

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## BAUXITE AND ALUMINA IN THE THIRD QUARTER 2016

Imports of crude and dried bauxite in the third quarter of 2016 were 1.14 million metric tons (Mt), 20% less than those in the second quarter of 2016 and 61% less than those in the third quarter of 2015 (fig. 1). Jamaica (67%) and Brazil (32%) were the leading sources of crude and dried bauxite imports in the third quarter of 2016 (table 1). Imports from Jamaica in the third quarter were 27% less than those in the second quarter, which was attributed to the shutdown of Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC's 1.65-million-metric-ton-per-year (Mt/yr) alumina refinery in Gregory, TX, on September 30. Sherwin, which had been operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection since January, sourced its bauxite from Jamaica and cited a dispute with its supplier, Noranda Aluminum Holding Corp., as the reason for the shutdown (Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC, 2016; Matyi, 2016b).

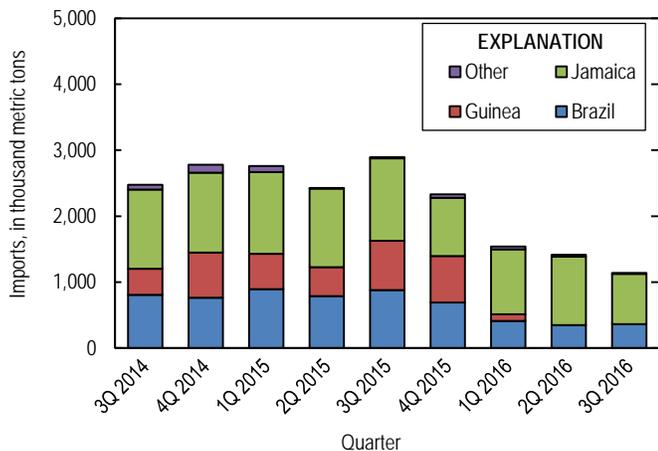


Figure 1. Quarterly imports of crude and dried bauxite from the third quarter 2014 through the third quarter 2016. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

Imports of alumina during the third quarter of 2016 were 315,000 metric tons (t), 3% more than those in the second quarter but 20% less than those in the third quarter of 2015 (fig. 2). The leading sources of imported alumina during the third

quarter of 2016 were Brazil (38%), Australia (30%), and Jamaica (18%).

Exports of alumina during the third quarter of 2016 were 366,000 t, the same as those in the second quarter but 38% less than those in the third quarter of 2015 (fig. 2). The leading destinations for alumina exported during the third quarter of 2016 were Iceland (43%) and the United Arab Emirates (26%).

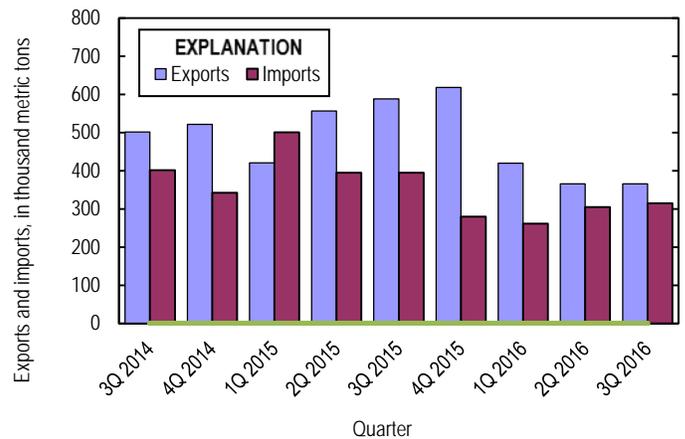


Figure 2. Alumina exports and imports from the third quarter 2014 through the third quarter 2016. Sources: Jamaica Bauxite Institute and U.S. Census Bureau.

### Update

New Day Aluminum Ltd. purchased Noranda's 1.2-Mt/yr alumina refinery at Gramercy, LA, and its 5.4-Mt/yr bauxite refinery at St. Ann Jamaica. Noranda filed for bankruptcy protection, on February 8, 2016, citing low alumina prices as well as losses on sales of bauxite to Sherwin (Matyi, 2016a).

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## **References Cited**

- Matyi, Bob, 2016a, New Day Aluminum closes on sale of Noranda's upstream assets: Platts Metals Daily, v. 5, no. 214, October 31, p. 3–4.
- Matyi, Bob, 2016b, Sherwin Alumina refinery to close September 30: Platts Metals Daily, v. 5, no. 192, September 29, p. 1, 3.
- Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC, 2016, Sherwin Alumina commences orderly wind-down of operations: Gregory, TX, Sherwin Alumina Co. LLC press release, August 1, 1 p. (Accessed September 9, 2016, at <http://sherwinalumina.com/press.php>.)

