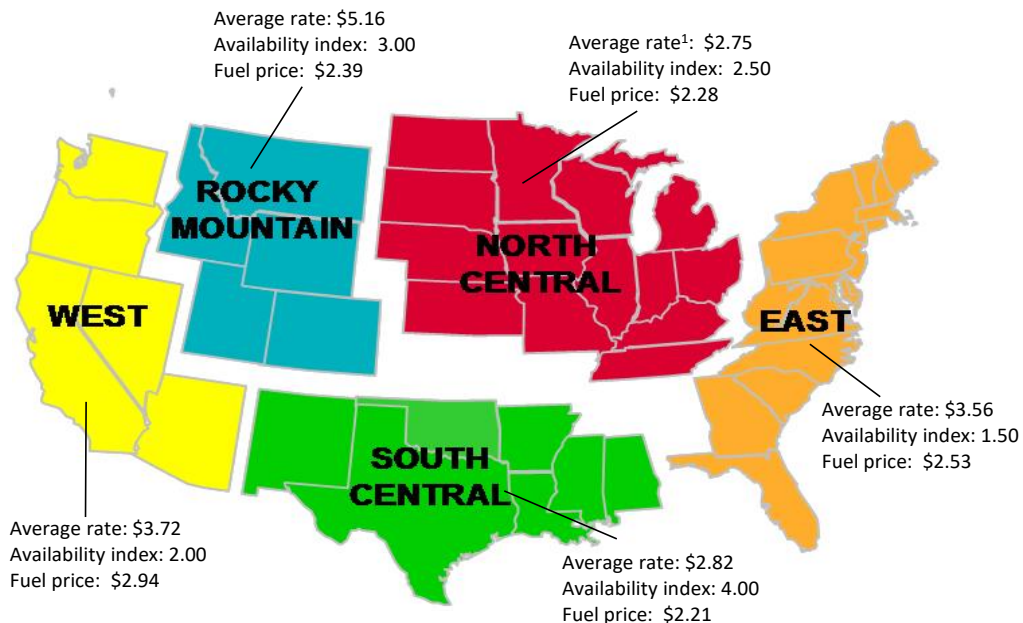
² National average is based on rates received from various States, but not every State is represented.

*Current and future truck use indices are based on comparison to the same quarter last year.

Note: NA = not available because of low or no response rate.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 1. U.S. Grain Truck Market, 2nd quarter 2020



¹ Average rate per loaded mile, based on truck rates for trips of 25, 100, and 200 miles.

Note: Fuel prices are a quarterly average (unit per gallon).

Source: Fuel price data are from U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, and availability index data are from USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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TRUCK USE

Truck use indices represent current and future national and regional truck use.

