



# Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service  
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## WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

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### DOT Announces Funding Opportunity for Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP)

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is inviting competitive grant applications for projects that improve facilities related to operating coastal seaports, inland river ports, and Great Lakes ports. Of the \$225 million total available, \$200 million will be reserved for grants to coastal seaports and Great Lakes ports. The minimum grant size is \$1 million, with a Federal cost share not exceeding 80 percent. Evaluation criteria include a project's effect on the movement of goods, effectiveness of its use of Federal funding, its net benefits, its readiness to start, and its use of domestically produced materials. The deadline to [submit an application for PIDP is 8 p.m. EDT May 18, 2020](#).

### DHS Designates Port and Waterways Workers as Critical Employees

On March 19, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued a [memorandum](#) listing the types of workers who qualify as critical infrastructure personnel. These include port workers, mariners, equipment operators, and "employees who maintain marine vessels and the equipment and infrastructure that enables operations that encompass movement of cargo and passengers." This "critical" designation will allow these workers to continue working in their normal job locations during shelter-in-place or similar pandemic response orders.

### Grain Inspections Down for Third Consecutive Week

For the week ending March 19, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 1.77 million metric tons (mmt). Continuing a 3-week downward trend, total grain inspections were down 11 percent from the previous week, down 23 percent from last year, and down 31 percent from the 3-year average. Compared to the previous week, wheat inspections dropped 25 percent, and corn inspections decreased 17 percent. Soybean inspections, however, increased 15 percent from the previous week as shipments destined to China increased. Total Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain inspections jumped 45 percent from week to week, but the increase could not offset the decreases in other export regions, such as the Mississippi Gulf and Interior, which decreased 19 percent and 43 percent, respectively. Year to date grain inspections are currently down 9 percent from the same time last year.

## Snapshots by Sector

### Export Sales

For the week ending March 12, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 22 million metric tons (mmt). This represented a 33-percent decrease in outstanding sales, compared to the same time last year. Net **corn export sales** reached 0.905 mmt, down 39 percent from the past week. Net **soybean export sales** were 0.632 mmt, up significantly from the previous week. Net weekly **wheat export sales** reached 0.338 mmt, down 25 percent from the previous week.

### Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 19,911 **grain carloads** during the week ending March 14. This was a 5-percent decrease from the previous week, 7 percent more than last year, and 10 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Average April shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers (per car) were \$75 above tariff for the week ending March 19. This was \$190 more than last week and \$546 lower than this week last year. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.

### Barge

For the week ending March 21, **barge grain movements** totaled 445,136. This was a 21-percent decrease from the previous week and 36 percent less than the same period last year.

For the week ending March 21, 273 grain barges **moved down river**—73 fewer barges than the previous week. There were 561 grain barges **unloaded in New Orleans**, unchanged from the previous week.

### Ocean

For the week ending March 19, 24 **oceangoing grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf—29 percent fewer than the same period last year. Within the next 10 days (starting March 20), 38 vessels were expected to be loaded—35 percent fewer than the same period last year.

As of March 19, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was \$41.25. This was 5 percent less than the previous week. The rate from PNW to Japan was \$21.25 per mt, 9 percent less than the previous week.

### Fuel

For the week ending March 23, the U.S. average **diesel fuel price** decreased 7.4 cents from the previous week to \$2.659 per gallon, 42.1 cents below the same week last year.

# Feature Article/Calendar

## Soybean Transportation Costs Varied; Landed Costs Rose in Fourth Quarter 2019

The United States and Brazil are the world's leading producers and exporters of soybeans. Although the countries' cost structures in production and transportation differ, both countries compete for the same overseas markets—including China, the world's **largest importer** of soybeans. Here, we analyze the quarterly and yearly changes in the costs of moving soybeans from the United States and Brazil to Hamburg, Germany, and Shanghai, China.

From the third quarter to the fourth quarter 2019 (quarter to quarter), the transportation costs of shipping U.S. soybeans to Europe (table 1) and China (table 2) fluctuated, and the costs from Brazil to both foreign markets (tables 1 and 2) declined. However, U.S. and Brazilian landed costs to both Europe and China increased quarter to quarter.

U.S. transportation costs to Europe and China through the Gulf were pushed down by combined decreases in barge and ocean rates, which more than offset a quarter-to-quarter increase in the truck rates. Barge rates declined in response to a larger supply of empty barges heading upriver for repositioning. Also, navigation difficulties that had dominated most of the summer improved significantly, making travel easier. The lower risk of delays could have made carriers more willing to sell because there was less risk of unanticipated cost overruns. Ocean freight rates for shipping bulk items, including grain fell from quarter to quarter because of lackluster iron ore and coal trade (see January 16, 2019 *Grain Transportation Report (GTR)*).

**Table 1-Quarterly costs of transporting soybeans from United States and Brazil to Hamburg, Germany**

	2018	2019	2019	Percent change		2018	2019	2019	Percent change	
	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	3 <sup>rd</sup> qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	3 <sup>rd</sup> qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.
<b>United States (via U.S. Gulf)</b>										
	<b>Minneapolis, MN</b>					<b>Davenport, IA</b>				
	--\$/mt--					--\$/mt--				
Truck	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84
Barge	31.66	31.39	26.54	-16.17	-15.45	24.28	28.74	22.93	-5.56	-20.22
Ocean <sup>1</sup>	20.83	20.21	19.02	-8.69	-5.89	20.83	20.21	19.02	-8.69	-5.89
Total transportation	64.59	60.78	57.02	-11.72	-6.19	57.21	58.13	53.41	-6.64	-8.12
Farm value <sup>2</sup>	312.08	303.87	309.50	-0.83	1.85	313.55	303.75	314.65	0.35	3.59
Landed cost <sup>3</sup>	376.67	364.65	366.52	-2.69	0.51	370.76	361.88	368.06	-0.73	1.71
Transport % of landed cost	17.15	16.67	15.56			15.43	16.06	14.51		
<b>Brazil</b>										
	<b>North MT<sup>4</sup> - Santos<sup>5</sup></b>					<b>South GO<sup>4</sup> - Paranaguá<sup>5</sup></b>				
	--\$/mt--					--\$/mt--				
Truck	79.37	88.37	72.86	-8.20	-17.55	51.68	51.28	42.16	-18.42	-17.78
Ocean <sup>6</sup>	25.00	27.00	31.00	24.00	14.81	26.00	27.00	30.75	18.27	13.89
Total transportation	104.37	115.37	103.86	-0.49	-9.98	77.68	78.28	72.91	-6.14	-6.86
Farm value <sup>7</sup>	293.43	286.87	307.47	4.78	7.18	314.40	286.67	301.77	-4.02	5.27
Landed cost	397.80	402.24	411.33	3.40	2.26	392.08	364.95	374.68	-4.44	2.67
Transport % of landed cost	26.24	28.68	25.25			19.81	21.45	19.46		

<sup>1</sup>Source for the U.S. ocean rates: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

<sup>2</sup>Source for the U.S. farm values: USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service.

<sup>3</sup>Landed cost is total cost plus farm value.

<sup>4</sup>Producing regions: MT= Mato Grosso, GO = Goiás.

<sup>5</sup>Export ports.

<sup>6</sup>Source for Brazil's ocean rates: University of São Paulo, Brazil and USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service.

<sup>7</sup>Source for Brazil's farm values: Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento.

Note: qtr. = quarter; yr. = year; mt = metric ton; total may not add exactly because of rounding.

Source: Compiled by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

However, quarter-to-quarter truck rates for shipments through the Gulf and Pacific Northwest (PNW) generally increased. Truck rates increased partly in response to increased demand for trucking services from farms to either barge- or rail-served local or country elevators. Soybeans are then transported downriver by barge to export ports on the Gulf or transported by rail to export ports in PNW. A total of 5.38 million tons of

soybeans shipped downriver in the fourth quarter, compared to 4.42 million tons in the third quarter. In addition, the retail U.S. average **diesel prices** were relatively high during the fourth quarter of 2019. The quarter-to-quarter costs of transporting U.S. soybeans through PNW increased, responding to increases in truck and tariff rail rates.

**Table 2-Quarterly costs of transporting soybeans from United States and Brazil to Shanghai, China**

	2018	2019	2019	Percent change		2018	2019	2019	Percent change	
	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	3 <sup>rd</sup> qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	3 <sup>rd</sup> qtr.	4 <sup>th</sup> qtr.	Yr. to yr.	Qtr. to qtr.
<b>United States (via U.S. Gulf)</b>										
	<b>Minneapolis, MN</b>					<b>Davenport, IA</b>				
	--\$/mt--					--\$/mt--				
Truck	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84
Barge	31.66	31.39	26.54	-16.17	-15.45	24.28	28.74	22.93	-5.56	-20.22
Ocean <sup>1</sup>	47.52	49.35	47.05	-0.99	-4.66	47.52	49.35	47.05	-0.99	-4.66
Total transportation	91.28	89.92	85.05	-6.83	-5.42	83.90	87.27	81.44	-2.93	-6.68
Farm value <sup>2</sup>	312.08	303.87	309.50	-0.83	1.85	313.55	303.75	314.65	0.35	3.59
Landed cost <sup>3</sup>	403.36	393.79	394.55	-2.18	0.19	397.45	391.02	396.09	-0.34	1.30
Transport % of landed cost	22.63	22.83	21.56			21.11	22.32	20.56		
<b>Via PNW</b>										
	<b>Fargo, ND</b>					<b>Sioux Falls, SD</b>				
Truck	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84	12.10	9.18	11.46	-5.29	24.84
Rail <sup>4</sup>	56.11	56.11	57.10	1.76	1.76	57.10	57.10	58.09	1.73	1.73
Ocean	25.97	27.28	25.71	-1.00	-5.76	25.97	27.28	25.71	-1.00	-5.76
Total transportation	94.18	92.57	94.27	0.10	1.84	95.17	93.56	95.26	0.09	1.82
Farm value	299.83	281.33	293.09	-2.25	4.18	294.81	288.44	306.69	4.03	6.33
Landed cost	394.01	373.90	387.36	-1.69	3.60	389.98	382.00	401.95	3.07	5.22
Transport % of landed cost	23.90	24.76	24.34			24.40	24.49	23.70		
<b>Brazil</b>										
	<b>North MT<sup>5</sup> - Santos<sup>6</sup></b>					<b>South GO<sup>5</sup> - Paranagua<sup>6</sup></b>				
	--\$/mt--					--\$/mt--				
Truck	79.37	88.37	72.86	-8.20	-17.55	51.68	51.28	42.16	-18.42	-17.78
Ocean <sup>7</sup>	30.00	33.25	38.17	27.23	14.80	31.00	34.75	39.50	27.42	13.67
Total transportation	109.37	121.62	111.03	1.52	-8.71	82.68	86.03	81.66	-1.23	-5.08
Farm Value <sup>8</sup>	293.43	286.67	307.47	4.78	7.26	314.40	286.67	301.77	-4.02	5.27
Landed Cost	402.80	408.29	418.50	3.90	2.50	397.08	372.70	383.43	-3.44	2.88
Transport % of landed cost	27.15	29.79	26.53			20.82	23.08	21.30		

<sup>1</sup>Source for the U.S. Ocean freight rates: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

<sup>2</sup>Source for the U.S. farm values: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

<sup>3</sup>Landed cost is transportation cost plus farm value.

