United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Transportation Report

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

Contact Us

August 17, 2017

Contents

The next release is August 24, 2017

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Grain Inspections at Lowest Level for the Year

For the week ending August 10, **total inspections of grain** (corn, wheat, and soybeans) for export from major U.S. export regions reached 1.88 million metric tons (mmt), the lowest so far for the year. Total inspections were down 20 percent from the previous week, down 31 percent from the same time last year, and 4 percent below the 3-year average. Significant decreases were seen for each of the three major grains. Grain inspections decreased 43 percent in the Pacific Northwest (PNW), 7 percent in the Mississippi Gulf, and 40 percent in the Texas Gulf. Compared to the previous week, rail deliveries of grain to the PNW and Texas Gulf ports were also down notably (**Table 3**). Despite the drop in week-to-week inspections of grain, year-to-date grain inspections are up 15 percent from last year, and inspections during the last 4 weeks are 9 percent above the 3-year average. Outstanding (unshipped) export sales were down for corn, wheat, and soybeans.

Year-to-Date Grain Barge Movements About the Same as Last Year

For the week ending August 12, year-to-date (YTD) grain barge movements on the locking sections of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Arkansas Rivers were 25.53 million tons, 0.41 million tons higher than the same period in 2016. YTD corn barge movements were 15.6 million tons, 0.53 million tons lower than last year. YTD soybean barge movements were 8.13 million tons, an increase of .77 million tons over last year. In addition, there were slight increases in YTD barge shipments of wheat and other grains (sorghum, barley, and oats) as compared to last year. Throughout the year, river conditions have been generally favorable for navigation, however, there have been sporadic disruptions on the river system due to lock and dam maintenance and repairs. At present, there are significant delays at Illinois River La Grange Lock and Dam and at Ohio River Locks and Dam 52. Due to the on-going repairs, La Grange Lock will be closed 10 hours each day and opened to traffic for 14 hours each day.

Highest Average Diesel Prices Seen So Far in 2017

During the week ending August 14, average **diesel fuel prices** increased almost 2 cents from the previous week to $2.60 per gallon. This is the highest average diesel retail price so far this year, and also higher than last year's peak at $2.54. Diesel prices were 13 percent higher than the same week last year. The largest year-to-year price-spread recorded in 2017, when average diesel fuel prices were $0.60 higher than the prior year, was recorded during February. Diesel prices were $0.29 higher this week than the same week last year. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, oil distillate exports reached a record high 1.5 million barrels per day in May; and throughout the month of July, oil distillate consumption was close to the seasonal consumption level that is usually experienced during the winter months. U.S. industrial production, manufacturing activity, and freight shipments are continuing to increase and are likely contributing to domestic fuel consumption

Snapshots by Sector

Export Sales

For the week ending August 3, **unshipped balances** of wheat, corn, and soybeans totaled 14.7 mmt, down 25 percent from the same time last year. Net weekly **wheat export sales** were .464 mmt, up significantly from the previous week. Net **corn export sales** were .052 mmt, up 41 percent from the previous week. Net **soybean export sales** were .045 mmt, down 81 percent from the past week, and the lowest so far for the current marketing year.

Rail

U.S. Class I railroads originated 20,846 **grain carloads** for the week ending August 5, up 1 percent from the previous week, down 14 percent from last year, and down 4 percent from the 3-year average.

Average August shuttle **secondary railcar** bids/offers per car were $125 below tariff for the week ending August 10, up $29 from last week, and $1,250 lower than last year. There were no non-shuttle bids/offers this week.

Barge

For the week ending August 12, **barge grain movements** totaled 934,961 tons, 10 percent higher than the last week, and down 26 percent from the same period last year.

For the week ending August 12, 604 grain barges **moved down river**, up 12 percent from last week, 600 grain barges were **unloaded in New Orleans**, down 5 percent from the previous week.

Ocean

For the week ending August 10, 28 **ocean-going grain vessels** were loaded in the Gulf, 42 percent less than the same period last year. Fifty vessels are expected to be loaded within the next 10 days, 37 percent less than the same period last year.

For the week ending August 10, the ocean freight rate for shipping bulk grain from the Gulf to Japan was $37 per metric ton, unchanged from the previous week. The cost of shipping from the PNW to Japan was $19 per metric ton, unchanged from the previous week.

Preferred citation: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service. *Grain Transportation Report.* August 17, 2017.
Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.08-17-2017**

Feature Article/Calendar

Sept. 12-14, 2017	American Feed Industry Association, 2017 Liquid Feed Symposium	Louisville, KY	http://www.afia.org/
Sept. 14-15, 2017	National Grain Car Council meeting and TEGMA 2017 Fall Symposium	Kansas City, MO	http://www.tegma.org/201709
Sept. 16, 2017	2017 American Trucking Association, Technology & Maintenance Council Fall Meeting	Orlando, FL	http://www.trucking.org/Events.aspx
Sept. 26-28, 2017	National Waterway Conference Annual Meeting	St. Louis, MO	https://waterways.org/2017-annual-meeting/
Oct. 1-4, 2017	American Association of Port Authorities Annual Convention	Long Beach, CA	http://aapa2017.com/
Oct. 9-10, 2017	Tennessee River Valley Association 51th Annual Meeting	Nashville, TN	http://www.trva-tcwc.org/2017-trva-annual-meeting-invite/
Oct. 11-13, 2017	American Waterways Operators, Fall Convention	Boston, MA	http://www.americanwaterways.com/about/awo-event-calendar
Oct. 13-17, 2017	Atlantic Seed Association Annual Convention 2017	Cleveland, OH	http://www.atlanticseed.org/
Oct. 21-25, 2017	American Trucking Association 2017 Management Conference & Exhibition	Orlando, FL	http://mce.trucking.org/
Nov. 5-9, 2017	American Water Resource Association Annual Conference	Portland, OR	http://www.awra.org/
Nov. 6-8, 2017	JOC Inland Distribution Conference	Atlanta, GA	http://events.joc.com/upcoming-events
Nov. 8-10, 2017	Waterways Council Annual Meeting and Symposium	Mobile, AL	http://waterwayscouncil.org/
Nov. 8, 2017	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Kansas City, MO	http://www.agtrans.org
Nov. 9, 2017	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Atlanta, GA	http://www.agtrans.org
Dec. 3-5, 2017	National Grain and Feed Association Country Elevator Conference	Louisville, KY	https://www.ngfa.org/country-elevator-conference/
Dec. 5, 2017	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Minneapolis, MN	http://www.agtrans.org
Dec. 6, 2017	AgTC/USDA Ag Shipper Workshop	Boise, ID	http://www.agtrans.org
Dec. 12-13, 2017	JOC Port Performance North America Conference	New Jersey, NY	http://events.joc.com/upcoming-events
Jan. 7-11, 2018	Transportation Research Board 97th Annual Meeting	Washington, DC	http://www.trb.org/
Feb. 6, 2018	Iowa Soybean Association Research Conference	Des Moines, IA	http://www.iasoybeans.com/calendar/
Feb. 13-16, 2018	Waterways Council Washington Meeting	Washington, DC	http://waterwayscouncil.org/
Feb. 22, 2018	USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum	Arlington, VA	https://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/
Feb. 27- Mar. 1, 2018	Commodity Classic	Anaheim, CA	http://www.commodityclassic.com/home/
Mar. 4-7, 2018	18th Annual Trans-Pacific Maritime Annual Conference	Long Beach, CA	http://events.joc.com/upcoming-events
Mar. 16-18, 2018	North American Rail Shippers Association 2018 Annual Meeting	Chicago, IL	https://www.railshippers.com/
Mar. 18-20, 2018	National Grain and Feed Association Convention	Scottsdale, AZ	https://www.ngfa.org/upcoming-events/annual-convention/

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1

Grain Transport Cost Indicators[1]

	Truck	Rail		Barge	Ocean	
For the week ending		Unit Train	Shuttle		Gulf	Pacific
08/16/17	376	257	205	171	165	135
08/09/17	173	256	203	164	165	135

[1]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); and ocean = routes to Japan ($/metric ton)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2

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

Commodity	Origin--Destination	8/11/2017	8/4/2017
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.52	-0.50
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.69	-0.67
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-1.12	-1.13
HRW	KS--Gulf	-2.15	-1.95
HRS	ND--Portland	-2.15	-1.95

