



# Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the Agricultural Marketing Service  
www.ams.usda.gov/GTR

Contact Us

April 23, 2020

## Contents

Article/  
Calendar

Grain  
Transportation  
Indicators

Rail

Barge

Truck

Exports

Ocean

Brazil

Mexico

Grain Truck/Ocean  
Rate Advisory

Datasets

Specialists

Subscription  
Information

The next  
release is  
April 30, 2020

### TSA Temporarily Extends Expired TWIC Cards

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has granted [an extension through July 31](#) for Transportation Worker Identification Credentials (TWIC) cards that expired March 1. Effective April 10, the extension is intended to limit the spread of COVID-19 and ensure maritime facilities and vessels operate at full capacity. TWIC cards allow truck drivers and other transportation workers unescorted access to secured areas of maritime facilities and vessels. To receive a new card (valid for 5 years), applicants must undergo security threat assessment and provide proof of identity and fingerprints at approved TSA enrollment sites.

### Soybean Inspections Up; Total Inspections Lowest Since Late December

For the week ending April 16, [total inspections of grain](#) (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from all major U.S. export regions reached 1.74 million metric tons (mmt). Total grain inspections were down 26 percent from the previous week, down 34 percent from last year, and down 34 percent from the 3-year average. Inspections of grain were also the lowest since the end of December. Soybean inspections increased 14 percent from week to week; going primarily to Asia. The increase in soybeans, however, could not offset the respective 29 and 42 percent drop in inspections of wheat and corn. Grain inspections were down 46 percent in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) and down 10 percent in the Mississippi Gulf. During the last four weeks, grain inspections were 18 below last year and 22 percent below the 3-year average.

### DOT Makes Almost \$312 Million Available for Capital Rail Projects

On April 17, the Federal Railroad Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) [announced](#) a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements program. The NOFO funds up to \$311.8 million in freight and passenger rail projects to improve transportation safety, efficiency, and reliability. At least 25 percent of available funds will be reserved for projects in rural communities. Applications for funding under this solicitation are due no later than 5 p.m. eastern time, June 19, 2020.

## Snapshots by Sector

### Export Sales

For the week ending April 9, [unshipped balances](#) of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 23.17 million metric tons (mmt). This represented a 25-percent decrease in outstanding sales, compared to the same time last year. Net [corn export sales](#) were 0.907 mmt, down 51 percent from the past week. Net [soybean export sales](#) were 0.245 mmt, down 53 percent from the previous week. Net weekly [wheat export sales](#) were 0.178 mmt, down 31 percent from the previous week.

### Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 22,237 [grain carloads](#) during the week ending April 11. This was a 7-percent increase from the previous week, 3 percent more than last year, and 2 percent lower than the 3-year average.

Average May shuttle [secondary railcar](#) bids/offers (per car) were \$48 below tariff for the week ending April 16. This was \$48 less than last week and \$77 more than this week last year. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.

### Barge

For the week ending April 18, [barge grain movements](#) totaled 659,427 tons. This was 0.2 percent less than the previous week and 40 percent more than the same period last year.

For the week ending April 18, 413 grain barges [moved down river](#)—14 fewer barges than the previous week. There were 528 grain barges [unloaded in New Orleans](#), 4 percent less than the previous week.

### Ocean

For the week ending April 16, 31 [oceangoing grain vessels](#) were loaded in the Gulf—3 percent fewer than the same period last year. Within the next 10 days (starting April 17), 40 vessels were expected to be loaded—26 percent fewer than the same period last year.

As of April 16, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was \$38.25. This was 1 percent less than the previous week. The rate from PNW to Japan was \$19.75 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

### Fuel

For the week ending April 20, the U.S. average [diesel fuel price](#) decreased 2.7 cents from the previous week to \$2.480 per gallon, 66.7 cents below the same week last year.

## March 1, 2020, Grain Stocks and Grain Transportation Demand

Each year, by December 1, all the U.S. grain available for transport for the rest of the marketing year is in storage.<sup>1</sup> Thus, grain transportation demand is closely connected to stocks of grain held in storage. Because of this connection, tracking changes in grain stocks over time provides insight into the demand for grain transportation. Such tracking complements barge, rail, and export data and sheds light on grain truck demand. Additionally, the latest (March 1) grain stocks snapshot measures grain that has yet to enter the transportation system, thereby providing an indicator of transportation demand to come.

This article uses the latest—March 1, 2020—grain stocks data from USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The first section of this article looks at grain disappearance and transportation demand in the second quarter of the 2019/20 corn and soybean marketing year (MY), which runs from December 1 through the end of February.<sup>2</sup> The second section analyzes the March 1 grain stocks snapshot across the States to provide a spatial perspective on transportation demand. The final section reviews the recent *Prospective Plantings* report from NASS to assess transportation demand in the coming marketing year.

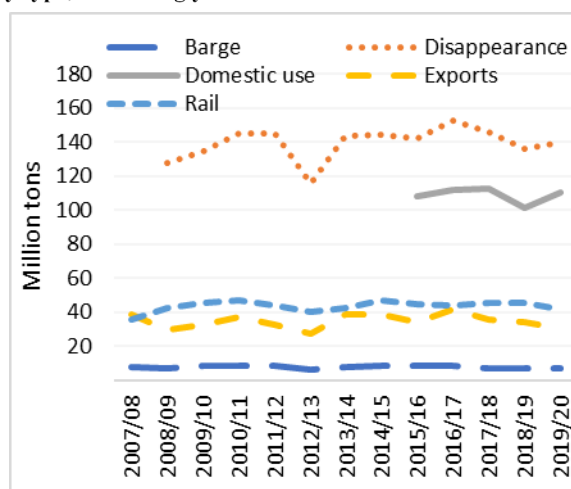
### A Look Back: December 1, 2019, to March 1, 2020

At the close of the MY2019/20 harvests for corn and soybeans, grain stocks as of December 1, 2019 were relatively low, down about 7 percent from 2018. However, lower starting stocks did not result in less grain leaving the bins and entering the transportation system. The difference between March 1, 2020 grain stocks and December 1, 2019 grain stocks was 5.02 billion bushels (bbu), which is a measure of “disappearance” or use. This was 3 percent more than in the December-through-February quarter of 2018/19 (year to year), but 4 percent less than the prior 3-year average. Year to year, disappearance was as follows: corn, up 4 percent; wheat, up 3 percent; and soybeans, down 1 percent.

Movement data by mode and use over this span varied. Year to year, rail carloads were down 8 percent, and barge movements were up 10 percent. Both modes supply a majority of grain destined for export. Grain inspections remained considerably low year to year and from the prior 3-year average, though the trend differed by commodity. Year-to-year exports were down for corn and wheat, but up for soybeans. In addition, domestic use, the other major destination for grain, was up about 9 percent year to year. Each major grain saw higher year-to-year domestic consumption from larger amounts of commodity consumed, such as more wheat consumed for food; more corn used for feed, industrial, and other purposes; and higher levels of soybeans crushed.

Figure 1 plots December-through-February quarterly activity for several major categories over time. For instance, disappearance was up year to

Figure 1: December-through-February quarterly volumes by type, marketing years 2007/08-2019/20.



Sources: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) analysis of AMS, USDA/Economic Research Service, and USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service data. Barge, rail, and export data come from the *Grain Transportation Report*. “Disappearance” is calculated by comparing periods in NASS *Grain Stocks* reports. Domestic use includes corn (total quarterly disappearance from ERS’s *Feed Grains Outlook*); soybeans (the amount crushed from NASS’s *Fats and Oils: Oilseed Crushings, Production, Consumption and Stocks*); and wheat (food use, seed, and feed and residual use from ERS’s *Wheat Outlook*).

<sup>1</sup> Imports can also add to grain supplies during the marketing year but are usually a trivial amount.

<sup>2</sup> This time span represents the third quarter of the marketing year for small grains, such as wheat, barley, and oats.

year but lower than recent years. The increased disappearance was due to greater domestic use. The rise in disappearance and domestic use, coupled with the decline in exports and rail, suggests truck volumes may have increased in the quarter.

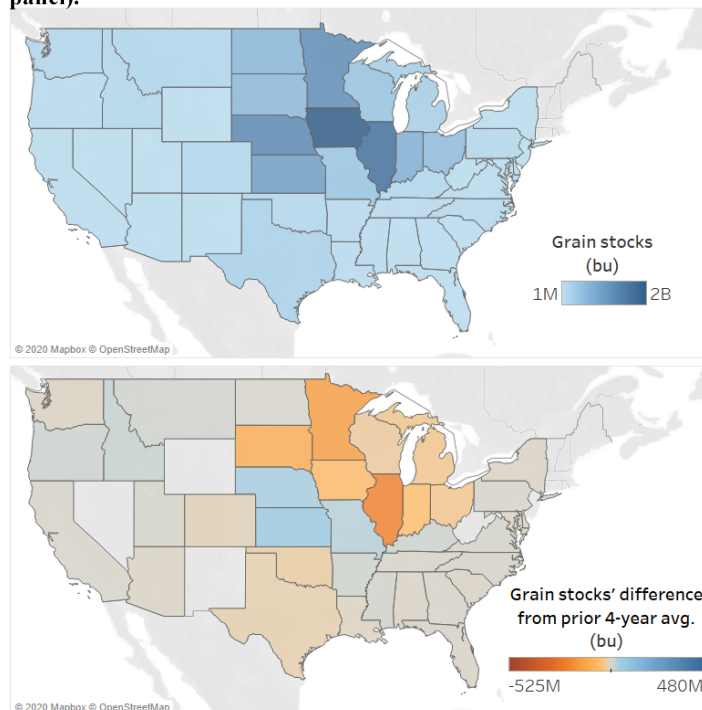
### Current Conditions: March 1, 2020 Grain Stocks

The relatively low starting stocks on December 1 and moderate disappearance levels throughout the quarter both contributed to low March 1 grain stocks of 11.9 bbu. These were down 10 percent from March 1, 2019, and down 4 percent from the prior 4 years for the comparable period. The low grain stocks suggest demand for grain transportation will also be relatively low in coming months.

The top map of figure 2 shows how total U.S. grain stocks on March 1 were distributed across the States. Iowa and adjoining States where stocks were highest were also those likely to have the most transportation activity this year.

