

SALT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Domestic production of salt increased by 8% in 2013. The total value was estimated to be about \$1.6 billion. Twenty-eight companies operated 61 plants in 16 States. The estimated percentage of salt sold or used, by type, was salt in brine, 46%; rock salt, 36%; vacuum pan, 11%; and solar salt, 7%.

The chemical industry accounted for about 45% of total salt sales with salt in brine accounting for 91% of the salt used for chemical feedstock. The chlorine and caustic soda manufacturing sector was the main consumer within the chemical industry. Highway deicing consumed about 30% of total salt. The remaining markets for salt were, in declining order, distributors, 10%; food processing, 5%, agricultural, 4%; general industrial, 3%; other uses and exports, 2%; and primary water treatment, 1%.

Salient Statistics—United States: ¹	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013^e
Production	46,000	43,300	45,000	37,200	40,100
Sold or used by producers ²	43,100	43,500	45,500	34,900	39,200
Imports for consumption	14,700	12,900	13,800	9,880	11,300
Exports	1,450	595	846	809	546
Consumption:					
Reported	45,000	48,600	48,000	36,900	45,000
Apparent ²	56,400	55,800	58,500	44,000	50,000
Price, average value of bulk, pellets and packaged salt, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine and plant:					
Vacuum and open pan salt	178.67	180.08	174.00	170.00	175.00
Solar salt	72.09	57.41	51.19	71.87	70.00
Rock salt	36.08	35.67	38.29	36.89	37.00
Salt in brine	7.85	7.49	8.14	8.44	8.50
Employment, mine and plant, number ^e	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,100
Net import reliance ³ as a percentage of apparent consumption	24	22	22	21	22

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2009–12): Canada, 38%; Chile, 37%; Mexico, 10%; The Bahamas, 5%; and other, 10%.

Tariff:	Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations
			12–31–13
	Salt (sodium chloride)	2501.00.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 10% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

Events, Trends, and Issues: The 2012–13 winter was colder than the 2011–12 winter, and the amount of frozen precipitation was closer to normal in most of the United States, requiring more salt for highway deicing. Despite some municipalities and local and State transportation departments reporting moderate levels of rock salt inventories at the beginning of winter, rock salt production and imports in 2013 increased from the low levels in 2012. Many contracts between salt suppliers and consumers require that the customer take delivery of at least 80 percent of its order, and after having too much salt in recent years, some customers were hesitant to enter into these contracts, leaving them subject to substantial spikes in pricing if they required emergency salt purchases. Because of the relatively lower demand for deicing salt, a few salt companies were forced to temporarily lay off workers.

The majority of local and State governments reportedly have ample supplies of rock salt for the winter of 2013–14. Many weather forecasters indicated that it may be a slightly warmer than average winter in the southern two thirds of the United States, which could reduce the demand for deicing salts. Parts of the northern one-third of the United States may be wetter and colder than average according to predictions from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The forecast for the traditional snow belt in the northeastern part of the United States was uncertain, with an above- or below-average winter equally likely. It is anticipated that the domestic salt industry would be able to provide adequate salt supplies from domestic and foreign sources for emergency use in the event of adverse winter weather.

SALT

World Production and Reserves:

	Production		Reserves ⁴
	2012	2013 ^e	
United States ¹	37,200	40,100	Large. Economic and subeconomic deposits of salt are substantial in principal salt-producing countries. The oceans contain a virtually inexhaustible supply of salt.
Australia	10,800	11,000	
Brazil	7,020	6,170	
Canada	10,800	11,000	
Chile	8,060	8,000	
China	70,000	71,000	
France	6,100	6,000	
Germany	11,900	12,000	
India	17,000	18,000	
Mexico	10,800	9,500	
Poland	3,810	3,900	
Spain	4,390	4,400	
Turkey	5,000	5,000	
Ukraine	5,900	6,200	
United Kingdom	6,700	6,800	
Other countries	43,500	45,000	
World total (rounded)	259,000	264,000	

World Resources: World continental resources of salt are practically unlimited, and the salt content in the oceans is virtually inexhaustible. Domestic resources of rock salt and salt from brine are primarily in the States of Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Texas. Saline lakes and solar evaporation salt facilities are in the States of Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Utah. Almost every country in the world has salt deposits or solar evaporation operations of various sizes.

Substitutes: No economic substitutes or alternates for salt in most applications exist. Calcium chloride and calcium magnesium acetate, hydrochloric acid, and potassium chloride can be substituted for salt in deicing, certain chemical processes, and food flavoring, but at a higher cost.

^eEstimated.

¹Excludes production from Puerto Rico.

²Defined as sold or used by producers + imports – exports.

³Defined as imports – exports.

⁴[See Appendix C for resource/reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.](#)