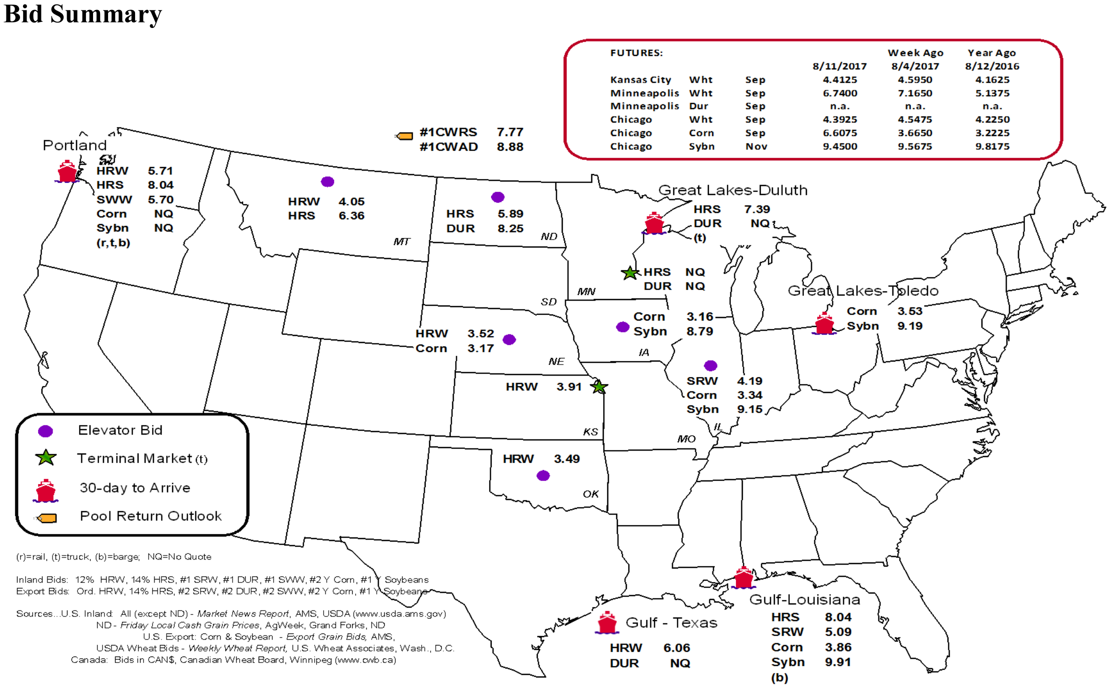
Note: nq = no quote; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **grain bid summary** illustrates the market relationships for commodities. Positive and negative adjustments in differential between terminal and futures markets, and the relationship to inland market points, are indicators of changes in fundamental market supply and demand. The map may be used to monitor market and time differentials.

Figure 1

Grain Bid Summary



Rail Transportation

Table 3

Rail Deliveries to Port (carloads)[1]

For the Week Ending	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total	Week ending	Cross-Border Mexico[3]
08/09/2017[p]	338	406	3,844	237	4,825	8/5/2017	1,952
08/02/2017[r]	138	984	5,011	259	6,392	7/29/2017	2,355
2017 YTD[r]	16,070	54,275	184,534	12,578	267,457	2017 YTD	73,468
2016 YTD[r]	10,130	45,191	157,432	11,105	223,858	2016 YTD	66,023
2017 YTD as % of 2016 YTD	159	120	117	113	119	% change YTD	111
Last 4 weeks as % of 2016[2]	29	80	97	86	85	Last 4wks % 2016	108
Last 4 weeks as % of 4-year avg.[2]	83	74	156	113	128	Last 4wks % 4 yr	133
Total 2016	36,925	86,992	299,932	28,728	452,577	Total 2016	92,982
Total 2015	29,054	60,819	239,029	26,730	355,632	Total 2015	97,736

[1] Data is incomplete as it is voluntarily provided

[2] Compared with same 4-weeks in 2016 and prior 4-year average.

[3] 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 KCSM and FerroMex.

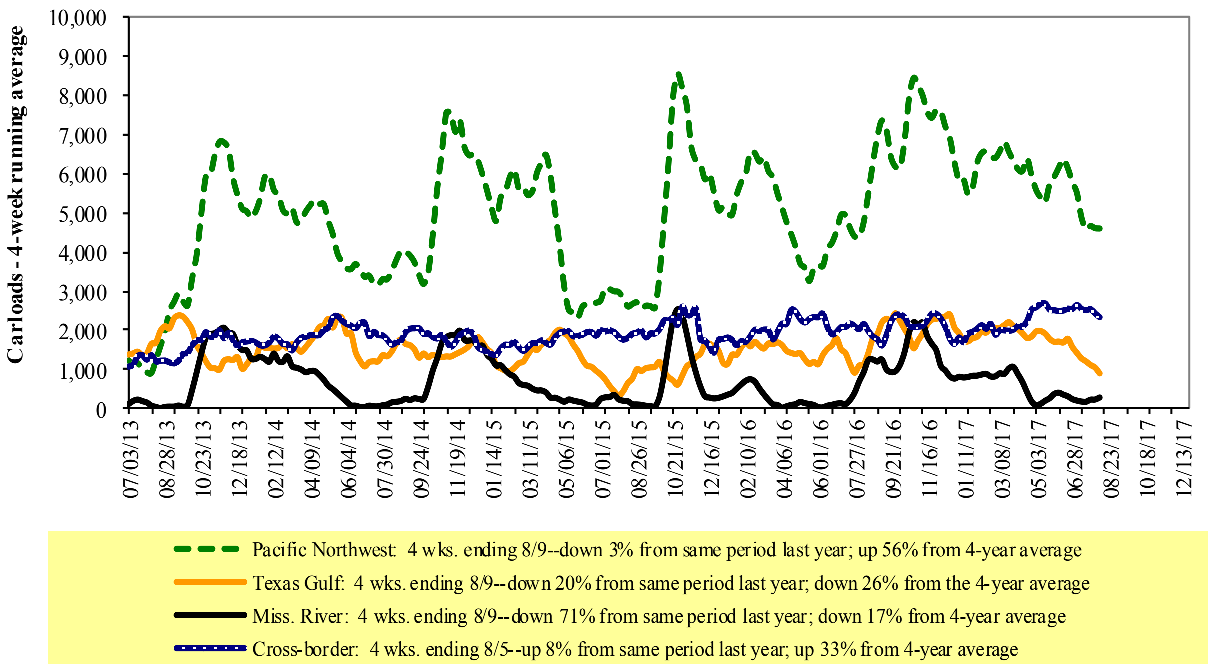
YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data; n/a = not available

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

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: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 4

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

For the week ending: 8/5/2017	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
This week	1,563	2,818	9,976	747	5,742	20,846	3,672	3,994
This week last year	1,227	2,786	13,290	918	5,904	24,125	4,104	5,617
2017 YTD	53,433	86,744	352,279	29,147	181,463	703,066	117,492	139,220
2016 YTD	53,745	87,038	331,355	26,605	164,377	663,120	101,881	131,558
2017 YTD as % of 2016 YTD	99	100	106	110	110	106	115	106
Last 4 weeks as % of 2016*	99	94	80	93	92	86	89	96
Last 4 weeks as % of 3-yr avg.**	77	97	100	108	97	97	87	94
Total 2016	95,179	151,015	590,779	45,246	300,836	1,183,055	193,933	234,738

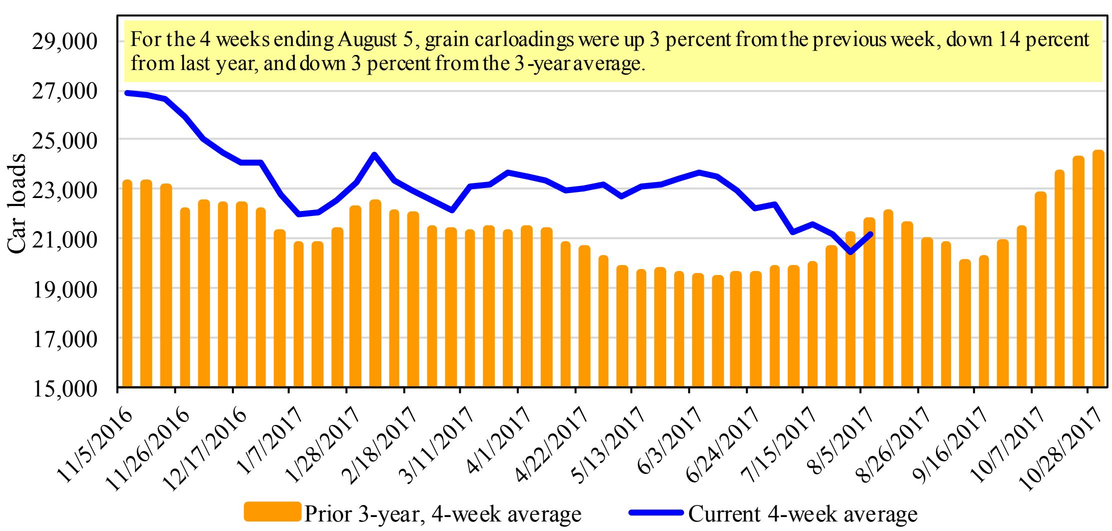
*The past 4 weeks of this year as a percent of the same 4 weeks last year.