However, the bottom map shows how each State compares to its historical (4-year) average. On the one hand, many States had below average stocks and will (all else equal) likely see below average transportation activity for the rest of the year compared to previous years. For instance, compared to their prior 4-year average, grain stocks were down 217 million bushels (mbu) in Illinois, 142 mbu in Minnesota, and 105 mbu in South Dakota. On the other hand, a few States had above average stocks, suggesting that these areas could see more demand for grain transportation in coming months compared to recent years. For example, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri had 56 mbu, 42 mbu, and 27 mbu more bushels, respectively, than their prior 4-year average.

Figure 2: March 1, 2020 grain stocks by State (top panel) and State-level changes in grain stocks from the prior 4-year average (bottom panel).



Note: bu = bushels. M = million. B = billion. avg. = average.  
Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service analysis of USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service data.

### A Look Ahead: Prospective Plantings

The grain stocks data are particularly relevant to the demand for grain transportation in the near-term. The annual March *Prospective Plantings* report from NASS signals the potential demand for transportation in the next marketing year, beginning June 1, for wheat and other small grains, and September 1, for corn and soybeans.

NASS projects wheat planted acreage to remain relatively steady, falling by only 1 percent. Texas is projected to add the most wheat acreage, while North Dakota wheat acreage is expected to decline the most. NASS projects corn acreage to increase 8 percent across the United States, including +1.7 million (M) acres South Dakota, +0.9M acres in Ohio, +0.9M acres in Illinois, and +0.9M acres in Iowa. Finally, U.S. soybean acreage is projected to increase 10 percent, including +1.9M acres in South Dakota, +1.0M acres in North Dakota, and +0.7M acres in Missouri. The additions to planted acreage suggest that, all else equal, grain transportation demand, particularly from corn and soybean shippers, will be higher in the upcoming marketing year. [Jesse.Gastelle@usda.gov](mailto:Jesse.Gastelle@usda.gov), [PeterA.Caffarelli@usda.gov](mailto:PeterA.Caffarelli@usda.gov)

# 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 |
| 04/22/20            | 166   | n/a        | 222     | 157   | 171   | 140     |
| 04/15/20            | 168   | n/a        | 224     | 171   | 173   | 140     |

<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)

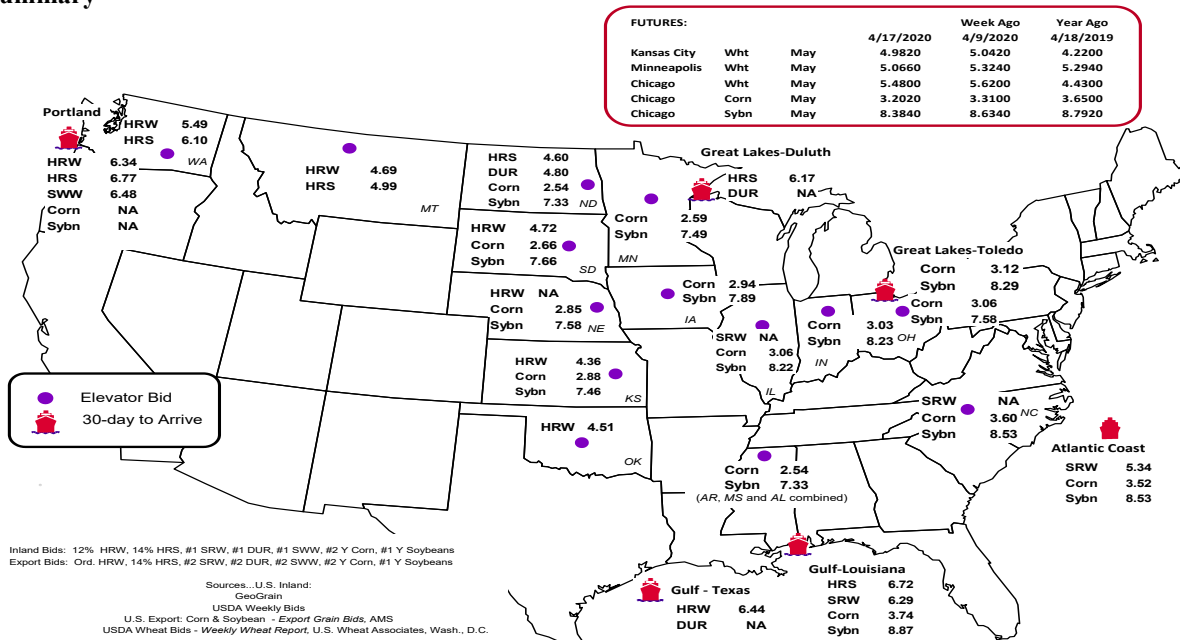
| Commodity | Origin-destination | 4/17/2020 | 4/9/2020 |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| Corn      | IL-Gulf            | -0.68     | -0.73    |
| Corn      | NE-Gulf            | -0.89     | -0.96    |
| Soybean   | IA-Gulf            | -0.98     | -1.00    |
| HRW       | KS-Gulf            | -2.08     | -2.09    |
| HRS       | ND-Portland        | -2.17     | -2.21    |

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  |         |                    |                                  |
| 4/15/2020 <sup>p</sup>                        | 949         | 657        | 4,982     | 166        | 6,754   | 4/11/2020          | 3,105                            |
| 4/08/2020 <sup>r</sup>                        | 735         | 804        | 4,868     | 191        | 6,598   | 4/4/2020           | 3,028                            |
| 2020 YTD <sup>r</sup>                         | 6,152       | 10,608     | 69,333    | 3,262      | 89,355  | 2020 YTD           | 36,106                           |
| 2019 YTD <sup>r</sup>                         | 12,940      | 18,420     | 90,094    | 5,934      | 127,388 | 2019 YTD           | 33,198                           |
| 2020 YTD as % of 2019 YTD                     | 48          | 58         | 77        | 55         | 70      | % change YTD       | 109                              |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 2019 <sup>2</sup>        | 39          | 47         | 72        | 58         | 64      | Last 4wks. % 2019  | 137                              |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg. <sup>2</sup> | 99          | 45         | 77        | 49         | 71      | Last 4wks. % 4 yr. | 129                              |
| 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.

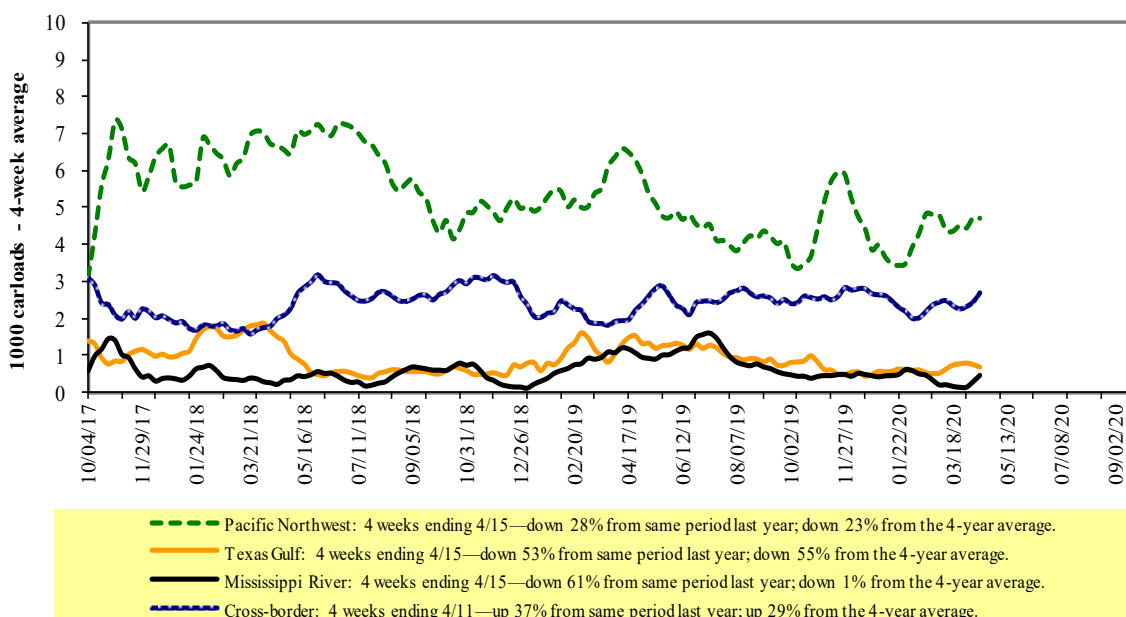
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available; wks. = weeks; avg. = average.

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:<br>4/11/2020 | East   |         | West    |        |         | U.S. total | Canada  |         |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|------------|---------|---------|
|                                   | CSXT   | NS      | BNSF    | KCS    | UP      |            | CN      | CP      |
| This week                         | 1,462  | 2,411   | 11,793  | 1,008  | 5,563   | 22,237     | 5,398   | 5,500   |
| This week last year               | 1,490  | 2,881   | 10,019  | 1,227  | 6,024   | 21,641     | 6,127   | 5,318   |
| 2020 YTD                          | 25,623 | 34,718  | 158,529 | 16,212 | 68,996  | 304,078    | 55,259  | 59,072  |
| 2019 YTD                          | 29,704 | 40,367  | 157,620 | 17,308 | 75,942  | 320,941    | 63,534  | 62,713  |
| 2020 YTD as % of 2019 YTD         | 86     | 86      | 101     | 94     | 91      | 95         | 87      | 94      |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 2019*        | 77     | 90      | 106     | 83     | 99      | 98         | 91      | 95      |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr. avg.** | 84     | 93      | 95      | 106    | 91      | 93         | 104     | 100     |
| Total 2019                        | 91,611 | 137,168 | 568,369 | 58,527 | 260,269 | 1,115,944  | 212,537 | 235,892 |

