

STATE DATA SERIES

Authority

The legal authority for the collection and publication of U.S. foreign commerce and trade statistics is established by Title 13, Chapter 9; and Title 18, Section 1905 of the United States Code (USC), and by regulatory mandate in Title 15 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 30.90-30.91. Title 13 directs the Secretary of Commerce to collect, compile, and publish foreign trade statistics on a monthly and cumulative basis.

The U.S. Census Bureau (Census Bureau) is responsible for collecting, compiling, and publishing trade statistics for the United States.

Background

Exports

Data on U.S. exports of merchandise from the U.S. to all countries, except Canada, is compiled from the Electronic Export Information (EEI) filed by the US Principal Party in Interest (USPPI) or their agents through the Automated Export System (AES). The EEI is unique among Census Bureau data collection methods since it is not sent to respondents soliciting responses as in the case of surveys. Each EEI represents a shipment of one or more kinds of merchandise from one exporter to one foreign importer on a single carrier. Filing the EEI is mandatory under Chapter 9, Title 13, United States Code. Qualified exporters or their agents submit EEI data by automated means directly to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Since 1990 the United States has been substituting Canadian import statistics for U.S. exports to Canada in accordance with a 1987 Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Census Bureau, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Canadian Customs, and Statistics Canada. Similarly, under this Memorandum of Understanding, Canada is substituting U.S. import statistics for Canadian exports to the United States. This data exchange includes only U.S. exports destined for Canada and does not include shipments destined for third countries by routes passing through Canada or shipments of certain grains and oilseeds to Canada for storage prior to exportation to a third country. These shipments are reported on and compiled from EEIs.

Imports

Published data on U.S. imports of merchandise is compiled primarily from automated data submitted through the U.S. Customs' Automated Commercial System and Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). Data are also compiled from import entry summary forms, warehouse withdrawal forms and Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) documents as required by law to be filed with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Data on imports of electricity and natural gas from Canada are obtained from Canadian sources.

The import and export data measure the physical movement of merchandise in and out of the United States to and from foreign countries. Information on the export state from which the merchandise was shipped has been collected and made available since the 1980s. Beginning with January 2010 statistics, information on import state is available. To maintain confidentiality, the Census Bureau applies statistical procedures to protect the identity of any business or individual. The data in this release contain non-sampling error but do not contain sampling error. Data users who create their own estimates using data from USA Trade Online tables should cite the Census Bureau as the source of the original data only. Included at the end of this document is technical information, including definitions of terms and quality statements.

Data Series

Exports

Origin of Movement - Based on Origin State: In 1985, a new field indicating the state where the export journey begins was added to export reporting requirements. This field allowed the compilation of the State of Origin of Movement (OM) Series. The OM series based on origin state, that became available in 1987, provides export statistics based on the state from which the merchandise starts its journey to the port of export; that is, the data reflect the transportation origin of exports.

Origin of Movement - ZIP Code Based: In 2004 the ZIP Code of the USPPI, the party in the United States that receives the primary benefit monetary or otherwise from the shipment, was redefined to indicate the origin of movement of goods. Initially it did not necessarily represent the location of the USPPI. However, due to increased electronic reporting in the AES, the validity of the reported ZIP Code has improved significantly since 2004.

Note: Effective with January 2006 statistics, a new OM State series - based on ZIP Code, is available on our [website](#).

Imports

State of Destination (SD) Series: Also in the mid 1980s state data based on the import state of destination were added. However, in 1988, release of the data on import state of destination was discontinued due to quality concerns. Since then changes to the import reporting requirements along with growth of electronic reporting and a better understanding of the data's limitations has made it possible to bring back the import state of destination series.

Effective with January 2010 statistics, this new SD series will be available. A new supplement will be added to the FT900: U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services. In addition the following data products will be produced: Import state data by 6-digit Harmonized System (HS) and Import state data 4-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). An example of the data structure for these files can be found on our website. Historical data tables and products will be made available for monthly data back to January 2008.

This new series is based upon the U.S. State of Destination Code. This is defined as the U.S. state, U.S. territory or U.S. possession where the merchandise is destined, as known at the time of entry summary filing. If the contents of the shipment are destined to more than one state, territory, or possession, or if the entry summary represents a consolidated shipment, report the state of destination with the greatest aggregate value. If in either case, this information is unknown, the state of the ultimate consignee, or the state where the entry is filed, in that order, should be reported. However, before either of these alternatives is used, a good faith effort should be made by the entry filer to ascertain the state where the imported merchandise will be delivered. In all cases, the state code reported should be derived from the standard postal two-letter state or territory abbreviation. For shipments into FTZ's, the import state represents the location of the zone.

