

SALT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Domestic production of salt was estimated to have increased by 6% in 2015 to 48 million tons. The total value of salt sold or used was estimated to be about \$2.3 billion. Twenty-nine companies operated 64 plants in 16 States. The top producing States, in alphabetical order, were Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Utah. These seven States produced about 95% of the salt in the United States in 2015. The estimated percentage of salt sold or used was, by type, rock salt, 44%; salt in brine, 38%; solar salt, 9%; and vacuum pan salt, 9%.

Highway deicing accounted for about 46% of total salt consumed. The chemical industry accounted for about 36% of total salt sales, with salt in brine accounting for 88% of the salt used for chemical feedstock. Chlorine and caustic soda manufacturers were the main consumers within the chemical industry. The remaining markets for salt were, in declining order of use, distributors, 7%; food processing, 4%; agricultural, 3%; general industrial, 2%; primary water treatment, 1%; and other uses combined with exports, 1%.

Salient Statistics—United States: ¹	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015^e
Production	45,000	37,200	39,900	45,300	48,000
Sold or used by producers	45,500	34,900	43,100	46,000	47,200
Imports for consumption	13,800	9,880	11,900	20,100	23,200
Exports	846	809	525	940	846
Consumption:					
Reported	48,000	36,900	47,600	56,500	57,000
Apparent ²	58,500	44,000	54,500	65,200	69,500
Price, average value of bulk, pellets and packaged salt, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine and plant:					
Vacuum and open pan salt	174.00	169.93	172.09	180.61	182.00
Solar salt	51.19	71.87	78.04	83.90	89.00
Rock salt	38.29	36.89	47.22	48.11	50.00
Salt in brine	8.14	8.44	8.49	9.08	9.15
Employment, mine and plant, number ^e	4,100	4,100	4,100	4,200	4,200
Net import reliance ³ as a percentage of apparent consumption	24	22	22	29	32

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2011–14): Chile, 37%; Canada, 36%; Mexico, 12%; The Bahamas, 5%; and other, 10%.

Tariff:	Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations
	Salt (sodium chloride)	2501.00.0000	12–31–15 Free.

Depletion Allowance: 10% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

Events, Trends, and Issues: The 2014–15 winter was colder than average for the second year in a row, and the amount of frozen precipitation and the number of winter weather events were above average in many parts of the United States, requiring more salt for highway deicing. Rock salt production and imports in 2015 increased from the levels in 2014 because of increased demand from many local and State transportation departments that reported low levels of rock salt inventories at the end of the 2014–15 winter season. The majority of local and State governments in cold regions reportedly had rebuilt their stockpiles and had large supplies of rock salt available for the winter of 2015–16.

Owing to the greatly increased demand for deicing salt during severe winter weather periods, many buyers were experiencing double-digit percentage increases in spot rock salt prices for emergency salt purchases. Many contracts between salt suppliers and consumers require the customer to take delivery of at least 80 percent of its order with some options to purchase more at the agreed to unit price. But salt purchasers without contracts are subject to substantial spikes in pricing if they require an unplanned salt allocation.

SALT

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted a milder winter for the traditional snowbelt in the northern tier of the United States, with average or below-average winter precipitation and average to warmer temperatures. The southern part of the United States was expected to be cooler and wetter than average. However, since the southern area traditionally uses much less salt, the overall impact may be that less salt is consumed nationwide. It was anticipated that the salt industry would be able to provide adequate salt supplies from domestic and foreign sources for emergency use in the event of harsher than anticipated winter weather.

World Production and Reserves:

	Production		Reserves ⁴
	2014	2015 ^e	
United States ¹	45,300	48,000	Large. Economic and subeconomic deposits of salt are substantial in principal salt-producing countries. The oceans contain a virtually inexhaustible supply of salt.
Australia	11,000	11,000	
Brazil	7,400	7,500	
Canada	13,000	12,500	
Chile	8,500	9,000	
China	68,000	70,000	
France	6,000	6,000	
Germany	12,200	12,500	
India	16,000	17,000	
Mexico	10,700	10,500	
Poland	4,300	4,200	
Spain	4,380	4,300	
Turkey	5,400	5,500	
Ukraine	6,100	6,100	
United Kingdom	6,700	6,700	
Other countries	<u>41,000</u>	<u>42,000</u>	
World total (rounded)	266,000	273,000	

World Resources: World continental resources of salt are vast, and the salt content in the oceans is virtually inexhaustible. Domestic resources of rock salt and salt from brine are primarily in Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Texas. Saline lakes and solar evaporation salt facilities are in 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 alternatives for salt exist in most applications. 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.

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