<sup>4</sup>Rail rates include fuel surcharges, but do not include the cost of purchasing empty rail cars in the secondary rail markets, which could exceed the rail tariff rate plus fuel surcharge shown in the table.

<sup>5</sup>Producing regions: MT= Mato Grosso, GO = Goiás.

<sup>6</sup>Export ports.

<sup>7</sup>Source for Brazil's ocean freight rates: University of São Paulo, Brazil and USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

<sup>8</sup>Source for Brazil's farm values: Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento.

Note: qtr. = quarter; yr. = year; mt = metric ton; total may not add exactly because of rounding.

Source: Compiled by the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Generally, quarter-to-quarter landed costs of soybeans to Europe and China increased for both the United States and Brazil, mostly in response to higher soybean farm values. From the United States, landed costs to Hamburg, Germany, were about \$367-\$368/metric ton (mt) (table 1) and to Shanghai, China, were \$387-\$402/mt (table 2). From Brazil, landed costs to Hamburg, Germany, were \$375-\$411/mt (table 1) and to Shanghai, China, were \$383-\$419/mt (table 2). For both the United States and Brazil, lower transportation costs and higher farm values pushed down transportation's share of landed costs. For the United States, transportation's share of landed costs to Hamburg, Germany, was 15-16 percent (table 1) and, to Shanghai, China, was 21-25 percent (table 2). For Brazil, transportation's share of landed costs to Hamburg, Germany, was 19-25 percent (table 1) and to Shanghai, China, was 21-27 percent (table 2). From fourth quarter 2018 to fourth quarter 2019, landed costs decreased in the United States and Brazil except for Sioux Falls, SD, and North Mato Grosso in Brazil where the farm values had increased over a year earlier.

According to USDA's grain inspection data, China imported 8.17 million metric tons (mmt) of U.S. soybeans during fourth quarter 2019 versus 5.64 mmt in the previous quarter and 0.32 mmt during the same period in 2018. Recent ease in trade tension between the United States and China may boost soybean exports to China in 2020.

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# Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

## Grain transport cost indicators<sup>1</sup>

For the week ending	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
		Unit train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
03/25/20	178	n/a	228	169	184	151
03/18/20	183	n/a	220	154	193	165

<sup>1</sup>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); ocean = routes to Japan (\$/metric ton); n/a = not available.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 2

## Market Update: U.S. origins to export position price spreads (\$/bushel)

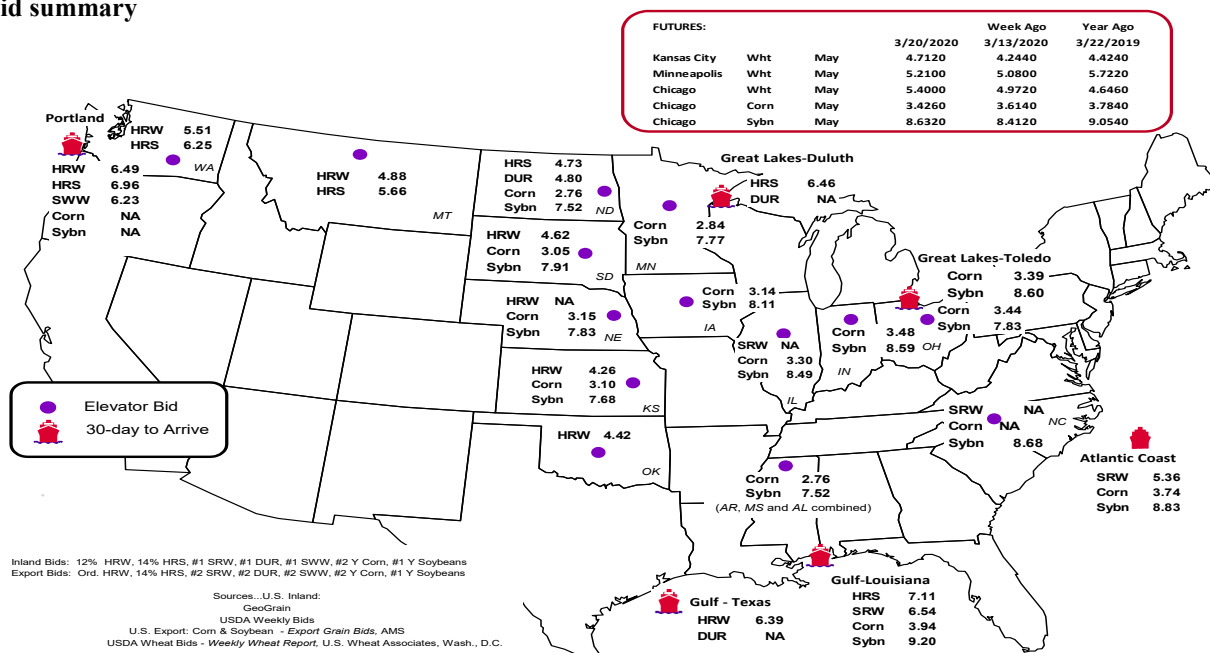
Commodity	Origin-destination	3/20/2020	3/13/2020
Corn	IL-Gulf	-0.64	-0.57
Corn	NE-Gulf	-0.79	-0.73
Soybean	IA-Gulf	-1.09	-1.07
HRW	KS-Gulf	-2.13	-2.04
HRS	ND-Portland	-2.23	-2.26

Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available; HRW = hard red winter wheat; HRS = hard red spring wheat.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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)<sup>1</sup>

For the week ending	Mississippi		Pacific	Atlantic &	Total	Week ending	Cross-border Mexico <sup>3</sup>
	Gulf	Texas Gulf	Northwest	East Gulf			
3/18/2020 <sup>p</sup>	244	929	4,906	236	6,315	3/14/2020	2,117
3/11/2020 <sup>r</sup>	133	958	3,767	309	5,167	3/7/2020	2,542
2020 YTD <sup>r</sup>	4,342	7,813	50,368	2,449	64,972	2020 YTD	25,259
2019 YTD <sup>r</sup>	8,239	12,516	64,075	4,540	89,370	2019 YTD	25,261
2020 YTD as % of 2019 YTD	53	62	79	54	73	% change YTD	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 2019 <sup>2</sup>	16	76	79	85	71	Last 4wks. % 2019	126
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. <sup>2</sup>	23	46	69	65	61	Last 4wks. % 4 yr.	127
Total 2019	40,974	51,167	251,181	16,192	359,514	Total 2019	127,622
Total 2018	22,118	46,532	310,449	21,432	400,531	Total 2018	129,674

<sup>1</sup>Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided.

<sup>2</sup>Compared with same 4-weeks in 2019 and prior 4-year average.

<sup>3</sup>Cross-border weekly data is approximately 15 percent below the Association of American Railroads' reported weekly carloads received by Mexican railroads. to reflect switching between Kansas City Southern de Mexico (KCSM) and Grupo Mexico.

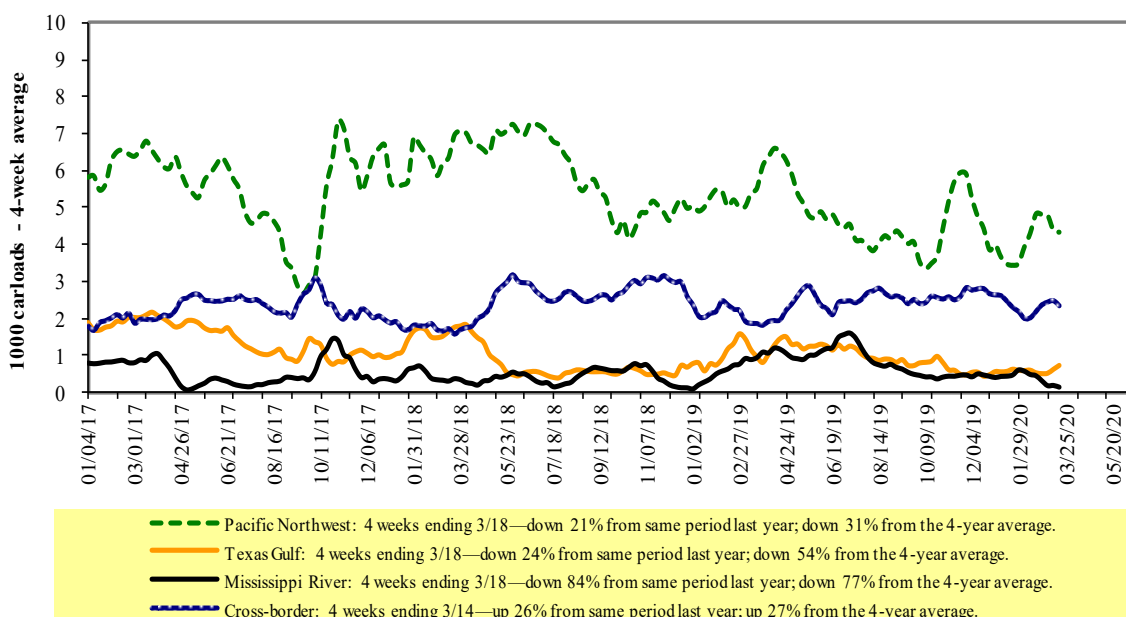
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available; wks. = weeks; avg. = average.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Railroads originate approximately 24 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