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

Source: Association of American Railroads (www.aar.org)

Figure 3

Total Weekly U.S. Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings



Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 5

Railcar Auction Offerings[1] ($/car)[2]

For the week ending: 8/10/2017		Delivery period							
		Aug-17	Aug-16	Sep-17	Sep-16	Oct-17	Oct-16	Nov-17	Nov-16
BNSF[3]	COT grain units	no bids	no offer	1	40	no offer	116	no bids	17
	COT grain single-car[5]	1	no offer	0	153-252	0	193-205	0	127-152
UP[4]	GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no bids	no offer	no bids	no offer	n/a	n/a
	GCAS/Region 2	no offer	no offer	10	no offer	10	no offer	n/a	n/a

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

[2]Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

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

[4]UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

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

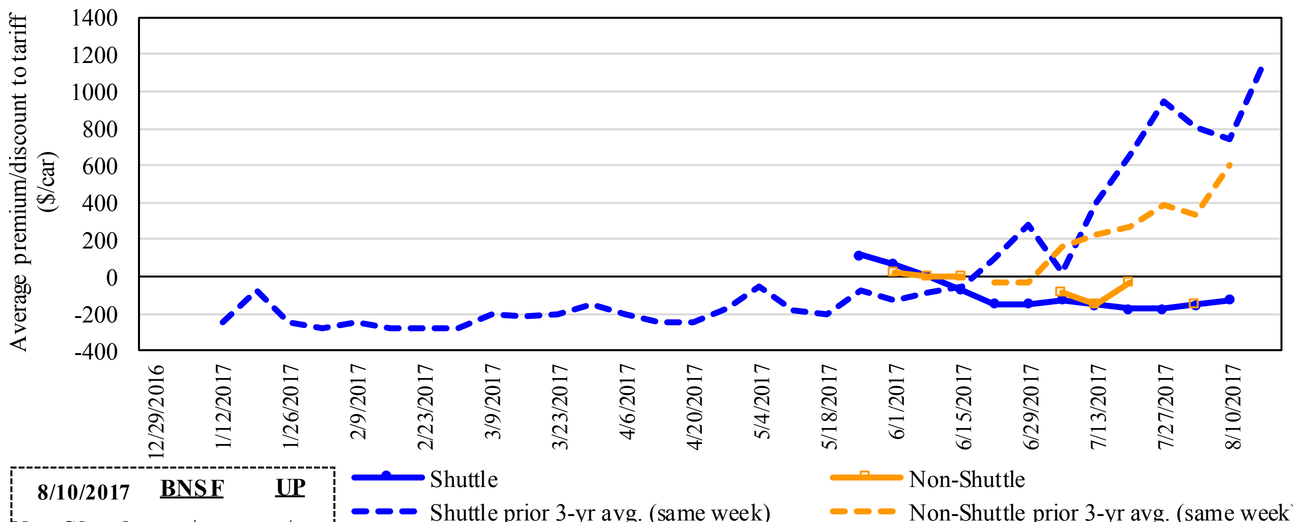
Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

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

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA.

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

Figure 4
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in August 2017, Secondary Market

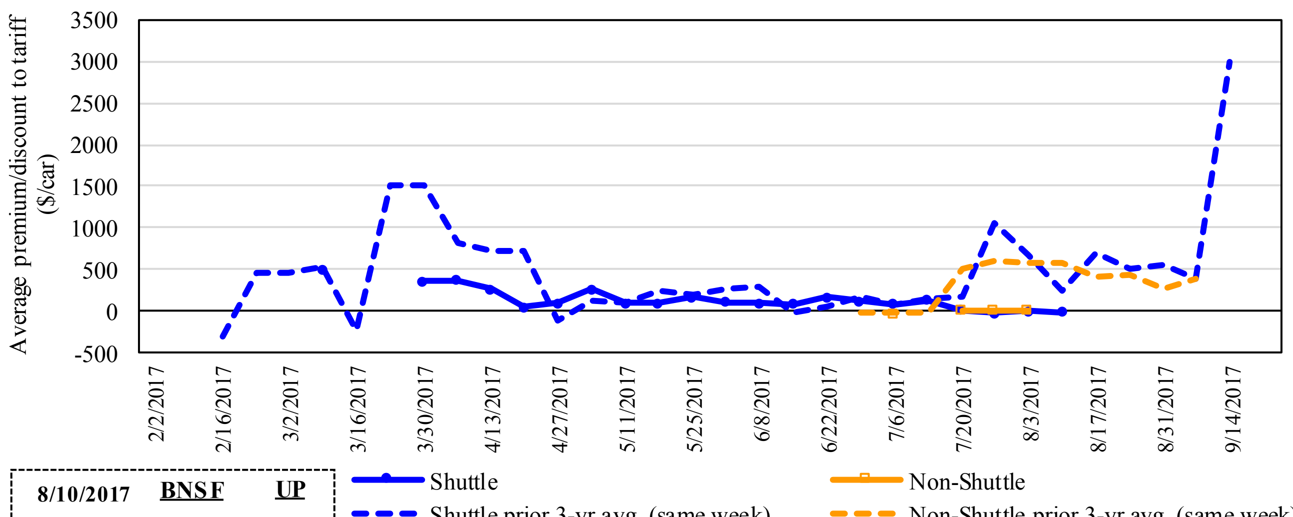


8/10/2017	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	-$200	-$50

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $29 this week and are $238 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 5
Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in September 2017, Secondary Market



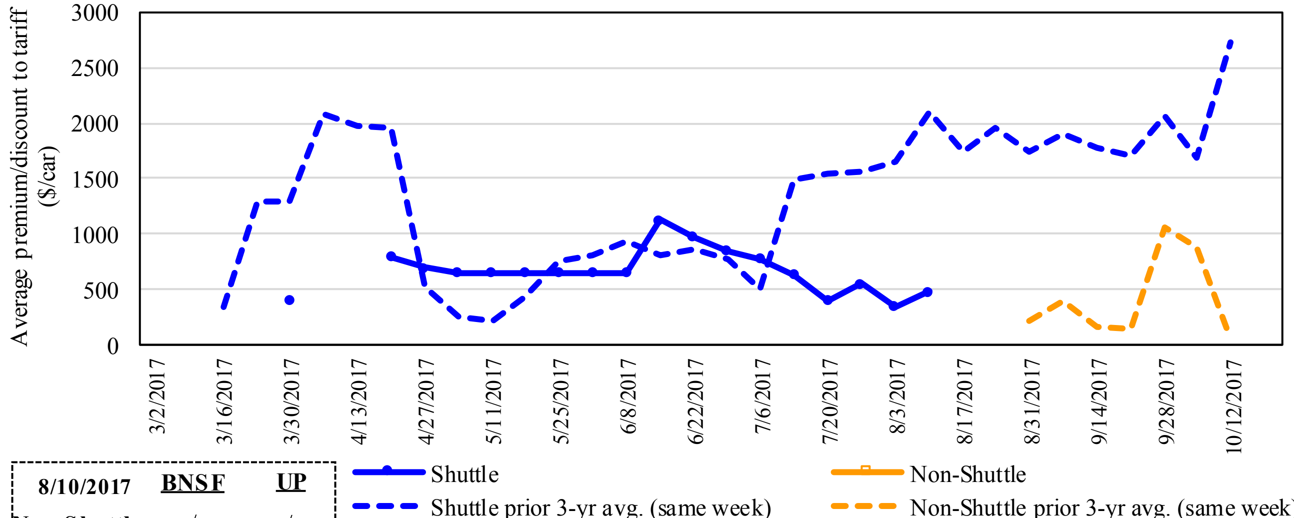
8/10/2017	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$10	-$25

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average Shuttle bids/offers fell $3 this week and are $507 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 6

Bids/Offers for Railcars to be Delivered in October 2017, Secondary Market



8/10/2017	BNSF	UP
Non-Shuttle	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	$600	$363

There were no Non-Shuttle bids/offers this week.
Average Shuttle bids/offers rose $131 this week and are $644 below the peak.

Non-shuttle bids include unit-train and single-car bids. n/a = not available.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 6

Weekly Secondary Railcar Market ($/car)[1]

For the week ending: 8/10/2017		Delivery period: Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18
Non-shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**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 2016	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**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 2016	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shuttle	**BNSF-GF**	**(200)**	**10**	**600**	**0**	**(100)**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	25	2	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2016	(1325)	(990)	(1250)	n/a	n/a	n/a
	UP-Pool	**(50)**	**(25)**	**363**	**200**	**(100)**	**n/a**
	Change from last week	33	(8)	13	0	n/a	n/a
	Change from same week 2016	n/a	(275)	(1038)	(275)	(275)	n/a

[1]Average premium/discount to tariff, $/car-last week

Note: Bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices,

n/a = not available; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool

Sources: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

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

The **tariff rail rate** is the base price of freight rail service, and together with **fuel surcharges** and any **auction and secondary rail** values constitute 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. High auction and secondary rail values, during times of high rail demand or short supply, can exceed the cost of the tariff rate plus fuel surcharge.

