

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

John D. Jorgenson, Iron Ore Commodity Specialist
U.S. Geological Survey
989 National Center
Reston, VA 20192
Telephone: (703) 648-4912, Fax: (703) 648-7757
E-mail: jjorgenson@usgs.gov

Michelle B. Blackwell (Data)
Telephone: (703) 648-7943
Fax: (703) 648-7975
E-mail: mblackwell@usgs.gov

Internet: <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>

IRON ORE IN JUNE 2010

U.S. mine production of iron ore in June 2010, on a daily average basis, was 16% less than that for the prior month and was more than 4.5 times that of June 2009, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Average daily production, at 123,000 metric tons (t), was 23,600 t less than that of May 2010.

Average daily shipments in June 2010, at 165,000 t, were 4,300 t more than those of the prior month and more than double those of June 2009. Mine stocks at the end of June 2010 were 1.24 million metric tons (Mt) less than the stocks held on May 31, a 23% decrease. U.S. net exports of iron ore in May 2010 were 331,000 t, with exports 44% greater than imports.

Domestic Production.—Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. (Cleveland, OH) announced production for the first half of 2010 for its North American operations. Mine production was as follows (United States, unless otherwise specified): Empire, 1.5 Mt; Hibbing Taconite, 1.9 Mt; Northshore, 2.1 Mt; Tilden, 4.0 Mt; United Taconite, 2.4 Mt; and Wabush (Canada), 2.0 Mt. Cliffs' share of the total production of 14.0 Mt was 11.5 Mt. The total production at Cliffs' mines increased by 55% from that of the same period in 2009. Production rates for the first half of 2010 represent a recovery from the economic downturn that began in late 2008, which caused extended shutdowns at the Hibbing, Northshore, and United Taconite Mines and reduced production rates at the Michigan and Canadian operations (Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., 2010, p. 41).

World Production.—Rio Tinto plc (London, United Kingdom) announced first half production for 2010. Rio Tinto's share of saleable iron ore plus pellets worldwide for the half-year ending June 30 was 87.0 Mt—a 15% increase compared with that of the same period in 2009, as markets recovered from the global economic downturn of 2009. Rio Tinto's Pilbara region iron ore operations continued to produce at nearly full capacity in the second quarter 2010. Rio Tinto's Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOC) overall production was affected by the increased pellet to concentrate ratio during the second quarter (Rio Tinto plc, 2010, p. 1, 3, 13).

BHP Billiton Ltd. (Melbourne, Australia) announced that its share of worldwide iron ore (wet) production for the first half of 2010 was 62.4 Mt—a 13% increase compared with that of the

corresponding period in 2009. Production in the first half of 2009 was affected by shutdown of pelletizing lines at Samarco (Brazil) and cyclone interruptions in the Pilbara region, whereas first half of 2010 production was impacted by the activities related to the ramp-up of the Rapid Growth Project 4 expansion in Western Australia (BHP Billiton Ltd., 2010a, p. 9; 2010b, p. 4, 10).

In the first half of 2010, Vale S.A. (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) reported iron ore production of 144.9 Mt (including Vale's Samarco joint venture)—an increase of 35% compared with that of the same period in 2009. Vale pellet production for the first half of 2010 was 23.1 Mt—a 224% increase compared with that of the first half of 2009. Pellet production in the first half of 2010 recovered to the same levels as those of the corresponding period in 2008 (Vale S.A., 2010, p. 2, 3).

Transportation.—The Australian Competition Tribunal (ACT) ruled on June 30 that third-party access to Rio Tinto's Hamersley and BHP Billiton's Newman rail lines was not in the public interest (Australian Journal of Mining, 2010).

