



# U.S. Selected Exports, Trade and Transportation

## Wheat, Corn, Grain Sorghum, Cotton and Soybean Complex

1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

**NEW on the IGP website!** IGP Market Information: <http://www.dtnigp.com/index.cfm>

**KSU Agriculture Today Podcast Link:** <https://agtodayksu.libsyn.com/timeliness-of-corn-and-soybean-plantingworld-grain-supply-and-demand>

**KSU Ag Manager Link:** <https://www.agmanager.info/grain-marketing/publications/us-grain-exports-and-trade>

**USDA Transportation Report:** <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/transportation-analysis/qtr>

**USDA FAS Historical Grain Shipments:** <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/wkHistData.htm>,  
<https://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/complete.htm>

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- This summary based on reports for the 25<sup>th</sup> of August to 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2023
- Outstanding Export Sales (Unshipped Balances) on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2023
- Export Shipments in Current Marketing Year
- Daily Sales Reported for the 25<sup>th</sup> of August to 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2023

## U.S. EXPORT ACTIVITY

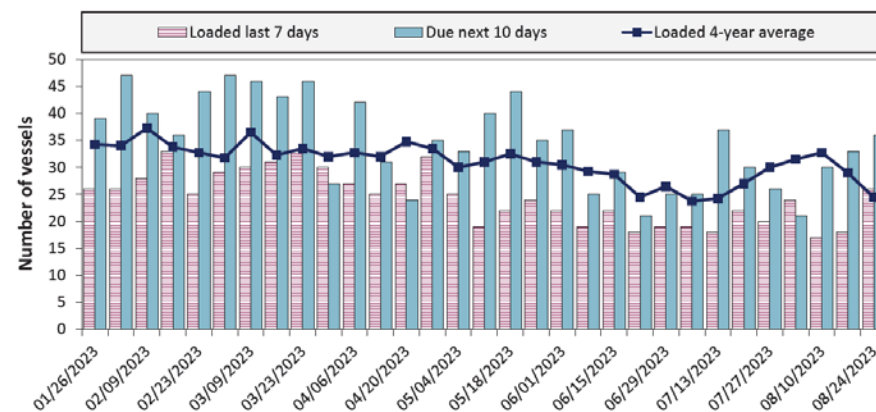
### Export Sales

For the week ending the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, unshipped balances of wheat, corn, and soybeans for marketing year (MY) 2022/23 totaled 7.85 mmmts, down 6% from last week and down 38% from the same time last year.

- Net wheat export sales for 2023/24, were 0.406 mmmts, up 13% from last week.
- Net corn export sales for 2022/23 were -0.023 mmmts, down 110% from last week.
- Net soybean export sales were 0.365 mmmts, up 851% from last week.

### Vessel Loadings

Figure 16. U.S. Gulf vessel loading activity



Note: U.S. Gulf includes Mississippi, Texas, and east Gulf  
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

## U.S. Export Balances and Cumulative Exports (1,000 metric tons)

| Grain Exports                                |   | Wheat                 |                       |                       |                        |       |           | Corn   | Soybeans | Total   |
|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|----------|---------|
|  |   | Hard red winter (HRW) | Soft red winter (SRW) | Hard red spring (HRS) | Soft white wheat (SWW) | Durum | All wheat |        |          |         |
| Current unshipped (outstanding) export sales | For the week ending 8/17/2023           | 658                   | 649                   | 1,542                 | 722                    | 96    | 3,666     | 2,235  | 1,952    | 7,853   |
|  | This week year ago                      | 1,471                 | 866                   | 1,489                 | 1,420                  | 109   | 5,355     | 3,209  | 4,076    | 12,640  |
|  | Last 4 wks. as % of same period 2021/22 | N/A                   | N/A                   | N/A                   | N/A                    | N/A   | N/A       | N/A    | N/A      | N/A     |
| Current shipped (cumulative) exports sales   | 2022/23 YTD                             | 694                   | 1,058                 | 1,054                 | 679                    | 24    | 3,510     | 38,291 | 51,517   | 93,317  |
|  | 2021/22 YTD                             | 1,163                 | 745                   | 1,011                 | 521                    | 18    | 3,458     | 57,741 | 55,482   | 116,681 |
|  | YTD 2022/23 as % of 2021/22             | 60                    | 142                   | 104                   | 130                    | 135   | 101       | 66     | 93       | 80      |
|  | Total 2021/22                           | 7,172                 | 2,786                 | 5,254                 | 3,261                  | 196   | 18,669    | 59,764 | 57,189   | 135,622 |
|  | Total 2020/21                           | 8,422                 | 1,790                 | 7,500                 | 6,438                  | 656   | 24,807    | 66,958 | 60,571   | 152,335 |

Note: The marketing year for wheat is Jun. 1 to May 31 and, for corn and soybeans, Sep. 1 to Aug. 31. YTD = year-to-date; wks. = weeks.  
Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

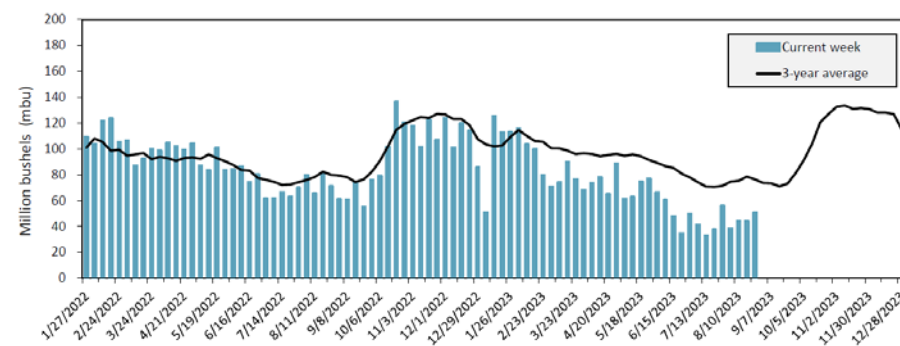
## Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)

| Date         | Gulf      |               |                  | Pacific Northwest |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
|              | In port   | Loaded 7-days | Due next 10-days | In port           |
| 8/24/2023    | 19        | 26            | 36               | 4                 |
| 8/17/2023    | 18        | 18            | 33               | 3                 |
| 2022 range   | (14...61) | (18...39)     | (28...62)        | (5...23)          |
| 2022 average | 30        | 28            | 44               | 13                |

Note: The data are voluntarily submitted and may not be complete.  
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

## ➤ Export Inspections

Figure 14. U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Note: 3-year average consists of 4-week running average.  
Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

### GRAINS INSPECTED AND/OR WEIGHED FOR EXPORT

Week Ending the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2023

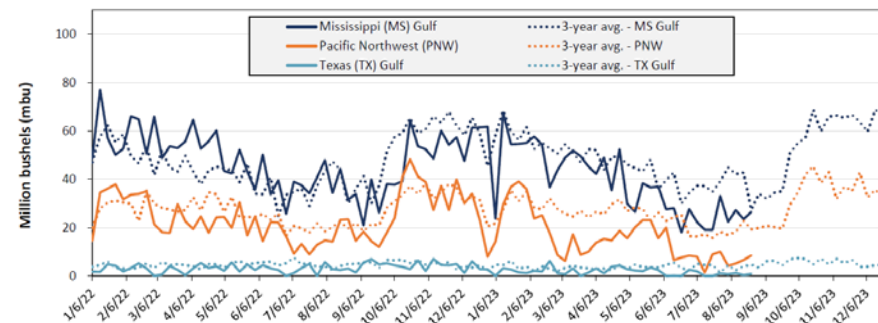
| GRAIN     | WEEK ENDING |            |            | PREVIOUS               | CURRENT                |
|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|           | 08/24/2023  | 08/17/2023 | 08/25/2022 | MARKET YEAR<br>TO DATE | MARKET YEAR<br>TO DATE |
| BARLEY    | 0           | 0          | 147        | 399                    | 1,214                  |
| CORN      | 597,144     | 510,559    | 699,829    | 36,778,785             | 54,602,158             |
| FLAXSEED  | 0           | 0          | 0          | 0                      | 0                      |
| MIXED     | 0           | 0          | 0          | 0                      | 0                      |
| OATS      | 100         | 0          | 0          | 3,195                  | 6,386                  |
| RYE       | 0           | 0          | 0          | 0                      | 0                      |
| SORGHUM   | 77,863      | 57,933     | 22,471     | 2,591,099              | 7,424,226              |
| SOYBEANS  | 322,149     | 320,431    | 509,849    | 51,868,743             | 56,517,890             |
| SUNFLOWER | 670         | 384        | 288        | 6,445                  | 3,316                  |
| WHEAT     | 390,364     | 311,314    | 631,326    | 4,030,272              | 5,125,532              |
| Total     | 1,388,290   | 1,200,621  | 1,863,910  | 95,278,938             | 123,680,722            |

CROP MARKETING YEARS BEGIN JUNE 1<sup>st</sup> FOR WHEAT, RYE, OATS, BARLEY AND FLAXSEED, SEPTEMBER 1<sup>st</sup> FOR CORN, SORGHUM, SOYBEANS AND SUNFLOWER SEEDS. INCLUDES WATERWAY SHIPMENTS TO CANADA.  
Source: [https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/wa\\_gr101.txt](https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/wa_gr101.txt)

- For the week ending the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 26 oceangoing grain vessels were loaded in the Gulf—37% more than the same period last year.
- Within the next 10 days (starting the 25<sup>th</sup> of August), 36 vessels were expected to be loaded—29% more than the same period last year.

- As of the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, the rate for shipping a metric ton (mt) of grain from the U.S. Gulf to Japan was \$52.00. This was unchanged from the previous week.
- The rate from the Pacific Northwest to Japan was \$27.50 per mt, unchanged from the previous week.

Figure 15. U.S. grain inspections for U.S. Gulf and PNW (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: USDA, Federal Grain Inspection Service.

#### Week ending 08/24/23 inspections (mbu):

MS Gulf: 26.6

PNW: 8.5

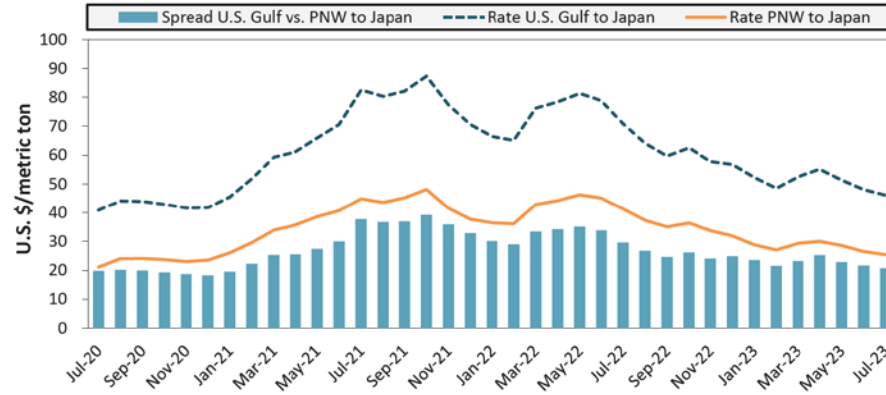
TX Gulf: 0.9

| Percent change from                    | MS Gulf | TX Gulf | U.S. Gulf | PNW     |
|--|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Last week                              | up 13   | up 136  | up 15     | up 28   |
| Last year (same week)                  | down 16 | down 71 | down 21   | down 64 |
| 3-year average (4-week moving average) | down 32 | down 77 | down 36   | down 56 |

## OCEAN FREIGHT

### Vessel Rates

Figure 17. U.S. Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan



|                                       | 29 Aug | Weekly Change | Annual Change | 52 Week Low | 52 Week High |
|---------------------------------------|--------|---------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| IGC Grains and Oilseeds Freight Index | 144    | -             | -8 %          | 117         | 180          |
| Argentina sub-Index                   | 181    | +4            | -9 %          | 145         | 232          |
| Australia sub-Index                   | 98     | -1            | -25 %         | 73          | 128          |
| Brazil sub-Index                      | 189    | +6            | -%            | 148         | 239          |
| Black Sea sub-Index                   | 145    | +5            | -15 %         | 117         | 184          |
| Canada sub-Index                      | 105    | -             | -14 %         | 85          | 132          |
| Europe sub-Index                      | 119    | -             | -15 %         | 96          | 146          |
| USA sub-Index                         | 115    | +1            | -11 %         | 95          | 141          |



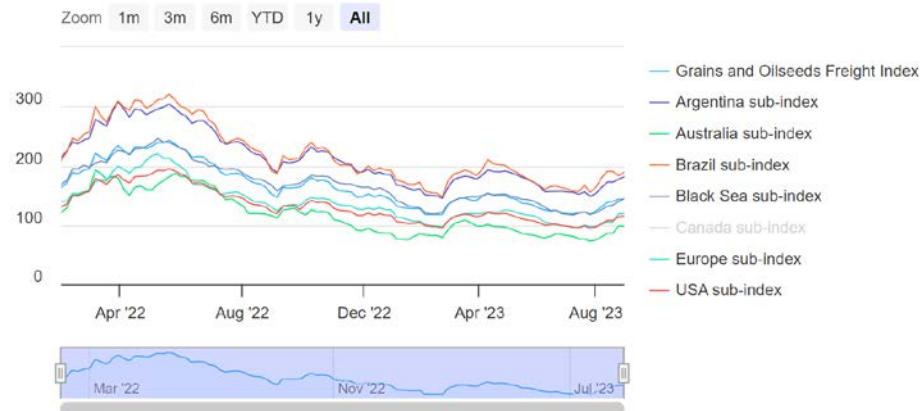
|                    | 29 Aug | Weekly Change | Annual Change | 52 Week Low | 52 Week High |
|--------------------|--------|---------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Australia - Iran   | \$21   | -             | -16 %         | \$17        | \$31         |
| Brazil - EU        | \$28   | -1            | 12 %          | \$19        | \$34         |
| USA (Gulf) - Japan | \$51   | -1            | 6 %           | \$41        | \$59         |

Source: IGC <https://www.igc.int/en/markets/marketinfo-freight.aspx>

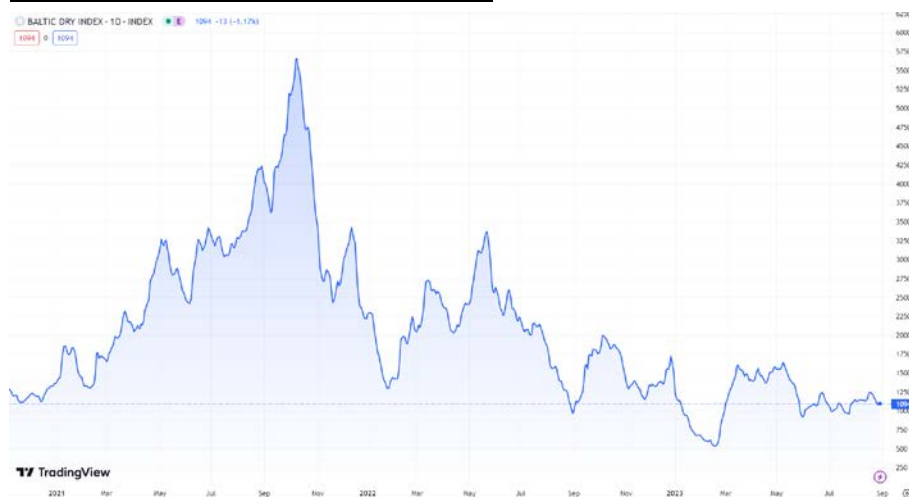
### IGC Grains Freight Index – 29<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023

#### New - IGC Grains and Oilseeds Freight Index (GOFI) & sub-Indices

(Weekly basis, 1 January 2013 = 100)



## ➤ Baltic Dry Freight Index – Daily = 1094



Source: <https://www.tradingview.com/chart/?symbol=INDEX%3ABDI>

The Baltic Dry Index is reported daily by the Baltic Exchange in London. The index provides a benchmark for the price of moving the major raw materials by sea. The index is a composite of three sub-indices that measure different sizes of dry bulk carriers: Capesize, which typically transport iron ore or coal cargoes of about 150,000 tonnes; Panamax, which usually carry coal or grain cargoes of about 60,000 to 70,000 tonnes; and Supramax, with a carrying capacity between 48,000 and 60,000 tonnes.