Table 7

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

August, 2017	Origin region[3]	Destination region[3]	Tariff rate/car	Fuel surcharge per car	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton	Tariff plus surcharge per: bushel[2]	Percent change Y/Y[4]
Unit train							
Wheat	Wichita, KS	St. Louis, MO	$3,883	$46	$39.01	$1.06	8
	Grand Forks, ND	Duluth-Superior, MN	$4,143	$0	$41.14	$1.12	0
	Wichita, KS	Los Angeles, CA	$7,050	$0	$70.01	$1.91	1
	Wichita, KS	New Orleans, LA	$4,540	$80	$45.88	$1.25	7
	Sioux Falls, SD	Galveston-Houston, TX	$6,786	$0	$67.39	$1.83	5
	Northwest KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,816	$88	$48.70	$1.33	7
	Amarillo, TX	Los Angeles, CA	$5,021	$122	$51.07	$1.39	7
Corn	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,681	$91	$37.45	$0.95	1
	Toledo, OH	Raleigh, NC	$6,061	$0	$60.19	$1.53	0
	Des Moines, IA	Davenport, IA	$2,258	$19	$22.61	$0.57	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Atlanta, GA	$5,191	$0	$51.55	$1.31	4
	Indianapolis, IN	Knoxville, TN	$4,311	$0	$42.81	$1.09	0
	Des Moines, IA	Little Rock, AR	$3,534	$56	$35.65	$0.91	3
	Des Moines, IA	Los Angeles, CA	$5,202	$164	$53.29	$1.35	4
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	New Orleans, LA	$3,634	$60	$36.68	$1.00	-4
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$5,051	$0	$50.16	$1.37	0
	Indianapolis, IN	Raleigh, NC	$6,178	$0	$61.35	$1.67	0
	Indianapolis, IN	Huntsville, AL	$4,529	$0	$44.98	$1.22	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$4,495	$91	$45.54	$1.24	3
Shuttle Train							
Wheat	Great Falls, MT	Portland, OR	$3,953	$0	$39.26	$1.07	0
	Wichita, KS	Galveston-Houston, TX	$4,171	$0	$41.42	$1.13	8
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$5,492	$0	$54.54	$1.48	0
	Grand Forks, ND	Portland, OR	$5,611	$0	$55.72	$1.52	0
	Grand Forks, ND	Galveston-Houston, TX	$5,931	$0	$58.90	$1.60	0
	Northwest KS	Portland, OR	$5,812	$144	$59.15	$1.61	7
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,000	$0	$49.65	$1.26	0
	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$4,960	$0	$49.26	$1.25	0
	Champaign-Urbana, IL	New Orleans, LA	$3,481	$91	$35.47	$0.90	1
	Lincoln, NE	Galveston-Houston, TX	$3,700	$0	$36.74	$0.93	3
	Des Moines, IA	Amarillo, TX	$3,895	$71	$39.38	$1.00	3
	Minneapolis, MN	Tacoma, WA	$5,000	$0	$49.65	$1.26	0
	Council Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$4,740	$0	$47.07	$1.20	2
Soybeans	Sioux Falls, SD	Tacoma, WA	$5,600	$0	$55.61	$1.51	2
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$5,650	$0	$56.11	$1.53	3
	Fargo, ND	Tacoma, WA	$5,500	$0	$54.62	$1.49	2
	Council Bluffs, IA	New Orleans, LA	$4,525	$104	$45.97	$1.25	3
	Toledo, OH	Huntsville, AL	$4,226	$0	$41.97	$1.14	0
	Grand Island, NE	Portland, OR	$5,460	$147	$55.68	$1.52	2

[1]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.

[2]Approximate load per car = 111 short tons (100.7 metric tons): corn 56 lbs./bu., wheat and soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

[3]Regional economic areas are defined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

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

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.csx.com, www.up.com

Table 8

Tariff Rail Rates for U.S. Bulk Grain Shipments to Mexico

Commodity	Origin state	Destination region	Tariff rate/car[1]	Fuel surcharge per car[2]	Tariff plus surcharge per: metric ton[3]	bushel[3]	Percent change[4] Y/Y
Date: August, 2017							
Wheat	MT	Chihuahua, CI	$7,459	$0	$76.21	$2.07	0
	OK	Cuautitlan, EM	$6,631	$63	$68.39	$1.86	2
	KS	Guadalajara, JA	$7,309	$246	$77.19	$2.10	7
	TX	Salinas Victoria, NL	$4,292	$37	$44.24	$1.20	4
Corn	IA	Guadalajara, JA	$8,187	$198	$85.68	$2.17	2
	SD	Celaya, GJ	$7,580	$0	$77.45	$1.97	1
	NE	Queretaro, QA	$7,909	$125	$82.09	$2.08	1
	SD	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,635	$0	$67.79	$1.72	1
	MO	Tlalnepantla, EM	$7,268	$122	$75.51	$1.92	1
	SD	Torreon, CU	$7,180	$0	$73.36	$1.86	1
Soybeans	MO	Bojay (Tula), HG	$8,647	$209	$90.48	$2.46	1
	NE	Guadalajara, JA	$8,942	$212	$93.53	$2.54	-1
	IA	El Castillo, JA	$8,960	$0	$91.55	$2.49	-5
	KS	Torreon, CU	$7,489	$142	$77.96	$2.12	2
Sorghum	NE	Celaya, GJ	$7,164	$177	$75.01	$1.90	-1
	KS	Queretaro, QA	$7,608	$78	$78.53	$1.99	1
	NE	Salinas Victoria, NL	$6,213	$63	$64.12	$1.63	1
	NE	Torreon, CU	$6,607	$129	$68.83	$1.75	0

[1]Rates are based upon published tariff rates for high-capacity shuttle trains. Shuttle trains are available for qualified shipments of 75--110 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

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

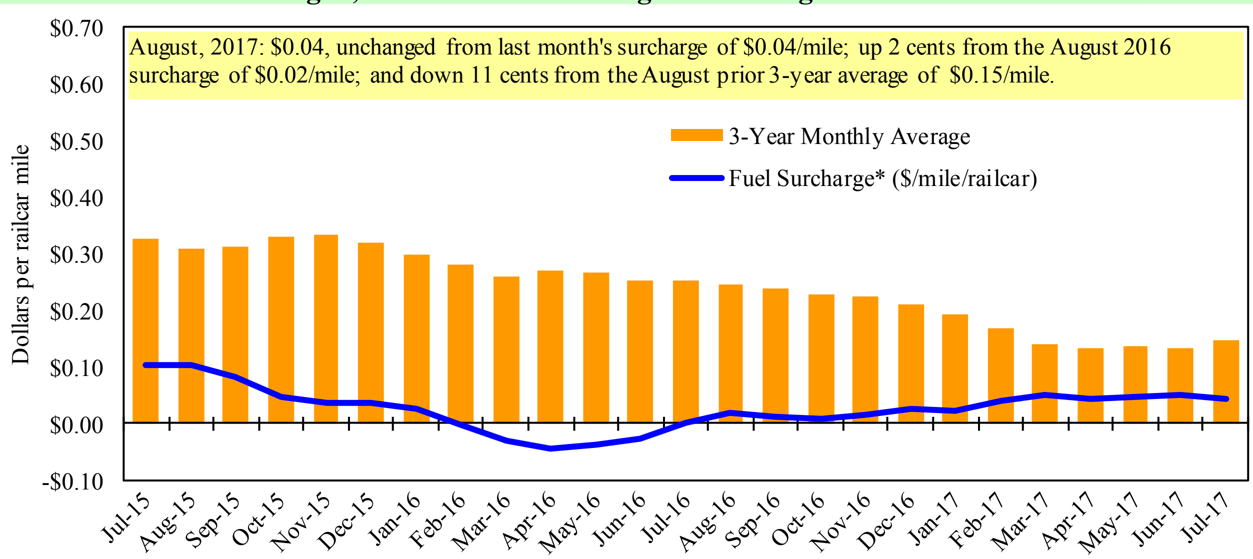
[3]Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn & Sorghum 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

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

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.uprr.com, www.kcsouthern.com

Figure 7

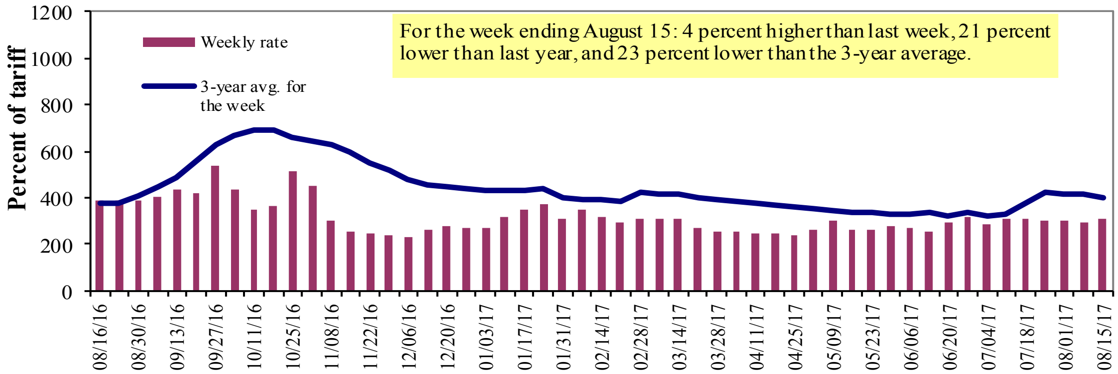
Railroad Fuel Surcharges, North American Weighted Average[1]



[1] Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.
* 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: www.bnsf.com, www.cn.ca, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.kcsi.com, www.nscorp.com, www.uprr.com

Barge Transportation

Figure 8
Illinois River Barge Freight Rate[1,2]



[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average of the 3-year average.
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 9
Weekly Barge Freight Rates: Southbound Only

		Twin Cities	Mid-Mississippi	Lower Illinois River	St. Louis	Cincinnati	Lower Ohio	Cairo-Memphis
Rate[1]	8/15/2017	408	308	308	210	250	250	185
	8/8/2017	328	295	295	200	248	248	170
$/ton	8/15/2017	25.26	16.39	14.29	8.38	11.73	10.10	5.81
	8/8/2017	20.30	15.69	13.69	7.98	11.63	10.02	5.34
Current week % change from the same week:								
	Last year	-15	-23	-21	-20	-22	-22	-26
	3-year avg. [2]	-17	-27	-23	-33	-29	-29	-37
Rate[1]	September	423	338	338	263	313	313	280
	November	400	338	325	263	325	325	225

[1]Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); [2]4-week moving average; ton = 2,000 pounds
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 9
Benchmark tariff rates