Table 2. Regional truck use index*

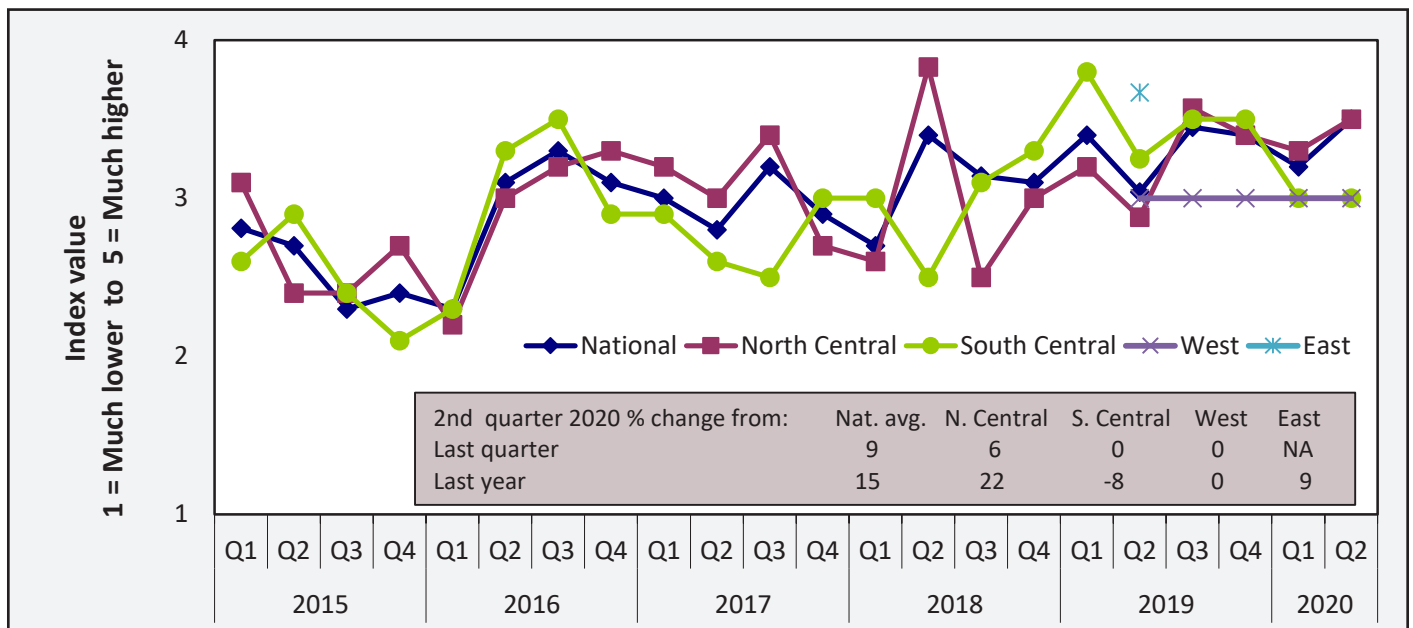
Current truck use 1 = Much lower to 5 = Much higher					Future truck use 1 = Much lower to 5 = Much higher			
2019	1st qtr.	2nd qtr.	3rd qtr.	4th qtr.	1st qtr.	2nd qtr.	3rd qtr.	4th qtr.
National	3.40	3.04	3.45	3.40	3.60	3.41	2.92	3.30
North Central	3.20	2.88	3.57	3.40	3.30	3.53	2.33	3.30
East	NA	3.67	NA	NA	NA	2.67	NA	NA
South Central	3.80	3.25	3.50	3.50	4.00	3.50	2.33	3.50
West	NA	3.00	3.00	3.00	NA	3.50	3.50	3.00
Rocky Mountain	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2020	1st qtr.	2nd qtr.	3rd qtr.	4th qtr.	1st qtr.	2nd qtr.	3rd qtr.	4th qtr.
National	3.20	3.50			2.80	3.36		
North Central	3.30	3.50			2.80	3.38		
East	NA	NA			NA	NA		
South Central	3.00	3.00			3.00	3.00		
West	3.00	3.00			2.50	3.00		
Rocky Mountain	NA	3.50			NA	3.00		

*Current and future truck use indices are based on comparison to the same quarter last year.

Note: qtr. = quarter; NA = not available.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 2. National truck usage, 2nd quarter 2020



Note: Q = quarter; Nat. = national; avg. = average; N. = north; S. = south; NA = not available.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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TRUCK AVAILABILITY