Not restricted to Baltic Sea countries, the index provides "an assessment of the price of moving the major raw materials by sea. Taking in 23 shipping routes measured on a time-charter basis, for dry bulk carriers carrying a range of commodities including coal, iron ore, grain, and other commodities.

Because dry bulk primarily consists of materials that function as raw material inputs to the production of intermediate or finished goods, the index is also seen as an efficient economic indicator of future economic growth and production.

## ➤ A weekly round-up of tanker and dry bulk market

18 August 2023 Baltic Exchange - This report is produced by the Baltic Exchange -

Source: <https://www.balticexchange.com/en/data-services/WeeklyRoundup.html>.

**Capesize:** The Capesize market observed a shortened trading week due to the public holiday in the UK on Monday and another in Singapore on Friday. Trading in the Pacific region displayed consistent volumes throughout the week. The presence of all three major players led to a

slightly optimistic market sentiment earlier in the week, but this positivity did not significantly impact rates on C5, which saw only a minor increase. Meanwhile, the Atlantic market remained subdued, with bids on C3 struggling to attract interest, reflecting owners' hesitancy. The North Atlantic faced challenges with an excess of spot vessels and a shortage of cargo, pressuring the market. Despite hopes for increased Pacific activity before Singapore's holiday on Friday, the market did not experience a significant upswing, and freight rates remained relatively steady. The North Atlantic continued to grapple with oversupply issues, leading to limited enquiry and competition among owners for available cargoes. Rates from South Brazil to the Far East experienced further declines as charterers adjusted their bids downward. Overall, the market sentiment persisted as bearish.

**Panamax:** The Panamax market opened the week on a firm footing, but we ended with rates slowly eroding, particularly in the Atlantic as pressure was applied all week with a basic lack of demand, especially for the Transatlantic trades. South America front haul trips started brightly but activity fizzled out as the week progressed, with several deals concluding mid-week basis delivery India at \$16,000. Conversely, Asia witnessed solid cargo volumes ex Australia and NoPac, including an 82,000-dwt delivery North China fixed for a NoPac round trip at \$12,000. Some impacts being applied by a typhoon in the south of the region, the market with favourable positioned ships taking advantage. However, nervousness from the Atlantic physical and FFA market appeared to impact the basin here too as we approached the weekend. Period activity remained minimal with a wide bid/offer spread but reports of a scrubber-fitted 81,500-dwt delivery Hong Kong achieving \$11,000 basis 6/8 months.

**Ultramax/Supramax:** Gains were seen this week across the Atlantic as demand increased and limited tonnage availability was evident. The Black Sea region was especially active with a 61,000-dwt fixing from Ereğli via the Black Sea to Singapore-Japan range at \$20,500. In the US Gulf, a 63,000-dwt was fixed for a trip to India at \$22,000 whilst a 61,000-dwt fixed from Brownsville to Egypt at \$18,750 with a guaranteed minimum duration of 50 days. The South Atlantic also improved with a

**Table 18. Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 08/26/2023**

| Export region | Import region      | Grain types  | Loading date        | Volume loads (metric tons) | Freight rate (US\$/metric ton) |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| U.S. Gulf     | Japan              | Heavy grain  | May 2, 2023         | 50,000                     | 56.70                          |
| U.S. Gulf     | Japan              | Heavy grain  | May 1, 2023         | 50,000                     | 54.80                          |
| U.S. Gulf     | Japan              | Heavy grain  | Nov 1/10, 2022      | 50,000                     | 79.25                          |
| U.S. Gulf     | Jamaica            | Wheat        | Jun 20/30, 2023     | 4,400                      | 63.00 op 66.00                 |
| U.S. Gulf     | Mexico             | Soybean Meal | Oct 1/10, 2023      | 17,250                     | 87.13                          |
| U.S. Gulf     | Dominican Republic | Soybean Meal | Oct 1/10, 2023      | 17,250                     | 87.13                          |
| PNW           | Indonesia          | Soybean Meal | Jul 21/31, 2023     | 35,000                     | 106.00                         |
| PNW           | N. China           | Heavy grain  | Apr 21/27, 2023     | 63,000                     | 28.00                          |
| PNW           | N. China           | Heavy grain  | May 1/4, 2023       | 66,000                     | 29.00                          |
| Brazil        | S. Korea           | Heavy grain  | Jun 15/Jul 15, 2023 | 68,000                     | 45.15                          |
| Brazil        | S. Korea           | Soybean Meal | Jun 1, 2023         | 60,000                     | 53.75                          |
| Brazil        | China              | Heavy grain  | Jul 1/31, 2023      | 63,000                     | 41.50                          |
| Brazil        | China              | Heavy grain  | May 5/10, 2023      | 65,000                     | 36.50                          |
| Brazil        | N. China           | Heavy grain  | Apr 21/30, 2023     | 66,000                     | 40.60                          |

Note: 50 percent of food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S.-flag vessels. Rates shown are per metric ton (1 metric ton = 2,204.62 pounds), free on board (F.O.B), except where otherwise indicated. op = option

Source: Maritime Research, Inc.



62,000-dwt fixing from San Nicolas to Singapore-Japan range at \$16,000 plus a \$600,000 ballast bonus. Increased activity in the Indian Ocean was also evident, with a 60,000-dwt fixing from Cape Town via Saldanha to China at \$17,500 with a \$175,000 ballast bonus. In Asia, levels were more balanced with a holiday in Singapore tempering activity, a 61,000-dwt fixed from Gresik to WC India at \$14,500. Period activity remained and a 63,000-dwt opening in India fixed 4 to 6 months at \$15,000.

**Handysize:** The Handy sector has remained positive, with the Atlantic seeing the biggest gains. In the Black Sea, a 35,000-dwt was fixed passing Canakkale via Constantza to Jebel Ali at \$10,000 whilst a 34,000-dwt fixed from Otranto via Constantza to Morocco at \$12,000. Activity was said to have improved on the North Coast of South America with a 33,000-dwt fixing a trip to the Continent at \$9,000. A 37,000-dwt fixed an Alumina cargo from Fazendinha to Norway at \$16,000. The Asia markets were more balanced. A 32,000-dwt was fixed from Singapore via Australia for a round voyage at \$9,500 whilst a 35,000-dwt opening ex dry dock in China fixed a trip via Japan to the East Coast of India with steels at \$9,500. Period had also been active with a 32,000-dwt opening in China fixing for 4 to 6 months at \$9,850, whilst in the Atlantic a 37,000-dwt opening in Brunsbuttle fixed for 7 to 9 months at 95% of the BHSI index.

#### ➤ **Higher rates across vessel segments prop up Baltic index**

30 August 2023 Daksh Grover, Reuters - The Baltic Exchange's main sea freight index, tracking rates for ships carrying dry bulk commodities, snapped a six-session long streak of declines on Tuesday, on a pickup in rates across all vessel segments.

The overall index, which factors in rates for capesize, panamax and supramax shipping vessels, gained 27 points or 2.5% to 1,107.

The capesize index rose 31 points, or 2.6%, to 1,205, rising for the first time in eight sessions.

Average daily earnings for capesizes, which typically transport 150,000-tonne cargoes carrying commodities such as iron ore and coal, increased \$262 to \$9,997.

Dalian iron ore futures extended declines, as traders remained cautious on shrinking steel margins and lack of any clear signs of improved downstream demand despite a raft of stimulus steps.

The panamax index was up 49 points, or 3.4%, at 1,498.

Average daily earnings for panamaxes, which usually carry coal or grain cargoes of about 60,000 to 70,000 tonnes, increased \$440 to \$13,481.

The Panama Canal expects to maintain restrictions on daily vessel transit and maximum draft for at least 10 more months amid a prolonged drought that has lowered the water level, an official from the waterway said on Thursday.

Among smaller vessels, the supramax index rose 10 points, or 1.1%, to 918.

#### ➤ **U.S. Ag Exporters Keeping Eye on Panama Canal Backlog**

A backlog of nearly 200 ships was reportedly awaiting transit through the Panama Canal last week, the result of ongoing drought that has affected the water level at

Lake Gatun, the reservoir that supplies water for the canal locks to operate, reports *Feedstuffs*.

Now, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) says that number stands at approximately 120 vessels, and while this is an improvement from the previously reported number, ACP noted that under normal circumstances, only around 90 vessels are waiting. Currently around 32 vessels transit the canal daily, but this is down from 36 per day in normal conditions. Average wait time for vessels has also risen from 6-7 days last month to 9-11 days.

The Panama Canal has 46% of the total market share of containers moving from Northeast Asia to the East Coast of the United States. It also serves more than 144 maritime routes connecting 160 countries and reaching some 1,700 ports globally.

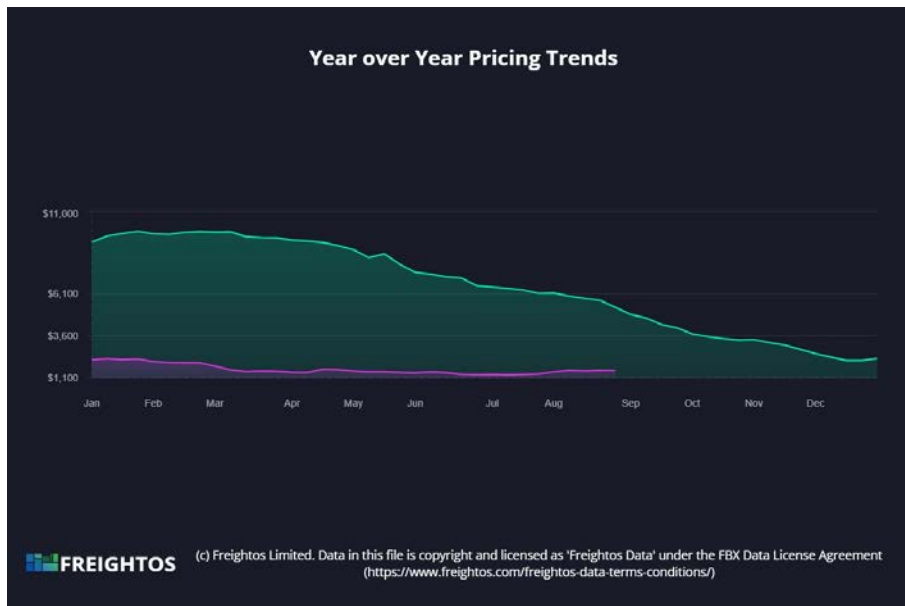
The U.S. agriculture industry is closely monitoring the situation as the U.S. is the largest user of the canal.

*GHA: Two interesting comments from article:*

*Shipping a ton of soybeans in 2008 from Iowa to Shanghai was 77% of the price of using Brazil's northern ports, but by March 2023 it was 5% more expensive shipping it from the U.S., according to U.S. Department of Agriculture and Brazil's ESALQ-LOG data. For corn, freight values are very similar, says Thiago Pera, logistics research coordinator at ESALQ-LOG.*

*Chinese state-owned trader COFCO is now building a major new grains terminal at Santos after getting a 25-year license to operate a unit with capacity for 14 million tons. Shipments from COFCO's STS11 terminal are scheduled to begin in 2026.*

➤ **Freightos Baltic Index (FBX): Global Container Freight Index**



Source: <https://fbx.freightos.com/>

➤ **Freightos West Coast N.A. – China/East Asia Container Index - Daily**



Source: <https://fbx.freightos.com/>

FBX stands for Freightos Baltic Index. It is the leading international Freight Rate Index, in cooperation with the Baltic Exchange, providing market rates for 40' containers (FEUs).

Prices used in the index are rolling short term Freight All Kind (FAK) spot tariffs and related surcharges between carriers, freight forwarders and high-volume shippers. Index values are calculated by taking the median price for all prices (to ignore the influence of outliers on active lanes) with weighting by carrier. 50 to 70 million price points are collected every month. The weekly freight index is calculated as an average of the five business days from the same week and published each Friday.

➤ **[Freightos Weekly Update] New signs that peak season may have already peaked**

31 August 2023 American Journal of Transportation

**Key insights:**

- Recent reports of slowing sales, waning US consumer strength, and inventories running down but not quickly enough, may mean that ocean volumes – and rates – reached their peak for this year in August though carriers are likely to attempt additional GRIs in September.
- Panama Canal low-water restrictions will stay in place for at least ten months, though there has not been any significant impact on container shipping via the canal yet. With alternatives and excess capacity in the market, it is looking unlikely that these restrictions will cause much disruption to container trade.
- Asia - N. Europe spot rates have been about \$1,700/FEU since early August last on some demand improvement and on capacity reductions, though there is skepticism that this level is sustainable.
- Freightos Air Index data show that China - N. America air cargo rates increased for the third consecutive week last week, and at \$4.02/kg are 15% higher than at the start of August while China - N. Europe prices have fallen 7% to \$2.91/kg over the same period.

**Ocean rates - Freightos Baltic Index:**

- Asia-US West Coast prices (FBX01 Weekly) increased 5% to \$2,029/FEU.
- Asia-US East Coast prices (FBX03 Weekly) climbed 3% to \$3,075/FEU.
- Asia-N. Europe prices (FBX11 Weekly) increased 2% to \$1,747/FEU.
- Asia-Mediterranean prices (FBX13 Weekly) fell 1% to \$2,313/FEU.
- Air rates - Freightos Air index
- China - N. America weekly prices increased 6% to \$4.02/kg
- China - N. Europe weekly prices fell 3% to \$2.91/kg.
- N. Europe - N. America weekly prices fell 4% to \$1.67/kg.