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

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

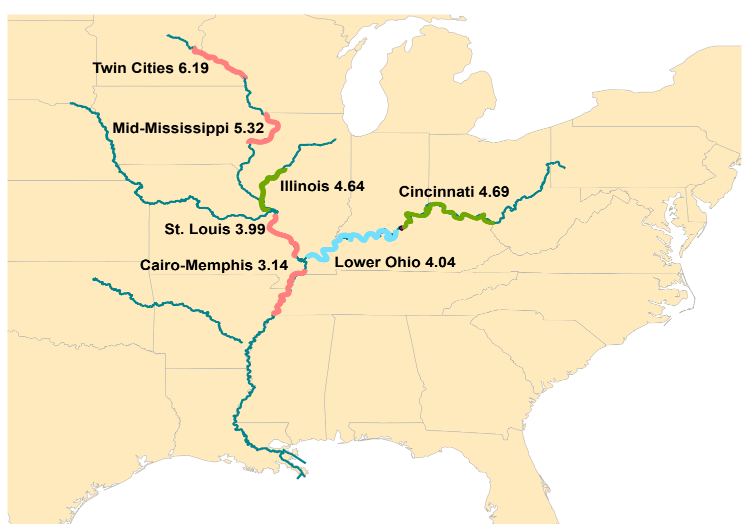
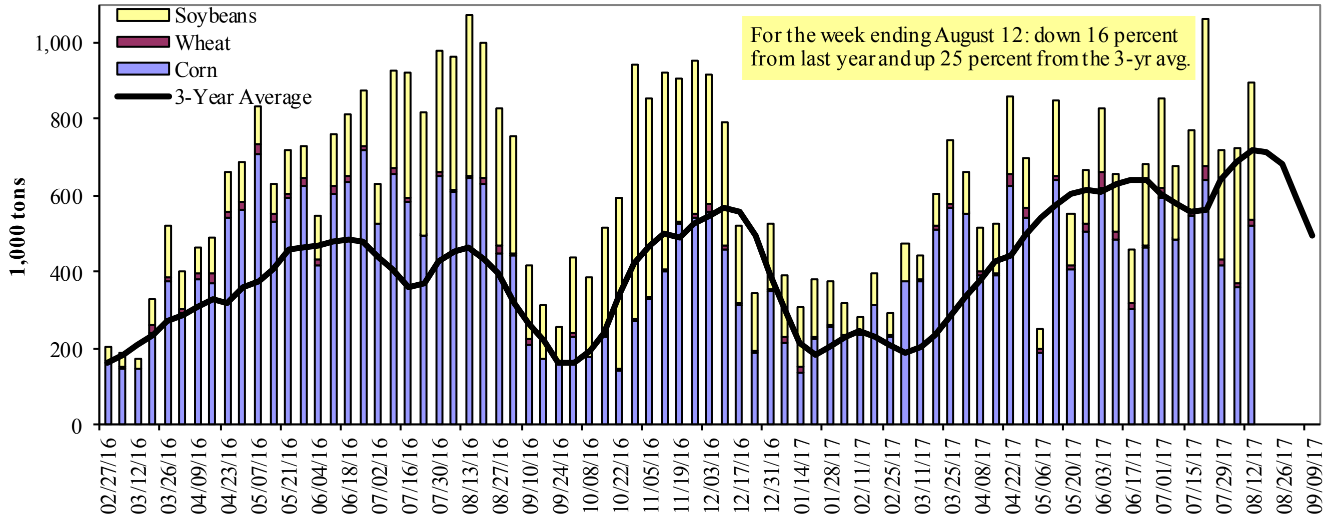


Figure 10

Barge Movements on the Mississippi River[1] (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)



[1] The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Table 10

Barge Grain Movements (1,000 tons)

For the week ending 8/12/2017	Corn	Wheat	Soybeans	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	281	13	198	8	500
Winfield, MO (L25)	388	17	293	9	707
Alton, IL (L26)	395	21	335	9	760
Granite City, IL (L27)	420	19	359	9	807
Illinois River (L8)	54	0	100	0	154
Ohio River (L52)	14	21	37	0	71
Arkansas River (L1)	0	51	6	0	57
Weekly total - 2017	434	91	401	9	935
Weekly total - 2016	726	71	467	2	1,266
2017 YTD[1]	15,611	1,590	8,130	201	25,531
2016 YTD	16,145	1,439	7,356	181	25,121
2017 as % of 2016 YTD	97	110	111	111	102
Last 4 weeks as % of 2016[2]	74	108	100	297	85
Total 2016	24,136	2,030	16,668	344	43,178

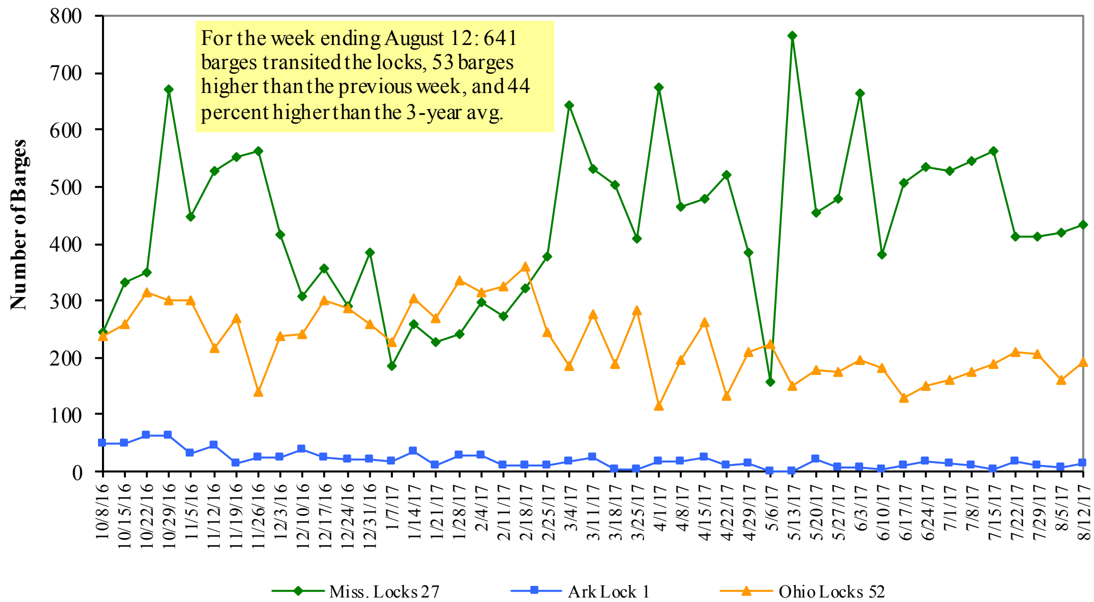
[1] Weekly total, YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1; "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

[2] As a percent of same period in 2016.

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

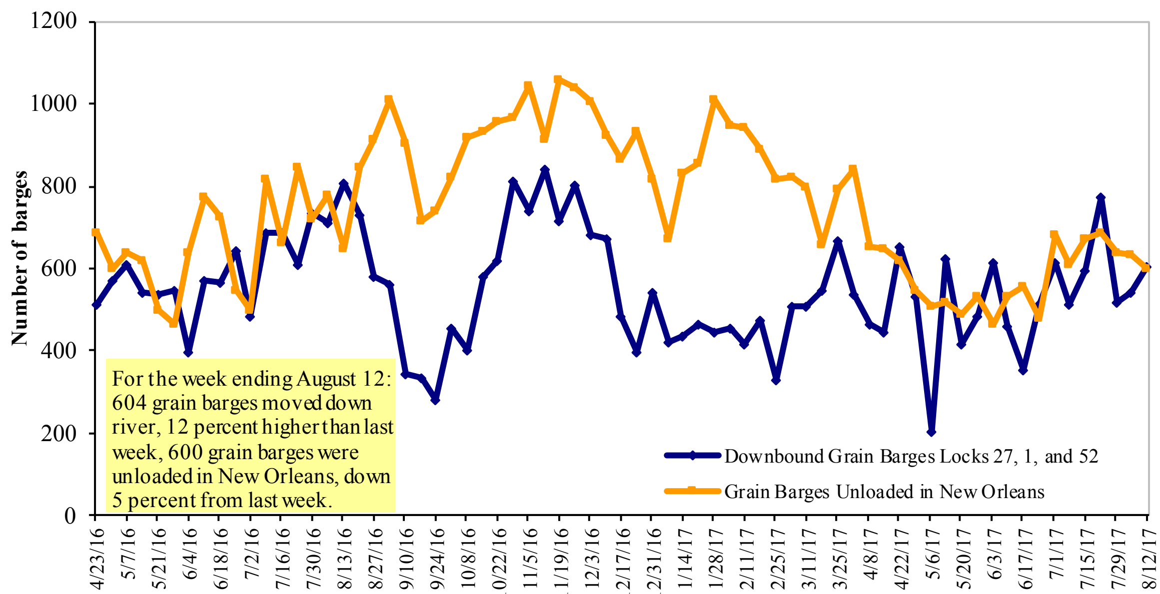
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 11
Upbound Empty Barges Transiting Mississippi River Locks 27, Arkansas River Lock and Dam 1, and Ohio River Locks and Dam 52



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Figure 12
Grain Barges for Export in New Orleans Region



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and GIPSA

Truck Transportation

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

Table 11

Retail on-Highway Diesel Prices[1], Week Ending 8/14/2017(US $/gallon)

Region	Location	Price	Change from Week ago	Change from Year ago
I	East Coast	2.624	0.011	0.310
	New England	2.625	0.007	0.257
	Central Atlantic	2.761	0.010	0.355
	Lower Atlantic	2.527	0.013	0.294
II	Midwest[2]	2.543	0.027	0.297
III	Gulf Coast[3]	2.410	0.000	0.231
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.700	0.027	0.306
V	West Coast	2.848	0.029	0.294
	West Coast less California	2.788	0.041	0.347
	California	2.930	0.019	0.253
Total	U.S.	2.598	0.017	0.288