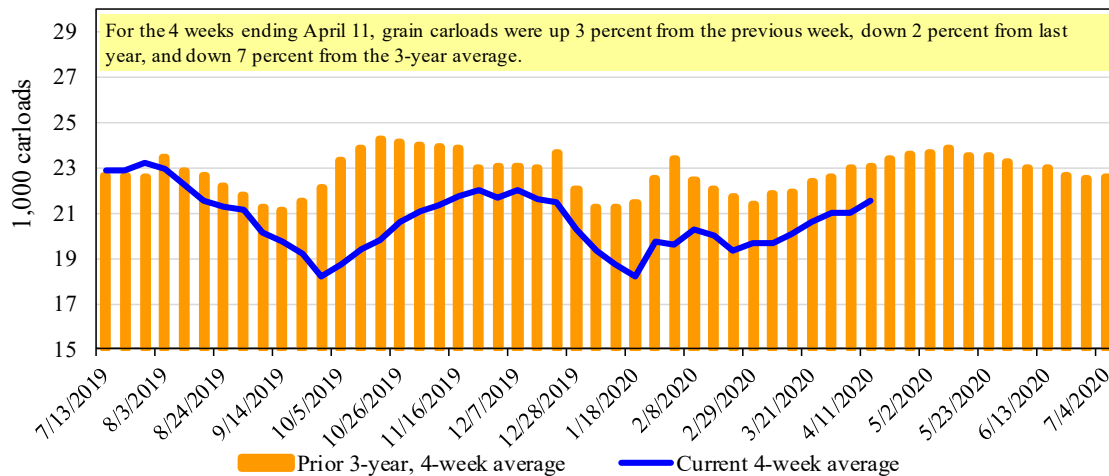
\*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

\*\*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:<br>4/16/2020 |                      | Delivery period |          |          |          |          |          |         |        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|--------|
|                                   |                      | May-20          | May-19   | Jun-20   | Jun-19   | Jul-20   | Jul-19   | Aug-20  | Aug-19 |
| BNSF <sup>3</sup>                 | COT grain units      | 0               | no offer | no bids  | 23       | no bids  | 1        | no bids | 48     |
|                                   | COT grain single-car | 0               | no offer | 0        | 422      | no bids  | 295      | no bids | 245    |
| 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        | no bid          | 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.

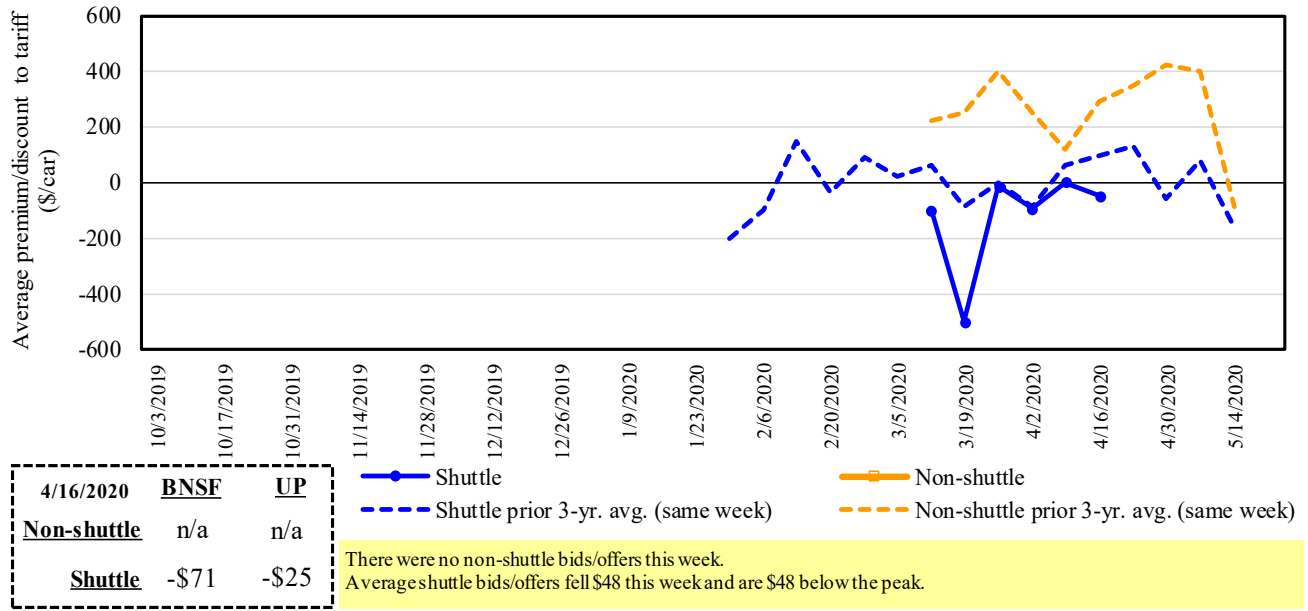
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.



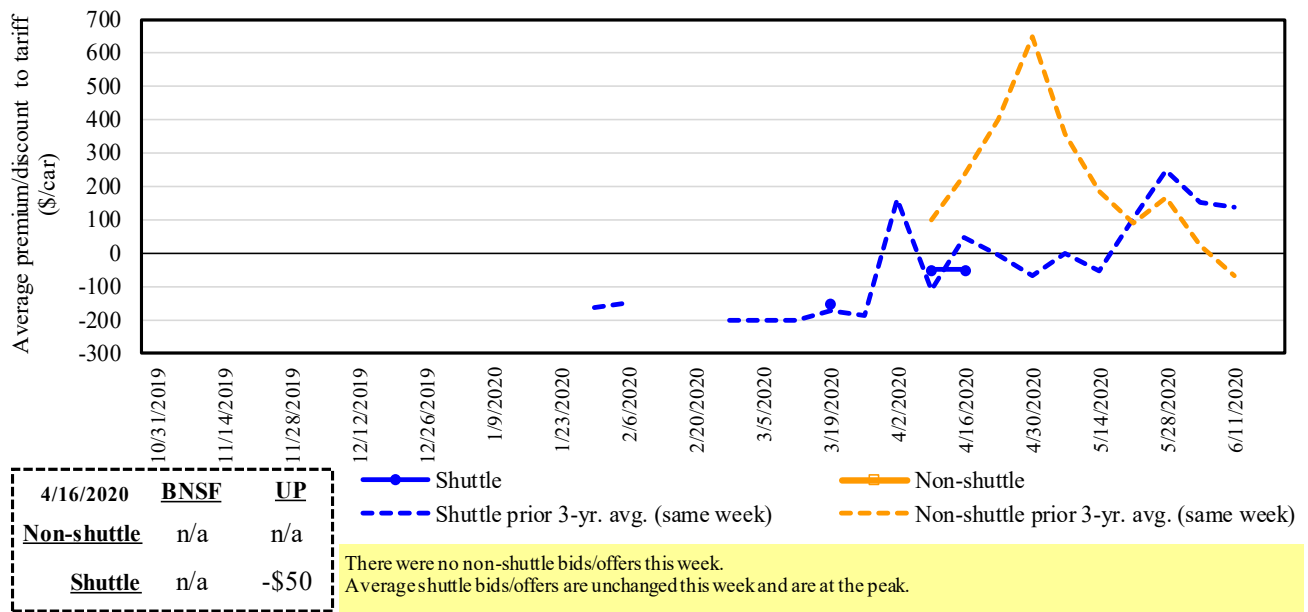
The **secondary rail market** information reflects trade values for service that was originally purchased from the railroad carrier as some form of guaranteed freight. The **auction and secondary rail** values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/supply.

**Figure 4**  
**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in 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.

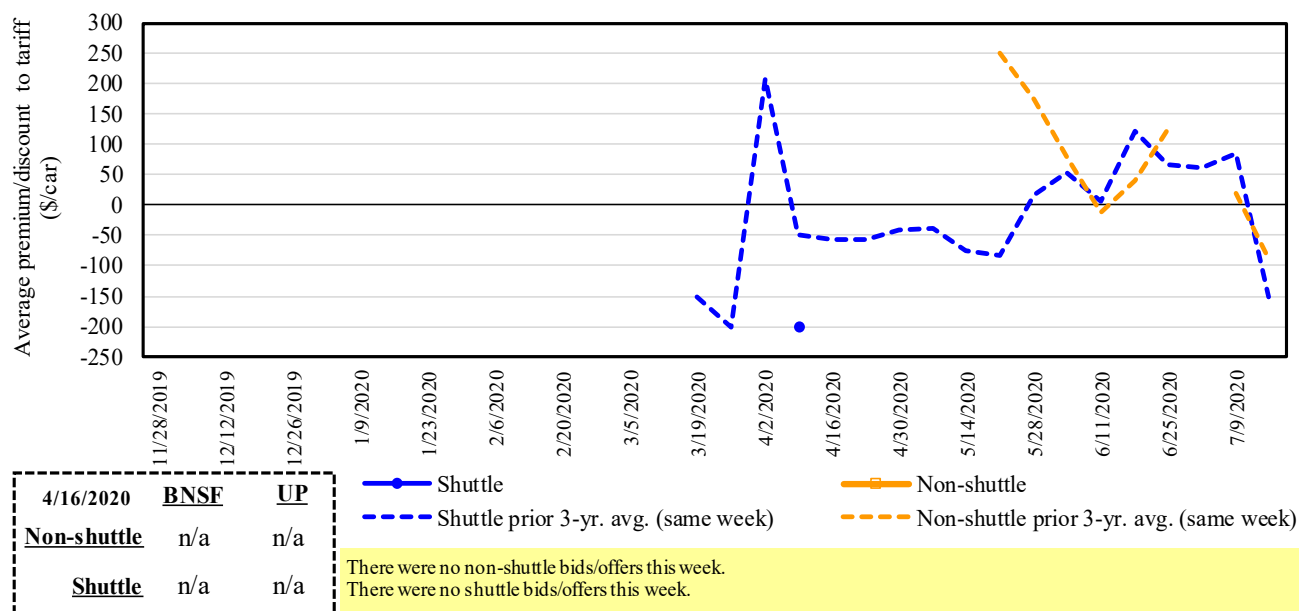
**Figure 5**  
**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in June 2020, secondary market**



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.