**Analysis**

Though US retail spending has held up even as inflation cools, sales across major retailers have been uneven. While Amazon, Walmart and TJX reported strong Q2 numbers, others like Macy's and Dick's Sporting Goods did not fare as well and are seeing possible signs of a slowdown in consumer strength.

And while a recent analysis shows US retail inventory levels are decreasing, they remain elevated, and, together with slowing sales, will likely push off a significant restocking cycle and freight rebound until mid-2024. Taken together, these trends

support projections that import volumes likely reached their peak for the year in August.

Transpacific ocean rates climbed slightly last week, with West Coast rates up 5% to \$2,029/FEU, and East Coast prices up 3% to \$3,075/FEU, both above 2019 levels. And though the success of August General Rate Increases were due not only to increased demand but also strict capacity management by carriers, if demand ebbs as fleet sizes continue to grow we may be seeing peak rates for this year as well, even as some carriers have announce transpacific GRIs for mid-September.

The Panama Canal Authority announced that low-water restrictions will likely stay in place for at least ten months, though there has not been any significant impact on container shipping via the canal yet. With alternatives and excess capacity in the market, it is looking unlikely that these restrictions will cause much disruption to container trade.

China - N. Europe total H1 import volumes were down year on year, though demand has improved since March, with June volumes 5% higher than last year and 6% higher than in 2019. August GRIs pushed Asia - N. Europe spot rates to about the \$1,700/FEU mark and above contract levels through last week on this demand improvement and on capacity reductions, though there is skepticism that carriers will be able to sustain these prices.

Asia - Mediterranean demand was resilient through June, and August rates of \$2,300/FEU have been about 20% higher than in July, suggesting volumes continue to improve.

Freightos Air Index data show that China - N. America air cargo rates increased for the third consecutive week last week, and at \$4.02/kg are 15% higher than at the start of August, while China - N. Europe prices have fallen 7% to \$2.91/kg over the same period.



## CEREAL GRAINS

**Table 15. Top 10 importers of all U.S. wheat**

| For the week ending 8/17/2023                             | Total commitments (1,000 mt) |                | % change current MY from last MY | Exports 3-year average 2020-22 (1,000 mt) |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|---|
|   | YTD MY 2023/24               | YTD MY 2022/23 |                                  |   |
| Mexico  | 1,379                        | 1,571          | -12                              | 3,397                                     |
| Philippines   | 1,073                        | 1,236          | -13                              | 2,615                                     |
| Japan   | 855                          | 810            | 6                                | 2,281                                     |
| China   | 162                          | 273            | -41                              | 1,740                                     |
| Korea   | 499                          | 605            | -17                              | 1,426                                     |
| Nigeria   | 104                          | 408            | -74                              | 1,276                                     |
| Taiwan  | 453                          | 269            | 68                               | 944                                       |
| Thailand  | 156                          | 182            | -15                              | 643                                       |
| Columbia  | 144                          | 314            | -54                              | 537                                       |
| Indonesia   | 144                          | 81             | 78                               | 469                                       |
| <b>Top 10 importers</b>                                   | <b>4,970</b>                 | <b>5,749</b>   | <b>-14</b>                       | <b>15,327</b>                             |
| <b>Total U.S. wheat export sales</b>                      | <b>7,176</b>                 | <b>8,813</b>   | <b>-19</b>                       | <b>20,411</b>                             |
| % of YTD current month's export projection                | 38%                          | 43%            |                                  |   |
| Change from prior week                                    | 406                          | 0              |                                  |   |
| <b>Top 10 importers' share of U.S. wheat export sales</b> | <b>69%</b>                   | <b>65%</b>     |                                  | <b>75%</b>                                |
| <b>USDA forecast, August 2023</b>                         | <b>19,074</b>                | <b>20,681</b>  | <b>-8</b>                        |   |

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2021/22 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated export (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports). mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

GTR 8-31-23

### ➤ **Wheat Export Shipments and Sales**

Net sales of 329,100 metric tons (mts) for 2023/2024 were down 19% from the previous week and 25% from the prior 4-week average. Increases primarily for China (110,000 mts), the Philippines (77,500 mts), Honduras (30,000 mts), Peru (28,300 mts, including decreases of 5,000 mts), and Japan (27,300 mts), were offset by reductions for Costa Rica (200 mts) and Morocco (100 mts). Total net sales of 15,000 mts for 2024/2025 were for unknown destinations.

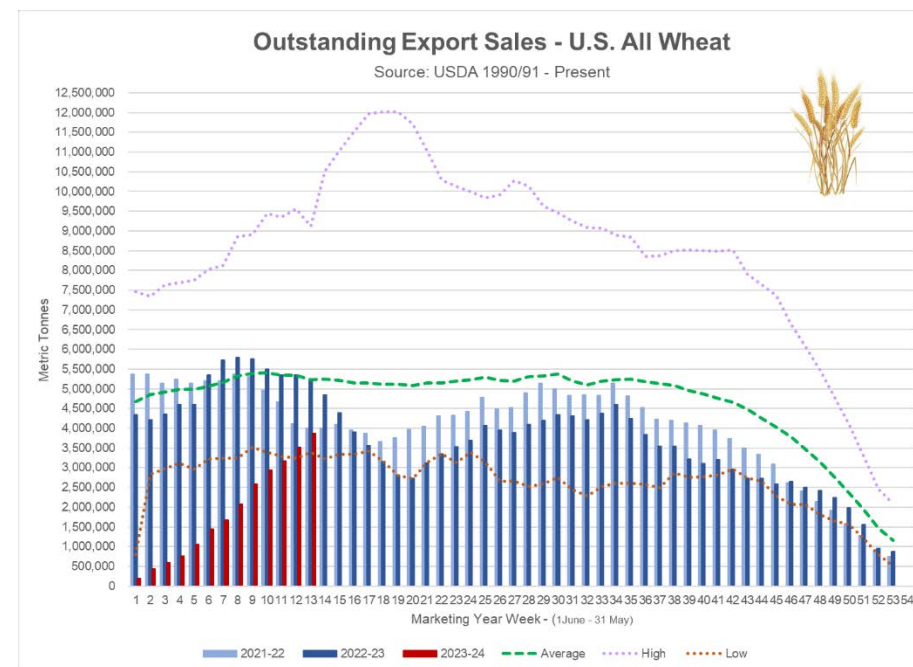
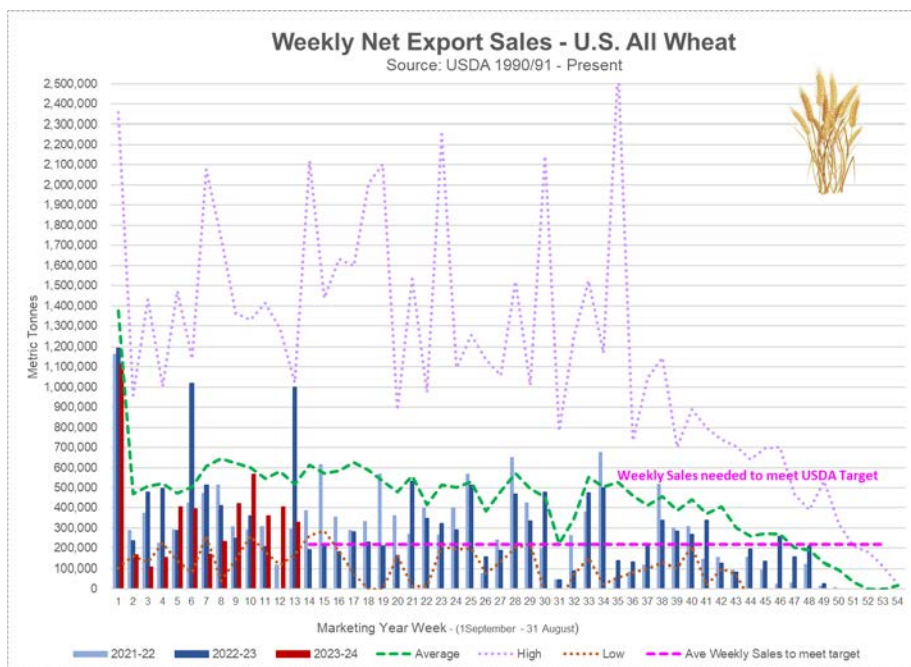
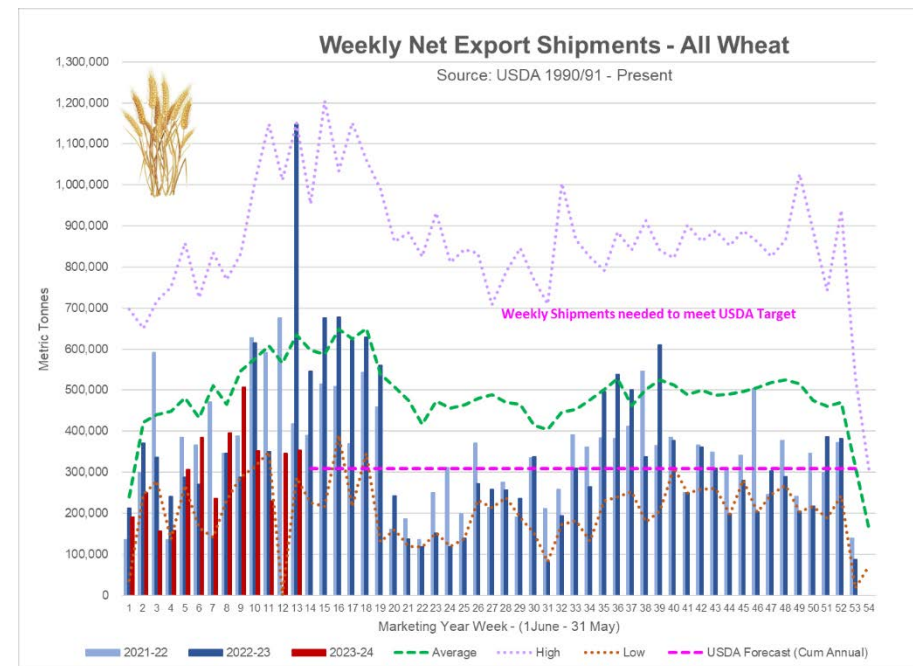
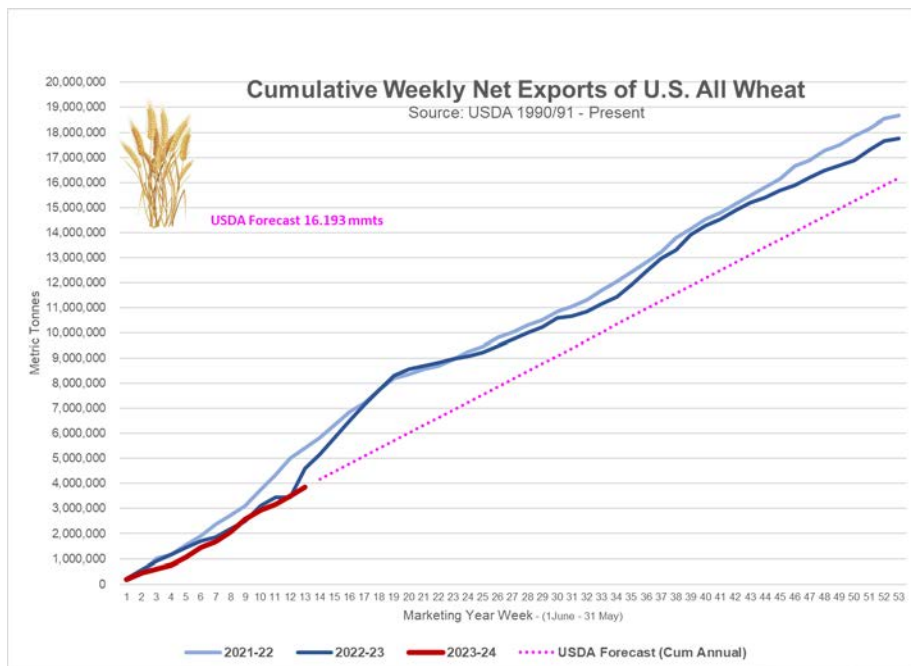
Exports of 353,900 mts were up 3% from the previous week, but down 1% from the prior 4-week average. The destinations were primarily to the Philippines (126,500 mts), Japan (85,200 mts), Mexico (53,300 mts), Jamaica (22,000 mts), and Morocco (19,900 mts).

### ➤ **Rice Export Shipments and Sales**

Net sales of 82,300 mts for 2023/2024 were primarily for Mexico (57,300 mts), Haiti (21,000 mts, including decreases of 1,200 mts), Canada (1,500 mts), Guatemala (1,200 mts), and Jordan (500 mts).

Exports of 64,600 mts were primarily to Mexico (48,100 mts), Haiti (7,100 mts), Venezuela (5,900 mts), Canada (2,000 mts), and Saudi Arabia (900 mts).

*Export Adjustments:* Accumulated exports of medium, short and other classes, milled rice to Canada were adjusted down 1 mts for week ending August 3rd. This shipment was reported in error.



## COARSE GRAINS

**Table 14. Top 5 importers of U.S. soybeans**

| For the week ending 8/17/2023                              | Total commitments (1,000 mt) |                |                | % change current MY from last MY | Exports 3-year average 2019-21 (1,000 mt) |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|---|
|  | YTD MY 2023/24               | YTD MY 2022/23 | YTD MY 2021/22 |                                  |   |
| China  | 5107                         | 31,271         | 30,615         | 2                                | 27,283                                    |
| Mexico   | 1376                         | 4,696          | 5,465          | -14                              | 4,929                                     |
| Egypt  | 63                           | 1,151          | 4,082          | -72                              | 3,553                                     |
| Japan  | 194                          | 2,358          | 2,576          | -8                               | 2,266                                     |
| Indonesia  | 97                           | 1,875          | 1,800          | 4                                | 2,116                                     |
| <b>Top 5 importers</b>                                     | <b>6,837</b>                 | <b>41,352</b>  | <b>44,538</b>  | <b>-7</b>                        | <b>40,147</b>                             |
| <b>Total U.S. soybean export sales</b>                     | <b>11,811</b>                | <b>53,469</b>  | <b>59,558</b>  | <b>-10</b>                       | <b>54,231</b>                             |
| % of YTD current month's export projection                 | 24%                          | 99%            | 102%           |                                  |   |
| <b>Change from prior week</b>                              | <b>1,218</b>                 | <b>365</b>     | <b>0</b>       |                                  |   |
| <b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales</b> | <b>58%</b>                   | <b>77%</b>     | <b>75%</b>     |                                  | <b>74%</b>                                |
| <b>USDA forecast, August 2023</b>                          | <b>49,728</b>                | <b>53,951</b>  | <b>58,638</b>  | <b>-8</b>                        |   |

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2021/22 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated export (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports). mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

### ➤ **Corn Export Shipments and Sales**

Net sales of 71,700 mts for 2022/2023 were down noticeably from the previous week and down 39% from the prior 4-week average. Increases primarily for Colombia (143,400 mts, including 104,800 mts switched from unknown destinations and decreases of 28,400 mts), Spain (58,000 mts, including 53,000 mts switched from unknown destinations), Japan (53,200 mts, including 51,700 mts switched from unknown destinations), the United Kingdom (49,500 mts, including 45,000 mts switched from unknown destinations), and El Salvador (8,500 mts, including 7,500 mts switched from Guatemala), were offset by reductions for unknown destinations (196,500 mts), Mexico (25,000 mts), Honduras (23,300 mts), and Guatemala (7,500 mts). Net sales of 991,800 mts for 2023/2024 primarily for Mexico (644,000 mts), unknown destinations (111,500 mts), Japan (80,600 mts), Colombia (71,200 mts), and Panama (37,100 mts), were offset by reductions for Honduras (5,500 mts).