TABLE 1  
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CRUDE AND DRIED BAUXITE<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Country	2015	2016			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	1st quarter– 3d quarter
<b>Imports (for consumption):</b>					
Brazil	3,250,000	411,000	348,000	364,000	1,120,000
Guinea	2,430,000	101,000	--	--	101,000
Jamaica <sup>2</sup>	4,560,000	985,000	1,040,000	763,000	2,790,000
Other	169,000	44,100	28,500	13,400	86,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,400,000</b>	<b>1,540,000</b>	<b>1,420,000</b>	<b>1,140,000</b>	<b>4,100,000</b>
<b>Exports:</b>					
Canada	2,740	750	1,210	912	2,870
Mexico	--	19	--	--	19
Other	632	171	226	201	598
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,370</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>3,490</b>

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 2  
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF CALCINED BAUXITE, BY COUNTRY<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Country	2016									
	2015		1st quarter		2d quarter		3d quarter		1st quarter– 3d quarter	
	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other	Refrac- tory	Other
<b>Imports (for consumption):</b>										
Australia	--	117,000	--	48,000	--	49,500	--	49,500	--	147,000
Brazil	40	--	547	--	--	--	--	--	547	--
China	56,100	14,700	11,300	2,210	13,800	3,390	27,500	3,410	52,600	9,010
Greece	--	26,400	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Guyana	35,500	260,000	11,100	58,500	5,330	98,500	5,890	41,300	22,300	198,000
Turkey	15,500	--	--	--	--	25,000	--	--	--	25,000
Other	165	1,080	461	50	25	323	516	70	1,000	443
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,000</b>	<b>419,000</b>	<b>23,400</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>19,100</b>	<b>177,000</b>	<b>33,900</b>	<b>94,200</b>	<b>76,500</b>	<b>380,000</b>
<b>Exports:</b>										
Canada	5,580	--	1,110	--	1,230	--	384	--	2,720	--
China	2,040	--	3,510	--	3,810	--	1,700	--	9,030	--
Mexico	135	555	20	27	2,740	--	46	--	2,810	27
Other	548	90	157	26	56	46	38	--	251	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,310</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>7,840</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2,170</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>14,800</b>	<b>99</b>

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.

TABLE 3  
U.S. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF ALUMINA<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, calcined equivalent)

Country	2015	2016			
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	1st quarter– 3d quarter
<b>Imports (for consumption):<sup>2</sup></b>					
Australia	672,000	88,100	95,800	95,000	279,000
Brazil	401,000	72,000	142,000	120,000	335,000
Jamaica <sup>3</sup>	37,700	48,600	4,270	52,500	105,000
Suriname	244,000	15,000	19,900	--	34,900
Venezuela	53,100	--	--	--	--
Other	165,000	38,600	43,400	43,000	125,000
Total	1,570,000	262,000	305,000	311,000	879,000
<b>Exports:<sup>4</sup></b>					
Canada	809,000	59,500	8,710	9,660	77,900
China	107,000	37,200	986	26,400	64,600
Egypt	422,000	30,000	5	29,900	59,800
Iceland	121,000	118,000	119,000	158,000	395,000
Mexico	87,400	27,400	30,000	11,000	68,300
Netherlands	98,000	20,700	27,500	24,800	73,100
Norway	367,000	19	53	56	128
Russia	840	21	62,900	7	62,900
Sweden	1,430	251	31,600	173	32,000
United Arab Emirates	1,460	62,500	62,200	94,000	219,000
Other	207,000	64,200	22,500	11,700	98,400
Total	2,220,000	420,000	366,000	366,000	1,150,000

-- Zero.

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

<sup>2</sup>Includes imports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 144,000 metric tons (t) in 2015; 36,400 t in the first quarter of 2016; 63,400 t in the second quarter of 2016; 71,400 t in the third quarter of 2016.

<sup>3</sup>Source: Jamaica Bauxite Institute.

<sup>4</sup>Includes exports of aluminum hydroxide reported in calcined equivalent. As shipped, aluminum hydroxide: 82,500 t (revised) in 2015; 20,900 t (revised) in the first quarter of 2016; 21,900 t (revised) in the second quarter of 2016; 19,300 t in the third quarter of 2016.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; data adjusted by the U.S. Geological Survey.