

Mineral Industry Surveys

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ANTIMONY IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2006

Consumption of primary antimony in the third quarter of 2006 was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be about 12% higher than that in the second quarter of 2006 and about 18% higher than that in the third quarter of 2005. During the first 8 months of 2006, imports of all types of antimony totaled 20,800 metric tons (t), slightly higher than the total for the comparable period of 2005. During the first 8 months of 2006, China remained the leading supplier of antimony metal and antimony oxide to the United States, while Peru was the second leading supplier of antimony metal, and Mexico was the second leading supplier of antimony oxide.

Antimony prices continued to rise during the third quarter. The Platts Metals Week New York dealer price for antimony metal started the third quarter in the range of \$2.33 to \$2.44 per pound, and rose fairly steadily, ending the third quarter at \$2.48 to \$2.58 per pound.

U.S. Antimony Corp. (Thompson Falls, MT), the only domestic antimony smelter, announced that it is considering the installation of three additional crushing and grinding mills at its Antimonio de Mexico, S.A. de C.V. (50% owned by U.S. Antimony Corp.) site in Estacion Madero, Coahuila, Mexico, to boost output of processed ore from its Coahuila antimony and silver property. The Coahuila Mine reportedly has about 1

million metric tons of reserves. The three additional mills have capacities of 150 metric tons per day (t/d), 200 t/d, and 300 t/d, respectively. The Coahuila plant was expected to be operational in the fourth quarter 2006 and to produce 2 million pounds (about 900 t) per year of 99.6% antimony metal with no lead, bismuth, or tellurium content. The company has signed contracts with two consumers, one in the eastern United States and one in Canada, for 100% of its production. Before the Coahuila Mine begins production, the smelter will produce antimony metal and intermediate products on behalf of third parties from other sources of ore. U.S. Antimony built the Mexican plant in 1994 and operated it for 4 years before closing it in 1998 because of low prices (Metal Bulletin, 2006).

Update

On November 16, 2006, the Platts Metals Week price for antimony was \$2.51 to \$2.60 per pound.

Reference Cited

Metal Bulletin, 2006, U.S. Antimony mulling Coahuila output boost: Metal Bulletin, no. 8961, September 11, p. 13.

TABLE 1
SALIENT ANTIMONY STATISTICS¹

(Metric tons, antimony content, unless otherwise specified)

	2005 ^p	2006		
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter
Production:				
Primary smelter ²	--	--	--	--
Secondary	W	W	W	W
Imports for consumption:	29,200	7,990	8,040 ^r	4,740 ³
Ore and concentrate	204	10	46 ^r	22 ³
Metal	6,370	1,780	1,620 ^r	1,280 ³
Oxide ⁴	22,700	6,200	6,370 ^r	3,440 ³
Exports:	2,420	507	601 ^r	412 ³
Metal, alloys, and scrap (gross weight)	741	97	151 ^r	81 ³
Oxide ⁴	1,680	409	451 ^r	331 ³
Consumption of primary antimony	10,200	2,660	2,500 ^r	2,810
Price: Average cents per pound ⁵	160.46	199.25	251.23	249.77
Stocks, end of period ⁶	XX	1,970	2,090 ^r	1,850

^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

²Nearly all primary smelter output is antimony trioxide.

³Data for July and August only; September data were not available at time of publication.

⁴Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

⁵Source: Platts Metals Week. New York dealer price for 99.5% to 99.6% metal, c.i.f. U.S. ports.

⁶Producer and consumer stocks.

TABLE 2
INDUSTRY STOCKS OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY
IN THE UNITED STATES¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material	2006 ²		
	First quarter	Second quarter ^r	Third quarter
Oxide	1,520	1,650	1,400
Other ³	443	440	448
Total	1,970	2,090	1,850

^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who held 42% of the total stocks of antimony at the end of 2004.

³Includes ore and concentrate, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY^{1,2}

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class of material consumed	2005 ^p	2006 ²		
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter
Oxide	8,590	2,100	1,950 ^r	2,270
Other ³	1,580	558	557	545
Total	10,200	2,660	2,500 ^r	2,810

^pPreliminary. ^rRevised.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2004.

³Includes ores and concentrates, metal, sulfide, and residues.

TABLE 4
CONSUMPTION OF PRIMARY ANTIMONY, BY CLASS OF MATERIAL PRODUCED¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Product	2005 ^P	2006		
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter
Metal ²	W	W	W	W
Nonmetal ³	W	W	W	W
Flame-retardants:				
Plastics	371	94	96 ^r	151
Other ⁴	611	157	133	157
Total	982	251	229 ^r	308
Reported consumption	2,720	739	700 ^r	748
Total consumption ⁵	10,200	2,660	2,500 ^r	2,810

^PPreliminary. ^rRevised. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Reported consumption."

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes adhesives, pigments, rubber, and textiles.

³Includes ammunition, antimonial lead, bearing metals and bearings, cable coverings, castings, sheet and pipe, and solder.

⁴Includes ammunition primers, pigments, ceramics and glass, and plastics.

⁵Estimated 100% coverage based on quarterly respondents and respondents who consumed 73% of the total antimony in 2004.

TABLE 5
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ANTIMONY, BY CLASS AND COUNTRY¹

(Metric tons, antimony content)

Class and country	2005 ^{P,2}	2006					January-August ²
		First quarter	Second quarter	June	July	August	
Ore and concentrate:							
China	147	--	20	--	--	--	20
Other	57	10	27	11	11	11	60
Total	204	10	46	11	11	11	80
Metal:							
China	3,870	1,330	837	98	336	537	3,040
Mexico	900	146	341	71	25	19	530
Peru	461	268	229	59	54	94	645
Other	1,140	31	211	10	200	14	456
Total	6,370	1,780	1,620	238	615	664	4,670
Oxide: ³							
Belgium	1,550	386	481	195	118	73	1,060
China	9,510	2,530	2,950	658	506	1,060	7,050
Hong Kong	146	--	--	--	17	--	17
Mexico	9,930	2,350	2,130	736	748	823	6,050
Other	1,530	933	814	24	77	20	1,850
Total	22,700	6,200	6,370	1,610	1,470	1,980	16,000
Grand total	29,200	7,990	8,040	1,860	2,090	2,650	20,800
Other antimony compounds (gross weight)	53	16	6	--	--	12	34

^PPreliminary. -- Zero.

¹Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²May include revisions to prior months data.

³Antimony content is calculated by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.