References Cited

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TABLE 1
U.S. PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS OF IRON ORE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 5% or more of manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Production		Shipments	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2009:				
June	811	11,200	2,440	8,810
July	1,480	12,700	3,080	11,900
August	1,780	14,500	3,190	15,100
September	2,560	17,100	3,120	18,200
October	3,080	20,100	3,370	21,600
November	3,140	23,300	4,380	26,000
December	3,180	26,500	3,960	29,900
2010:				
January	3,040	3,040	2,400	2,400
February	3,270	6,300	943	3,340
March	3,630	9,930	2,630	5,970
April	3,780	13,700	4,790	10,800
May	4,560	18,300	5,230	16,000
June	3,700	22,000	4,940	20,900

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

²Excludes byproduct ores.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION, SHIPMENTS, AND STOCKS OF IRON ORE IN JUNE^{1,2}

(Thousand metric tons)

State	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks ⁴	
	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009
Michigan	817	429	935	792	1,690	3,040
Minnesota	2,890	382	4,000	1,640	2,430	5,960
Total	3,700	811	4,940	2,440	4,120	9,010

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

²Excludes byproduct ore.

³Includes rail and vessel.

⁴Includes usable (marketable) material at mines, concentrators, pelletizing plants, and loading docks.
Excludes stocks of crude ore at mine and concentrates at agglomerating complexes.

TABLE 3
CANADA: SHIPMENTS OF IRON ORE^{1,2}

(Thousand dry metric tons)

Period	Newfoundland and Labrador	Quebec	British Columbia	Total
2009:				
May	2,090	1,260	7	3,350
June	820	1,080	10	1,910
July	1,360	1,430	10	2,800
August	1,480	1,570	8	3,060
September	1,540	1,580	8	3,130
October	2,060	1,510	7	3,580
November	2,010	1,000	8	3,020
December	1,660	1,320	(3)	2,980
Year total	17,100	14,500	73	31,700
2010:				
January	1,300	1,090	3	2,390
February	1,130	872	3	2,000
March	1,390	1,100	6	2,500
April	1,500	1,510	7	3,020
May	1,840	1,150	11	2,990

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

²Includes production from steel plant waste oxides.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: Natural Resources Canada.

TABLE 4
PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND RAW STEEL IN THE UNITED STATES, BY TYPE OF
FURNACE¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Period	Pig iron production, blast furnace		Raw steel production			
	Monthly	Year to date	Basic oxygen furnace		Electric furnace	
	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date	Monthly	Year to date
2009:						
May	1,370	7,360	1,070	6,240	2,760	12,600
June	1,380	8,740	1,210	7,440	2,980	15,500
July	1,840	10,600	1,630	9,070	3,200	18,700
August	2,090	12,700	1,810	10,900	3,460	22,200
September	1,930	14,600	2,230	13,100	3,540	25,700
October	2,510	17,100	2,080	15,200	3,480	29,200
November	2,240	19,400	2,000	17,200	3,470	32,700
December	2,410	21,800	2,120	19,300	3,450	36,100
2010:						
January	2,350	2,350	1,830	1,830	3,890	3,890
February	2,530	4,870	1,960	3,790	3,720	7,610
March	2,870	7,740	2,560	6,350	4,240	11,800
April	2,030	9,770	2,820	9,170	4,140	16,000
May	2,830	12,600	2,560	11,700	4,440	20,400

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

Source: American Iron and Steel Institute.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY OF DESTINATION AND TYPE^{1,2}

(Thousand metric tons)

Country of destination and type of product	2009		2010			
	4th quarter	Total	March	1st quarter	April	May
Belgium	150	194	--	1	27	78
Canada	877	3,060	225	918	545	702
China	(3)	99	--	--	55	27
Colombia	3	19	1	4	2	1
Finland	--	--	--	--	--	35
France	(3)	179	25	25	55	78
Germany	153	234	--	--	209	131
Mexico	55	70	38	151	11	4
Serbia	--	--	--	--	44	--
South Africa	25	52	--	--	--	--
Spain	--	--	--	--	28	27
Other ⁴	3	10	(3)	(3)	--	(3)
Total	1,270	3,910	289	1,100	976	1,080
Concentrates	5	123	1	6	2	5
Coarse ores	4	5	--	--	--	35
Fine ores	2	24	(3)	(3)	44	28
Pellets	1,260	3,760	287	1,090	930	1,020
Briquettes	--	3	--	--	(3)	(3)
Other agglomerates	(3)	(3)	--	(3)	--	--
Roasted pyrites	(3)	1	--	(3)	--	(3)
Total	1,270	3,910	289	1,100	976	1,080

-- Zero.

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

²Includes agglomerates.

³Less than ½ unit.