Figure 2

## Rail deliveries to port



Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 4

**Class I rail carrier grain car bulletin (grain carloads originated)**

For the week ending: 3/14/2020	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,679	2,257	10,476	965	4,534	19,911	3,944	3,718
This week last year	1,755	2,827	8,733	999	4,309	18,623	3,821	3,989
2020 YTD	18,948	24,573	113,864	11,895	48,498	217,778	36,438	40,114
2019 YTD	21,001	29,051	115,531	12,132	55,201	232,916	42,781	42,780
2020 YTD as % of 2019 YTD	90	85	99	98	88	94	85	94
Last 4 weeks as % of 2019*	94	87	110	95	94	101	83	100
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.**	95	89	96	112	80	92	86	95
Total 2019	91,611	137,194	568,369	58,527	260,269	1,115,970	212,530	235,892

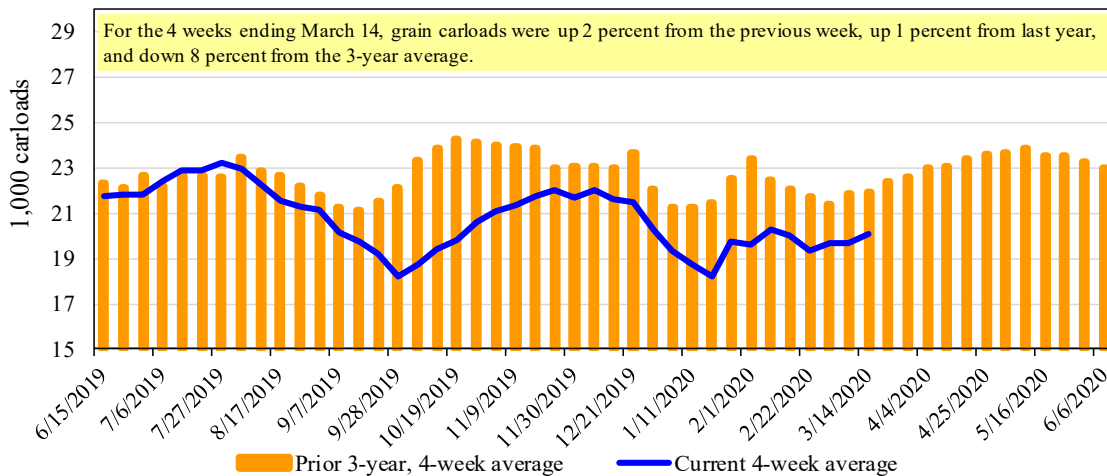
\*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

\*\*The past 4 weeks as a percent of the same period from the prior 3-year average. YTD = year-to-date; avg. = average; yr. = year.

Note: NS = Norfolk Southern; KCS = Kansas City Southern; UP = Union Pacific; CN = Canadian National; CP = Canadian Pacific.

Source: Association of American Railroads.

Figure 3

**Total weekly U.S. Class I railroad grain carloads**

Source: Association of American Railroads.

Table 5

**Railcar auction offerings<sup>1</sup> (\$/car)<sup>2</sup>**

For the week ending: 3/19/2020		Delivery period							
		Apr-20	Apr-19	May-20	May-19	Jun-20	Jun-19	Jul-20	Jul-19
BNSF <sup>3</sup>	COT grain units	0	n/a	0	n/a	no bid	n/a	no bids	n/a
	COT grain single-car	4	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	no bids	n/a
UP <sup>4</sup>	GCAS/Region 1	10	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	no offer	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	10	no offer	no bid	no offer	no bid	no offer	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup>Auction offerings are for single-car and unit train shipments only.

<sup>2</sup>Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction. n/a = not available.

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

<sup>4</sup>UP - GCAS = Union Pacific Railroad Grain Car Allocation System.

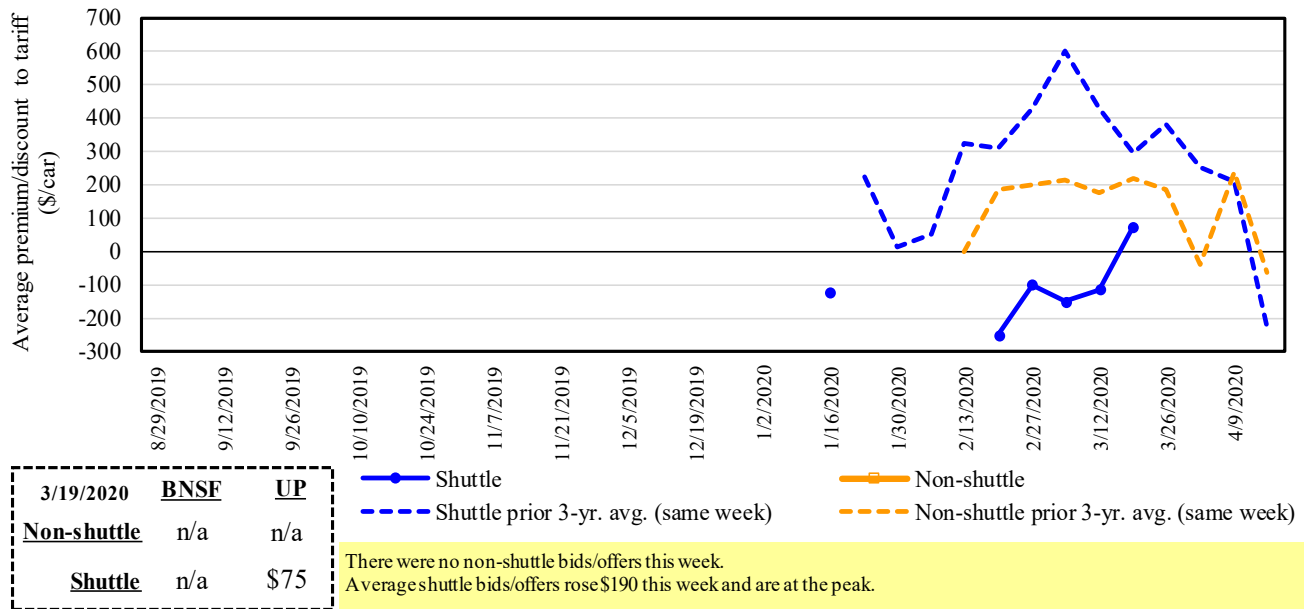
Region 1 includes: AR, IL, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX, WI, and Duluth, MN.

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

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

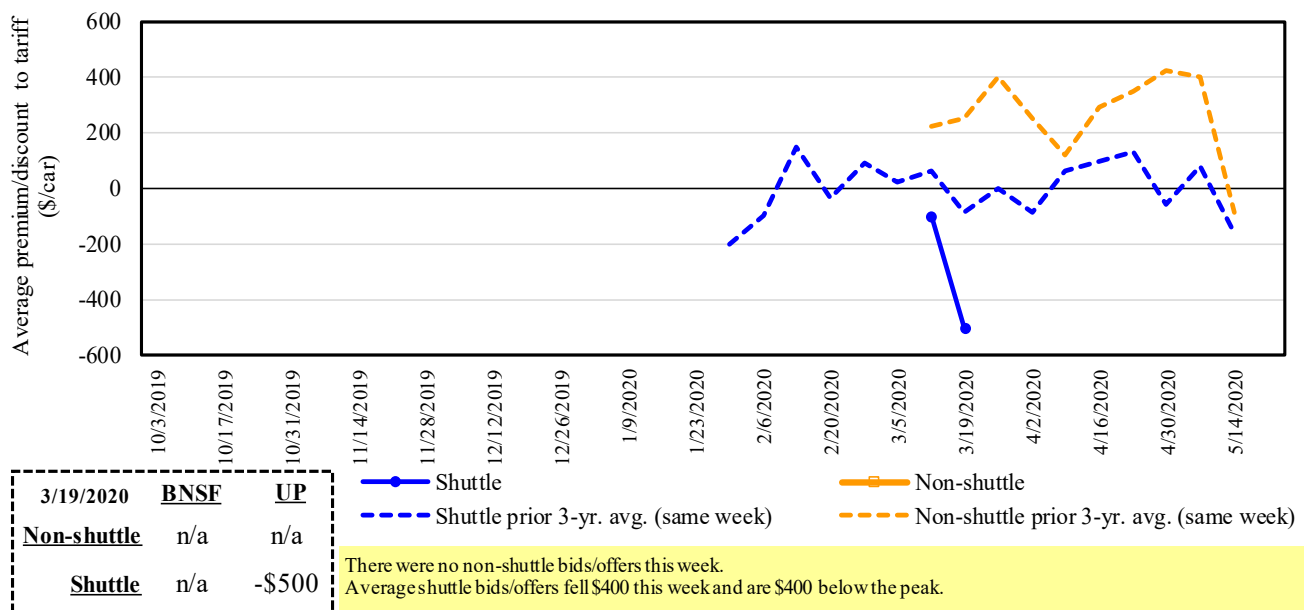
The **secondary rail market** information reflects trade values for service that was originally purchased from the railroad carrier as some form of guaranteed freight. The **auction and secondary rail** values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/supply.