Exports of 663,400 mts were up 34% from the previous week and 30% from the prior 4-week average. The destinations were primarily to Mexico (218,900 mts), Colombia (137,300 mts), Japan (79,200 mts), Spain (58,000 mts), and the United Kingdom (49,500 mts).

### ➤ **Grain Sorghum Export Shipments and Sales**

Net sales of 2,200 mts for 2022/2023 were down noticeably from the previous week and down 92% from the prior 4-week average. Increases reported for China (70,200 mts, including 68,000 mts switched from unknown destinations), were offset by reductions for unknown destinations (68,000 mts). Total net sales of 251,000 mts for 2023/2024 were for China. Exports of 74,000 mts were up 35% from the previous week and 10% from the prior 4-week average. The destinations were to China (73,500 mts) and Mexico (500 mts).

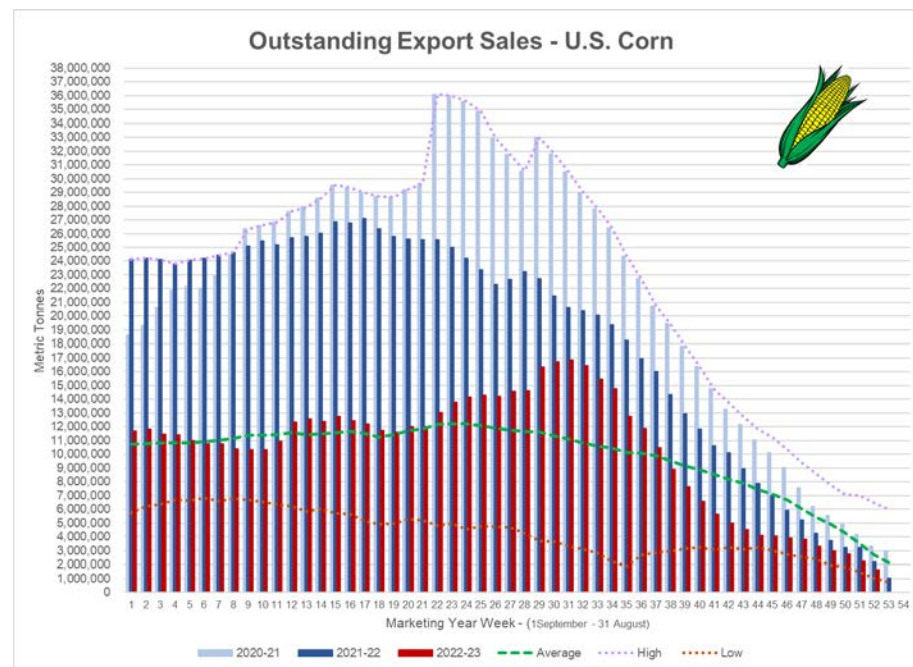
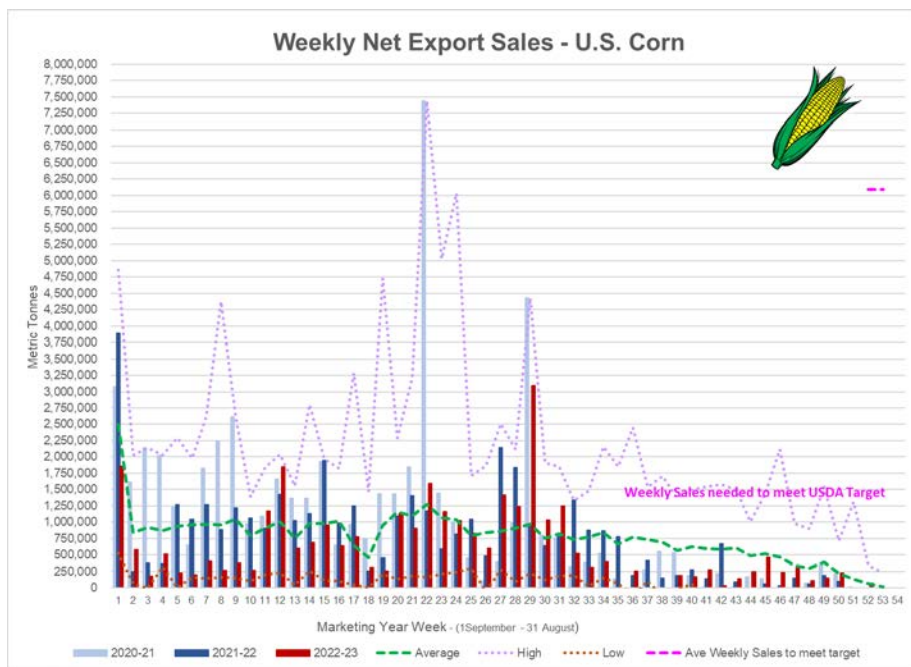
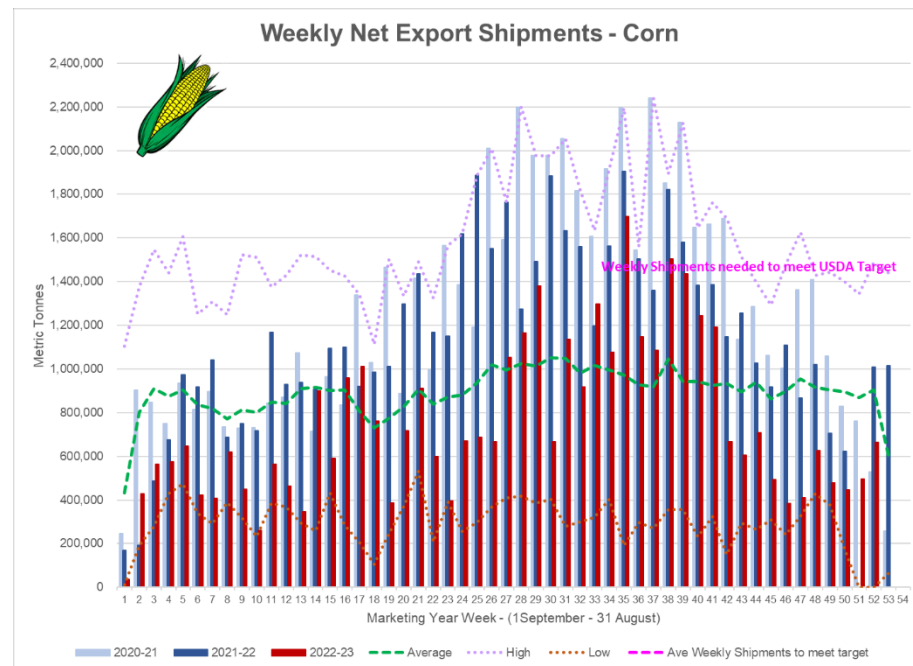
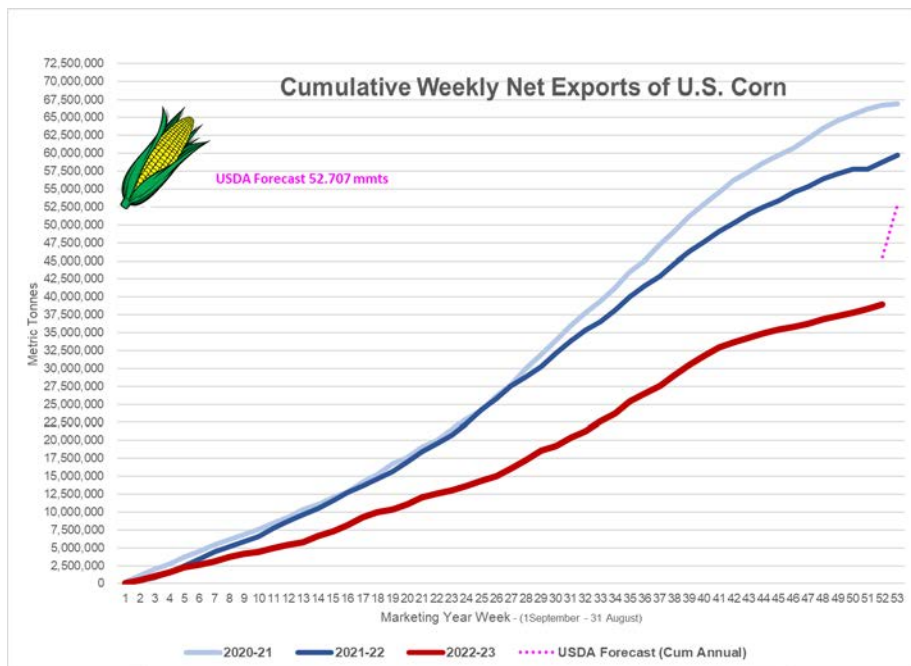
Rice: Net sales of 82,300 mts for 2023/2024 were primarily for Mexico (57,300 mts), Haiti (21,000 mts, including decreases of 1,200 mts), Canada (1,500 mts), Guatemala (1,200 mts), and Jordan (500 mts). Exports of 64,600 mts were primarily to Mexico (48,100 mts), Haiti (7,100 mts), Venezuela (5,900 mts), Canada (2,000 mts), and Saudi Arabia (900 mts).

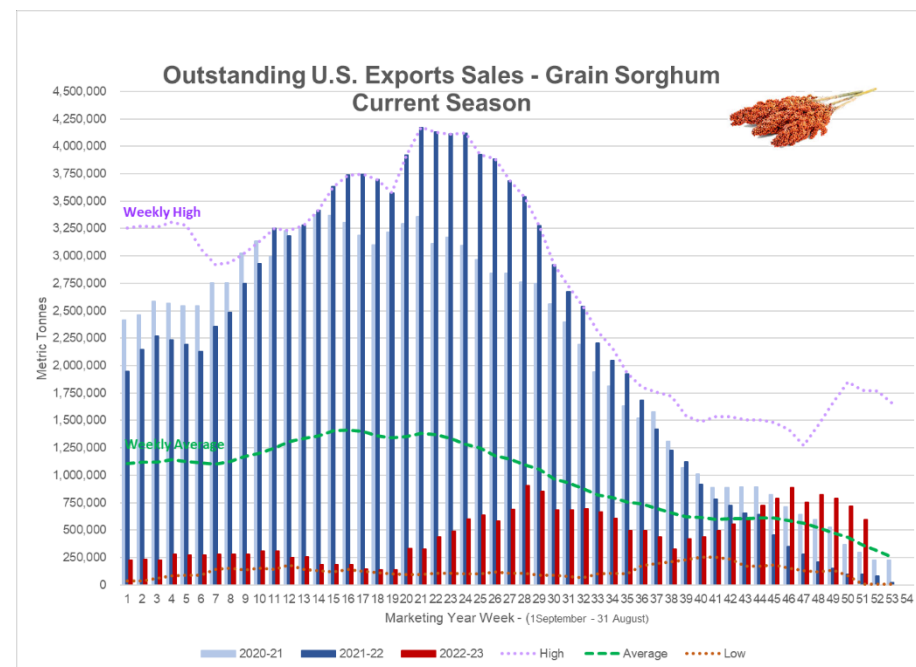
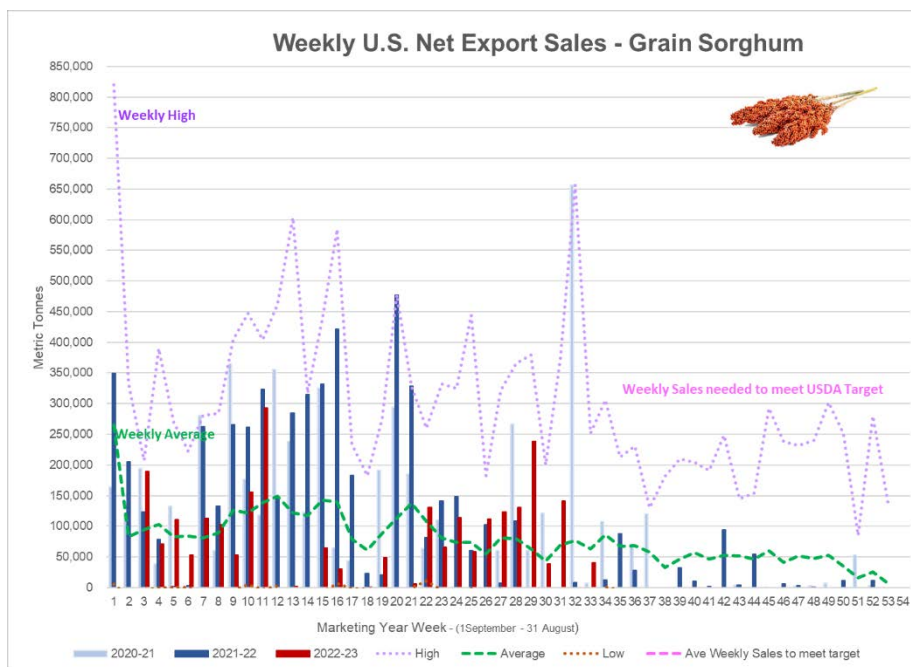
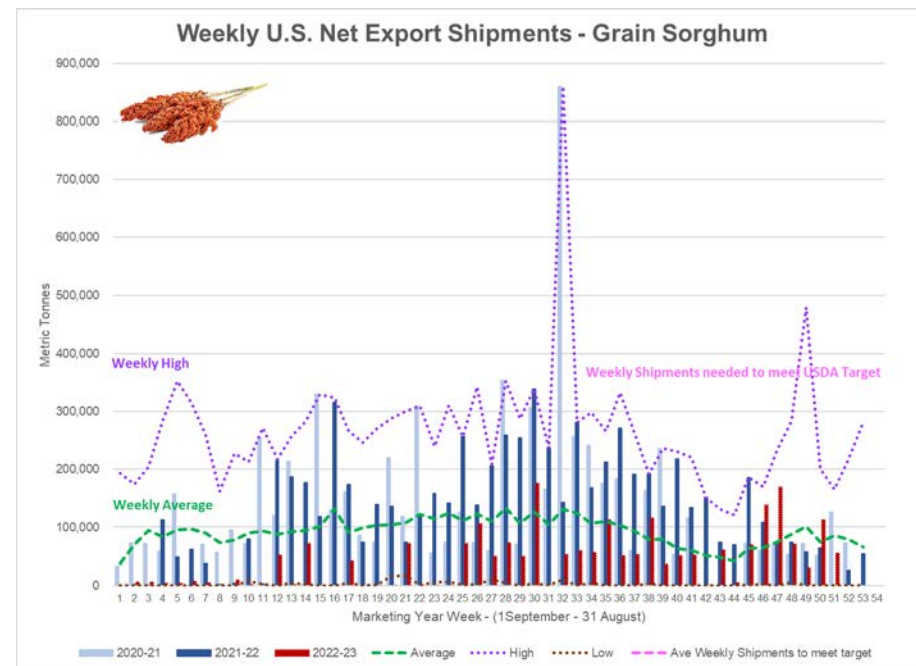
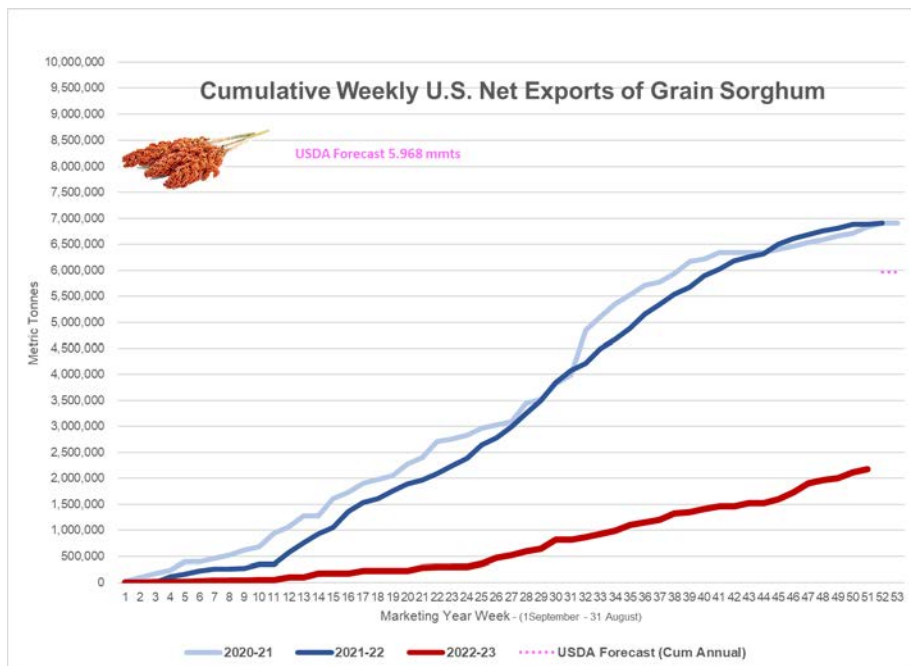
*Export Adjustments:* Accumulated exports of medium, short and other classes, milled rice to Canada were adjusted down 1 mts for week ending August 3rd. This shipment was reported in error.