⁴Includes all countries receiving less than 5,000 metric tons in any month during the 2-year period.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 6
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE, BY COUNTRY AND TYPE^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

Country of origin and type of product	2010					2009
	May		Year to date			January-May
	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Brazil	--	--	37	3,780	102.16	38
Canada	554	54,300	2,060	181,000	87.75	778
Chile	--	--	46	3,270	71.02	47
Finland	--	--	--	--	--	3
France	--	--	(4)	4	4,480.00	--
Mexico	--	--	48	3,980	83.00	26
Norway	--	--	2	31	15.50	1
Peru	--	--	7	315	45.00	34
Russia	71	6,900	473	46,400	98.11	--
South Africa	--	--	--	--	--	29
Spain	--	--	3	114	38.00	--
Sweden	--	--	--	--	--	4
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	(4)	11	187.50	--
Turkey	--	--	(4)	3	91.51	--
Ukraine	95	13,700	95	13,700	143.78	--
United Kingdom	--	--	--	--	--	8
Venezuela	32	2,100	52	3,490	67.15	--
Total	753	77,000	2,820	256,000	90.59	968
Concentrates	--	--	95	7,260	76.43	101
Coarse ores	--	--	--	--	--	8
Fine ores	1	24	154	15,400	99.69	200
Pellets	752	77,000	2,570	233,000	90.60	654
Briquettes	--	--	3	114	38.00	--
Other agglomerates	--	--	--	--	--	2
Roasted pyrites	--	--	(4)	4	4,480.00	3
Total	753	77,000	2,820	256,000	90.59	968

-- Zero.

¹Data, with the exception of the dollars per ton column, are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Includes agglomerates.

³Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 7
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE IN MAY 2010^{1,2}
(Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Country of origin	Type of product						Total
	Concentrates	Coarse ores	Fine ores	Pellets	Briquettes and other agglomerates	Roasted pyrites	
Canada	--	--	1	553	--	--	554
Russia	--	--	--	71	--	--	71
Ukraine	--	--	--	95	--	--	95
Venezuela	--	--	--	32	--	--	32
Total	--	--	1	752	--	--	753

-- Zero.

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

²Includes agglomerates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 8
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PELLETS, BY COUNTRY¹

Country of origin	2010					2009
	May		Year to date			January-May
	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Value ² (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Brazil	--	--	37	3,780	102.16	38
Canada	553	54,300	1,910	166,000	86.56	612
Peru	--	--	--	--	--	5
Russia	71	6,900	473	46,400	98.11	--
Ukraine	95	13,700	95	13,700	143.78	--
Venezuela	32	2,100	52	3,490	67.15	--
Total	752	77,000	2,570	233,000	90.60	654

-- Zero.

¹Data, with the exception of the dollars per ton column, are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

²Customs value. Excludes international freight and insurance charges.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 9
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF IRON ORE,
 BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT^{1,2}
 (Exclusive of ore containing 20% or more manganese)

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	May	January-May	
	2010	2010	2009
Baltimore, MD (13)	241	1,570	130
Charleston, SC (16)	--	--	4
Chicago, IL (39)	30	30	44
Cleveland, OH (41)	449	828	467
El Paso, TX (24)	--	3	--
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	37	38
Minneapolis, MN (35)	--	(3)	--
Mobile, AL (19)	--	--	5
New Orleans, LA (20)	32	348	257
New York, NY (10)	--	(3)	--
Nogales, AZ (26)	--	--	2
Norfolk, VA (14)	--	1	--
Ogdensburg, NY (07)	1	4	7
Philadelphia, PA (11)	--	--	3
Port Arthur, TX (21)	--	--	8
Seattle, WA (30)	--	--	3
Total	753	2,820	968

-- Zero.

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

²Includes agglomerates.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 10
 U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF PELLETS,
 BY CUSTOMS DISTRICT¹

(Thousand metric tons)

Customs district (code no.)	May	January-May	
	2010	2010	2009
Baltimore, MD (13)	241	1,570	130
Chicago, IL (39)	30	30	15
Cleveland, OH (41)	449	824	466
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	37	38
Mobile, AL (19)	--	--	5
New Orleans, LA (20)	32	108	--
Total	752	2,570	654

-- Zero.

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.