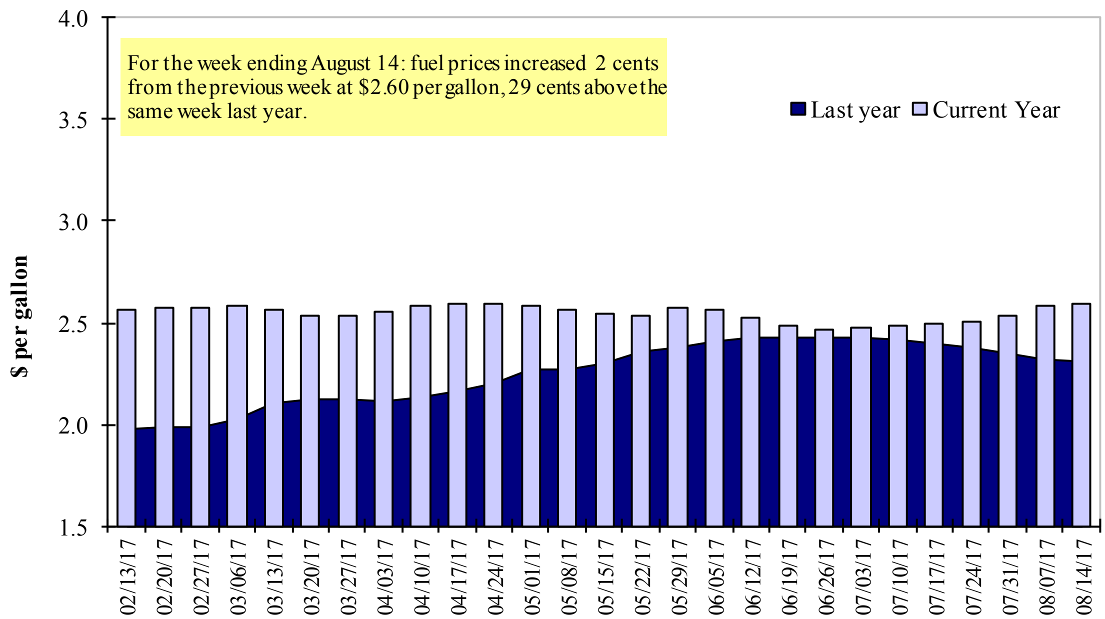
[1]Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel.

[2]Same as North Central [3]Same as South Central

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Figure 13

Weekly Diesel Fuel Prices, U.S. Average



Source: Retail On-Highway Diesel Prices, Energy Information Administration, Dept. of Energy

Grain Exports

Table 12

U.S. Export Balances and Cumulative Exports (1,000 metric tons)

For the week ending	Wheat HRW	Wheat SRW	Wheat HRS	Wheat SWW	Wheat DUR	All wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Total
Export Balances[1]									
8/3/2017	1,498	641	1,387	1,493	127	5,146	4,119	5,397	14,662
This week year ago	2,516	625	1,942	1,098	165	6,345	7,743	5,481	19,569
Cumulative exports-marketing year[2]									
2016/17 YTD	2,250	451	1,393	1,212	76	5,382	52,292	55,409	113,083
2015/16 YTD	1,777	405	1,395	741	34	4,352	41,887	47,189	93,428
YTD 2016/17 as % of 2015/16	127	111	100	164	222	124	125	117	121
Last 4 wks as % of same period 2015/16	62	109	74	149	77	86	72	112	87
2015/16 Total	5,538	3,057	6,285	3,551	670	19,101	45,564	49,821	114,487
2014/15 Total	7,009	3,654	7,250	3,758	665	22,336	45,205	49,614	117,155

[1] Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales to date

[2] Shipped export sales to date; new marketing year now in effect for wheat

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

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

Table 13

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

For the week ending 8/03/2017	Total Commitments[2] 2017/18 Next MY	2016/17 Current MY	2015/16 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-year avg 2013-2015
		- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Mexico	2,462	13,850	12,776	8	11,204
Japan	650	12,046	10,594	14	11,284
Korea	1	5,645	3,188	77	3,931
Colombia	369	4,283	4,663	(8)	4,134
Peru	185	3,082	2,414	28	2,109
Top 5 Importers	**3,668**	**38,907**	**33,634**	**16**	**32,662**
Total US corn export sales	**5,067**	**56,411**	**49,630**	**14**	**46,633**
% of Projected	11%	100%	103%		
Change from prior week[2]	**629**	**52**	**595**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. corn export sales	72%	69%	68%		70%
USDA forecast, August 2017	**47,074**	**56,616**	**48,372**	**17**	
Corn Use for Ethanol USDA forecast, August 2017	**139,700**	**138,430**	**132,690**	**5**	

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2015/16 - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query-- http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/. Total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales.

[3]FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports - http://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myrkaug.htm; 3-yr average

Table 14

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

For the week ending 8/03/2017	Total Commitments[2] 2017/18 Next MY	2016/17 Current MY	2015/16 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg. 2013-2015
		- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
China	3,095	36,322	29,086	25	29,033
Mexico	547	3,730	3,314	13	3,295
Indonesia	41	2,430	1,972	23	2,065
Japan	330	2,251	2,247	0	1,994
Netherlands	0	2,013	1,590	27	1,644
Top 5 importers	**4,014**	**46,746**	**38,208**	**22**	**38,032**
Total US soybean export sales	**7,032**	**60,806**	**52,670**	**15**	**48,389**
% of Projected	12%	104%	100%		
Change from prior week[2]	**639**	**45**	**241**		
Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales	57%	77%	73%		**79%**
USDA forecast, August 2017	**60,627**	**58,583**	**52,916**	**11**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1]Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2015/16 - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year (MY) = Sep 1 - Aug 31.

[2]Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/. The total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include reivisions from previous week's outstanding sales and/or accumulated sales

[3] FAS Marketing Year Final Reports - www.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/myfi_rpt.htm. (Carryover plus Accumulated Exports)

Table 15

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

For the week ending 8/03/2017	Total Commitments[2] 2017/18 Current MY	2016/17 Last MY	% change current MY from last MY	Exports[3] 3-yr avg 2014-2016
	- 1,000 mt -			- 1,000 mt -
Japan	912	893	2	2,620
Mexico	1,443	983	47	2,743
Philippines	1,184	903	31	2,395
Brazil	95	328	(71)	862
Nigeria	556	563	(1)	1,254
Korea	924	589	57	1,104
China	389	262	48	1,623
Taiwan	460	264	74	768
Indonesia	513	259	98	726
Colombia	281	336	(16)	635
Top 10 importers	**6,756**	**5,381**	26	**14,729**
Total US wheat export sales	**10,528**	**10,697**	**(2)**	**24,485**
% of Projected	40%	37%		
Change from prior week[2]	**464**	**608**		
Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales	64%	50%		60%
USDA forecast, August 2017	**26,567**	**28,747**	**(8)**	

(n) indicates negative number.

[1] Based on FAS Marketing Year Ranking Reports for 2015/16 - www.fas.usda.gov; Marketing year = Jun 1 - May 31.

[2] Cumulative Exports (shipped) + Outstanding Sales (unshipped), FAS Weekly Export Sales Report, or Export Sales Query--http://www.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/. Total commitments change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from the previous outstanding and/or accumulated sales

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

Table 16

Grain Inspections for Export by U.S. Port Region (1,000 metric tons)

Port Regions	For the Week Ending 08/10/17	Previous Week[1]	Current Week as % of Previous	2017 YTD	2016 YTD	2017 YTD as % of 2016 YTD	Last 4-weeks as % of: Last Year	Prior 3-yr. avg.	2016 Total
Pacific Northwest									
Wheat	323	485	67	9,889	7,740	128	112	149	12,325
Corn	195	307	64	9,629	7,418	130	74	99	12,009
Soybeans	12	141	9	4,961	4,837	103	n/a	n/a	14,447
Total	**530**	**933**	**57**	**24,480**	**19,996**	**122**	**90**	**129**	**38,782**
Mississippi Gulf									
Wheat	114	54	210	3,044	2,295	133	124	89	3,480
Corn	367	466	79	21,090	19,879	106	67	78	31,420
Soybeans	476	513	93	13,952	12,991	107	74	161	35,278
Total	**957**	**1,033**	**93**	**38,085**	**35,165**	**108**	**73**	**103**	**70,178**
Texas Gulf									
Wheat	37	82	45	4,472	2,843	157	50	80	6,019
Corn	31	31	99	517	750	69	59	130	1,669
Soybeans	0	0	n/a	0	92	0	n/a	n/a	1,105
Total	**68**	**113**	**60**	**4,990**	**3,685**	**135**	**52**	**88**	**8,792**
Interior									
Wheat	42	32	128	1,173	788	149	161	142	1,543
Corn	130	150	86	5,030	4,303	117	119	127	7,197
Soybeans	77	62	124	2,997	2,519	119	89	150	4,577
Total	**249**	**245**	**101**	**9,201**	**7,609**	**121**	**111**	**136**	**13,317**
Great Lakes									
Wheat	23	15	157	418	452	92	40	34	1,186
Corn	14	0	n/a	129	292	44	13	18	584
Soybeans	21	0	n/a	208	148	140	49	146	910
Total	**58**	**15**	**402**	**755**	**892**	**85**	**34**	**44**	**2,681**
Atlantic									
Wheat	1	1	n/a	40	197	20	26	7	315
Corn	0	0	n/a	5	41	13	0	0	294
Soybeans	12	5	251	979	987	99	78	163	2,269
Total	**13**	**6**	**224**	**1,024**	**1,224**	**84**	**50**	**45**	**2,878**
U.S. total from ports[2]									
Wheat	538	670	80	19,037	14,314	133	93	111	24,867
Corn	738	955	77	36,402	32,683	111	72	88	53,173
Soybeans	599	721	83	23,097	21,574	107	75	164	58,587
Total	**1,875**	**2,345**	**80**	**78,535**	**68,572**	**115**	**78**	**109**	**136,627**