### ➤ **Barley Export Shipments and Sales**

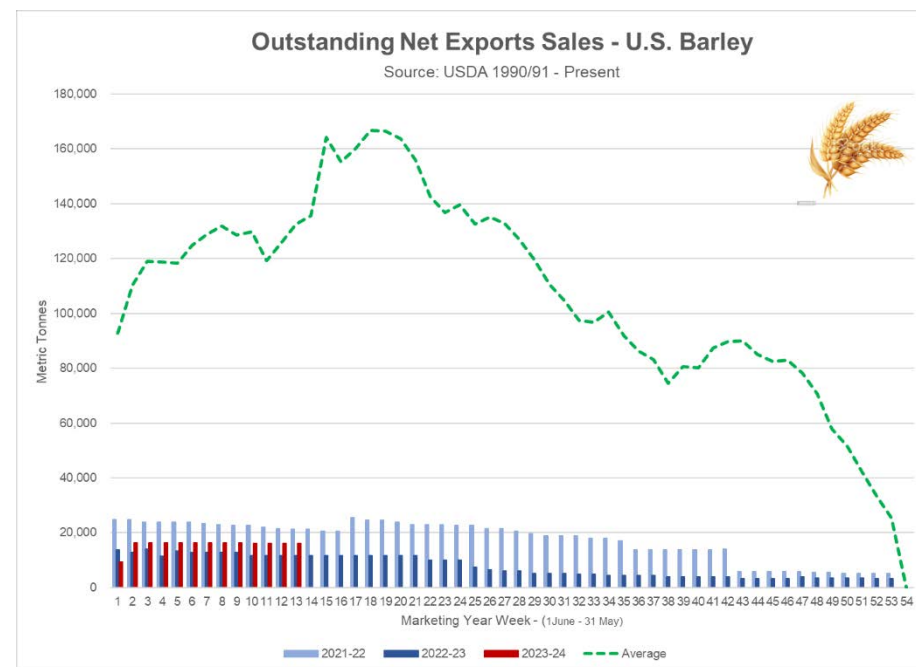
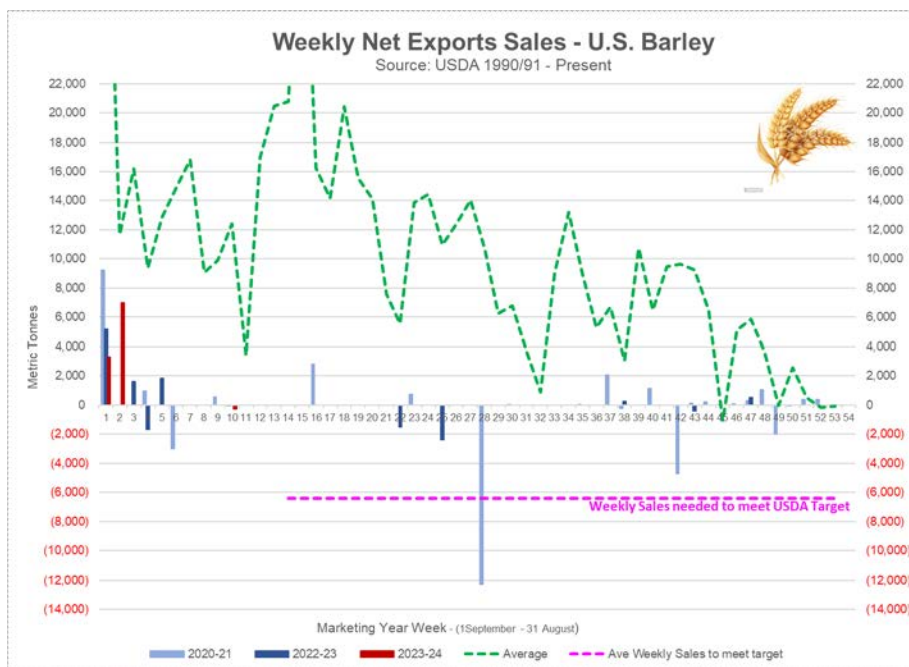
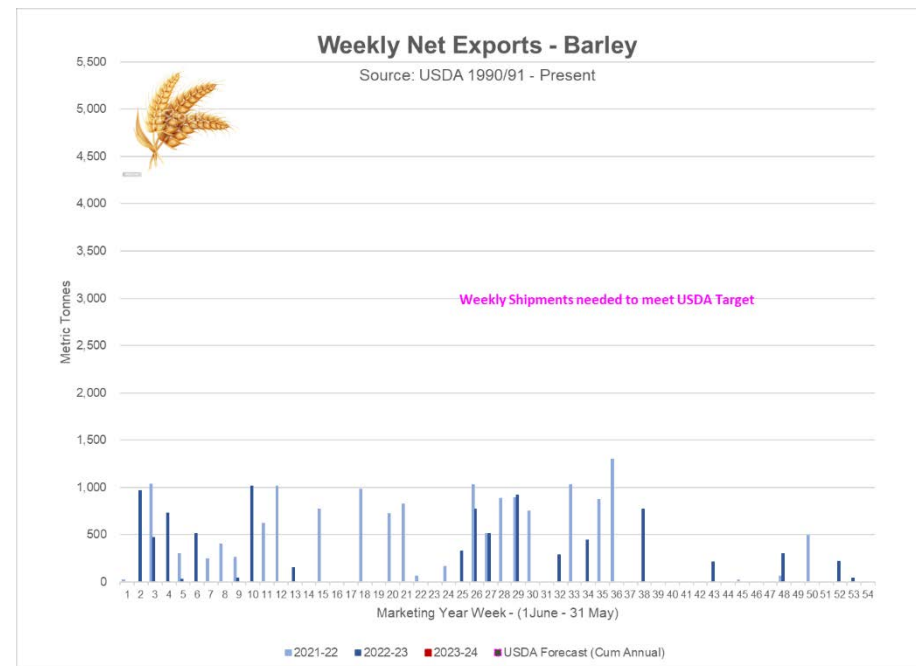
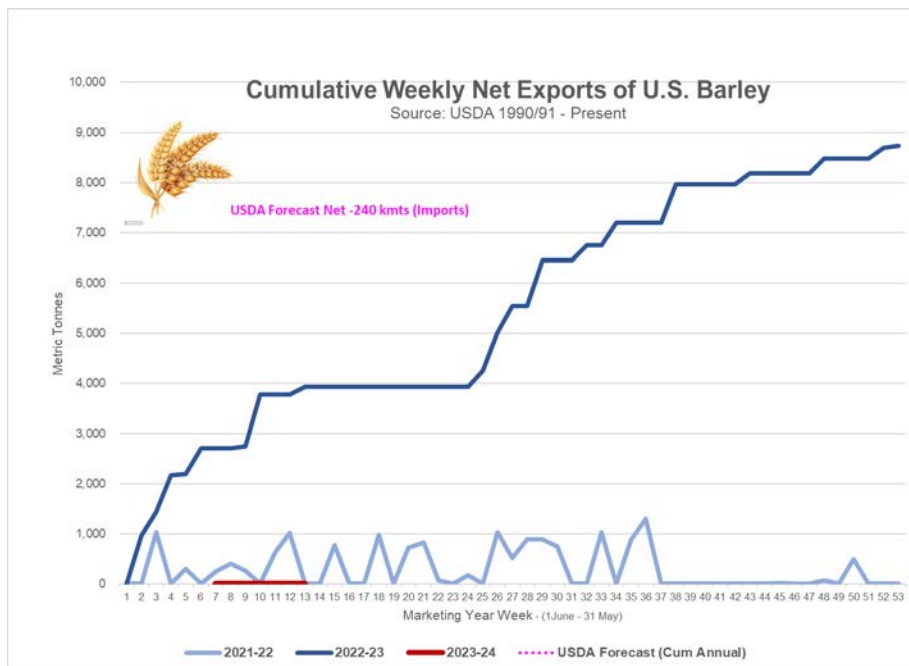
No net sales or exports were reported for the week.











## OILSEED COMPLEX

Table 14. Top 5 importers of U.S. soybeans

| For the week ending 8/17/2023                              | Total commitments (1,000 mt) |                |                | % change current MY from last MY | Exports 3-year average 2019-21 (1,000 mt) |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|---|
|  | YTD MY 2023/24               | YTD MY 2022/23 | YTD MY 2021/22 |                                  |   |
| China  | 5107                         | 31,271         | 30,615         | 2                                | 27,283                                    |
| Mexico   | 1376                         | 4,696          | 5,465          | -14                              | 4,929                                     |
| Egypt  | 63                           | 1,151          | 4,082          | -72                              | 3,553                                     |
| Japan  | 194                          | 2,358          | 2,576          | -8                               | 2,266                                     |
| Indonesia  | 97                           | 1,875          | 1,800          | 4                                | 2,116                                     |
| <b>Top 5 importers</b>                                     | <b>6,837</b>                 | <b>41,352</b>  | <b>44,538</b>  | <b>-7</b>                        | <b>40,147</b>                             |
| <b>Total U.S. soybean export sales</b>                     | <b>11,811</b>                | <b>53,469</b>  | <b>59,558</b>  | <b>-10</b>                       | <b>54,231</b>                             |
| % of YTD current month's export projection                 | 24%                          | 99%            | 102%           |                                  |   |
| <b>Change from prior week</b>                              | <b>1,218</b>                 | <b>365</b>     | <b>0</b>       |                                  |   |
| <b>Top 5 importers' share of U.S. soybean export sales</b> | <b>58%</b>                   | <b>77%</b>     | <b>75%</b>     |                                  | <b>74%</b>                                |
| <b>USDA forecast, August 2023</b>                          | <b>49,728</b>                | <b>53,951</b>  | <b>58,638</b>  | <b>-8</b>                        |   |

Note: The top 5 importers are based on USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing year ranking reports for marketing year (MY) 2021/22 (Sep. 1 – Aug. 31). "Total commitments" = cumulative exports (shipped) + outstanding sales (unshipped), from FAS weekly export sales report, or export sales query. Total commitments' change (net sales) from prior week could include revisions from previous week's outstanding sales or accumulated sales. In rightmost column, "Exports" = carryover plus accumulated export (as defined in FAS marketing year ranking reports). mt = metric ton; yr. = year; avg. = average; YTD = year to date.

Source: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service.

### ➤ Soybeans, Oil & Meal Export Shipment & Sales

**Soybeans:** Net sales reductions of 50,700 mts for 2022/2023--a marketing-year low--were down noticeably from the previous week and from the prior 4-week average. Increases primarily for China (105,600 mts, including 53,000 mts switched from unknown destinations and decreases of 2,400 mts), Colombia (4,500 mts, including decreases of 2,400 mts), Vietnam (1,700 mts), Costa Rica (1,400 mts), and Taiwan (300 mts), were more than offset by reductions for unknown destinations (108,000 mts), Mexico (55,700 mts), and Egypt (800 mts). Net sales of 1,123,800 mts for 2023/2024 were primarily for unknown destinations (399,400 mts), China (392,500 mts), Mexico (184,400 mts), Japan (50,000 mts), and Taiwan (30,500 mts).

Exports of 319,700 mts were down 29% from the previous week and 9% from the prior 4-week average. The destinations were primarily to China (105,900 mts), Mexico (87,500 mts), Egypt (54,200 mts), Japan (27,700 mts), and Costa Rica (17,300 mts).

*Optional Origin Sales:* For 2022/2023, the current outstanding balance of 300 mts, all South Korea.

