

Mineral Industry Surveys

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IRON ORE IN SEPTEMBER 2011

U.S. mine production of iron ore in September 2011, on a daily average basis, was 5% less than that for the prior month and was slightly less than that of September 2010. Daily average production, at 147,000 metric tons (t), was 7,200 t less than that of August 2011.

Daily average shipments in September 2011, of 188,000 t, were 11,600 t more than those of the prior month and were 24% greater than those of September 2010. Mine stocks at the end of September 2011 were 1,229,000 t less than the stocks held on August 31, a 19% decrease. U.S. net exports of iron ore in August 2011 were 684,000 t, with exports more than double imports.

North American Production.—Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. (Cleveland, OH) announced production for the third quarter of 2011 for its North American operations. Cliffs' share of mine production for U.S. mines was 6.4 million metric tons (Mt), a 5% increase from that of the same period of 2010. Canadian production from Cliffs' managed mines for the third quarter of 2011 was 2.5 Mt, a 138% increase from that of the same period in 2010. This increase resulted mainly from the ramp up of production at the Bloom Lake Mine near Fermont, Quebec, a major part of which was obtained with the acquisition of Consolidated Thompson Iron Mines Ltd. (Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., 2011, p. 1, 3).

World Production.—Rio Tinto plc (London, United Kingdom) announced third quarter production for 2011. Rio Tinto's share of saleable iron ore plus pellets worldwide for the 9 months ending September 30 was 140.6 Mt—a 4% increase compared with that of the same period in 2010. Rio Tinto's partially owned (59%) Canadian iron ore operations increased production in the third quarter by 6% compared with that of the same quarter of 2010, and by 24% compared with that of the second quarter of 2011 (Rio Tinto plc, 2011, p. 3, 13).

BHP Billiton Ltd. (Melbourne, Australia) announced that its share of worldwide iron ore (wet) production for the first 9 months of 2011 was 108.3 Mt—a 15% increase compared with

that of the corresponding period in 2010. Production in the third quarter of 2011 increased relative to that of the previous quarter reflecting increased production at Western Australian operations owing primarily to the ramp up of Ore Handling Plant 3 (BHP Billiton Ltd., 2011a, p. 3, 9; b, p. 9).

In the first 9 months of 2011, Vale S.A. (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) reported iron ore production of 239.7 Mt (including Vale's Samarco joint venture)—an increase of 5% compared with that of the same period in 2010. Iron ore production for the quarter represented a 10% increase compared with that of the previous quarter. Vale pellet production for the first 9 months of 2011 was 39.9 Mt—an 8% increase compared with that of the same period in 2010. Increased production of iron ore was partially due to the ramp up of a new processing plant at Corumbá in Brazil and an improvement in weather conditions at the Carajás Mine (Vale S.A., 2011, p. 1, 2).

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
2010:				
September	4,430	35,600	4,540	35,600
October	4,600	40,200	4,340	39,900
November	4,640	44,800	4,720	44,600
December	4,660	49,500	4,600	49,200
2011:				
January	4,100	4,100	3,230	3,230
February	3,920	8,010	699	3,930
March	4,350	12,400	2,070	6,000
April	4,360	16,700	4,870	10,900
May	4,840	21,600	5,120	16,000
June	4,520	26,100	5,280	21,300
July	4,700	30,800	5,860	27,100
August	4,780	35,600	5,460	32,600
September	4,410	40,000	5,630	38,200

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 SEPTEMBER^{1, 2}

(Thousand metric tons)

State	Production		Shipments ³		Stocks ⁴	
	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010
Michigan	961	1,130	1,190	1,010	2,640	1,970
Minnesota	3,450	3,300	4,450	3,530	2,510	1,190
Total	4,410	4,430	5,630	4,540	5,150	3,150

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
	2010:			
August	1,350	1,390	12	2,760
September	1,130	1,830	8	2,970
October	1,490	1,350	7	2,850
November	2,620	1,990	10	4,620
December	1,640	1,440	5	3,090
January–December	19,000	17,000	93	36,100
2011:				
January	695	1,060	4	1,760
February	1,220	890	2	2,110
March	1,320	1,600	4	2,930
April	1,070	1,380	6	2,450
May	1,450	1,940	7	3,400
June	1,160	1,650	8	2,820
July	1,290	1,930	4	3,230
August	2,040	1,730	6	3,770

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

²Includes production from steel plant waste oxides.

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
2010:						
August	2,490	20,300	2,250	18,600	4,130	33,200
September	2,600	22,900	2,370	20,900	4,000	37,200
October	2,150	25,100	2,390	23,300	4,160	41,300
November	2,470	27,500	2,220	25,500	3,950	45,300
December	2,340	29,900	2,580	28,100	4,060	49,300
2011:						
January	2,400	2,400	2,680	2,680	4,510	4,510
February	2,490	4,890	2,200	4,880	4,200	8,710
March	2,790	7,680	2,490	7,360	4,580	13,300
April	2,550	10,200	2,300	9,660	4,480	17,800
May	2,870	13,100	2,490	12,100	4,270	22,000
June	2,820	15,900	2,520	14,700	4,420	26,500
July	2,520	18,400	2,750	17,400	4,620	31,100
August	2,610	21,100	3,060	20,500	4,370	35,500