Figure 6

**Bids/offers for railcars to be delivered in July 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:<br>4/16/2020 |                            | Delivery period |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                   |                            | May-20          | Jun-20 | Jul-20 | Aug-20 | Sep-20 | Oct-20 |
| Non-shuttle                       | <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 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    |
| Shuttle                           | <b>BNSF-GF</b>             | (71)            | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    |
|                                   | Change from last week      | (21)            | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    |
|                                   | Change from same week 2019 | 29              | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    |
|                                   | <b>UP-Pool</b>             | (25)            | (50)   | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    |
|                                   | Change from last week      | (75)            | 0      | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    | n/a    |
|                                   | Change from same week 2019 | 125             | n/a    | 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>**

| April 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         | \$156                  | \$37.61                    | \$1.02              | -12                             |
|                      | 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               | \$5,260                         | \$278           | \$55.00                | \$1.50                     | -8                  |                                 |

<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: April 2020 |                 |                      | Tariff rate<br>per car <sup>1</sup> | Fuel<br>surcharge<br>per car <sup>2</sup> | Tariff rate plus<br>fuel surcharge per: |                     | Percent<br>change <sup>4</sup><br>Y/Y |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Commodity        | Origin<br>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                             | \$502                                     | \$82.10                                 | \$2.23              | 3                                     |
|                  | TX              | Salinas Victoria, NL | \$4,329                             | \$72                                      | \$44.96                                 | \$1.22              | 0                                     |
| Corn             | IA              | Guadalajara, JA      | \$8,902                             | \$433                                     | \$95.39                                 | \$2.42              | 5                                     |
|                  | SD              | Celaya, GJ           | \$8,140                             | \$0                                       | \$83.17                                 | \$2.11              | 3                                     |
|                  | NE              | Queretaro, QA        | \$8,278                             | \$244                                     | \$87.08                                 | \$2.21              | 1                                     |
|                  | SD              | Salinas Victoria, NL | \$6,905                             | \$0                                       | \$70.55                                 | \$1.79              | 0                                     |
|                  | MO              | Tlahpantla, EM       | \$7,643                             | \$238                                     | \$80.53                                 | \$2.04              | 1                                     |
|                  | SD              | Torreon, CU          | \$7,690                             | \$0                                       | \$78.57                                 | \$1.99              | 3                                     |
| Soybeans         | MO              | Bojay (Tula), HG     | \$8,547                             | \$405                                     | \$91.46                                 | \$2.49              | 4                                     |
|                  | NE              | Guadalajara, JA      | \$9,172                             | \$424                                     | \$98.04                                 | \$2.67              | 4                                     |
|                  | IA              | El Castillo, JA      | \$9,490                             | \$0                                       | \$96.97                                 | \$2.64              | 4                                     |
|                  | KS              | Torreon, CU          | \$7,964                             | \$295                                     | \$84.38                                 | \$2.29              | 4                                     |
| Sorghum          | NE              | Celaya, GJ           | \$7,772                             | \$385                                     | \$83.34                                 | \$2.12              | 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          | \$7,092                             | \$272                                     | \$75.24                                 | \$1.91              | 2                                     |

<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.

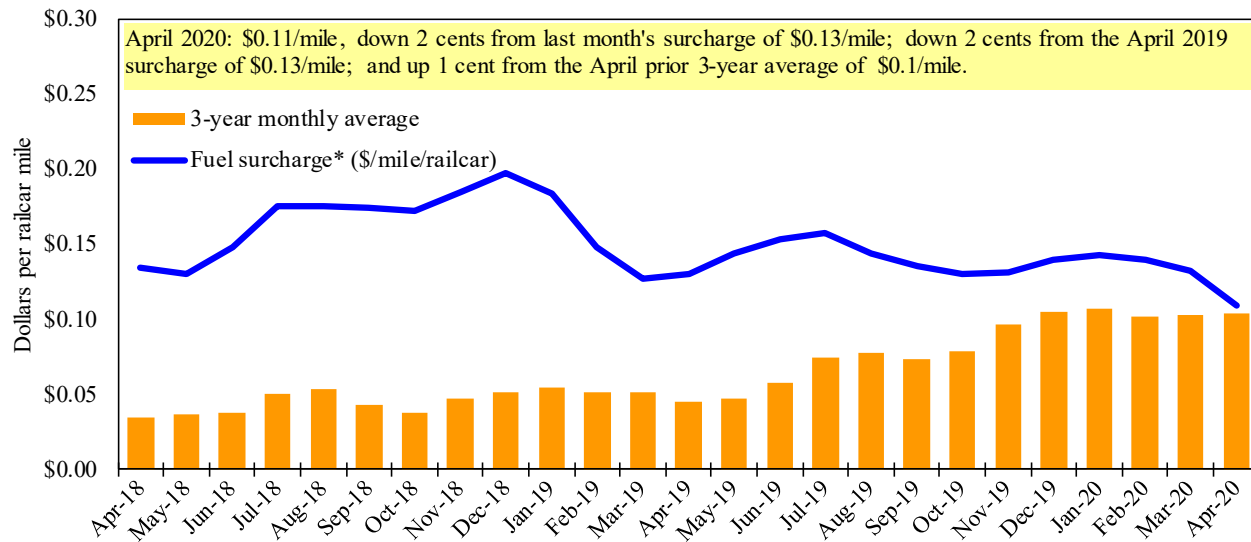
<sup>2</sup>Fuel surcharge adjusted to reflect the change in Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V railroad fuel surcharge policy as of 10/01/2009.

<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.

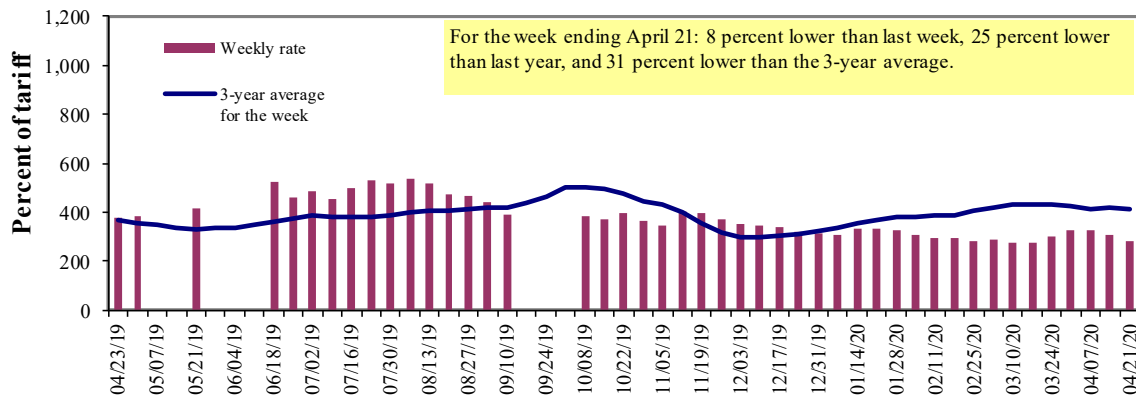
\*\*CSX strike price changed from \$2.00/gal. to \$3.75/gal. starting January 1, 2015.

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 |
|--|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Rate <sup>1</sup>                                | 4/21/2020                | 346         | 296             | 283                  | 181       | 195        | 195        | 175           |
|  | 4/14/2020                | 393         | 324             | 308                  | 203       | 210        | 210        | 193           |
| \$/ton   | 4/21/2020                | 21.42       | 15.75           | 13.13                | 7.22      | 9.15       | 7.88       | 5.50          |
|  | 4/14/2020                | 24.33       | 17.24           | 14.29                | 8.10      | 9.85       | 8.48       | 6.06          |
| <b>Current week % change from the same week:</b> |                          |             |                 |                      |           |            |            |               |
|  | Last year                | -           | -               | -25                  | -35       | -34        | -34        | -36           |
|  | 3-year avg. <sup>2</sup> | -24         | -29             | -31                  | -44       | -45        | -45        | -41           |
| Rate <sup>1</sup>                                | May                      | 346         | 299             | 285                  | 188       | 198        | 198        | 180           |
|  | July                     | 345         | 309             | -                    | 194       | 204        | 204        | 186           |

<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

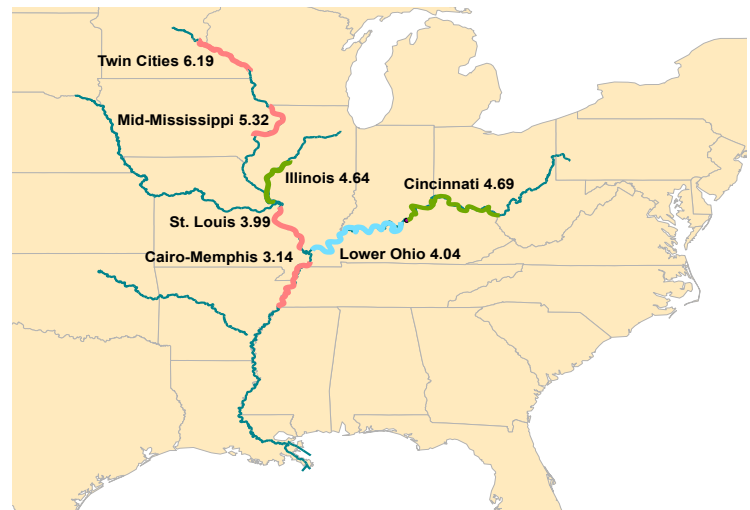
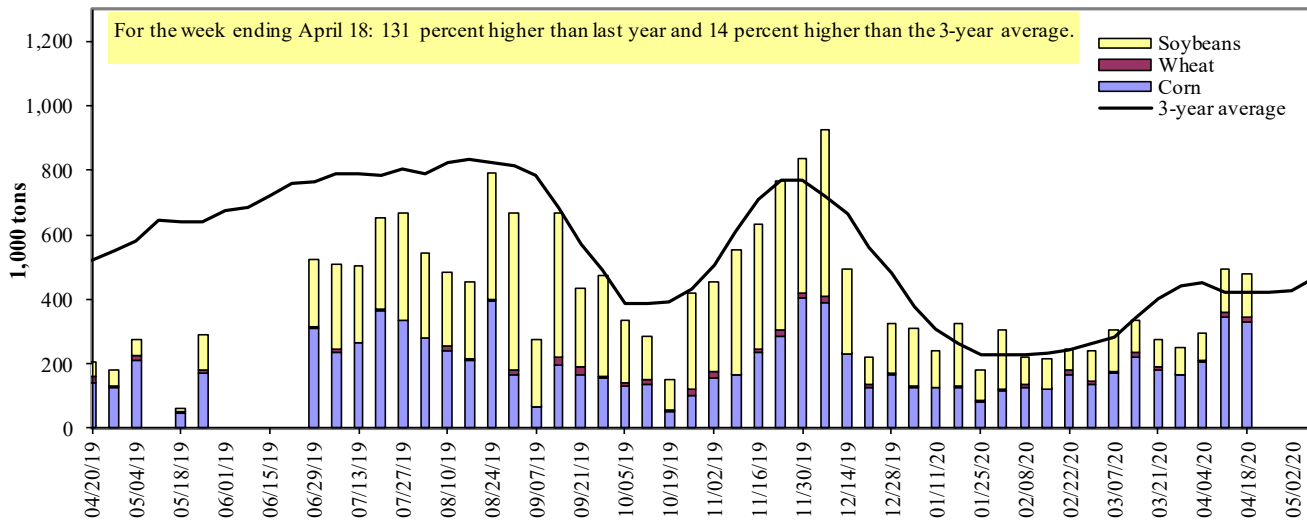