*Export for Own Account:* For 2022/2023, the current exports for own account outstanding balance of 1,900 mts are for Canada (1,400 mts) and Taiwan (500 mts).

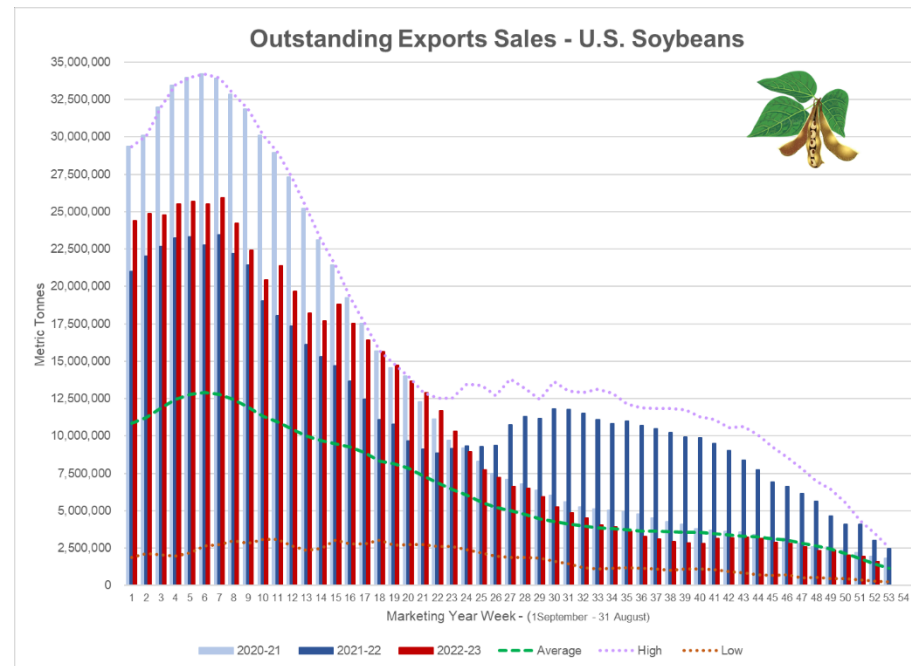
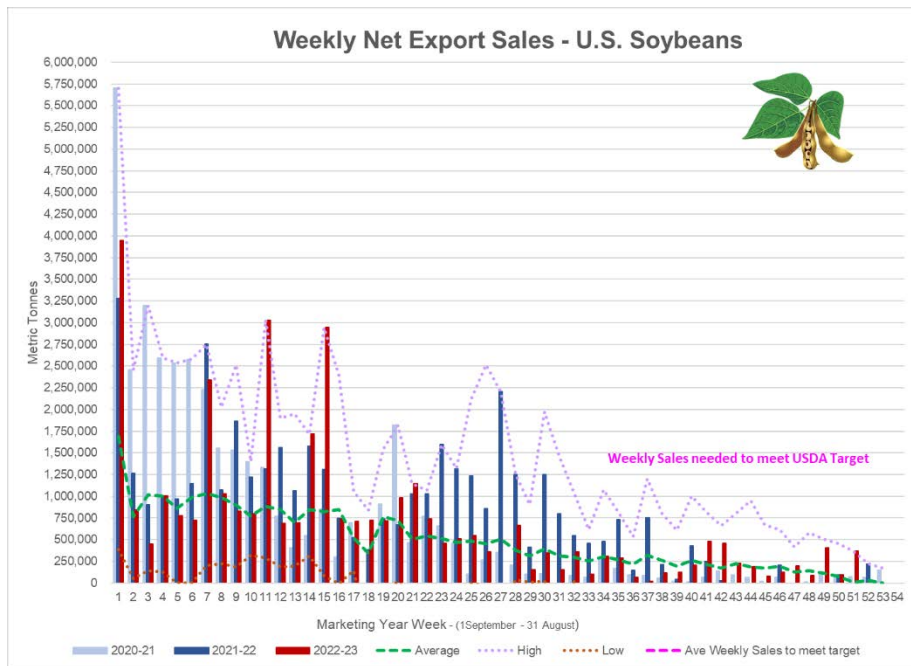
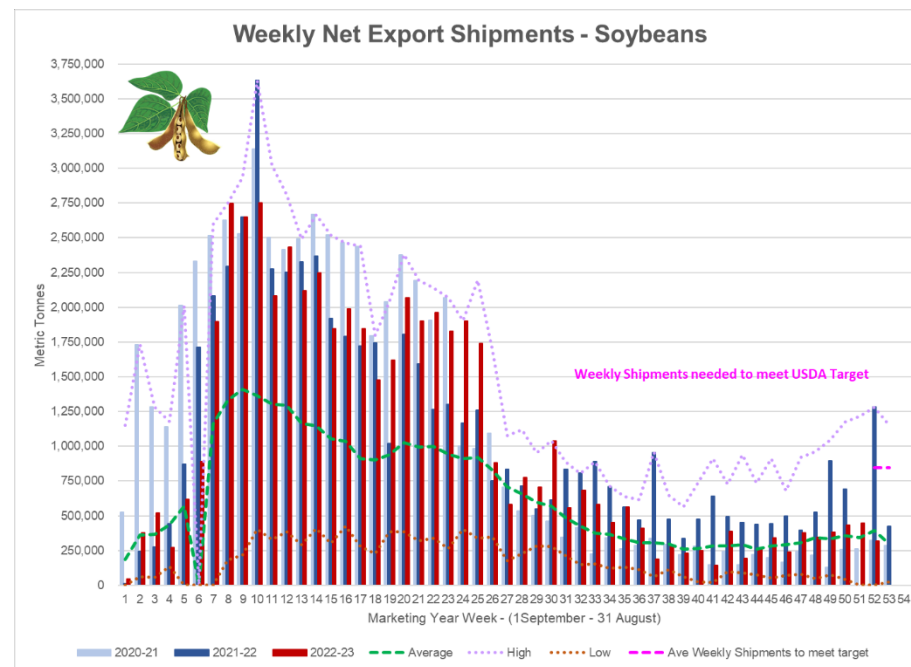
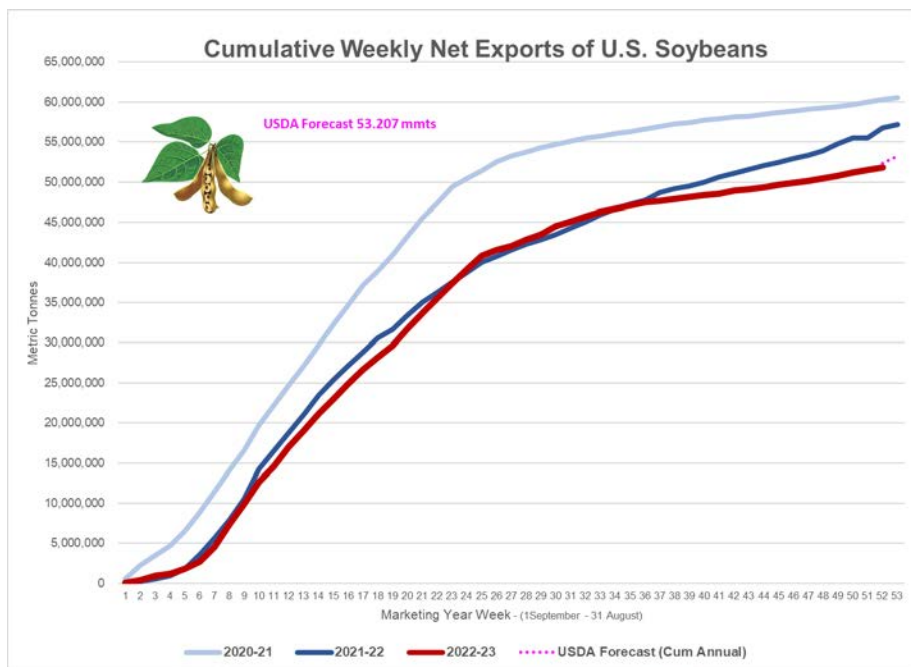
**Soybean Oil:** Net sales of 1,500 mts for 2022/2023 were down 16% from the previous week, but up 49% from the prior 4-week average. Increases were reported for Canada (1,400 mts) and Honduras (100 mts).

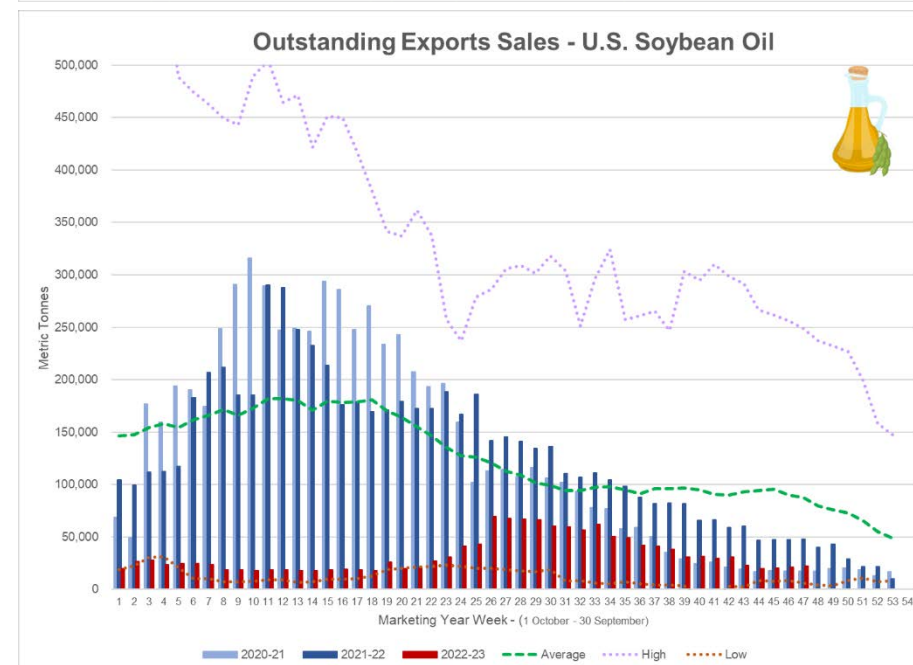
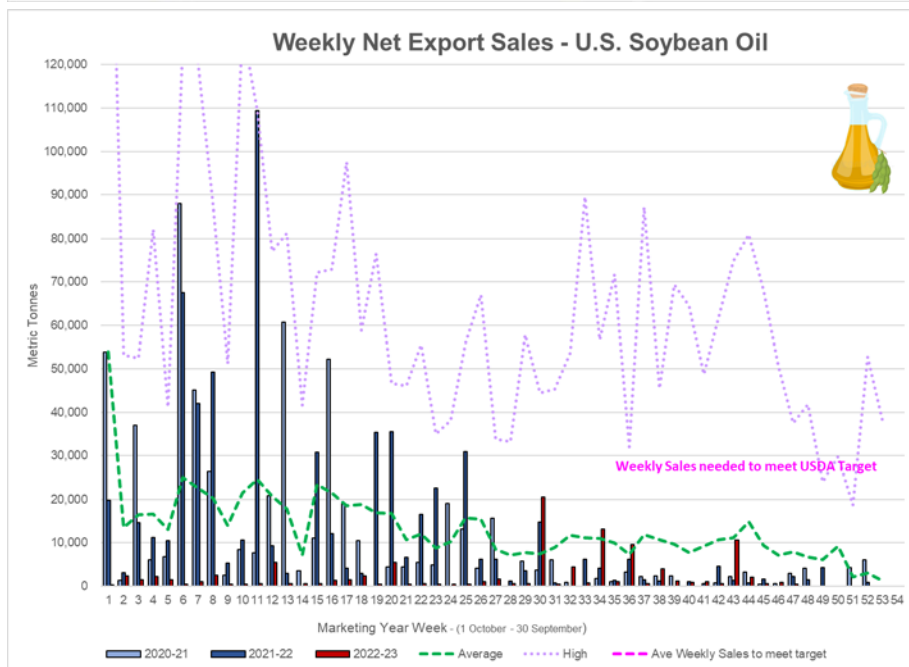
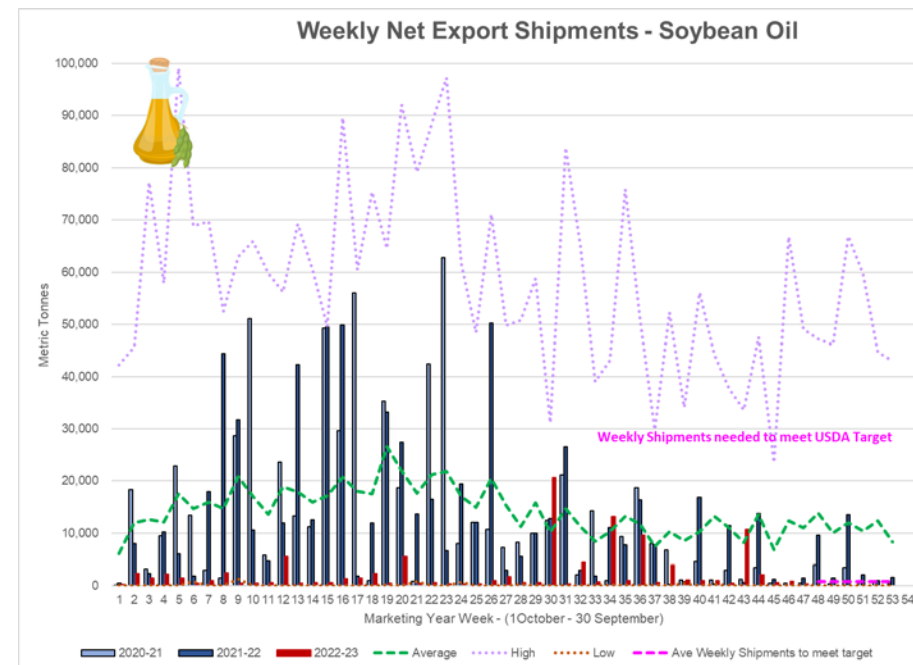
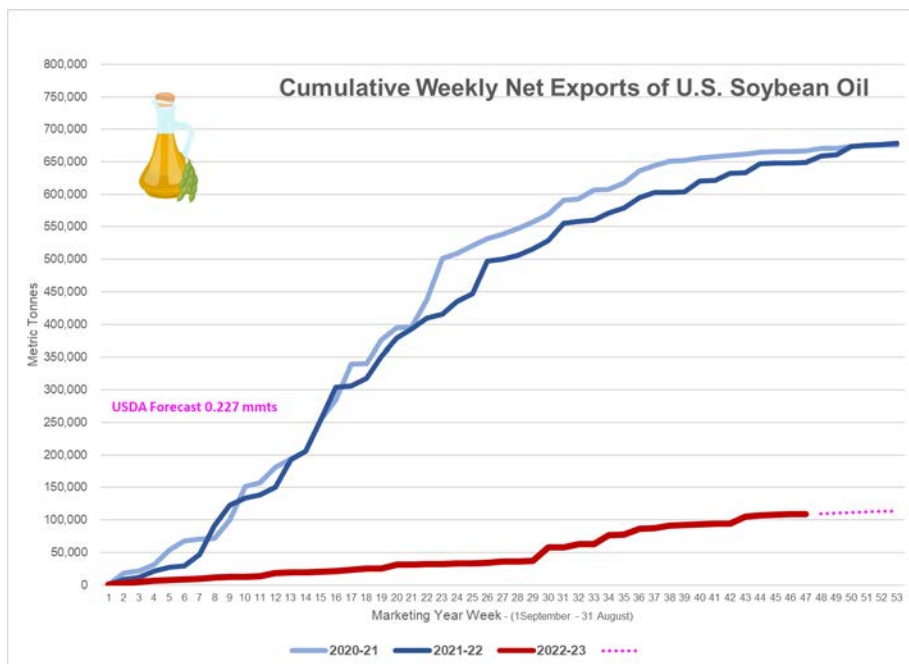
Exports of 300 mts were down 60% from the previous week and 90% from the prior 4-week average. The destination was Canada.