**Figure 4**  
**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in April 2020, secondary market**



Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.  
 Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

**Figure 5**  
**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in May 2020, secondary market**

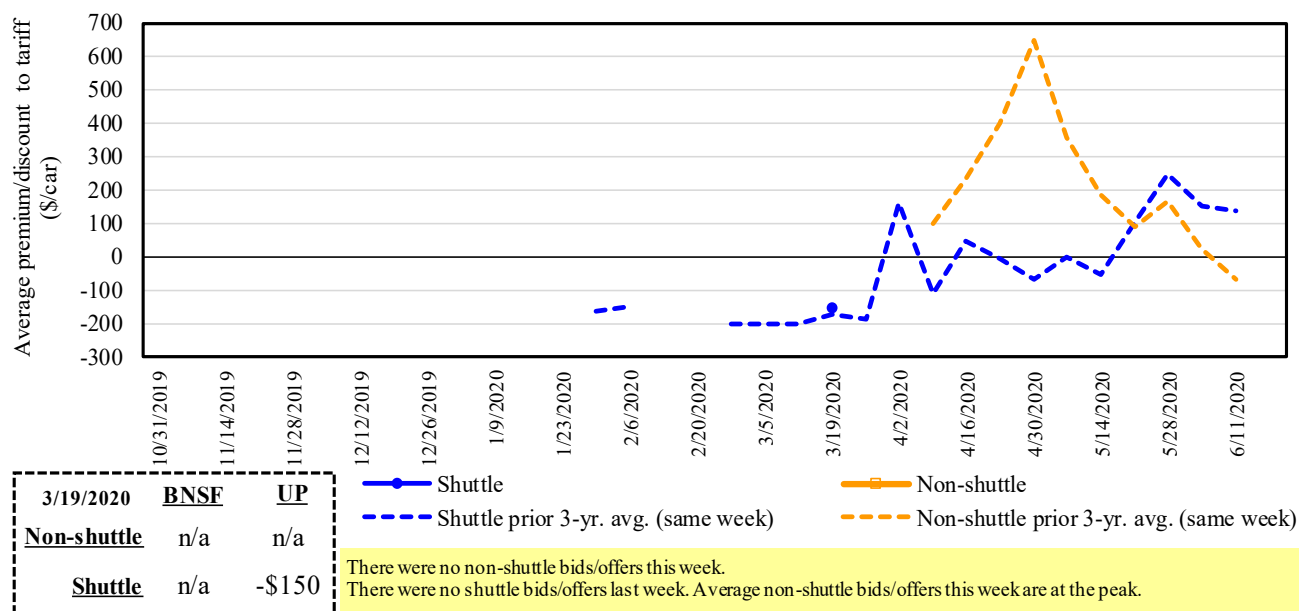


Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.  
 Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.



Figure 6

**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in June 2020, secondary market**



Note: Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available; avg. = average; yr. = year; BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.  
 Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 6

**Weekly secondary railcar market (\$/car)<sup>1</sup>**

For the week ending: 3/19/2020		Delivery period					
		Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20
<b>Non-shuttle</b>	<b>BNSF-GF</b>	n/a	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 2019	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<b>UP-Pool</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2019	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Shuttle</b>	<b>BNSF-GF</b>	n/a	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 2019	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<b>UP-Pool</b>	75	(500)	(150)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2019	(100)	(600)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup>Average premium/discount to tariff, \$/car-last week.

Note: Bids listed are market indicators only and are not guaranteed prices. n/a = not available; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool;

BNSF = BNSF Railway; UP = Union Pacific Railroad.

Data from James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.



The **tariff rail rate** is the base price of freight rail service. Together with **fuel surcharges** and any **auction and secondary rail** values, the tariff rail rate constitutes the full cost of shipping by rail. Typically, auction and secondary rail values are a small fraction of the full cost of shipping by rail relative to the tariff rate. However, during times of high rail demand or short supply, high auction and secondary rail values can exceed the cost of the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Table 7

**Tariff rail rates for unit and shuttle train shipments<sup>1</sup>**

March 2020	Origin region <sup>3</sup>	Destination region <sup>3</sup>	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per:		Percent change Y/Y <sup>4</sup>
					metric ton	bushel <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Unit train</b>							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	\$3,983	\$86	\$40.41	\$1.10	0
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	\$4,333	\$0	\$43.03	\$1.17	2
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	\$7,240	\$0	\$71.90	\$1.96	1
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	\$4,525	\$151	\$46.44	\$1.26	-1
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,976	\$0	\$69.28	\$1.89	1
	Colby, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,801	\$166	\$49.32	\$1.34	0
Corn	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	\$5,121	\$231	\$53.14	\$1.45	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,900	\$171	\$40.43	\$1.03	-3
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	\$6,816	\$0	\$67.69	\$1.72	4
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	\$2,415	\$36	\$24.34	\$0.62	7
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	\$5,818	\$0	\$57.78	\$1.47	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	\$4,874	\$0	\$48.40	\$1.23	4
Soybeans	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	\$3,800	\$106	\$38.79	\$0.99	-2
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	\$5,680	\$310	\$59.48	\$1.51	-1
	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	\$3,631	\$186	\$37.91	\$1.03	-11
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$5,630	\$0	\$55.91	\$1.52	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	\$6,932	\$0	\$68.84	\$1.87	3
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	\$5,107	\$0	\$50.71	\$1.38	3
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$4,645	\$171	\$47.83	\$1.30	-2
<b>Shuttle train</b>							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	\$4,143	\$0	\$41.14	\$1.12	2
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$4,361	\$0	\$43.31	\$1.18	2
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	\$7,074	\$0	\$70.25	\$1.91	20
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	\$5,801	\$0	\$57.61	\$1.57	1
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$6,121	\$0	\$60.78	\$1.65	1
	Colby, KS	Portland, OR	\$6,012	\$272	\$62.40	\$1.70	1
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,180	\$0	\$51.44	\$1.31	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,140	\$0	\$51.04	\$1.30	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	\$3,820	\$171	\$39.63	\$1.01	0
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	\$3,880	\$0	\$38.53	\$0.98	0
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	\$4,220	\$134	\$43.24	\$1.10	4
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	\$5,180	\$0	\$51.44	\$1.31	0
Soybeans	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	\$5,000	\$0	\$49.65	\$1.26	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	\$5,850	\$0	\$58.09	\$1.58	2
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	\$5,900	\$0	\$58.59	\$1.59	2
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	\$5,750	\$0	\$57.10	\$1.55	2
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	\$4,875	\$197	\$50.37	\$1.37	2
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	\$4,805	\$0	\$47.72	\$1.30	4
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	\$5,860	\$278	\$60.96	\$1.66	2

<sup>1</sup>A unit train refers to shipments of at least 25 cars. Shuttle train rates are generally available for qualified shipments of

75-120 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

<sup>2</sup>Approximate load per car = 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons): corn 56 pounds per bushel (lbs/bu), wheat and soybeans 60 lbs/bu.

<sup>3</sup>Regional economic areas are defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

<sup>4</sup>Percentage change year over year (Y/Y) calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, and Union Pacific Railroad.

Table 8

**Tariff rail rates for U.S. bulk grain shipments to Mexico**

Date: March 2020			Tariff rate per car <sup>1</sup>	Fuel surcharge per car <sup>2</sup>	Tariff rate plus fuel surcharge per:		Percent change <sup>4</sup> Y/Y
Commodity	Origin state	Destination region			metric ton <sup>3</sup>	bushel <sup>3</sup>	
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	\$7,509	\$0	\$76.72	\$2.09	3
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	\$6,775	\$118	\$70.44	\$1.92	0
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	\$7,534	\$576	\$82.86	\$2.25	4
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$4,329	\$75	\$44.99	\$1.22	0
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	\$8,902	\$488	\$95.94	\$2.43	5
	SD	Celaya, GJ	\$8,140	\$0	\$83.17	\$2.11	3
	NE	Queretaro, QA	\$8,278	\$265	\$87.30	\$2.22	1
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$6,905	\$0	\$70.55	\$1.79	0
	MO	Tlahpantla, EM	\$7,643	\$259	\$80.74	\$2.05	1
	SD	Torreon, CU	\$7,690	\$0	\$78.57	\$1.99	3
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	\$8,547	\$456	\$91.99	\$2.50	4
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	\$9,172	\$476	\$98.57	\$2.68	5
	IA	El Castillo, JA	\$9,490	\$0	\$96.97	\$2.64	4
	KS	Torreon, CU	\$7,964	\$327	\$84.71	\$2.30	4
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	\$7,772	\$430	\$83.81	\$2.13	4
	KS	Queretaro, QA	\$8,108	\$148	\$84.35	\$2.14	1
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	\$6,713	\$119	\$69.80	\$1.77	1
	NE	Torreon, CU	\$7,157	\$302	\$76.22	\$1.93	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

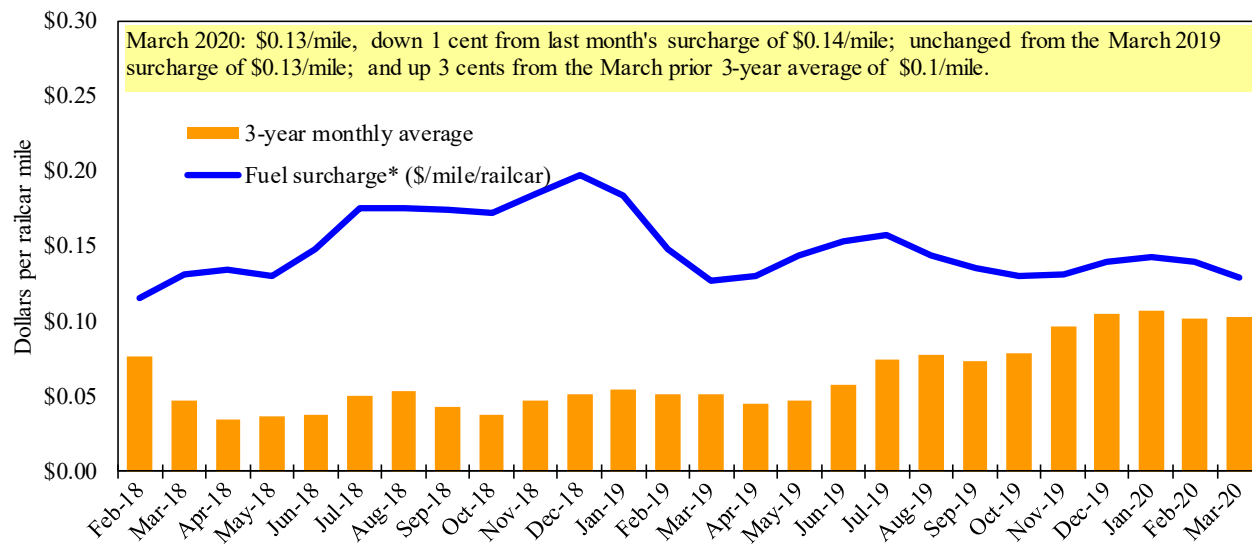
<sup>2</sup>Fuel surcharge adjusted to reflect the change in Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V railroad fuel surcharge policy as of 10/01/2009.

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

<sup>4</sup>Percentage change calculated using tariff rate plus fuel surcharge; Y/Y = year over year.

Sources: BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern.

Figure 7

**Railroad fuel surcharges, North American weighted average<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.

\* Beginning January 2009, the Canadian Pacific fuel surcharge is computed by a monthly average of the bi-weekly fuel surcharge.