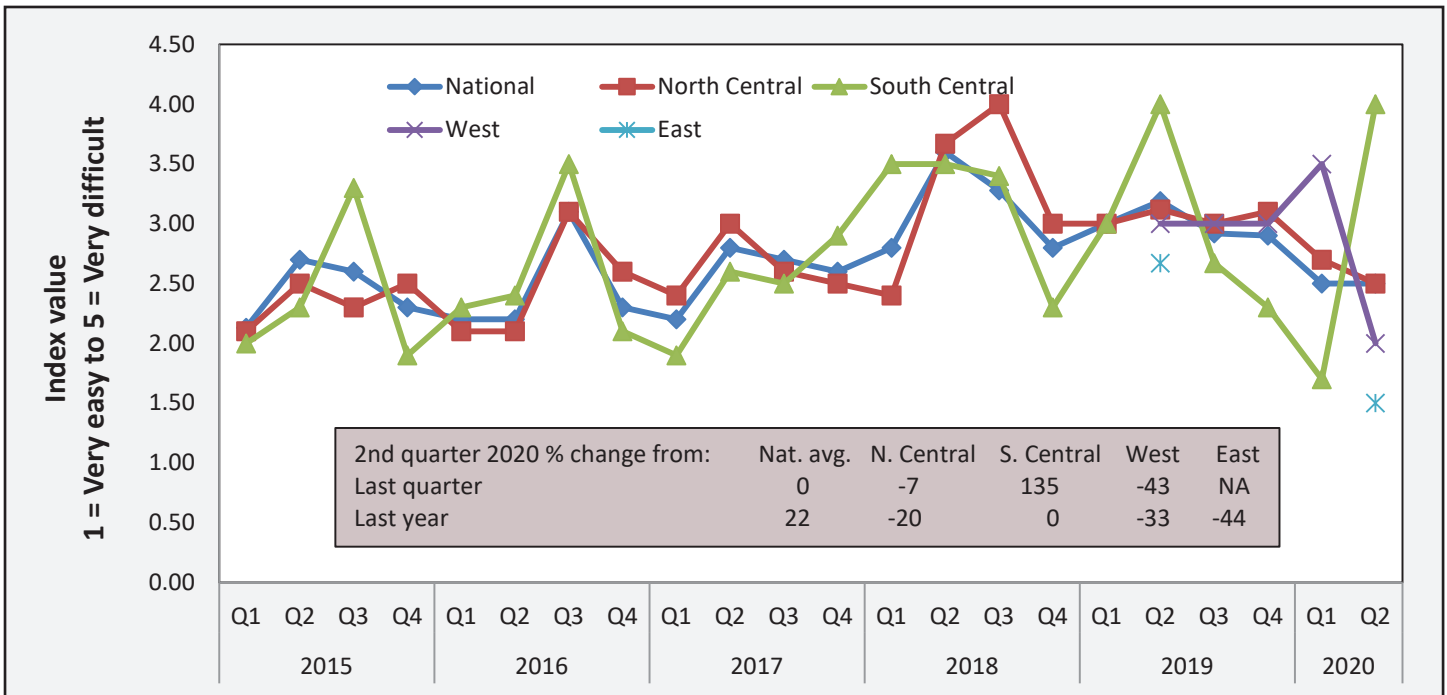
The truck availability index tracks the trends in perceived ease of hiring a truck as reported by grain elevators.

Table 3. Quarterly national truck availability index

Region	1 = Very easy 5 = Very difficult			Current quarter as % change from	
	2nd qtr. 2020	Previous qtr.	Same qtr. last year	Previous qtr.	Same qtr. last year
National	2.50	2.50	3.19	0	-22
North Central	2.50	2.70	3.12	-7	-20
East	1.50	NA	2.67	NA	-44
South Central	4.00	1.70	4.00	135	0
West	2.00	3.50	3.00	-43	-33

Note: qtr. = quarter; NA = not available.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 3. National truck availability



Note: Q = quarter; Nat. = national; avg. = average; N. = north; S. = south; NA = not available.
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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TRUCK RATES