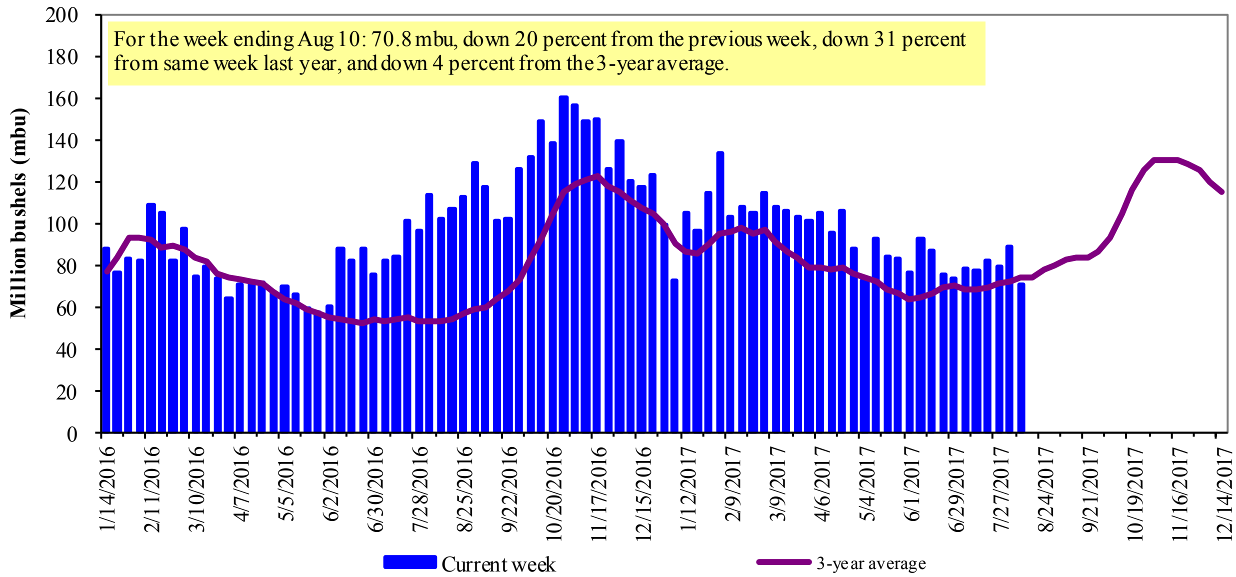
[1] Data includes revisions from prior weeks; some regional totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov); YTD= year-to-date; n/a = not applicable

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, this includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 35 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Approximately 58 percent of the U.S. export grain shipments departed through the U.S. Gulf region in 2016.

Figure 14

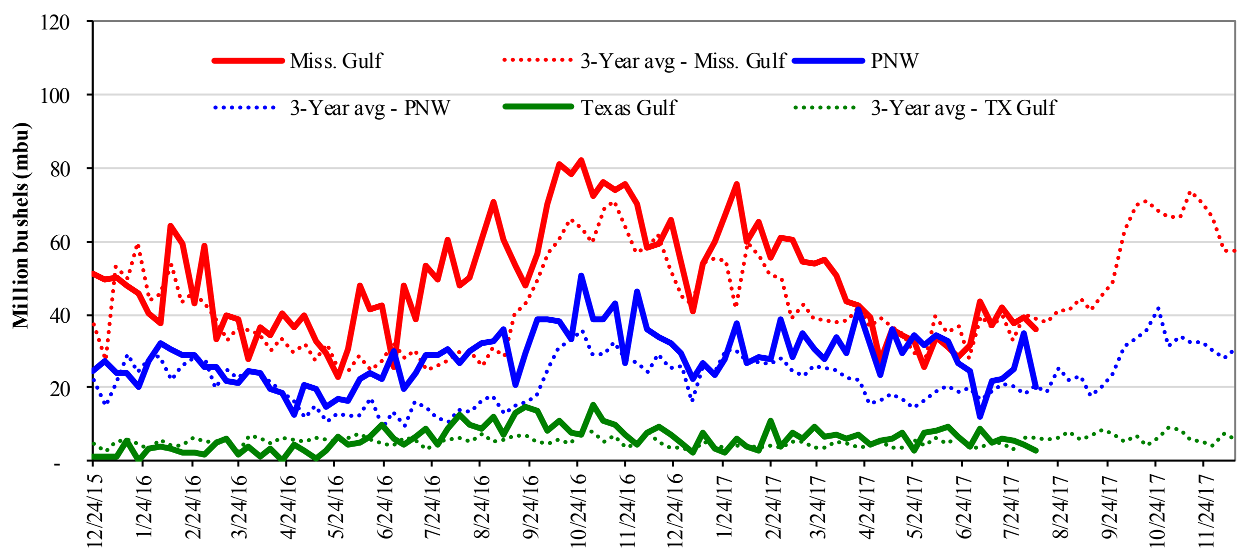
U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)
Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average

Figure 15

U.S. Grain Inspections: U.S. Gulf and PNW[1] (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Week ending 08/10/17 inspections (mbu):		Percent change from:	MS Gulf	TX Gulf	U.S. Gulf	PNW
Mississippi Gulf:	36.1	Last Week:	down 8	down 40	down 11	down 43
PNW:	20.0	Last Year (same week):	down 25	down 80	down 36	down 24
Texas Gulf:	2.6	3-yr avg. (4-wk. mov. Avg):	down 5	down 49	down 10	unchanged

Source: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration/USDA (www.gipsa.usda.gov)
[1]The 3-year average is based on a 4-week running average

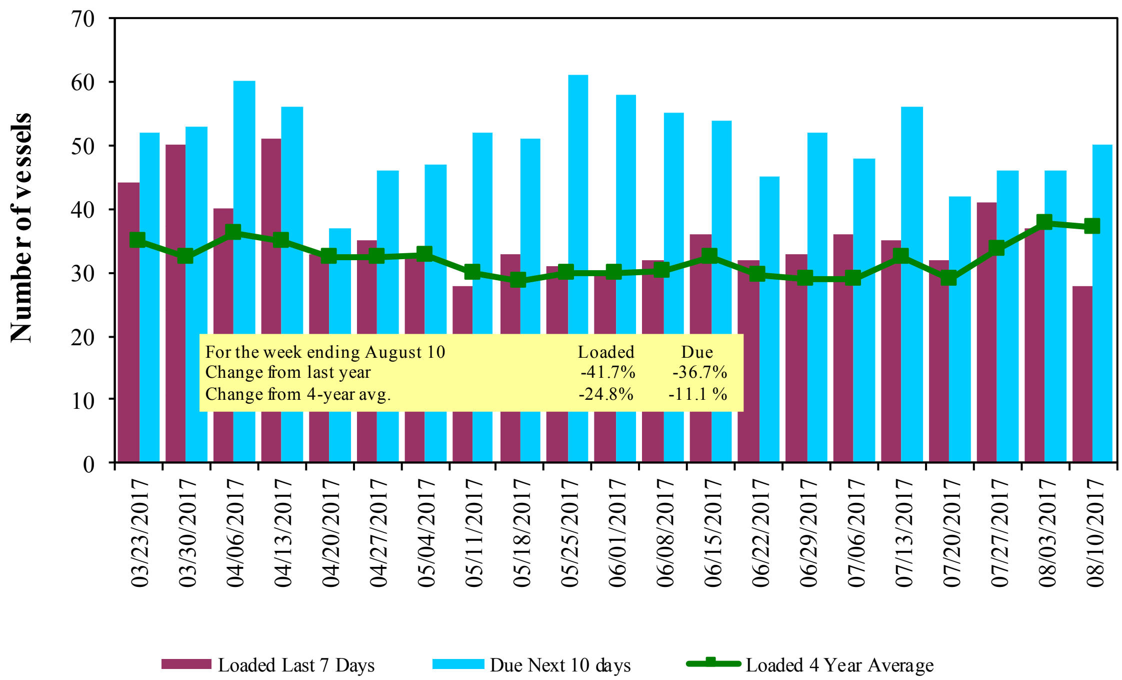
Ocean Transportation

Table 17
Weekly Port Region Grain Ocean Vessel Activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
8/10/2017	32	28	50	7	n/a
8/3/2017	43	37	46	12	n/a
2016 range	(21..62)	(27..55)	(40..87)	(6..27)	n/a
2016 avg.	43	40	62	15	n/a