Figure 10

**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 04/18/2020         | Corn   | Wheat | Soybeans | Other | Total  |
|--|--------|-------|----------|-------|--------|
| <b>Mississippi River</b>               |        |       |          |       |        |
| Rock Island, IL (L15)                  | 59     | 0     | 36       | 0     | 95     |
| Winfield, MO (L25)                     | 87     | 2     | 33       | 0     | 121    |
| Alton, IL (L26)                        | 324    | 13    | 128      | 0     | 464    |
| Granite City, IL (L27)                 | 330    | 13    | 136      | 0     | 478    |
| <b>Illinois River (La Grange)</b>      | 201    | 11    | 77       | 0     | 289    |
| <b>Ohio River (Olmsted)</b>            | 69     | 4     | 92       | 0     | 164    |
| <b>Arkansas River (L1)</b>             | 0      | 6     | 11       | 0     | 17     |
| Weekly total - 2020                    | 399    | 22    | 239      | 0     | 659    |
| Weekly total - 2019                    | 289    | 40    | 136      | 5     | 470    |
| 2020 YTD <sup>1</sup>                  | 4,404  | 489   | 3,336    | 13    | 8,243  |
| 2019 YTD <sup>1</sup>                  | 3,743  | 730   | 3,019    | 46    | 7,538  |
| 2020 as % of 2019 YTD                  | 118    | 67    | 111      | 29    | 109    |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 2019 <sup>2</sup> | 120    | 54    | 109      | 15    | 109    |
| 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.

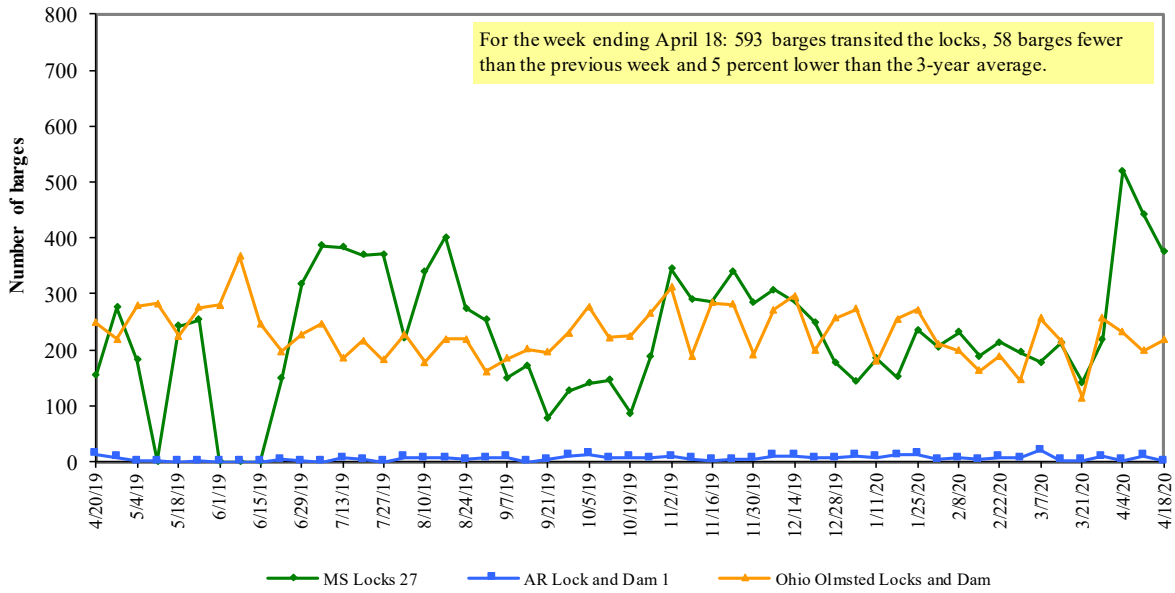
<sup>2</sup> As a percent of same period in 2019.

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

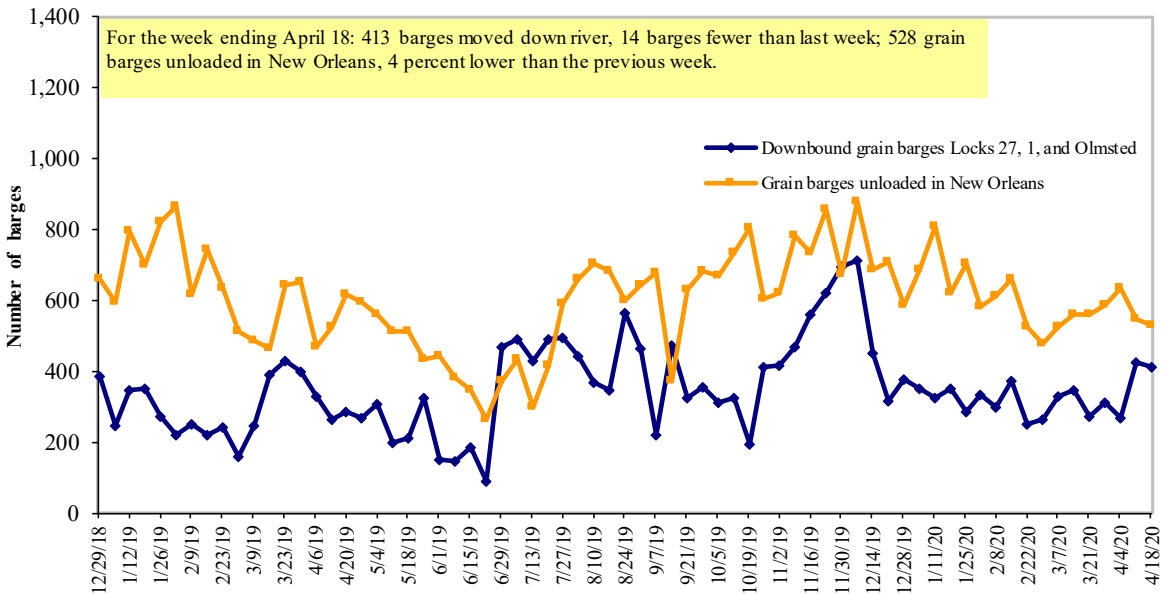
**Upbound empty barges transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Olmsted Locks and Dam**



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 4/20/2020 (U.S. \$/gallon)**

| Region | Location                   | Price | Change from |          |
|--------|----------------------------|-------|-------------|----------|
|        |                            |       | Week ago    | Year ago |
| I      | East Coast                 | 2.576 | -0.023      | -0.598   |
|        | New England                | 2.709 | -0.006      | -0.508   |
|        | Central Atlantic           | 2.747 | -0.035      | -0.623   |
|        | Lower Atlantic             | 2.434 | -0.016      | -0.599   |
| II     | Midwest                    | 2.326 | -0.027      | -0.716   |
| III    | Gulf Coast                 | 2.272 | -0.017      | -0.645   |
| IV     | Rocky Mountain             | 2.471 | -0.026      | -0.672   |
| V      | West Coast                 | 2.974 | -0.054      | -0.722   |
|        | West Coast less California | 2.640 | -0.055      | -0.669   |
|        | California                 | 3.248 | -0.054      | -0.755   |
| Total  | United States              | 2.480 | -0.027      | -0.667   |

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

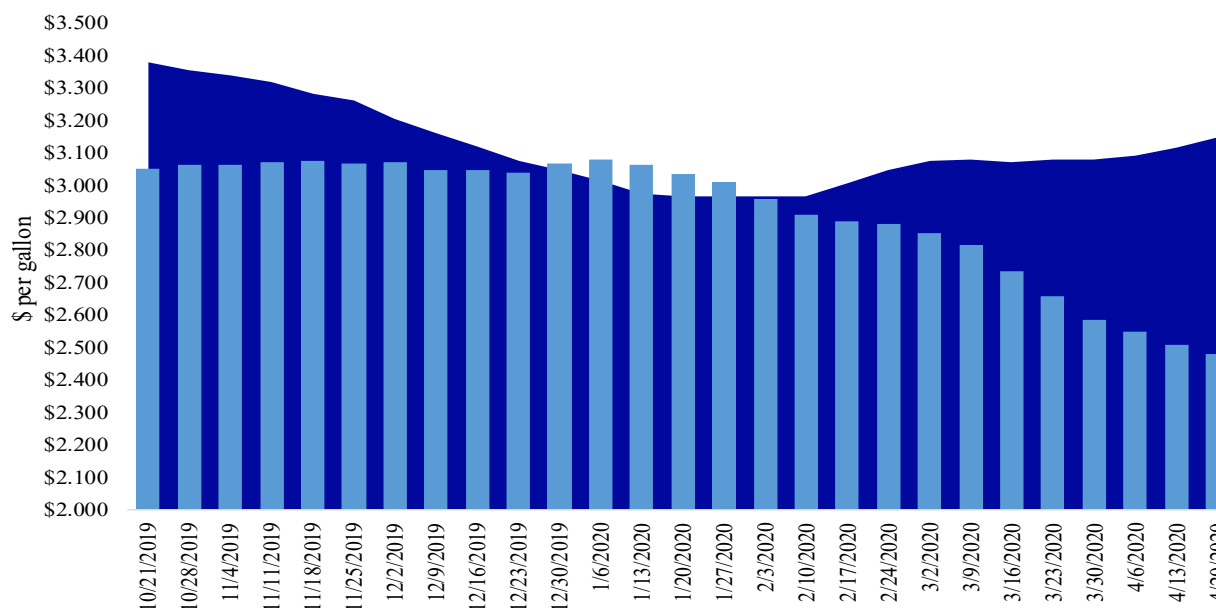
Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

Figure 13

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

For the week ending April 20, the U.S. average diesel fuel price decreased 2.7 cents from the previous week to \$2.48 per gallon, 66.7 cents below the same week last year.