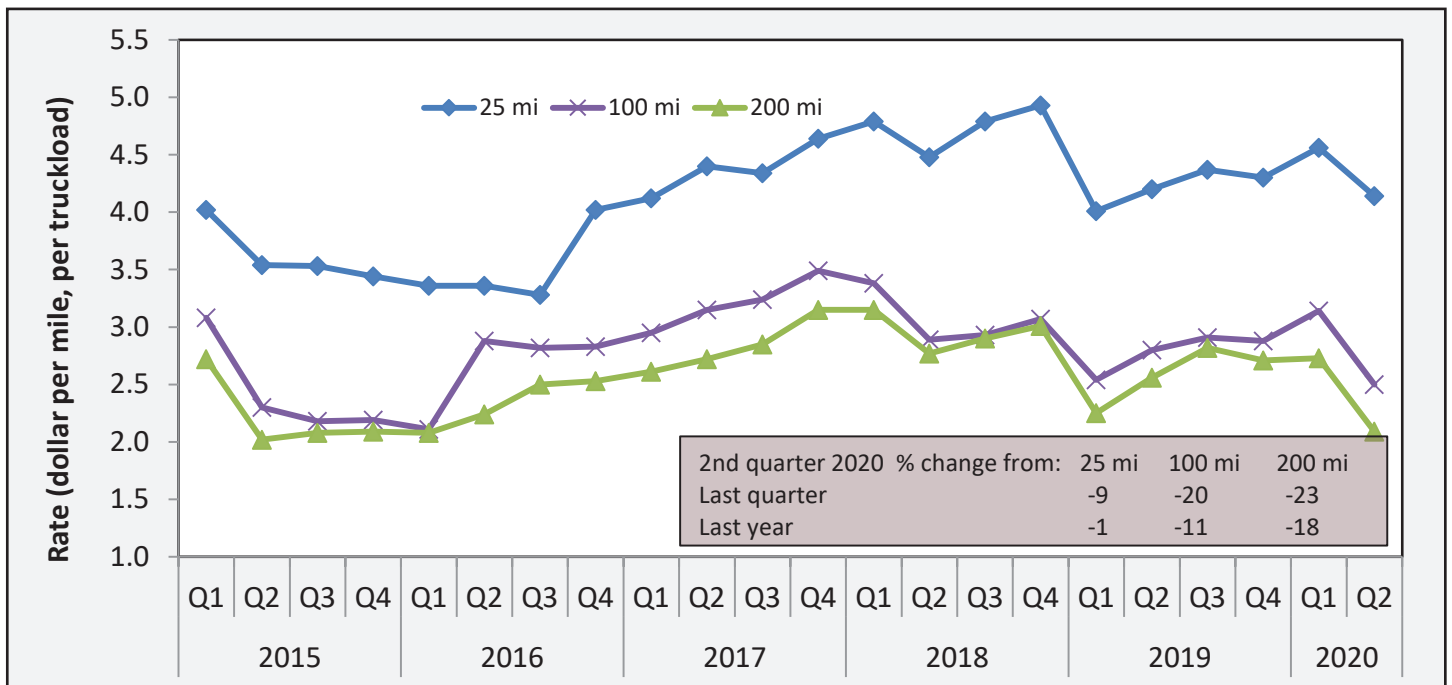
The truck is assumed to carry 55,000 lbs. or 25 metric tons of grain. Rates per metric ton per mile can be calculated from rates per truckload.

Table 4. Average grain truck rates for short and long hauls, 2nd quarter 2020

Region	(\$/mile per truckload)			% change from					
				Last qtr.			Same qtr. last year		
	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles
National average	4.14	2.50	2.09	-9.2%	-20.4%	-23.4%	-1.4%	-10.7%	-18.4%
North Central	3.82	2.42	2.00	-17.1%	-9.4%	-32.0%	-12.6%	-11.7%	-24.0%
East	3.56	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
South Central	3.20	2.97	2.30	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-10.1%	15.1%	13.9%
West	3.72	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rocky Mountain	5.16	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Note: qtr. = quarter; NA = not available.
 Rates are based on trucks with 80,000-pound (lb) gross vehicle weight limit.
 Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 4. National average truck rates by trip distance



Note: Q = quarter; mi = miles.
 Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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U.S. DIESEL FUEL RATES

The diesel fuel price provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates. Diesel fuel is a significant expense for grain movements.