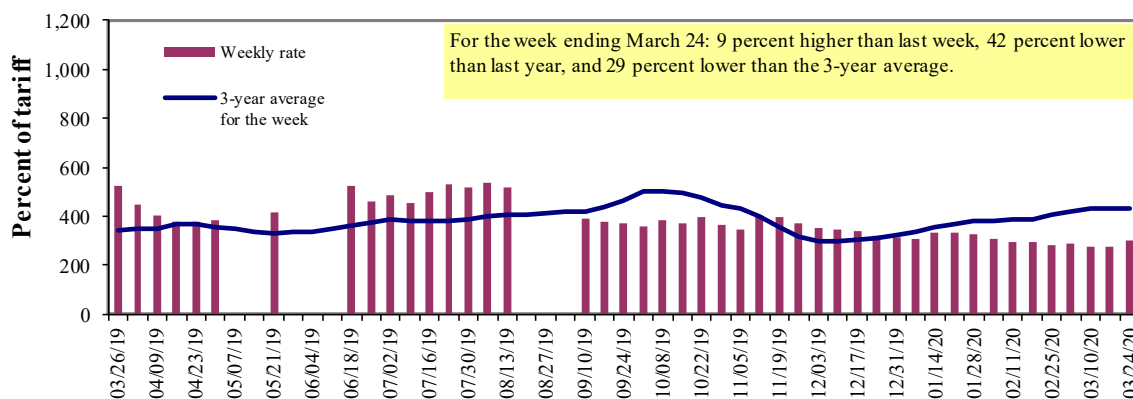
\*\*CSX strike price changed from \$2.00/gal. to \$3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

Sources: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, Canadian Pacific Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern Railway, Norfolk Southern Corporation.

# Barge Transportation

Figure 8

## Illinois River barge freight rate<sup>1,2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); <sup>2</sup>4-week moving average of the 3-year average.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Table 9

### Weekly barge freight rates: Southbound only

		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
<b>Rate<sup>1</sup></b>	3/24/2020	-	-	304	207	200	200	187
	3/17/2020	-	-	278	183	192	192	177
<b>\$/ton</b>	3/24/2020	-	-	14.11	8.26	9.38	8.08	5.87
	3/17/2020	-	-	12.90	7.30	9.00	7.76	5.56
<b>Current week % change from the same week:</b>								
	Last year	-	-	-42	-55	-59	-59	-57
	3-year avg. <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-29	-38	-50	-50	-39
<b>Rate<sup>1</sup></b>	April	377	320	309	209	205	205	191
	June	377	320	312	209	205	205	191

<sup>1</sup>Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); <sup>2</sup>4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds; "-" not available due to closure.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

### Figure 9 Benchmark tariff rates

**Calculating barge rate per ton:**  
(Rate \* 1976 tariff benchmark rate per ton)/100

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

Map Credit: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

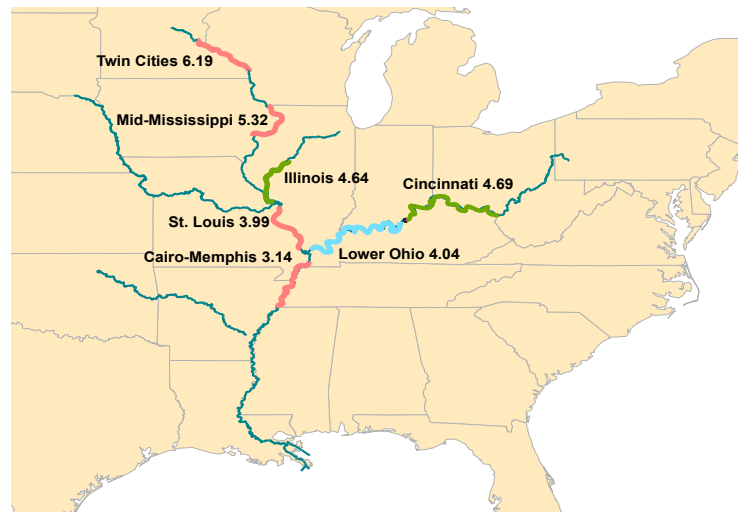
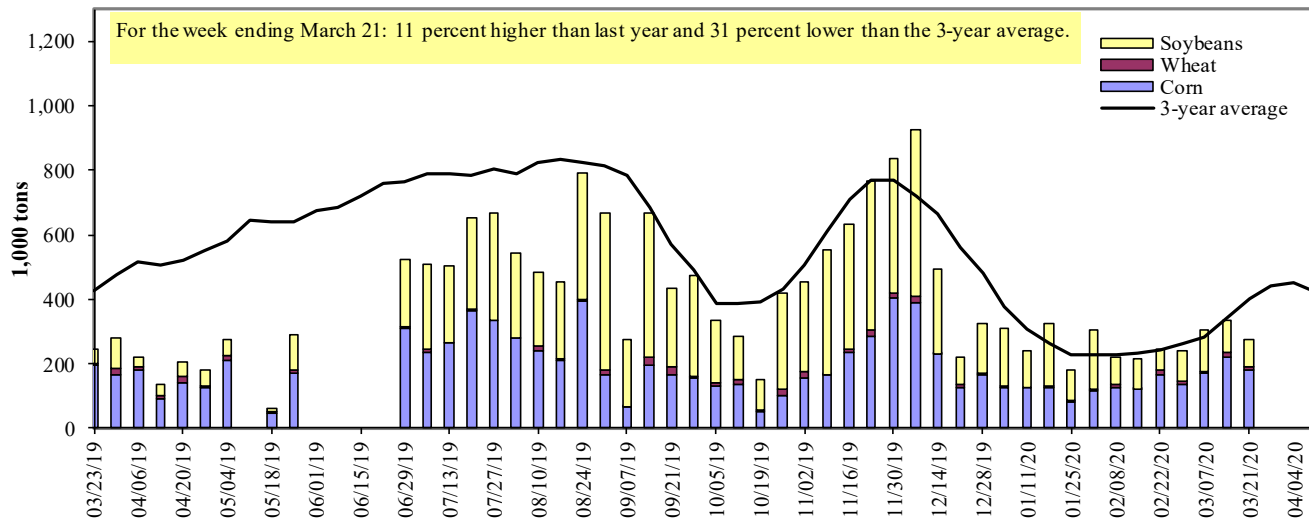


Figure 10

**Barge movements on the Mississippi River<sup>1</sup> (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)**



<sup>1</sup> 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)**

For the week ending 03/21/2020	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
<b>Mississippi River</b>					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	0	0	0	0	0
Alton, IL (L26)	203	3	85	0	291
Granite City, IL (L27)	183	6	85	0	274
<b>Illinois River (La Grange)</b>	187	5	86	0	277
<b>Ohio River (Olmsted)</b>	120	2	16	0	138
<b>Arkansas River (L1)</b>	0	15	18	0	34
Weekly total - 2020	303	23	119	0	445
Weekly total - 2019	413	61	217	7	697
2020 YTD <sup>1</sup>	2,996	375	2,605	12	5,987
2019 YTD <sup>1</sup>	2,565	519	2,346	34	5,464
2020 as % of 2019 YTD	117	72	111	34	110
Last 4 weeks as % of 2019 <sup>2</sup>	111	75	92	23	99
Total 2019	12,780	1,631	14,683	154	29,247

<sup>1</sup> Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date), and calendar year total include MS/27, OH/Olmsted, and AR/1; Other refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye. L (as in "L15") refers to a lock or lock and dam facility. Olmsted = Olmsted Locks and Dam. La Grange = La Grange Lock and Dam.

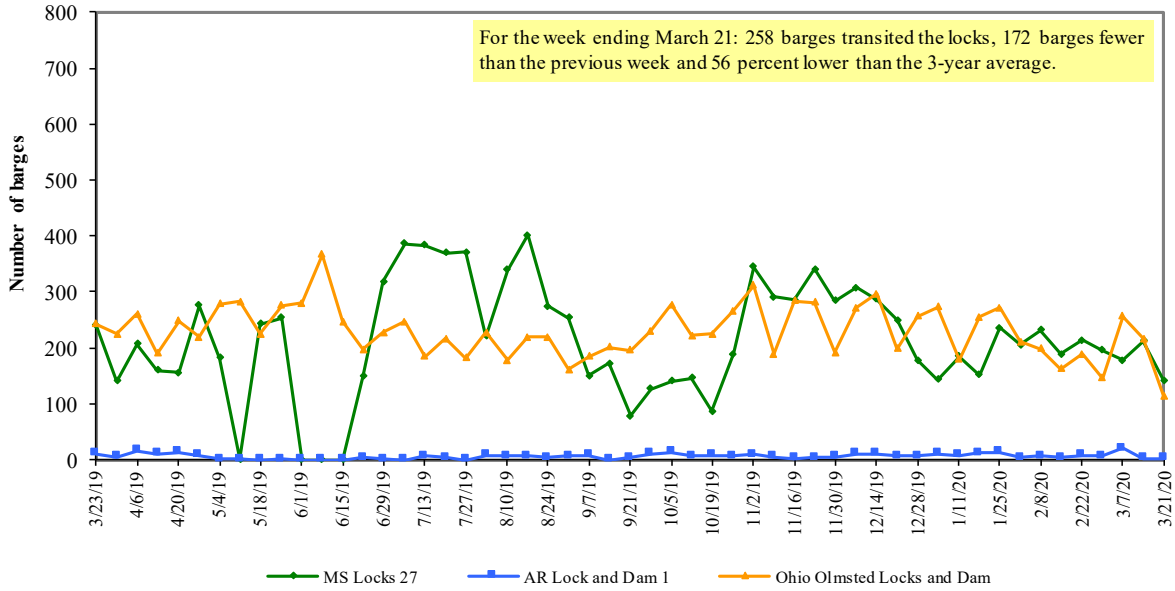
<sup>2</sup> As a percent of same period in 2019.