Known Limitations in Uses of the Data

Exports

In certain cases, the export origin of movement does not reflect the transportation origin. Specifically, whenever shipments are consolidated, the state will reflect the consolidation point rather than the origin of movement. This effect is particularly noticeable for agricultural shipments. For these shipments intermediaries located in inland states are shipping agricultural commodities down the Mississippi River for export from the port of New Orleans. In this case, the state reflects Louisiana, the state where the port of New Orleans is located, as the state of origin of movement. The states in which the commodities were grown and originally shipped are lost.

Another impact is on the states of distribution for non-manufactured exports. When goods are generally stored and then exported by central offices or intermediaries. The most visible result is to understate exports from the original production state and to overstate exports from the general office or consolidation point. For example, New York has ports that handle high-value shipments of non-manufactured products that may stand out.

Imports

In certain cases, the state of destination may not reflect the final location for which the imported goods are destined. Rather for these shipments, the state of destination, as known at the time the entry documentation is filed, may reflect an intermediary, storage or distribution point. From there, these shipments may later be distributed to another location in another state as the ultimate destination. For example, a consolidated shipment of many automobiles may be shipped by the importing company to a distribution point in one state with the intent of later shipping the automobiles to numerous states for final sale.

Trade Balances

Data users should keep in mind that import and export transactions are compiled with the state information recorded at time the goods enter or leave the United States. This timing produces reporting limitations as outlined in the previous paragraphs, namely that export origin of movement may not always imply production origin and import destination may not always reflect where the goods are consumed or used. In addition the trade data do not provide information to track or monitor interstate flows. Given these conditions, the concept of calculating trade balances at the state level, using destination and origin state data is problematic and may produce unintended results.

As a result, without some more in depth knowledge of individual state trade patterns available to the user, the Census Bureau would discourage using these state data to calculate state trade balances.

Non-sampling Error

The data in this release are a complete enumeration of documentation collected by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and are not subject to sampling error. Quality assurance procedures are performed at every stage of collection, processing and tabulation of the information. The data are still subject to nonsampling errors, which include reporting errors, undocumented shipments, timeliness, data capture errors, and errors in low value estimation. For more information on these types of errors please see the [Information on Goods and Services section](#) of the FT900 - U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services, page 26.

In addition to the reporting errors that affect the general merchandise trade statistics, there are reporting errors that specifically affect data tabulated by port. In general, the businesses or individuals that report the data may not be the same individuals who physically convey the shipments. This can lead to inaccurate information about where a shipment enters or exits the United States and how it is transported. The Census Bureau quality assurance procedures include checking that reported ports are valid CBP ports and performing relational checks between the ports and the method of transportation. In the future, the Census Bureau is exploring obtaining transportation information directly from the manifest, as reported by the carrier of the goods.

The Census Bureau recommends that data users incorporate this information into their analyses, as nonsampling error could impact the conclusions drawn from the results.

Data Quality

The CBP assigns official ports, commodities and other data and determines the type and direction of trade that is conducted at that port as well as edits and oversights the reporting/collection of the data for each individual trade transaction. In some cases, CBP at a port may receive imports but no exports, or vice versa.

For exports to Canada the Census Bureau is substituting Canadian import statistics for these northbound movements. In accordance with this data exchange, Canada requires its importers to

report the U.S. port of export (see definitions of terms). However, Canada only does limited edit checks of this field, which can lead to inaccurate information collected for exports to Canada. Additionally, Canada does not collect information on containerization as part of the data exchange and as such separate value and shipping weights for containerized exports to Canada are not available.

Containerized import shipments for Foreign Trade Zones are not collected by CBP and as such are not included in this release.

Confidentiality

The Census Bureau has modified or suppressed some data in this release to protect confidentiality. Title 13 United States Code, Section 9, prohibits the Census Bureau from publishing results in which an individual's or business' data can be identified. For more information on how the Census Bureau protects the confidentiality of data, see the disclosure limitation topics listed below as appropriate.

Disclosure Limitations

Disclosure limitation is the process for protecting the confidentiality of data. A disclosure of data occurs when published statistical information identifies either an individual or business that has provided information under a pledge of confidentiality. The techniques used by the Census Bureau to protect confidentiality in tabulations vary, depending on the type of data.