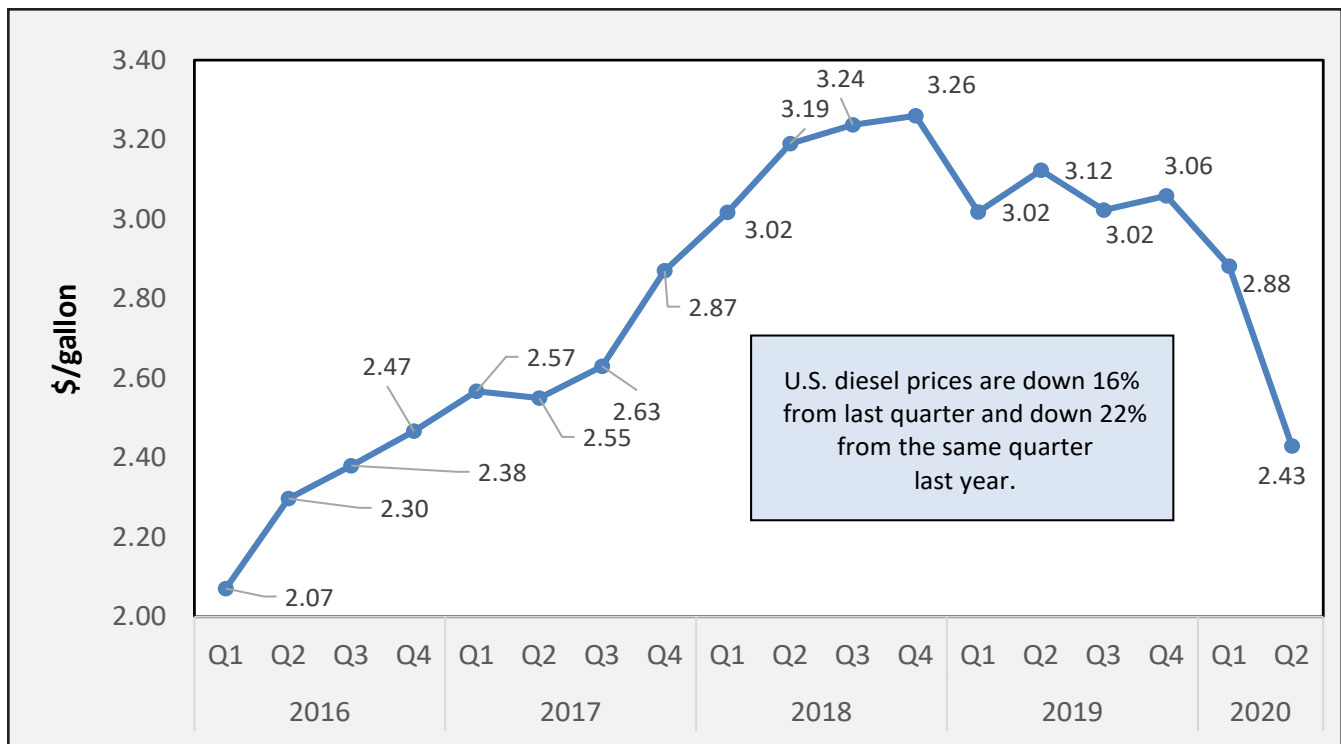
Table 5. 2nd quarter 2020 average diesel fuel prices (all types - \$/gallon)

Location	Price	Change from	
		Last qtr.	Same qtr. last year
East Coast	2.53	-0.40	-0.62
New England	2.66	-0.37	-0.55
Central Atlantic	2.71	-0.41	-0.63
Lower Atlantic	2.38	-0.41	-0.63
Midwest	2.28	-0.48	-0.74
Gulf Coast	2.21	-0.44	-0.68
Rocky Mountain	2.39	-0.48	-0.73
West Coast	2.94	-0.50	-0.76
California	3.23	-0.52	-0.81
U.S.	2.43	-0.45	-0.69

Note: qtr. = quarter.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Figure 5. U.S. average on-highway diesel fuel prices