Note: Total may not add exactly because of rounding. Starting from 11/24/2018, weekly movement through Ohio 52 is replaced by Olmsted.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure 11

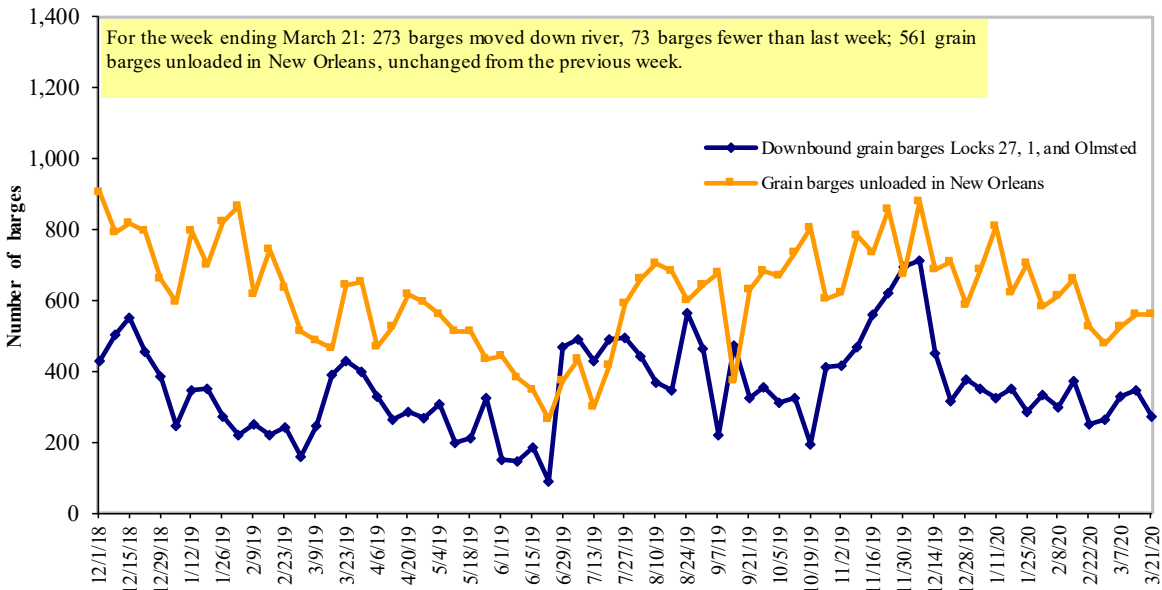
**Upbound empty barges transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam**



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Figure 12

**Grain barges for export in New Orleans region**



Note: Olmsted = Olmsted Locks and Dam.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

# 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, week ending 3/23/2020 (U.S. \$/gallon)**

Region	Location	Price	Change from	
			Week ago	Year ago
I	East Coast	2.724	-0.065	-0.408
	New England	2.849	-0.069	-0.365
	Central Atlantic	2.911	-0.078	-0.399
	Lower Atlantic	2.573	-0.054	-0.422
II	Midwest	2.499	-0.092	-0.494
III	Gulf Coast	2.438	-0.066	-0.438
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.680	-0.062	-0.294
V	West Coast	3.248	-0.074	-0.278
	West Coast less California	2.879	-0.075	-0.277
	California	3.552	-0.073	-0.267
Total	United States	2.659	-0.074	-0.421

<sup>1</sup>Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

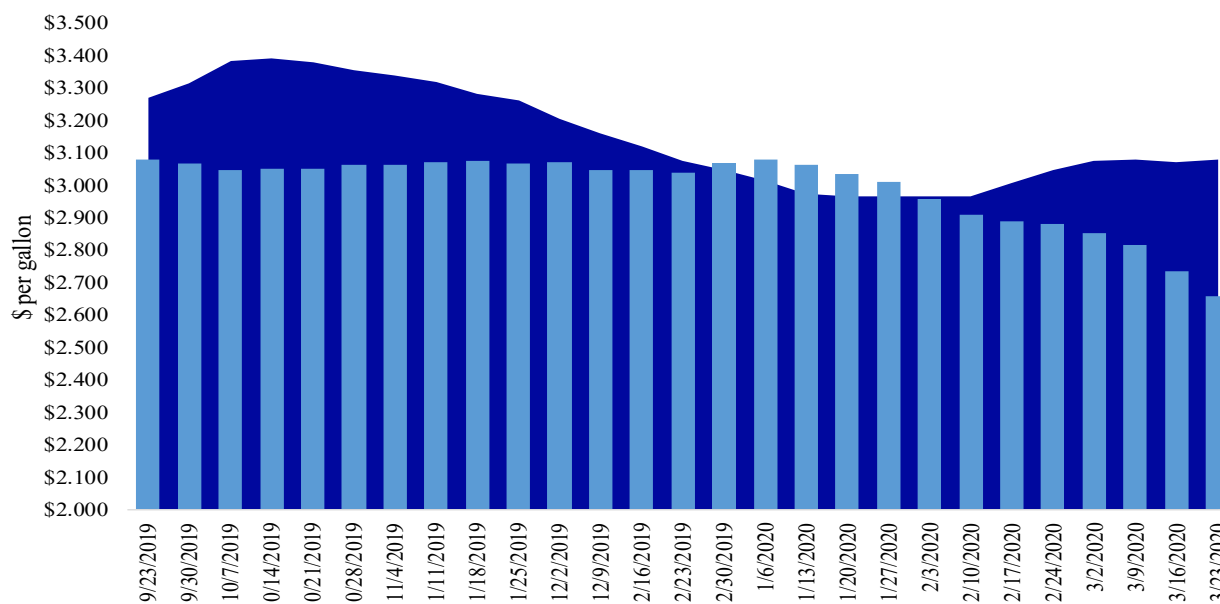
Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Figure 13

**Weekly diesel fuel prices, U.S. average**

For the week ending March 23, the U.S. average diesel fuel price decreased 7.4 cents from the previous week to \$2.659 per gallon, 42.1 cents below the same week last year.

■ Last year \$3.080  
■ Current year \$2.659



Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices.

# Grain Exports

Table 12

## U.S. export balances and cumulative exports (1,000 metric tons)

For the week ending	Wheat					All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR				
<b>Export balances<sup>1</sup></b>									
3/12/2020	1,747	306	1,614	1,070	146	4,884	12,816	4,316	22,015
This week year ago	2,415	875	1,334	1,024	121	5,769	13,934	13,189	32,892
<b>Cumulative exports-marketing year<sup>2</sup></b>									
2019/20 YTD	7,133	2,031	5,490	3,749	682	19,086	16,202	30,684	65,972
2018/19 YTD	5,675	2,186	5,103	4,049	360	17,374	27,819	28,234	73,428
YTD 2019/20 as % of 2018/19	126	93	108	93	189	110	58	109	90
Last 4 wks. as % of same period 2018/19*	74	39	119	105	123	86	90	34	67
Total 2018/19	8,591	3,204	6,776	5,164	479	24,214	48,924	46,189	119,327
Total 2017/18	9,150	2,343	5,689	4,854	384	22,419	57,209	56,214	135,842

<sup>1</sup> Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales to date.

<sup>2</sup> Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year now in effect for wheat, corn, and soybeans.

Note: marketing year: wheat = 6/01-5/31, corn and soybeans = 9/01-8/31. YTD = year-to-date; wks. = weeks; HRW= hard red winter; SRW = soft red winter; HRS= hard red spring; SWW= soft white wheat; DUR= durum.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 13

## Top 5 importers<sup>1</sup> of U.S. corn

For the week ending 3/12/2020	Total commitments <sup>2</sup>		% change current MY from last MY	Exports <sup>3</sup> 3-yr. avg. 2016-18
	2019/20 current MY	2018/19 last MY*		
	- 1,000 mt -			
Mexico	11,116	13,456	(17)	14,659
Japan	6,277	8,861	(29)	11,955
Korea	1,141	3,402	(66)	4,977
Colombia	2,824	3,256	(13)	4,692
Peru	15	1,877	(99)	2,808
<b>Top 5 importers</b>	<b>21,373</b>	<b>30,851</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>39,091</b>
<b>Total U.S. corn export sales</b>	<b>29,018</b>	<b>41,754</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>54,024</b>
% of projected exports	66%	79%		
Change from prior week <sup>2</sup>	<b>905</b>	<b>856</b>		
<b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales</b>	74%	74%		72%
<b>USDA forecast March 2020</b>	<b>43,893</b>	<b>52,545</b>	<b>(16)</b>	
<b>Corn use for ethanol USDA forecast, March 2020</b>	<b>137,795</b>	<b>136,601</b>	<b>1</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2018/19; marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

<sup>2</sup> Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales.

<sup>3</sup> FAS marketing year ranking reports (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number; mt = metric ton.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.



Table 14

**Top 5 importers<sup>1</sup> of U.S. soybeans**

For the week ending 3/12/2020	Total commitments <sup>2</sup>		% change current MY from last MY	Exports <sup>3</sup> 3-yr. avg. 2016-18
	2019/20 current MY	2018/19 last MY*		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	12,144	11,218	8	25,733
Mexico	3,574	4,548	(21)	4,271
Indonesia	1,360	1,589	(14)	2,386
Japan	1,933	1,939	(0)	2,243
Egypt	2,189	2,126	3	1,983
<b>Top 5 importers</b>	<b>21,198</b>	<b>21,419</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>36,616</b>
<b>Total U.S. soybean export sales</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>41,423</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>53,746</b>
% of projected exports	70%	87%		
change from prior week <sup>2</sup>	<b>632</b>	<b>317</b>		
<b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales</b>	61%	52%		<b>68%</b>
<b>USDA forecast, March 2020</b>	<b>49,728</b>	<b>47,629</b>	<b>104</b>	

<sup>1</sup>Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2018/19; marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

<sup>2</sup>Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. The total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales and/or accumulated sales.

<sup>3</sup>FAS marketing year ranking reports (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number; mt = metric ton.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 15

**Top 10 importers<sup>1</sup> of all U.S. wheat**

For the week ending 3/12/2020	Total commitments <sup>2</sup>		% change current MY from last MY	Exports <sup>3</sup> 3-yr. avg. 2016-18
	2019/20 current MY	2018/19 last MY*		
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Philippines	3,146	2,880	9	3,047
Mexico	3,394	2,758	23	3,034
Japan	2,535	2,580	(2)	2,695
Nigeria	1,410	1,427	(1)	1,564
Indonesia	1,009	1,132	(11)	1,381
Korea	1,422	1,554	(8)	1,355
Taiwan	1,164	1,096	6	1,164
Egypt	101	692	(85)	821
Thailand	853	742	15	747
Iraq	262	416	(37)	574
<b>Top 10 importers</b>	<b>15,295</b>	<b>15,278</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16,382</b>
<b>Total U.S. wheat export sales</b>	<b>23,970</b>	<b>23,143</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24,388</b>
% of projected exports	88%	91%		
change from prior week <sup>2</sup>	<b>338</b>	<b>299</b>		
<b>Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales</b>	64%	66%		67%
<b>USDA forecast, March 2020</b>	<b>27,248</b>	<b>25,504</b>	<b>7</b>	

<sup>1</sup>Based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service( FAS) marketing year ranking reports for 2018/19; Marketing year (MY) = Jun 1 - May 31.