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	2010	2011			
		1st quarter	2nd quarter	July	August
Belgium	107	1	2	--	--
Canada	8,110	871	2,180	946	819
China	725	259	832	248	274
Finland	35	--	--	--	--
France	236	--	--	81	134
Germany	341	--	1	--	80
Mexico	188	1	1	1	6
Serbia	44	--	--	--	--
Singapore	5	--	--	--	--
Spain	156	--	159	--	--
Other ³	11	5	9	4	(4)
Total	9,950	1,140	3,180	1,280	1,310
Concentrates	391	64	72	50	61
Coarse ores	259	130	597	202	181
Fine ores	78	51	55	4	35
Pellets	9,220	890	2,460	1,020	1,040
Briquettes	5	(4)	--	(4)	--
Other agglomerates	(4)	--	1	(4)	(4)
Roasted pyrites	1	1	(4)	(4)	(4)
Total	9,950	1,140	3,180	1,280	1,310

-- Zero.

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

²Includes agglomerates.

³Includes all countries receiving less than 5,000 metric tons in any month during the 2-year period.

⁴Less than ½ unit.

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	2011					2010
	August		Year to date			January–August
	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ³ (thousand dollars)	Value ³ (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Argentina	40	6,400	74	11,000	149.30	--
Brazil	56	8,370	69	10,100	146.29	145
Canada	446	82,700	2,670	421,000	157.99	3,230
Chile	--	--	121	19,800	163.59	82
China	--	--	(4)	11	1,830.00	--
Finland	--	--	4	263	65.75	--
France	--	--	--	--	--	(4)
Greece	--	--	--	--	--	3
Mexico	--	--	27	2,240	83.04	48
Norway	(4)	27	(4)	80	298.88	3
Peru	9	1,240	14	1,510	107.79	7
Russia	--	--	(4)	3	372.29	606
South Africa	78	15,300	147	28,800	196.14	--
Spain	--	--	--	--	--	4
Sweden	--	--	42	8,290	197.45	--
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	--	--	--	120
Turkey	--	--	--	--	--	(4)
Ukraine	--	--	--	--	--	95
Venezuela	--	--	160	29,200	182.51	116
Total	629	114,000	3,320	532,000	160.22	4,450
Concentrates	44	7,340	364	57,600	158.26	239
Coarse ores	--	--	36	7,410	205.86	36
Fine ores	183	30,000	571	83,700	146.59	237
Pellets	402	76,800	2,310	374,000	162.19	3,940
Briquettes	--	--	8	3,420	427.63	4
Other agglomerates	--	--	34	5,830	171.59	--
Roasted pyrites	--	--	4	263	65.75	(4)
Total	629	114,000	3,320	532,000	160.22	4,450

-- 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 AUGUST 2011^{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	
Argentina	--	--	40	--	--	--	40
Brazil	--	--	56	--	--	--	56
Canada	35	--	9	402	--	--	446
Norway	--	--	(3)	--	--	--	(3)
Peru	--	--	9	--	--	--	9
South Africa	9	--	69	--	--	--	78
Total	44	--	183	402	--	--	629

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

Country of origin	2011					2010
	August		Year to date			January–August
	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Thousand metric tons	Value ² (thousand dollars)	Value ² (dollars per ton)	Thousand metric tons
Brazil	--	--	--	--	--	37
Canada	402	76,800	2,310	374,000	162.19	3,000
Russia	--	--	--	--	--	606
Trinidad and Tobago	--	--	--	--	--	120
Ukraine	--	--	--	--	--	95
Venezuela	--	--	--	--	--	80
Total	402	76,800	2,310	374,000	162.19	3,940

-- 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.)	August	January–August	
	2011	2011	2010
Baltimore, MD (13)	274	1,020	1,910
Buffalo, NY (09)	--	(3)	--
Chicago, IL (39)	65	230	138
Cleveland, OH (41)	228	1,420	1,710
Detroit, MI (38)	3	11	(3)
El Paso, TX (24)	--	18	3
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	20	37
Laredo, TX (23)	--	1	--
Los Angeles, CA (27)	--	(3)	--
Minneapolis, MN (35)	--	--	(3)
Mobile, AL (19)	--	5	156
New Orleans, LA (20)	58	571	489
New York, NY (10)	--	--	(3)
Norfolk, VA (14)	--	1	1
Ogdensburg, NY (07)	(3)	1	6
Philadelphia, PA (11)	--	4	--
Port Arthur, TX (21)	--	--	3
San Francisco, CA (28)	--	5	--
St. Albans, VT (02)	(3)	1	--
Tampa, FL (18)	--	10	--
Total	629	3,320	4,450

-- 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.)	August	January–August	
	2011	2011	2010
Baltimore, MD (13)	174	814	1,910
Buffalo, NY (09)	--	(2)	--
Chicago, IL (39)	--	--	30
Cleveland, OH (41)	228	1,420	1,700
Houston-Galveston, TX (53)	--	--	37
Mobile, AL (19)	--	--	120
New Orleans, LA (20)	--	70	136
Total	402	2,310	3,940

-- Zero.

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

²Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.