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

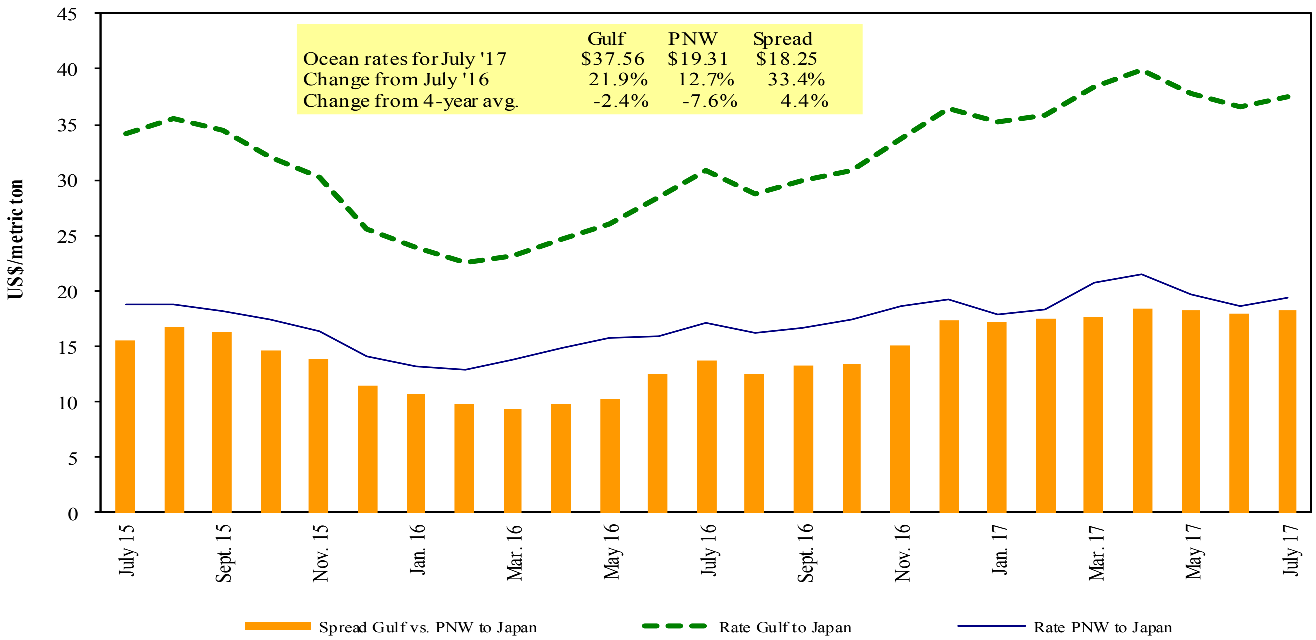
Figure 16
U.S. Gulf Vessel Loading Activity



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA
[1]U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and East Gulf.

Figure 17

Grain Vessel Rates, U.S. to Japan



Data Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Table 18

Ocean Freight Rates For Selected Shipments, Week Ending 08/12/2017

Export region	Import region	Grain types	Loading date	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate (US$/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 22/28	60,000	35.10
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 10/20	60,000	34.50
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 1/5	60,000	33.75
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 20/30	60,000	32.95
U.S. Gulf	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 15/25	60,000	33.65
U.S. Gulf	Cote d'Ivoire	Rice	Jun 19/29	6,000	93.33*
U.S. Gulf	Ghana	Rice	Jun 9/19	6,000	341.67*
U.S. Gulf	Ghana	Soybean Meal	Jun 9/19	5,000	86.75*
U.S. Gulf	Haiti	Wheat	Jul 3/13	20,000	80.00*
U.S. Gulf	Jordan	Wheat	Jun 19/28	50,000	36.00
PNW	Taiwan	Wheat	Jun 9/23	48,425	29.70
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Aug 1/10	60,000	27.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 15/30	60,000	22.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 1/10	60,000	22.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jul 1/5	60,000	22.25
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 20/30	60,000	24.00
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	Jun 10/20	60,000	24.75
Brazil	China	Heavy Grain	May 20/30	60,000	25.50
Brazil	Iran	Heavy Grain	Jun 15/18	70,000	22.75
Brazil	Malaysia	Heavy Grain	Aug 15/24	65,000	23.75
EC S. America	China	Heavy Grain	May 20/30	60,000	29.75

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

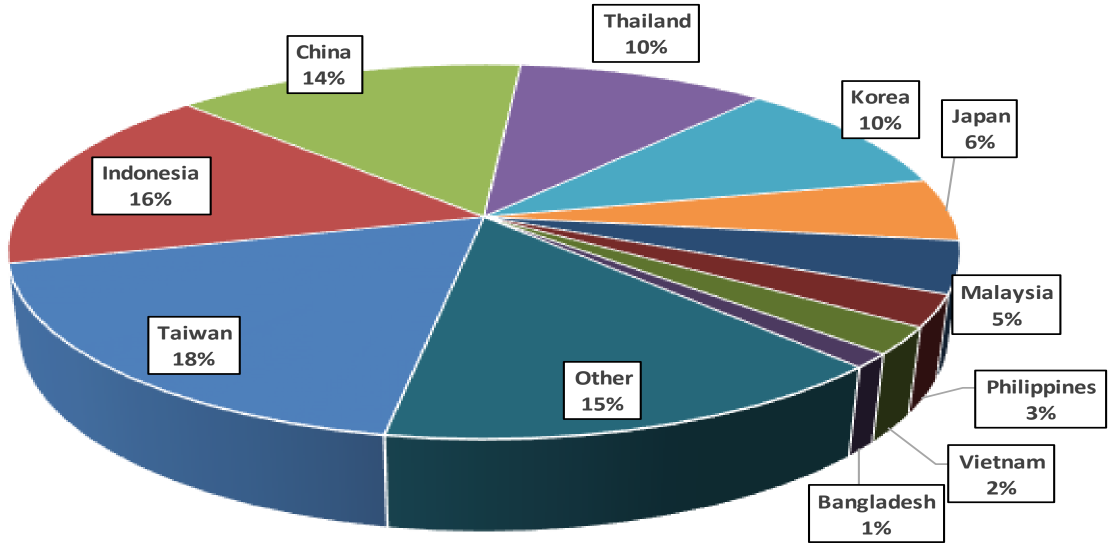
*50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels.

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

In 2015, containers were used to transport 8 percent of total U.S. waterborne grain exports. Approximately 64 percent of U.S. waterborne grain exports in 2015 went to Asia, of which 12 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, January-April 2017

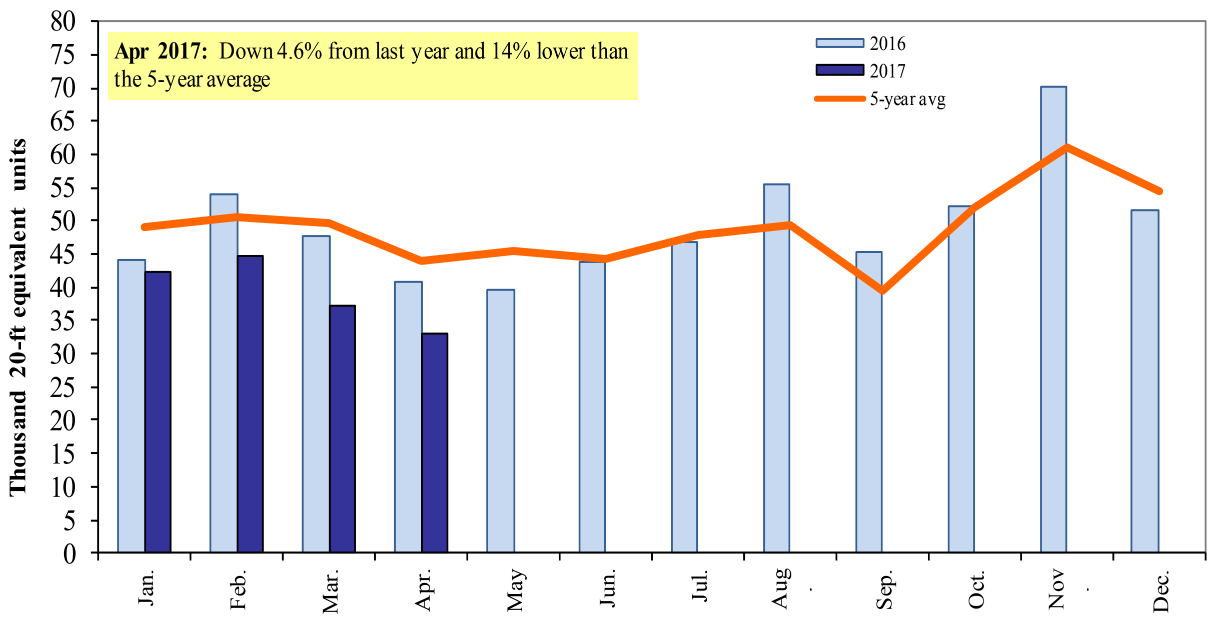


Source: USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service/Transportation Services Division analysis of Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS) data

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

Figure 19

Monthly Shipments of Containerized Grain to Asia



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

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

Contacts and Links

Coordinators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Pierre Bahizi	pierre.bahizi@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 0992
Weekly Highlight Editors		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
Grain Transportation Indicators		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
Rail Transportation		
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Jesse Gastelle	jesse.gastelle@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 1144
Peter Caffarelli	petera.caffarelli@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3244
Barge Transportation		
Nicholas Marathon	nick.marathon@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 4430
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Matt Chang	matt.chang@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0299
Truck Transportation		
April Taylor	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880
Sergio Sotelo	sergioa.sotelo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 756 - 2577
Grain Exports		
Johnny Hill	johnny.hill@ams.usda.gov	(202) 690 - 3295
Ocean Transportation		
Surajudeen (Deen) Olowolayemo (Freight rates and vessels)	surajudeen.olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 0119
April Taylor (Container movements)	april.taylor@ams.usda.gov	(202) 720 - 7880

Subscription Information: Send relevant information to **GTRContactUs@ams.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.* August 17, 2017. Web: **http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS056.08-17-2017**