■ Last year    ■ Current year  
\$3.147      \$2.480



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>                   |       |       |       |       |     |           |        |          |         |
| 4/9/2020   | 1,663 | 257   | 1,345 | 858   | 221 | 4,344     | 13,844 | 4,983    | 23,171  |
| This week year ago                                   | 2,521 | 819   | 1,248 | 942   | 84  | 5,613     | 12,443 | 12,928   | 30,984  |
| <b>Cumulative exports-marketing year<sup>2</sup></b> |       |       |       |       |     |           |        |          |         |
| 2019/20 YTD  | 7,934 | 2,108 | 6,009 | 4,126 | 699 | 20,876    | 20,819 | 32,647   | 74,342  |
| 2018/19 YTD  | 6,421 | 2,477 | 5,631 | 4,374 | 399 | 19,301    | 32,248 | 31,300   | 82,849  |
| YTD 2019/20 as % of 2018/19                          | 124   | 85    | 107   | 94    | 175 | 108       | 65     | 104      | 90      |
| Last 4 wks. as % of same period 2018/19*             | 70    | 34    | 122   | 112   | 269 | 87        | 111    | 39       | 76      |
| 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 4/09/2020                               | Total commitments <sup>2</sup> |                     | % change<br>current MY<br>from last MY | Exports <sup>3</sup><br>3-yr. avg.<br>2016-18 |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
|   | 2019/20<br>current MY          | 2018/19<br>last MY* |  |   |
|   | - 1,000 mt -                   |                     |  |   |
| Mexico  | 12,036                         | 14,264              | (16)                                   | 14,659  |
| Japan   | 7,842                          | 9,720               | (19)                                   | 11,955  |
| Korea   | 1,734                          | 3,615               | (52)                                   | 4,977   |
| Colombia  | 3,237                          | 3,781               | (14)                                   | 4,692   |
| Peru  | 36                             | 1,965               | (98)                                   | 2,808   |
| <b>Top 5 importers</b>                                      | <b>24,884</b>                  | <b>33,345</b>       | <b>(25)</b>                            | <b>39,091</b>                                 |
| <b>Total U.S. corn export sales</b>                         | <b>34,663</b>                  | <b>44,691</b>       | <b>(22)</b>                            | <b>54,024</b>                                 |
| % of projected exports                                      | 79%                            | 85%                 |  |   |
| Change from prior week <sup>2</sup>                         | <b>907</b>                     | <b>948</b>          |  |   |
| <b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn<br/>export sales</b> | 72%                            | 75%                 |  | 72%   |
| <b>USDA forecast April 2020</b>                             | <b>43,893</b>                  | <b>52,545</b>       | <b>(16)</b>                            |   |
| <b>Corn use for ethanol USDA<br/>forecast, April 2020</b>   | <b>128,270</b>                 | <b>136,601</b>      | <b>(6)</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 4/9/2020                                   | Total commitments <sup>2</sup> |                     | % change<br>current MY<br>from last MY | Exports <sup>3</sup><br>3-yr. avg.<br>2016-18 |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
|  | 2019/20<br>current MY          | 2018/19<br>last MY* |  |   |
|  | - 1,000 mt -                   |                     |  | - 1,000 mt -                                  |
| China  | 12,623                         | 12,922              | (2)                                    | 25,733  |
| Mexico   | 4,096                          | 4,659               | (12)                                   | 4,271   |
| Indonesia  | 1,559                          | 1,813               | (14)                                   | 2,386   |
| Japan  | 2,103                          | 2,090               | 1                                      | 2,243   |
| Egypt  | 2,447                          | 2,302               | 6                                      | 1,983   |
| <b>Top 5 importers</b>   | <b>22,828</b>                  | <b>23,785</b>       | <b>(4)</b>                             | <b>36,616</b>                                 |
| <b>Total U.S. soybean export sales</b>                         | <b>37,630</b>                  | <b>44,228</b>       | <b>(15)</b>                            | <b>53,746</b>                                 |
| % of projected exports   | 78%                            | 93%                 |  |   |
| change from prior week <sup>2</sup>                            | 245                            | 381                 |  |   |
| <b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S.<br/>soybean export sales</b> | 61%                            | 54%                 |  | <b>68%</b>                                    |
| <b>USDA forecast, April 2020</b>                               | <b>48,365</b>                  | <b>47,629</b>       | <b>102</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 4/9/2020                                  | Total commitments <sup>2</sup> |                     | % change<br>current MY<br>from last MY | Exports <sup>3</sup><br>3-yr. avg.<br>2016-18 |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
|   | 2019/20<br>current MY          | 2018/19<br>last MY* |  |   |
|   | - 1,000 mt -                   |                     |  | - 1,000 mt -                                  |
| Philippines   | 3,210                          | 3,050               | 5                                      | 3,047   |
| Mexico  | 3,713                          | 3,060               | 21                                     | 3,034   |
| Japan   | 2,681                          | 2,738               | (2)                                    | 2,695   |
| Nigeria   | 1,533                          | 1,510               | 2                                      | 1,564   |
| Indonesia   | 997                            | 1,318               | (24)                                   | 1,381   |
| Korea   | 1,551                          | 1,554               | (0)                                    | 1,355   |
| Taiwan  | 1,292                          | 1,108               | 17                                     | 1,164   |
| Egypt   | 101                            | 815                 | (88)                                   | 821   |
| Thailand  | 854                            | 744                 | 15                                     | 747   |
| Iraq  | 262                            | 616                 | (57)                                   | 574   |
| <b>Top 10 importers</b>                                       | <b>16,194</b>                  | <b>16,512</b>       | <b>(2)</b>                             | <b>16,382</b>                                 |
| <b>Total U.S. wheat export sales</b>                          | <b>25,220</b>                  | <b>24,914</b>       | <b>1</b>                               | <b>24,388</b>                                 |
| % of projected exports  | 94%                            | 98%                 |  |   |
| change from prior week <sup>2</sup>                           | 178                            | 318                 |  |   |
| <b>Top 10 importers' share of U.S.<br/>wheat export sales</b> | 64%                            | 66%                 |  | 67%   |
| <b>USDA forecast, April 2020</b>                              | <b>26,839</b>                  | <b>25,504</b>       | <b>5</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<br>04/16/20 | Previous<br>week* | Current week<br>as % of previous | 2020 YTD*     | 2019 YTD*     | 2020 YTD as<br>% of 2019 YTD | Last 4-weeks as % of: |                  | 2019 total*    |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
|                               |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              | Last year             | Prior 3-yr. avg. |                |
| <b>Pacific Northwest</b>      |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 303                             | 518               | 58                               | 4,750         | 4,124         | 115                          | 97                    | 96               | 13,961         |
| Corn                          | 1                               | 237               | 0                                | 1,884         | 3,797         | 50                           | 62                    | 51               | 7,047          |
| Soybeans                      | 141                             | 68                | 206                              | 2,347         | 4,018         | 58                           | 26                    | 37               | 11,969         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>444</b>                      | <b>823</b>        | <b>54</b>                        | <b>8,980</b>  | <b>11,940</b> | <b>75</b>                    | <b>66</b>             | <b>65</b>        | <b>32,977</b>  |
| <b>Mississippi Gulf</b>       |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 103                             | 63                | 165                              | 1,136         | 1,543         | 74                           | 64                    | 60               | 4,448          |
| Corn                          | 531                             | 703               | 76                               | 8,517         | 8,540         | 100                          | 100                   | 86               | 20,763         |
| Soybeans                      | 322                             | 293               | 110                              | 7,888         | 8,038         | 98                           | 108                   | 100              | 31,398         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>957</b>                      | <b>1,058</b>      | <b>90</b>                        | <b>17,541</b> | <b>18,121</b> | <b>97</b>                    | <b>99</b>             | <b>87</b>        | <b>56,609</b>  |
| <b>Texas Gulf</b>             |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 0                               | 71                | 0                                | 1,103         | 1,999         | 55                           | 35                    | 40               | 6,009          |
| Corn                          | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 168           | 211           | 80                           | 46                    | 44               | 640            |
| Soybeans                      | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 7             | 0             | n/a                          | n/a                   | n/a              | 2              |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>0</b>                        | <b>71</b>         | <b>0</b>                         | <b>1,277</b>  | <b>2,210</b>  | <b>58</b>                    | <b>36</b>             | <b>41</b>        | <b>6,650</b>   |
| <b>Interior</b>               |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 44                              | 43                | 102                              | 742           | 504           | 147                          | 168                   | 184              | 1,987          |
| Corn                          | 140                             | 216               | 65                               | 2,352         | 2,135         | 110                          | 118                   | 108              | 7,857          |
| Soybeans                      | 100                             | 123               | 82                               | 2,173         | 2,051         | 106                          | 72                    | 87               | 7,043          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>284</b>                      | <b>382</b>        | <b>74</b>                        | <b>5,267</b>  | <b>4,690</b>  | <b>112</b>                   | <b>103</b>            | <b>108</b>       | <b>16,887</b>  |
| <b>Great Lakes</b>            |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 44                              | 0                 | n/a                              | 45            | 64            | 71                           | 132                   | 147              | 1,339          |
| Corn                          | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 0             | 0             | n/a                          | n/a                   | 0                | 11             |
| Soybeans                      | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 0             | 43            | 0                            | 0                     | 0                | 493            |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>44</b>                       | <b>0</b>          | <b>n/a</b>                       | <b>45</b>     | <b>107</b>    | <b>42</b>                    | <b>74</b>             | <b>80</b>        | <b>1,844</b>   |
| <b>Atlantic</b>               |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 1             | 32            | 2                            | 2                     | 6                | 37             |
| Corn                          | 0                               | 0                 | n/a                              | 0             | 49            | 0                            | 0                     | 0                | 99             |
| Soybeans                      | 5                               | 15                | 36                               | 316           | 435           | 73                           | 50                    | 29               | 1,353          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>5</b>                        | <b>15</b>         | <b>36</b>                        | <b>317</b>    | <b>517</b>    | <b>61</b>                    | <b>34</b>             | <b>25</b>        | <b>1,489</b>   |
| <b>U.S. total from ports*</b> |                                 |                   |                                  |               |               |                              |                       |                  |                |
| Wheat                         | 495                             | 695               | 71                               | 7,777         | 8,267         | 94                           | 79                    | 82               | 27,781         |
| Corn                          | 672                             | 1,156             | 58                               | 12,920        | 14,732        | 88                           | 91                    | 77               | 36,417         |
| Soybeans                      | 568                             | 499               | 114                              | 12,730        | 14,584        | 87                           | 70                    | 76               | 52,258         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1,735</b>                    | <b>2,350</b>      | <b>74</b>                        | <b>33,427</b> | <b>37,583</b> | <b>89</b>                    | <b>82</b>             | <b>78</b>        | <b>116,457</b> |