<sup>2</sup>Cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. The total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from the previous week's outstanding and/or accumulated sales.

<sup>3</sup>FAS marketing year final reports (carryover plus accumulated export); yr. = year; avg. = average.

Note: A red number in parentheses indicates a negative number.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

Table 16

## Grain inspections for export by U.S. port region (1,000 metric tons)

Port regions	For the week ending 03/19/20	Previous week*	Current week as % of previous	2020 YTD*	2019 YTD*	2020 YTD as % of 2019 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of:		2019 total*
							Last year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	
<b>Pacific Northwest</b>									
Wheat	216	247	87	3,549	2,885	123	134	131	13,961
Corn	180	120	150	1,023	2,413	42	80	49	7,047
Soybeans	153	11	n/a	2,133	3,186	67	33	40	11,969
<b>Total</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>6,706</b>	<b>8,485</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>32,977</b>
<b>Mississippi Gulf</b>									
Wheat	41	129	32	879	1,143	77	89	83	4,448
Corn	545	658	83	5,786	5,846	99	113	81	20,763
Soybeans	356	372	96	6,764	7,000	97	79	76	31,398
<b>Total</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>13,429</b>	<b>13,988</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>56,609</b>
<b>Texas Gulf</b>									
Wheat	83	112	74	879	1,354	65	63	62	6,009
Corn	9	0	n/a	138	146	94	48	56	640
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	6	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6,650</b>
<b>Interior</b>									
Wheat	28	5	533	499	361	138	105	108	1,987
Corn	69	191	36	1,599	1,509	106	105	98	7,857
Soybeans	80	117	68	1,761	1,449	121	115	123	7,043
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>3,859</b>	<b>3,320</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>16,887</b>
<b>Great Lakes</b>									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	1	30	3	0	0	1,339
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	11
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	16	0	n/a	n/a	493
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,844</b>
<b>Atlantic</b>									
Wheat	0	0	n/a	0	1	n/a	0	0	37
Corn	0	0	n/a	0	35	0	0	0	99
Soybeans	11	19	56	269	341	79	62	63	1,353
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1,489</b>
<b>U.S. total from ports*</b>									
Wheat	368	493	75	5,807	5,774	101	103	99	27,781
Corn	802	968	83	8,547	9,949	86	102	73	36,417
Soybeans	600	520	115	10,933	11,992	91	68	72	52,258
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,770</b>	<b>1,981</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>25,287</b>	<b>27,716</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>116,457</b>

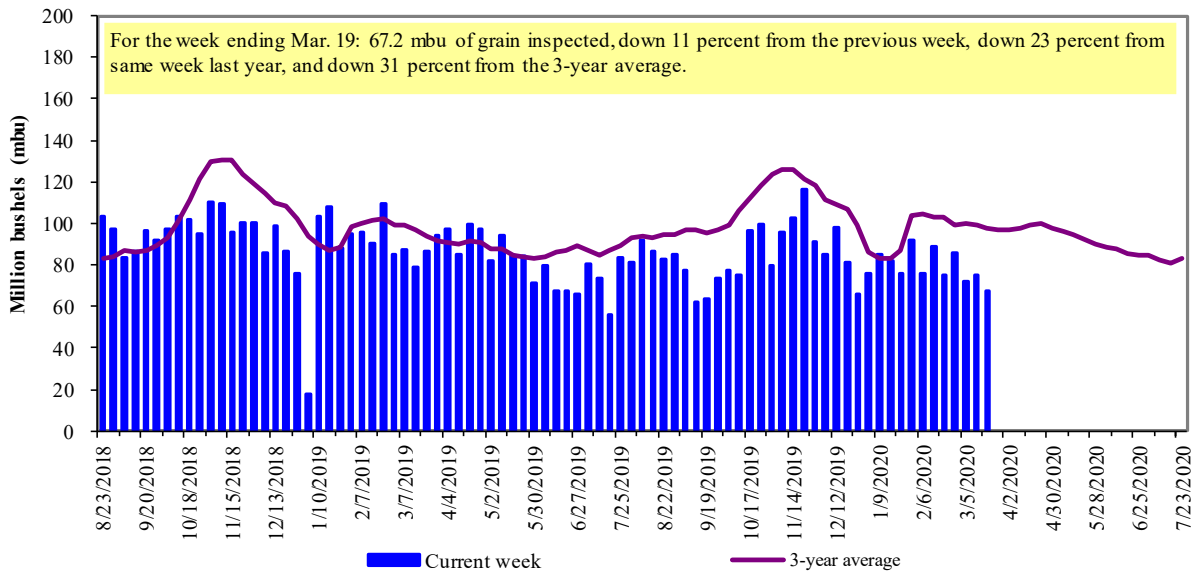
\*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service; YTD= year-to-date; n/a = not applicable or no change.

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, this includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 50 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Approximately 55 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2019.

Figure 14

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

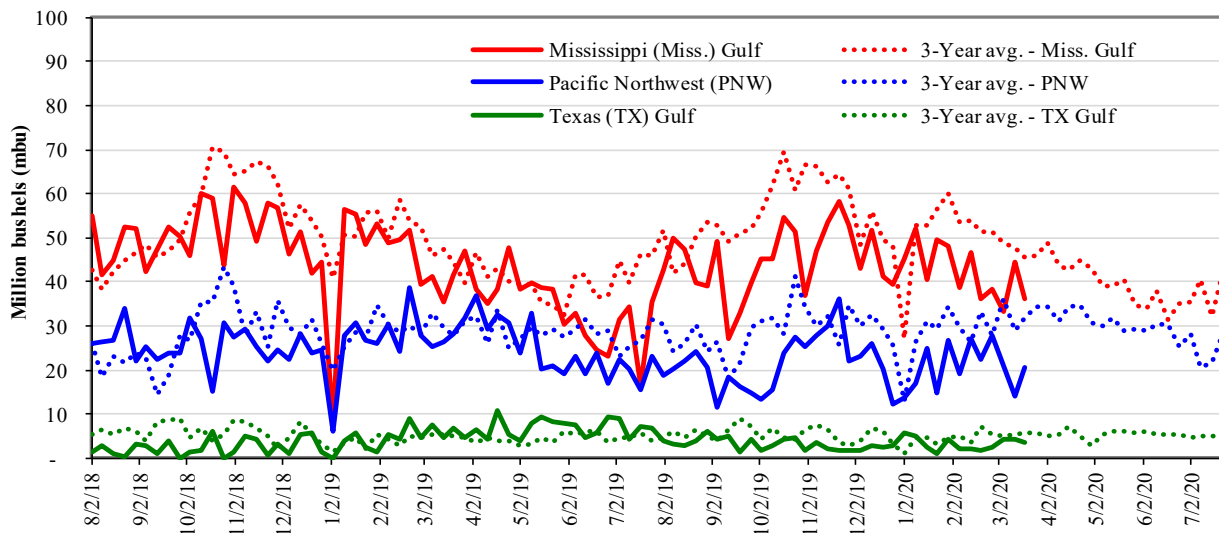


Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average.

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

Figure 15

**U.S. Grain inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW<sup>1</sup> (wheat, corn, and soybeans)**



Week ending 03/19/20 inspections (mbu):	Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
MS Gulf: 36.0	Last wk:	down 19	down 17	down 19	up 45
PNW: 20.6	Last Year (same wk):	down 13	down 50	down 18	down 27
TX Gulf: 3.4	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 26	down 35	down 26	down 34

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

# Ocean Transportation

Table 17

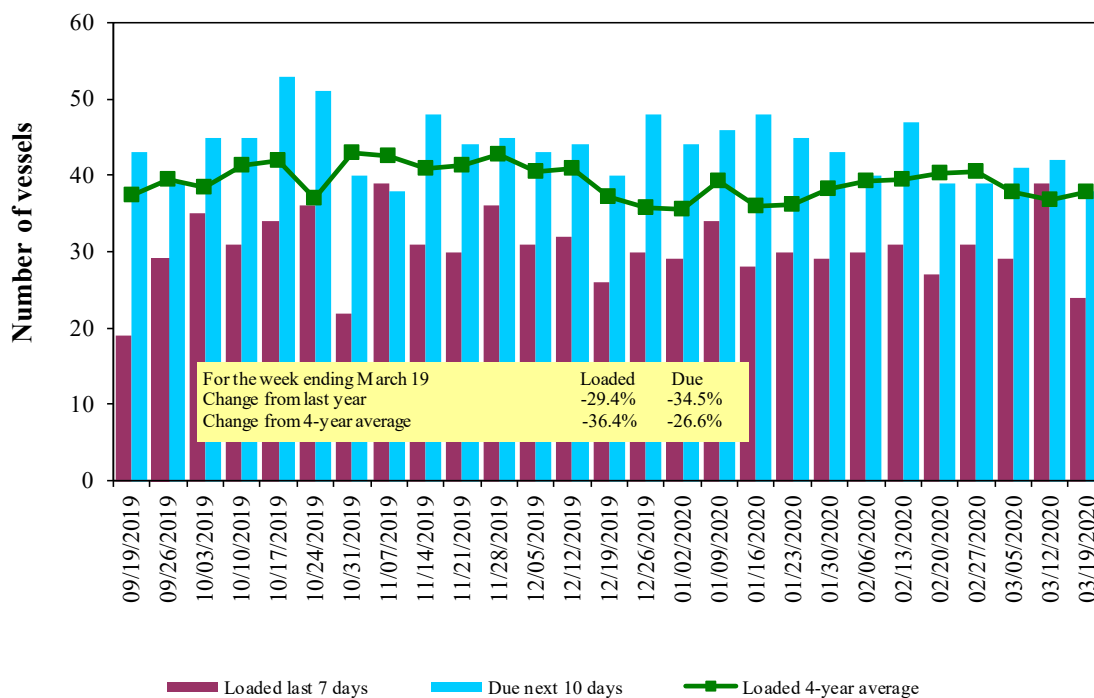
**Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)**