### Soybean Cake and Meal:

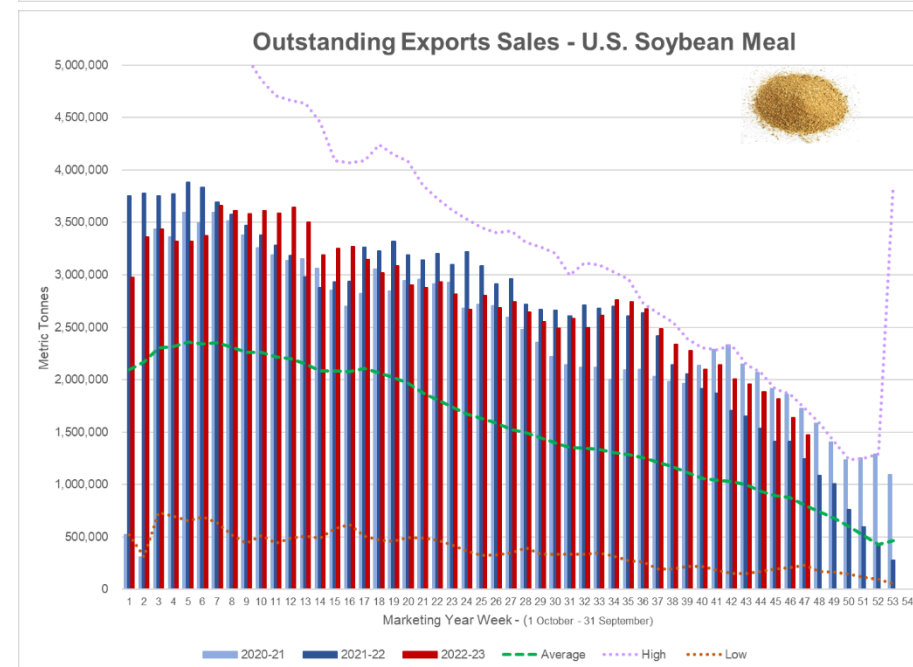
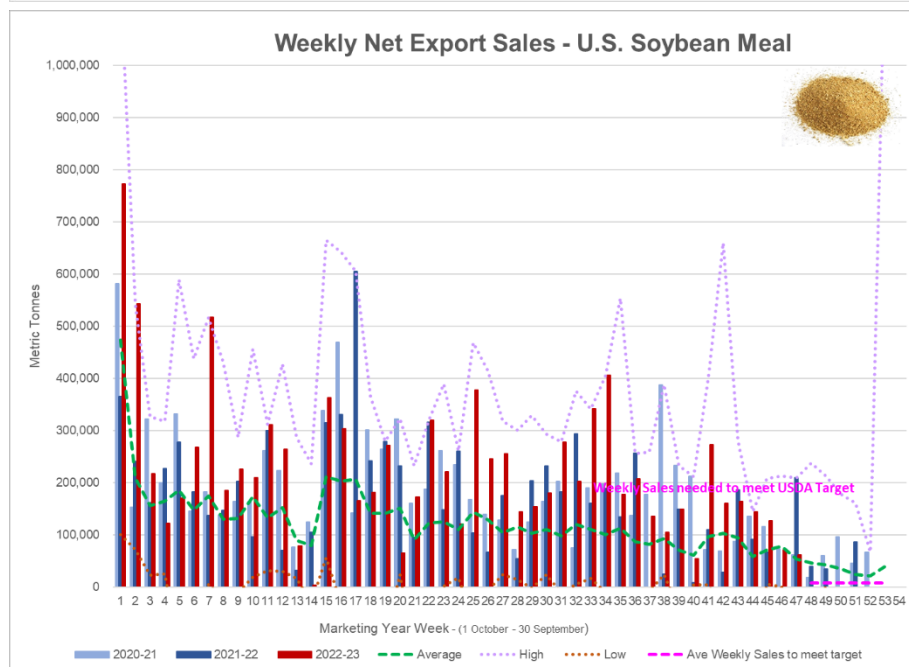
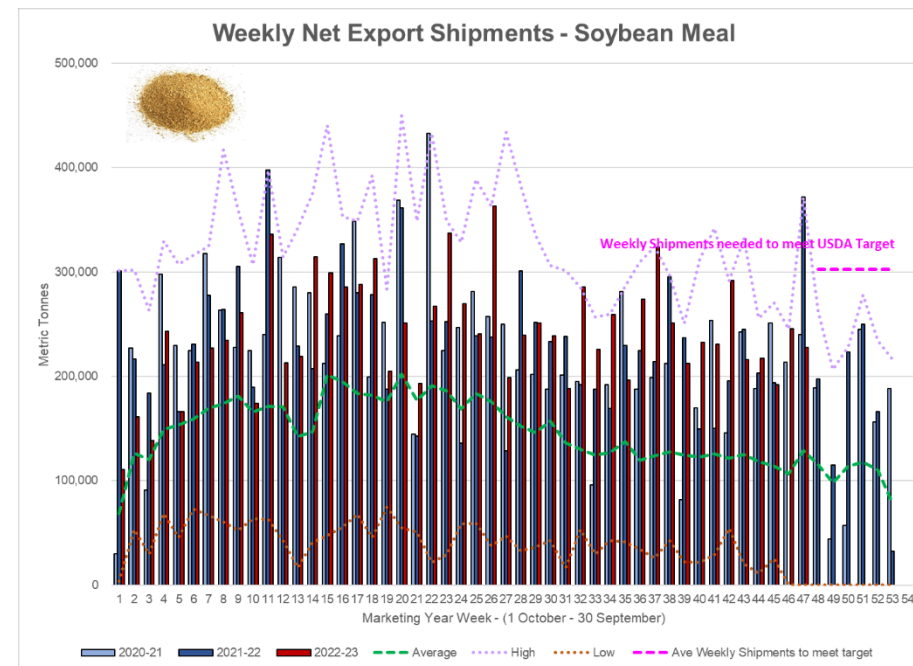
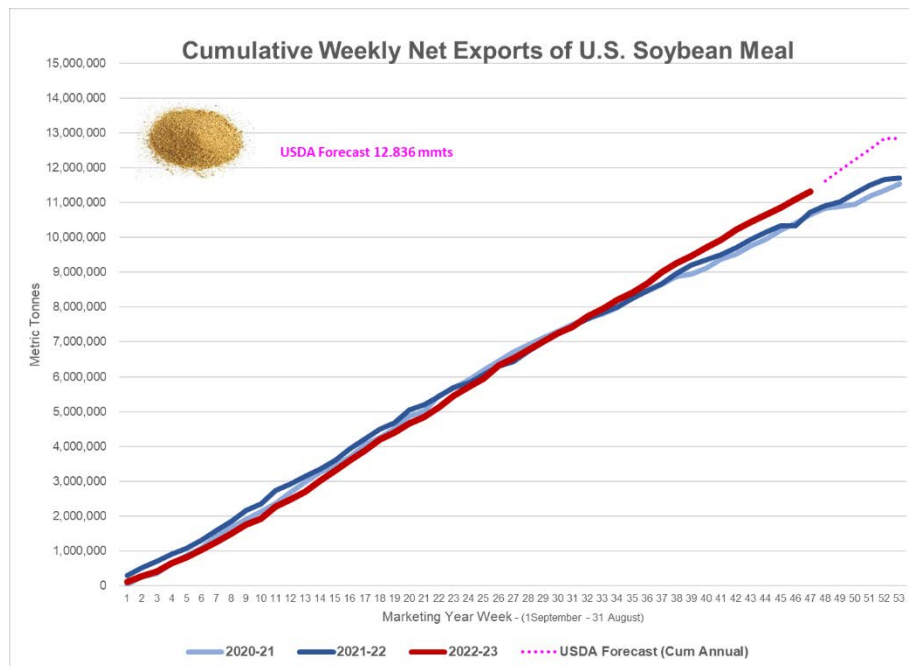
Net sales of 61,700 mts for 2022/2023 were down 14% from the previous week and 51% from the prior 4-week average. Increases primarily for Mexico (30,900 mts), Romania (30,000 mts), Venezuela (25,000 mts), Nicaragua (18,500 mts, including 12,000 mts switched from Guatemala and 6,000 mts switched from El Salvador), and Canada (17,700 mts), were offset by reductions primarily for Ireland (60,000 mts), Guatemala (14,600 mts), El Salvador (5,200 mts), the Dominican Republic (2,900 mts), and Costa Rica (2,500 mts). Net sales of 324,900 mts for 2023/2024 primarily for unknown destinations (205,000 mts), Ireland (60,000 mts), Honduras (17,200 mts), Panama (14,100 mts), and Vietnam (11,500 mts), were offset by reductions for Indonesia (3,100 mts).

Exports of 227,800 mts were down 7% from the previous week, but up 5% from the prior 4-week average. The destinations were primarily to Colombia (34,100 mts), Mexico (33,800 mts), the Dominican Republic (22,600 mts), Morocco (21,500 mts), and Nicaragua (18,500 mts).











## COTTON

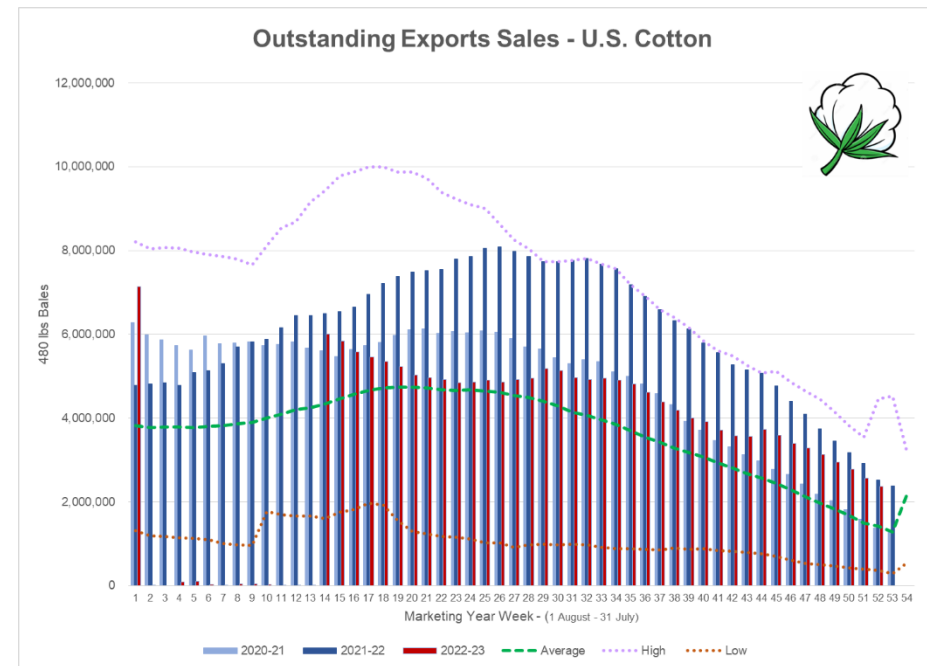
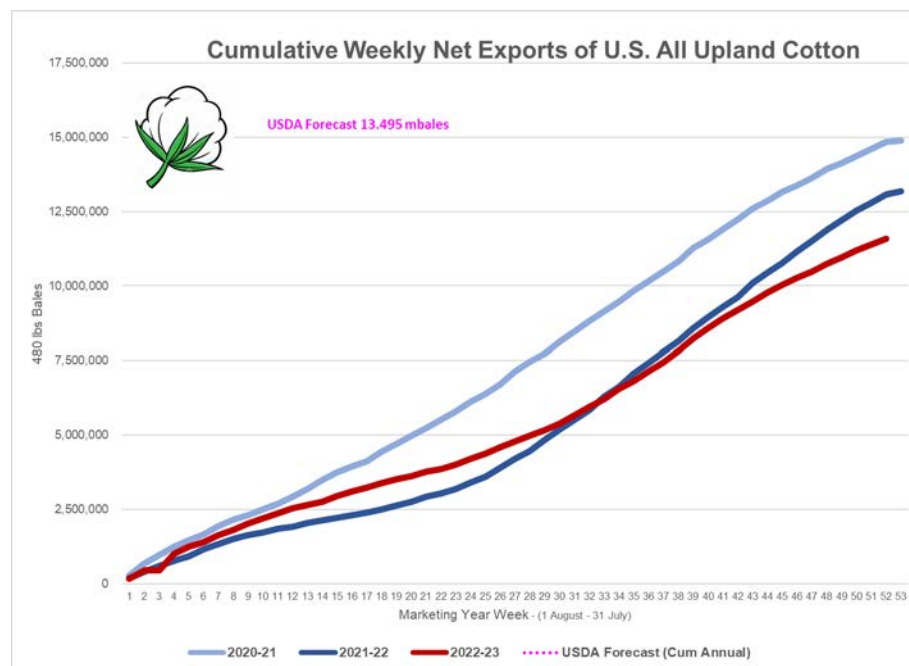
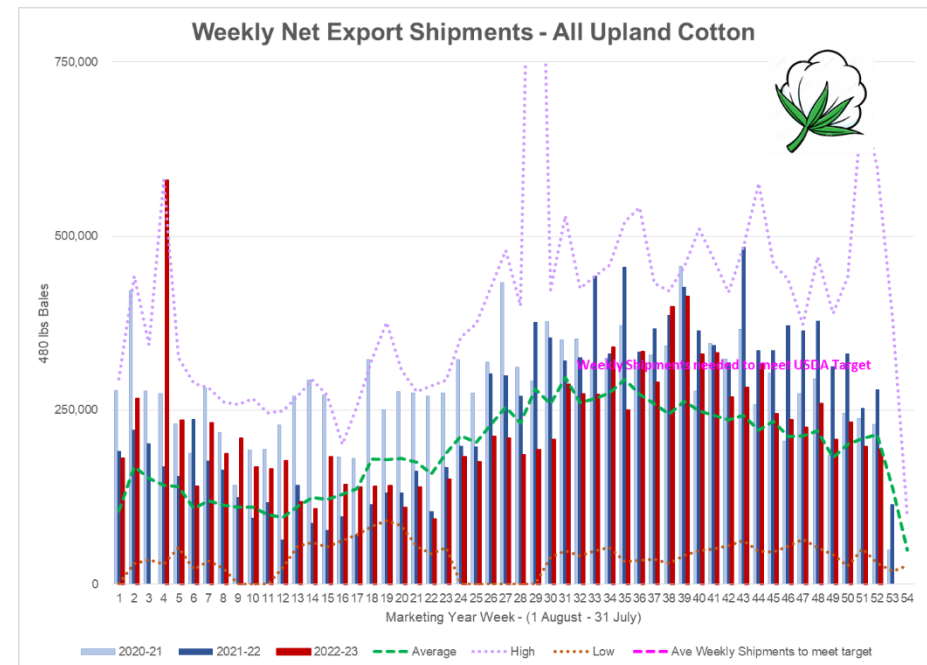
### ➤ Cotton Export Shipments & Sales

Net sales of 61,400 RB for 2023/2024 primarily for Costa Rica (23,400 RB), Bangladesh (10,000 RB, including decreases of 100 RB), Vietnam (7,300 RB, including 1,300 RB switched from China and decreases of 100 RB), Indonesia (6,700 RB, including 3,700 RB switched from the Philippines), and Pakistan (6,300 RB, including decreases of 900 RB), were offset by reductions for the Philippines (3,700 RB), China (800 RB), Japan (600 RB), Macau (300 RB), and India (100 RB). Total net sales of 11,000 RB for 2024/2025 were for Pakistan.