Note: Q = quarter.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

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OCEAN RATES

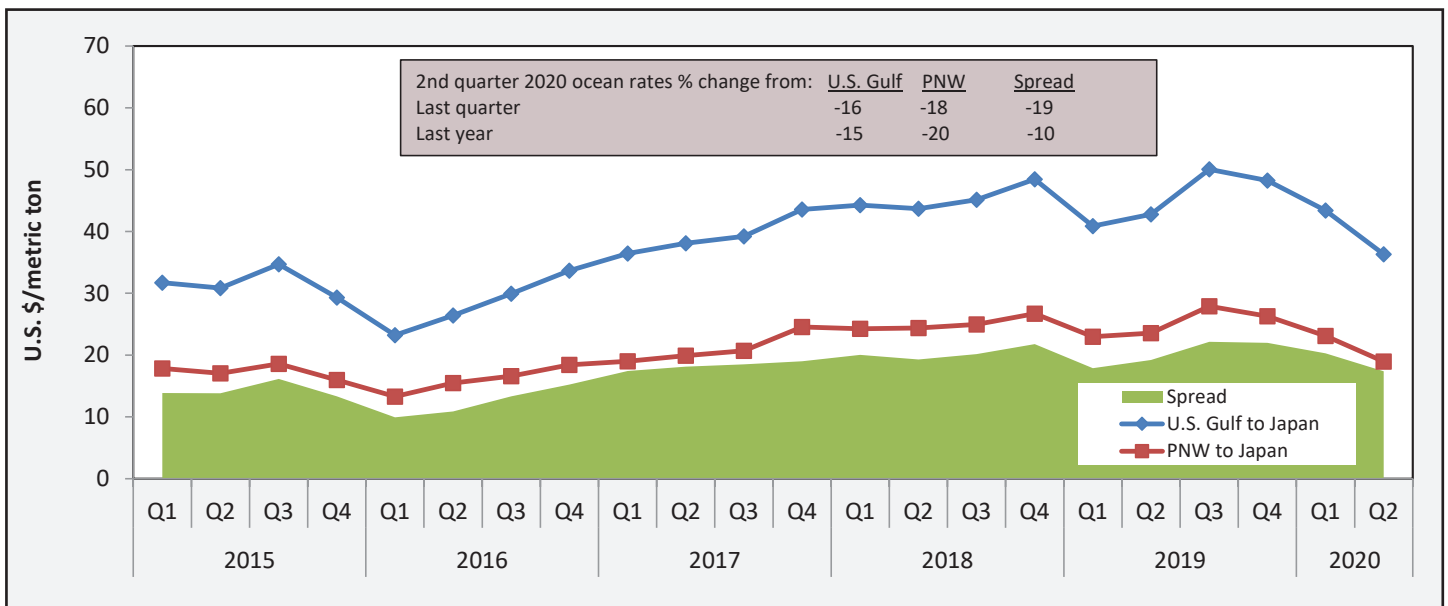
Quarterly ocean freight rates for shipping bulk grain from the U.S. Gulf and Pacific Northwest to selected foreign markets in dollars per metric ton.

Table 6. Ocean shipping rates for bulk grain (\$/metric ton)

U.S. Gulf to										
Country	1st qtr. 2019	2nd qtr. 2019	3rd qtr. 2019	4th qtr. 2019	Avg.	1st qtr. 2020	2nd qtr. 2020	3rd qtr. 2020	4th qtr. 2020	Avg.
Japan	40.85	42.78	50.05	48.26	45.49	43.38	36.33			39.86
Rotterdam	16.73	16.62	20.21	19.02	18.15	14.82	13.18			14.00
China	39.61	42.2	49.35	47.05	44.55	41.98	35.40			38.69
Mexico	13.89	14.01	15.5	15.23	14.66	13.64	12.41			13.03
Colombia: Atlantic Ports (East)	19.75	19.99	21.13	19.74	20.15	18.85	17.96			18.41
Colombia: Pacific Ports (West)	29.38	29.1	29.02	32.01	29.88	27.11	27.55			27.33
Colombia: Pacific Ports (West)										
PNW to										
Country	1st qtr. 2019	2nd qtr. 2019	3rd qtr. 2019	4th qtr. 2019	Avg.	1st qtr. 2020	2nd qtr. 2020	3rd qtr. 2020	4th qtr. 2020	Avg.
Japan	22.98	23.56	27.9	26.28	25.18	23.10	18.94			21.02
China	22.44	22.93	27.28	25.71	24.59	22.28	18.20			20.24

Note: qtr. = quarter; avg. = average; PNW = Pacific Northwest.
Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

Figure 6. Grain vessel rates and spread, U.S. to Japan



Note: Q = quarter; PNW = Pacific Northwest.
Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

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CONTACTS AND LINKS

Surajudeen Olowolayemo, Economist

E-mail: Surajudeen.Olowolayemo@usda.gov

202.720.0119

April Taylor, Economist

E-mail: April.Taylor@usda.gov

202.720.7880

Brian McGregor, Agricultural Marketing Specialist

E-mail: Brian.McGregor@usda.gov

202.720.0035

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Related Websites

- [Grain Transportation Report](#)
- [Mexico Transport Cost Indicator Report](#)
- [Brazil Soybean Transportation Indicator](#)
- [Agricultural Refrigerated Truck Quarterly](#)

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