To limit disclosure, statistics for two or more CBP ports may be combined and published under an arbitrary designation, or shipping weight or value may be excluded from an individual CBP port. In addition, value and shipping weight for a commodity may be placed in separate ports. Consequently, statistics for individual ports may be understated or overstated due to the suppression of the weight or value of the affected commodities.

Definitions of Terms

Port

Port of Unlading (Imports): The port where merchandise is unloaded from the importing vessel or aircraft. It is not necessarily the same port the shipment clears CBP. For overland shipments, they are one and the same.

Port of Export (Exports): The CBP port where the merchandise is loaded on the vessel or aircraft which takes the merchandise out of the country. For other overland transportation, the port through which the merchandise crosses the U.S. border into a foreign country.

Commodity

Imports: Six digits of the commodity classification in Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States Annotated for Statistical Reporting Purposes (HTSUSA), an official publication of the U.S. International Trade Commission. The HTSUSA is an import version of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (Harmonized System).

Exports: Six digits of the commodity classification in Schedule B, Statistical Classification of Domestic and Foreign Commodities Exported from the United States. The Schedule B is a U. S. Census Bureau publication and is based on the Harmonized System.

NAICS: The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) provides a consistent industry classification system for economic analysis across the three North American Free Trade Agreement partners -- Canada, Mexico and the United States. The structure of NAICS is hierarchical. The first two digits of the code designate the sector that represents one of 20 general categories of economic activities. The third digit designates the sub-sector, the fourth digit designates the industry group, the fifth digit designates the NAICS industry, and the sixth digit designates the national industry.

Import Types

General: General Imports measure the total physical arrivals of merchandise from foreign countries, whether such merchandise enters consumption channels immediately or is entered into bonded warehouses or Foreign Trade Zones under Customs custody.

Consumption: Imports for Consumption measure the total of merchandise that has physically cleared through Customs either entering consumption channels immediately or entering after withdrawal for consumption from bonded warehouses under Customs custody or from Foreign Trade Zones.

Export Types

Domestic: Exports of domestic merchandise include commodities which are grown, produced or manufactured in the United States, and commodities of foreign origin which have been changed in the United States, including U.S. Foreign Trade Zones, from the form in which they were imported, or which have been enhanced in value by further manufacture in the United States.

Foreign: Exports of foreign merchandise (re-exports) consist of commodities of foreign origin which have entered the United States for consumption or into Customs bonded warehouses or U.S. Foreign Trade Zones, and which, at the time of exportation, are in substantially the same condition as when imported.

Import Value

Customs Value: The Customs Value is generally defined as the price actually paid or payable for merchandise when sold for exportation to the United States, excluding U.S. import duties, freight, insurance and other charges incurred in bringing the merchandise to the U.S.

Export Value: Exports are valued on a free alongside ship (FAS) basis, which reflects transaction price including inland freight, insurance and other charges incurred in placing the merchandise alongside the ship at the port of export.

State

Imports: State of Destination – The state to which the merchandise is ultimately going to end its journey in.

Exports: State of Origin – The state from which the merchandise starts its journey to the port of export. Whenever shipments are consolidated, the state of origin represents the consolidate point.

Country

Imports: Country of Origin - The country where the merchandise was grown, mined, or manufactured, in accordance with CBP Regulations.

Exports: Country of Destination - The country where the goods are to be consumed, further processed, or manufactured as known to the shipper at the time of exportation.

Method of Transportation: The method of transportation by which the merchandise is imported or exported. The possible methods are air, vessel or other.

Containerized Shipment: Shipment transported in any van-type container.

Shipping Weight: Shipping weight represents the gross weight in kilograms of shipments, including the weight of moisture content, wrappings, crates, boxes, and containers (other than cargo vans and similar substantial outer containers). Shipping weight information is available for non low-valued shipments by air and vessel only.

Where to Get State Data Products

Each month, the Census Bureau publishes state value totals by manufactured, non-manufactured and total for the Export OM state data series based on Origin State and the Import State of Destination in the FT900 Press Release Supplement. More detailed data are available monthly, quarterly, and annually in machine-readable format. A list of the data products and contacts is given below:

Monthly Summary -- FT900 Press Release Supplement. Trade Data Inquiries & Controls
Section: 301-763-2227

Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Import or Export state data files. Order [Online](#).