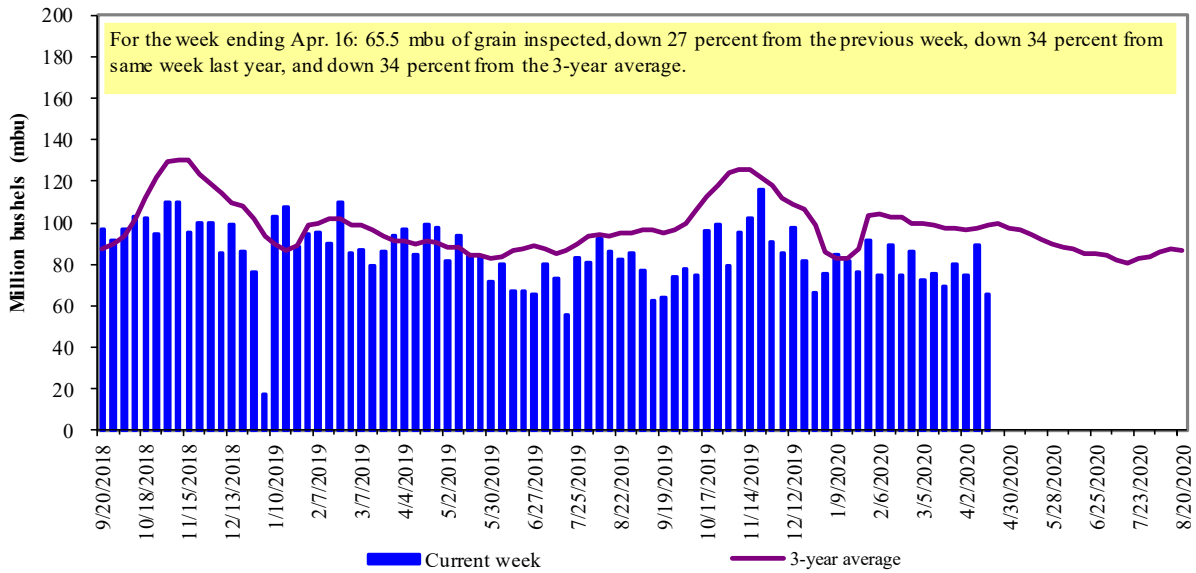
\*Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

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)**

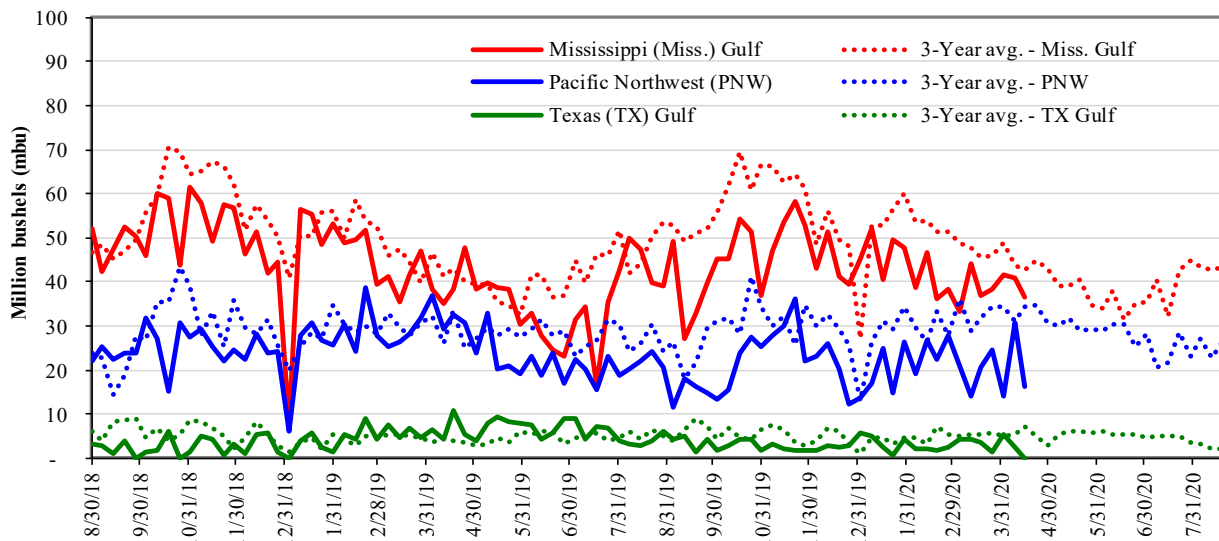


Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average.

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 04/16/20 inspections (mbu): | Percent change from:       | MS Gulf | TX Gulf  | U.S. Gulf | PNW     |
|---|----------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|
| MS Gulf: 36.5                           | Last wk:                   | down 10 | down 100 | down 16   | down 47 |
| PNW: 16.3                               | Last Year (same wk):       | down 5  | down 100 | down 26   | down 50 |
| TX Gulf: 0.0                            | 3-yr avg.(4-wk. mov. Avg): | down 19 | down 100 | down 28   | down 51 |

Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

# Ocean Transportation

Table 17

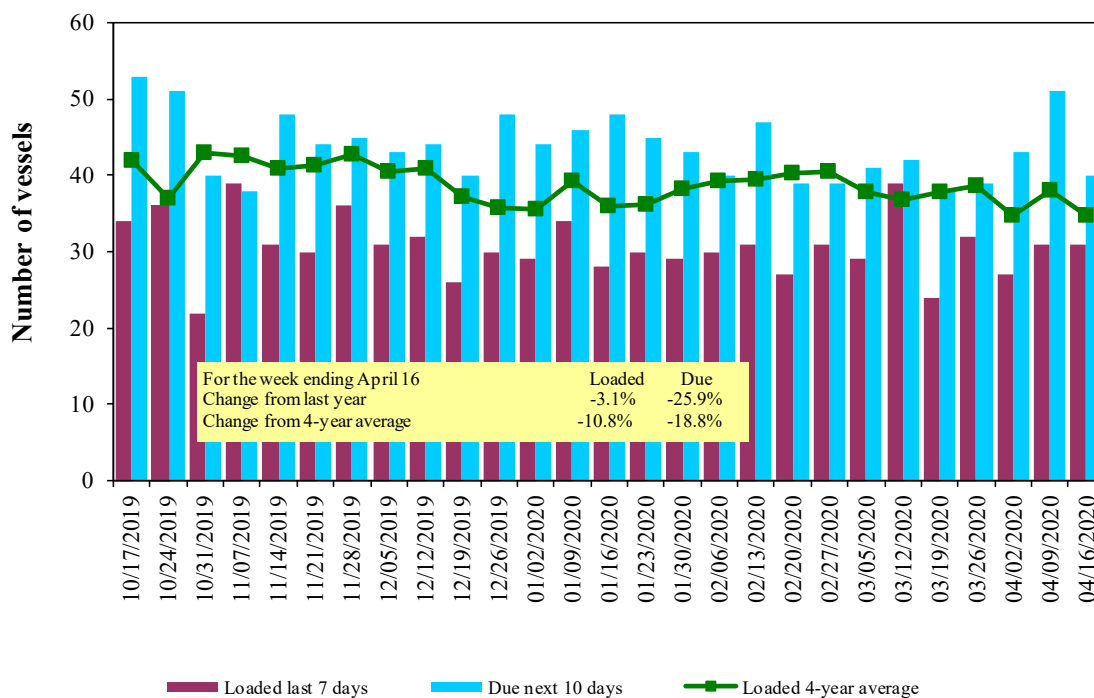
**Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)**

| Date         | Gulf      |               |                  | Pacific Northwest |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
|              | In port   | Loaded 7-days | Due next 10-days | In port           |
| 4/16/2020    | 34        | 31            | 40               | 7                 |
| 4/9/2020     | 30        | 31            | 51               | 10                |
| 2019 range   | (26...61) | (18...44)     | (33...69)        | (8...33)          |
| 2019 average | 40        | 31            | 49               | 17                |

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Figure 16

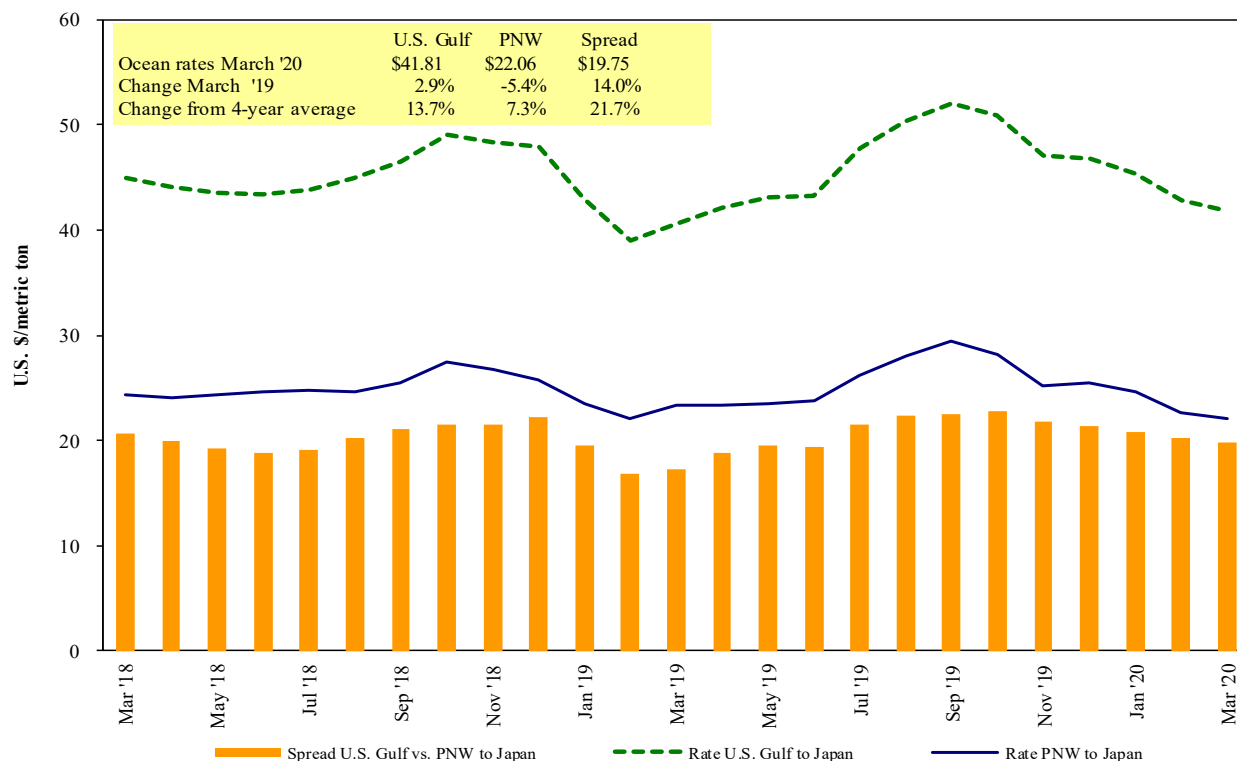
**U.S. Gulf<sup>1</sup> vessel loading activity**