Date	Gulf			Pacific Northwest
	In port	Loaded	Due next	In port
		7-days	10-days	
3/19/2020	28	24	38	11
3/12/2020	34	39	42	11
2019 range	(26...61)	(18...44)	(33...69)	(8...33)
2019 average	40	31	49	17

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 16

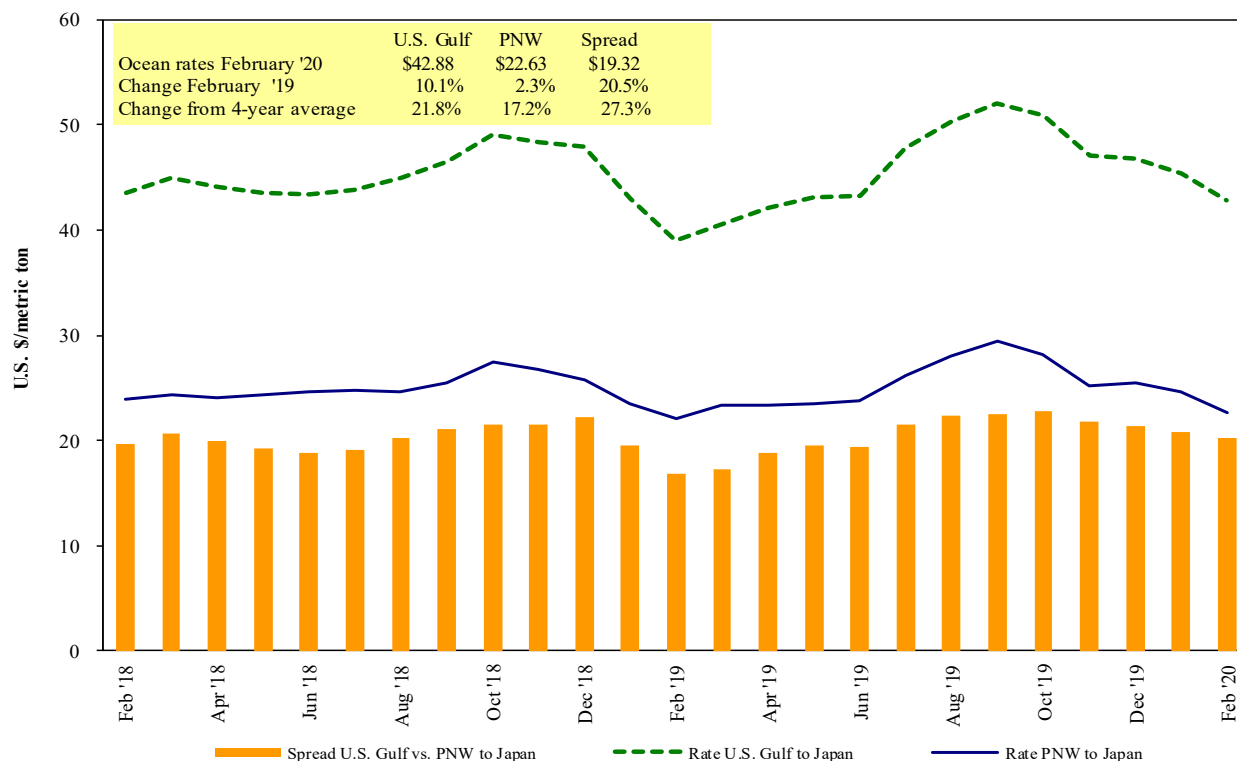
**U.S. Gulf<sup>1</sup> vessel loading activity**



<sup>1</sup>U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.  
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 17

**Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan**



Note: PNW = Pacific Northwest.

Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting.

Table 18

**Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 03/21/2020**

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US\$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Bangladesh	Wheat	Dec 10/20	48,990	79.92*
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy grain	Jan 25/30	65,000	46.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy grain	Dec 15/20	65,000	49.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy grain	Nov 15/18	66,000	49.00
U.S. Gulf	Rotterdam	Heavy grain	Feb 5/11	55,000	19.50
PNW	Taiwan	Wheat	Apr 27/May 11	50,700	29.40
PNW	China	Heavy grain	Jan 22/26	63,000	23.00
PNW	Bangladesh	Wheat	Dec 10/20	23,080	74.44*
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	May 1/31	60,000	33.25 op 33.00
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	Apr 2/16	66,000	30.75
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	Mar 1/10	65,000	32.00
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	Feb 12/21	65,000	34.50
Brazil	China	Heavy grain	Feb 18/27	60,000	34.00
Brazil	Japan	Corn	Dec 22/31	49,000	37.25 op 37.15

\* 50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

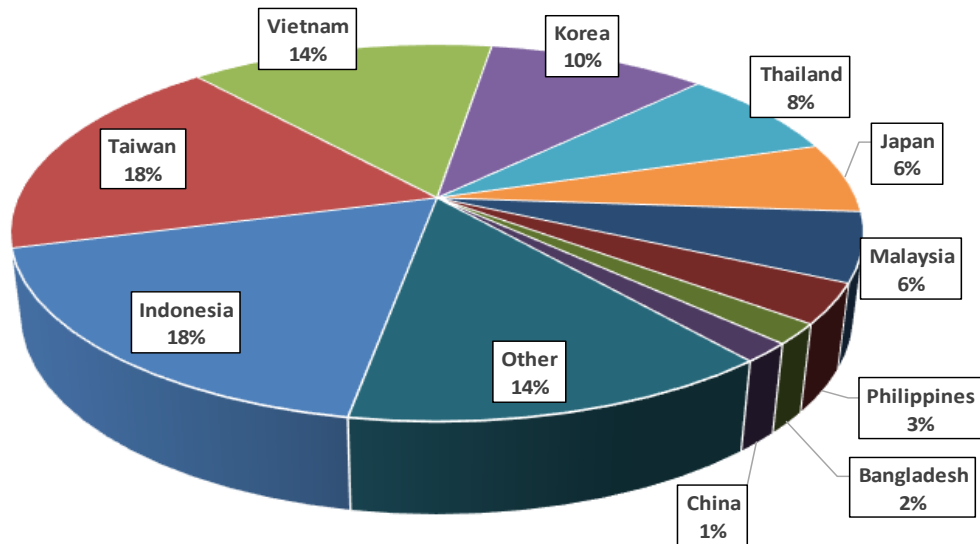
Note: Rates shown are per metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), free on board (F.O.B), except where otherwise indicated;

op = option.

Source: Maritime Research, Inc.

In 2018, containers were used to transport 8 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 55 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2018 went to Asia, of which 13 percent were moved in containers. Approximately 94 percent of U.S. waterborne containerized grain exports were destined for Asia.

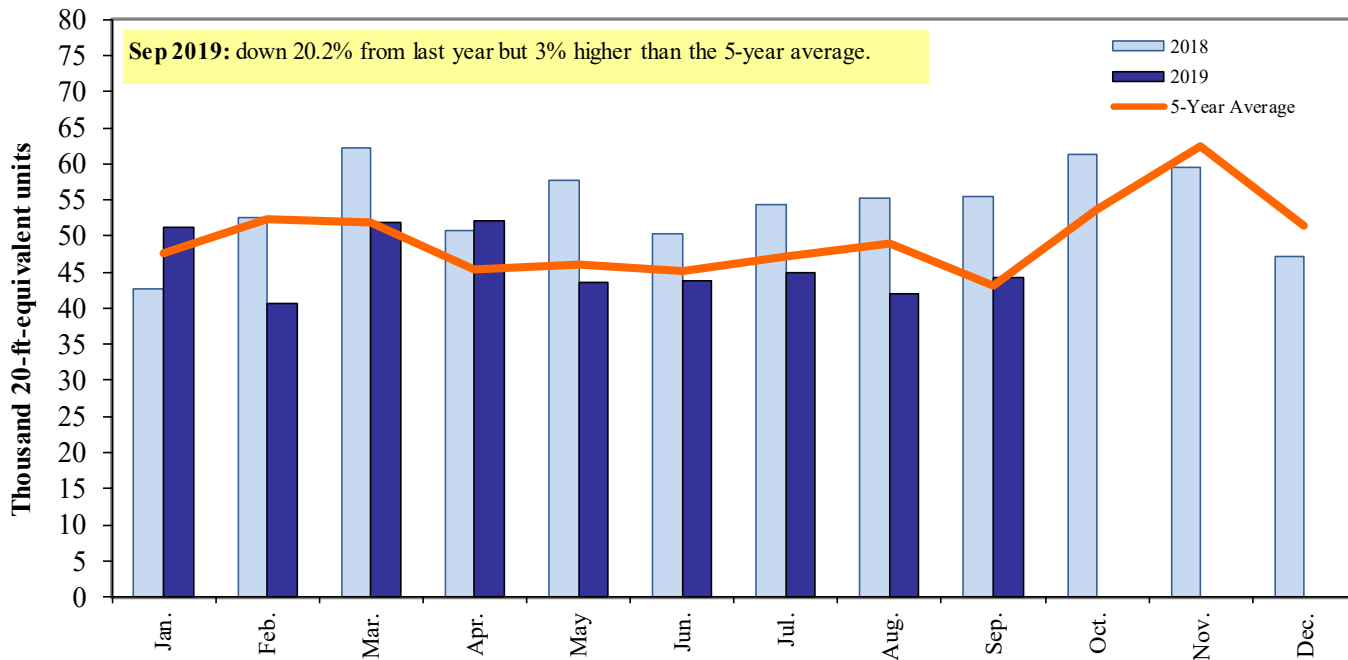
**Figure 18**  
**Top 10 destination markets for U.S. containerized grain exports, Jan-Sep 2019**



Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 1001, 100190, 1002, 1003, 100300, 1004, 100400, 1005, 100590, 1007, 100700, 1102, 110100, 230310, 110220, 110290, 1201, 120100, 230210, 230990, 230330, and 120810.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Transportation Services Division analysis of PIERS data.

**Figure 19**  
**Monthly shipments of containerized grain to Asia**



Note: The following Harmonized Tariff Codes are used to calculate containerized grains movements: 100190, 100200, 100300, 100400, 100590, 100700, 110100, 110220, 110290, 120100, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, and 230990.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, Transportation Services Division analysis of PIERS data.

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