<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 04/18/2020**

| Export region | Import region | Grain types | Loading date  | Volume loads (metric tons) | Freight rate (US\$/metric ton) |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| U.S. Gulf     | Djibouti      | Wheat       | Jun 5/15      | 30,000                     | 131.75*                        |
| U.S. Gulf     | Djibouti      | Sorghum     | Apr 17/27     | 45,730                     | 105.75*                        |
| U.S. Gulf     | China         | Heavy grain | Jan 25/30     | 65,000                     | 46.50                          |
| U.S. Gulf     | Rotterdam     | Heavy grain | Feb 5/11      | 55,000                     | 19.50                          |
| PNW           | Yemen         | Wheat       | Mar 26/Apr 6  | 35,000                     | 51.84*                         |
| PNW           | Taiwan        | Wheat       | Apr 27/May 11 | 50,700                     | 29.40                          |
| PNW           | China         | Heavy grain | Jan 22/26     | 63,000                     | 23.00                          |
| 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                          |

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

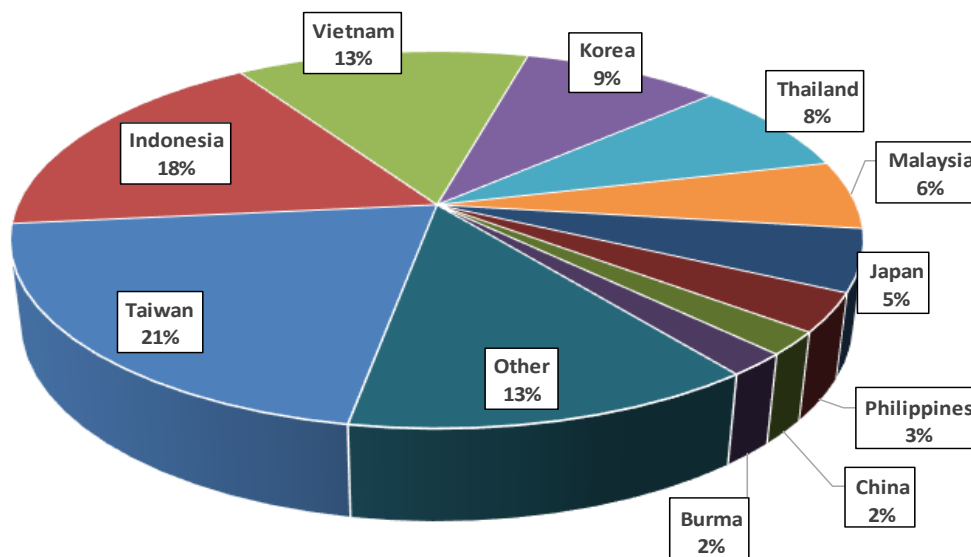
Note: Rates shown are per metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), free on board (F.O.B), except where otherwise indicated;

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.

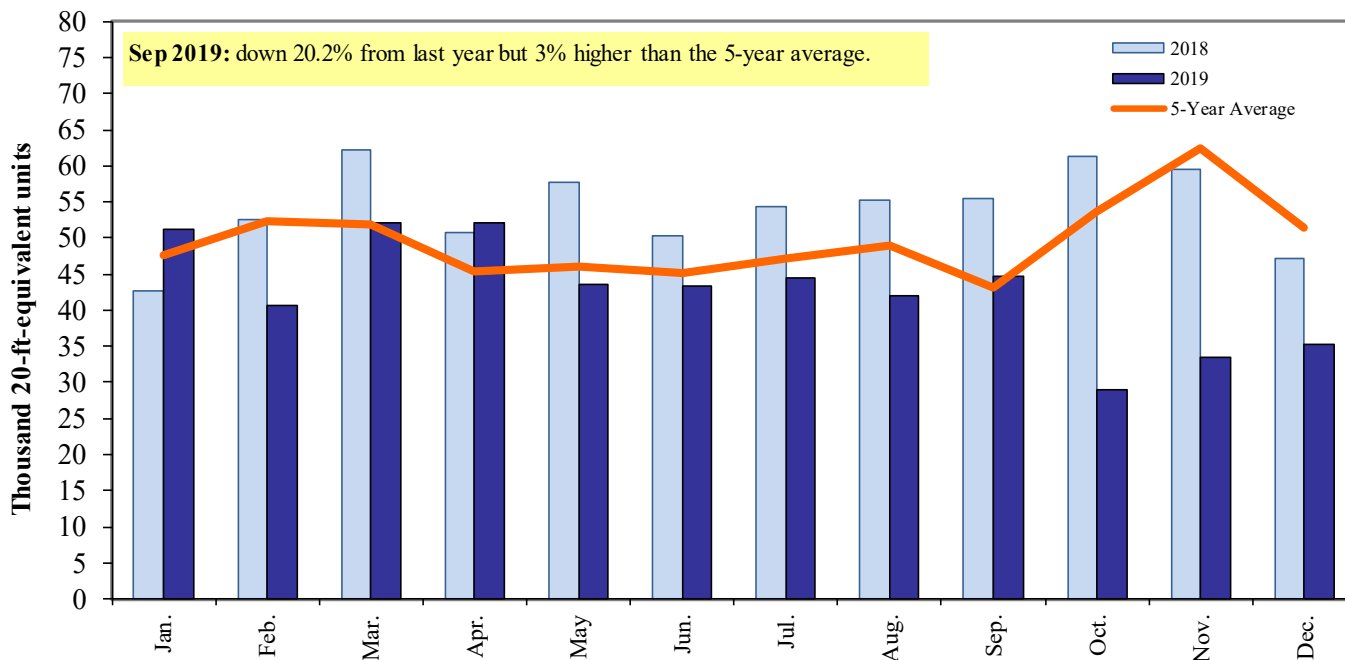
**Figure 18**  
**Top 10 destination markets for U.S. containerized grain exports, 2019**



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, 1201, 120100, 120190, 120810, 230210, 230310, 230330, and 230990.

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

# Contacts and Links

## Coordinators

|                               |  |                  |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo | <a href="mailto:surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov">surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov</a> | (202) 720 - 0119 |
| Maria Williams                | <a href="mailto:maria.williams@usda.gov">maria.williams@usda.gov</a>                 | (202) 690 - 4430 |
| Bernadette Winston            | <a href="mailto:bernadette.winston@usda.gov">bernadette.winston@usda.gov</a>         | (202) 690 - 0487 |

## Grain Transportation Indicators

|                               |  |                  |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo | <a href="mailto:surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov">surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov</a> | (202) 720 - 0119 |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|

## Rail Transportation

|                  |  |                  |
|------------------|--|------------------|
| Johnny Hill      | <a href="mailto:johnny.hill@usda.gov">johnny.hill@usda.gov</a>             | (202) 690 - 3295 |
| Jesse Gastelle   | <a href="mailto:jesse.gastelle@usda.gov">jesse.gastelle@usda.gov</a>       | (202) 690 - 1144 |
| Peter Caffarelli | <a href="mailto:petera.caffarelli@usda.gov">petera.caffarelli@usda.gov</a> | (202) 690 - 3244 |

## Barge Transportation

|                    |  |                  |
|--------------------|--|------------------|
| April Taylor       | <a href="mailto:april.taylor@usda.gov">april.taylor@usda.gov</a>             | (202) 720 - 7880 |
| Kelly P. Nelson    | <a href="mailto:kelly.nelson@usda.gov">kelly.nelson@usda.gov</a>             | (202) 690 - 0992 |
| Bernadette Winston | <a href="mailto:bernadette.winston@usda.gov">bernadette.winston@usda.gov</a> | (202) 690 - 0487 |

## Truck Transportation

|              |  |                  |
|--------------|--|------------------|
| April Taylor | <a href="mailto:april.taylor@usda.gov">april.taylor@usda.gov</a> | (202) 720 - 7880 |
|--------------|--|------------------|

## Grain Exports

|              |  |                  |
|--------------|--|------------------|
| Johnny Hill  | <a href="mailto:johnny.hill@usda.gov">johnny.hill@usda.gov</a>   | (202) 690 - 3295 |
| Kranti Mulik | <a href="mailto:kranti.mulik@usda.gov">kranti.mulik@usda.gov</a> | (202) 756 - 2577 |

## Ocean Transportation

|  |  |                  |
|--|--|------------------|
| Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo<br>(Freight rates and vessels) | <a href="mailto:surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov">surajudeen.olowolayemo@usda.gov</a> | (202) 720 - 0119 |
| April Taylor<br>(Container movements)                        | <a href="mailto:april.taylor@usda.gov">april.taylor@usda.gov</a>                     | (202) 720 - 7880 |

## Editor

|                |  |                |
|----------------|--|----------------|
| Maria Williams | <a href="mailto:maria.williams@usda.gov">maria.williams@usda.gov</a> | (202) 690-4430 |
|----------------|--|----------------|

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

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report*. April 23, 2020. Web: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.04-23-2020>

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.