Exports of 214,100 RB were primarily to China (133,800 RB), Pakistan (18,500 RB), Vietnam (15,500 RB), Mexico (13,200 RB), and Turkey (10,400 RB). Net sales of Pima totaling 4,600 RB for 2023/2024 were primarily for Pakistan (2,000 RB), China (1,800 RB), India (500 RB), Vietnam (100 RB), and Malaysia (100 RB). Exports of 3,100 RB were primarily to India (1,700 RB), Vietnam (900 RB), Indonesia (300 RB), Brazil (100 RB), and Japan (100 RB).

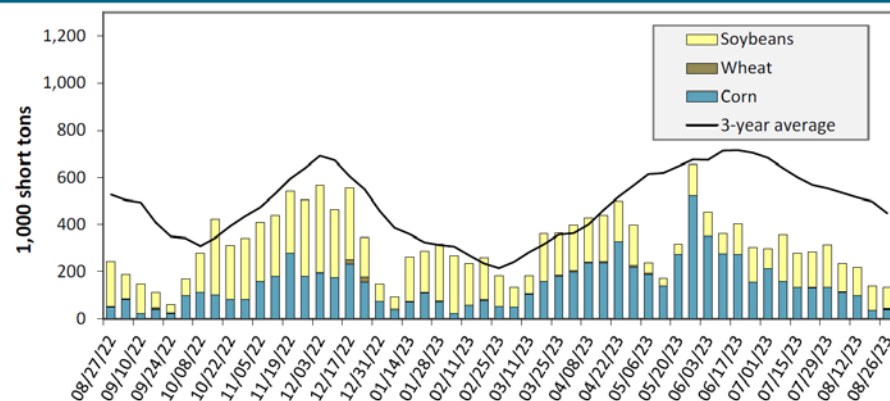
*Optional Origin Sales:* For 2023/2024, the outstanding balance of 900 RB, all Pakistan.

*Exports for Own Account:* For 2023/2024, decreases were reported for China (10,600 RB). The current outstanding balance of 113,500 RB is for China (89,800 RB), Vietnam (11,200 RB), Pakistan (5,000 RB), South Korea (4,800 RB), India (1,500 RB), and Turkey (1,200 RB).



## BARGE MOVEMENTS

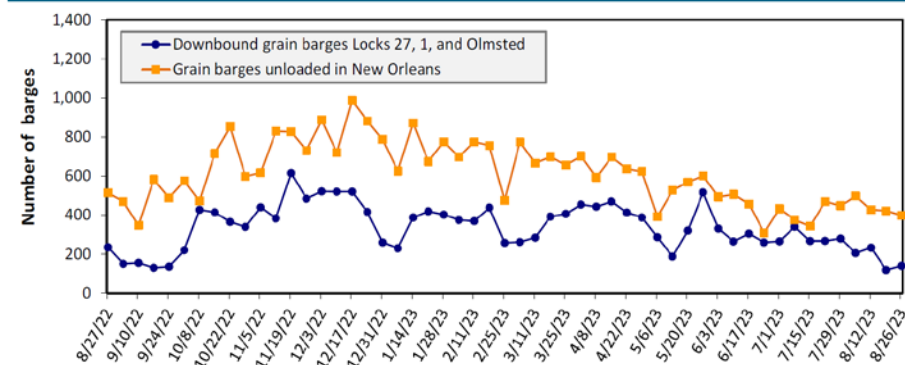
Figure 10. Barge movements on the Mississippi River (Locks 27-Granite City, IL)



Note: The 3-year average is a 4-week moving average. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.  
Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

For the week ending the 26<sup>th</sup> of August, barged grain movements totaled 202,018 tons. This was 7% more than the previous week and 42% less than the same period last year.

Figure 12. Grain barges for export in New Orleans region



Note: Olmsted = Olmsted Locks and Dam. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

For the week ending the 26<sup>th</sup> of August, 140 grain barges moved down river—21 more than last week. There were 398 grain barges unloaded in the New Orleans region, 6% fewer than last week.

Table 10. Barged grain movements (1,000 tons)

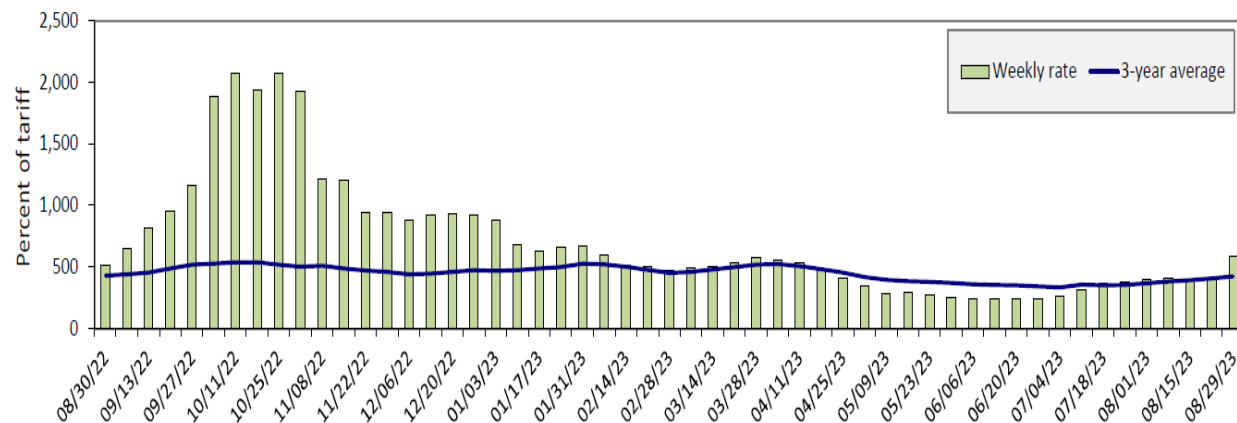
| For the week ending 08/26/2023             | Corn   | Wheat | Soybeans | Other | Total  |
|--|--------|-------|----------|-------|--------|
| Mississippi River (Rock Island, IL (L15))  | 11     | 8     | 46       | 0     | 65     |
| Mississippi River (Winfield, MO (L25))     | 10     | 2     | 59       | 0     | 70     |
| Mississippi River (Alton, IL (L26))        | 24     | 2     | 81       | 0     | 106    |
| Mississippi River (Granite City, IL (L27)) | 40     | 2     | 92       | 0     | 133    |
| Illinois River (La Grange)                 | 6      | 0     | 16       | 0     | 22     |
| Ohio River (Olmsted)                       | 3      | 37    | 21       | 0     | 62     |
| Arkansas River (L1)                        | 0      | 6     | 1        | 0     | 7      |
| Weekly total - 2023                        | 43     | 44    | 115      | 0     | 202    |
| Weekly total - 2022                        | 72     | 41    | 233      | 0     | 346    |
| 2023 YTD                                   | 8,758  | 994   | 7,110    | 200   | 17,063 |
| 2022 YTD                                   | 12,976 | 1,370 | 8,391    | 182   | 22,918 |
| 2023 as % of 2022 YTD                      | 67     | 73    | 85       | 110   | 74     |
| Last 4 weeks as % of 2022                  | 49     | 72    | 53       | 85    | 54     |
| Total 2022                                 | 16,437 | 1,594 | 14,464   | 232   | 32,727 |

Note: "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye. Total may not add up due to rounding. YTD = year to date. Weekly total, YTD, and calendar year total include Mississippi River lock 27, Ohio River Olmsted lock, and Arkansas Lock 1. "L" (as in "L15") refers to a lock, locks, or lock and dam facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has recently migrated its lock and vessel database and has noted the latest data may be revised in coming weeks.

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

GTR 8-31-23

Figure 8. Illinois River barge freight rate



Note: Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); 3-year avg. = 4-week moving average of the 3-year average.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.



Table 9. Weekly barge freight rates: southbound only

| Measure                                  | Date        | Twin Cities | Mid-Mississippi | Lower Illinois River | St. Louis | Cincinnati | Lower Ohio | Cairo-Memphis |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Rate                                     | 8/29/2023   | 611         | 588             | 584                  | 585       | 578        | 578        | 755           |
|  | 8/22/2023   | 475         | 415             | 398                  | 392       | 409        | 409        | 414           |
| \$/ton                                   | 8/29/2023   | 37.82       | 31.28           | 27.10                | 23.34     | 27.11      | 23.35      | 23.71         |
|  | 8/22/2023   | 29.40       | 22.08           | 18.47                | 15.64     | 19.18      | 16.52      | 13.00         |
| Measure                                  | Time Period | Twin Cities | Mid-Mississippi | Lower Illinois River | St. Louis | Cincinnati | Lower Ohio | Cairo-Memphis |
| Current week % change from the same week | Last year   | -3          | 3               | 14                   | 42        | 20         | 20         | 81            |
|  | 3-year avg. | 25          | 40              | -                    | 85        | 57         | 57         | 142           |
| Rate                                     | September   | 715         | 723             | 728                  | 724       | 724        | 724        | 806           |
|  | November    | 683         | 641             | 629                  | 561       | 609        | 609        | 521           |

Note: Rate = percent of 1976 tariff benchmark index (1976 = 100 percent); 3-year avg. = 4-week moving average of the 3-year avg.; ton = 2,000 pounds; "-" = data not available.

Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

#### **Benchmark Tariff Rate**

Calculating barge rate per ton:

Select applicable index from market quotes are included in tables on this page.

The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map.

***(Rate \* 1976 tariff benchmark rate per ton)/100***

➤ **Current Barge Freight Rates**

| IL RIVER<br>FREIGHT                       |           |           |     | MID<br>MISSISSIPPI               |           |           |     | LOWER<br>OHIO RIVER |           |           |     |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----|
|   | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     | McGregor                         | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     |                     | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     |
| August wk 8/27                            | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC | August wk 8/27                   | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC | August wk 8/27      | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/3                               | 725/750   | 725/750   | UNC | Sept wk 9/3                      | 725/750   | 725/750   | UNC | Sept wk 9/3         | 725/750   | 725/750   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/10                              | 750/775   | 750/775   | UNC | Sept wk 9/10                     | 750/775   | 750/775   | UNC | Sept wk 9/10        | 750/775   | 750/775   | UNC |
| Sept                                      | 775/800   | 775/800   | UNC | Sept                             | 775/800   | 775/800   | UNC | Sept                | 775/800   | 775/800   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/17                              | 800/825   | 800/825   | UNC | Sept wk 9/17                     | 800/825   | 800/825   | UNC | Sept wk 9/17        | 800/825   | 800/825   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/24                              | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | Sept wk 9/24                     | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | Sept wk 9/24        | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC |
| FH Oct                                    | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | FH Oct                           | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | FH Oct              | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC |
| Oct                                       | 800/850   | 800/850   | UNC | Oct                              | 800/850   | 800/850   | UNC | Oct                 | 800/850   | 800/850   | UNC |
| LH Oct                                    | 725/850   | 725/850   | UNC | LH Oct                           | 725/850   | 725/850   | UNC | LH Oct              | 725/850   | 725/850   | UNC |
| Nov                                       | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC | Nov                              | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC | Nov                 | 600/650   | 600/650   | UNC |
| Dec                                       | 500/550   | 500/550   | UNC | Dec                              | out       | out       | UNC | Dec                 | 500/550   | 500/550   | UNC |
| Jan                                       | 575/600   | 575/600   | UNC | Jan                              | out       | out       | UNC | Jan                 | 450/475   | 450/475   | UNC |
| Feb                                       | 550/575   | 550/575   | UNC | Feb                              | out       | out       | UNC | Feb                 | 425/450   | 425/450   | UNC |
| March                                     | 500/525   | 500/525   | UNC | March                            | out       | out       | UNC | March               | 400/425   | 400/425   | UNC |
| UPPER<br>MISSISSIPPI<br>ST<br>PAUL/SAVAGE |           |           |     | ST LOUIS<br>BARGE<br>FREIGHT 14' |           |           |     | MEMPHIS<br>CAIRO    |           |           |     |
|   | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     |                                  | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     |                     | 8/30/2023 | 8/31/2023 |     |
| August wk 8/27                            | 550/650   | 550/650   | UNC | August wk 8/27                   | 650/750   | 650/750   | UNC | August wk 8/27      | 725/800   | 725/800   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/3                               | 725/750   | 725/750   | UNC | Sept wk 9/3                      | 725/750   | 725/750   | UNC | Sept wk 9/3         | 750/850   | 750/850   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/10                              | 750/775   | 750/775   | UNC | Sept wk 9/10                     | 750/775   | 750/775   | UNC | Sept wk 9/10        | 775/875   | 775/875   | UNC |
| Sept                                      | 775/800   | 775/800   | UNC | Sept                             | 775/800   | 775/800   | UNC | Sept                | 800/900   | 800/900   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/17                              | 800/825   | 800/825   | UNC | Sept wk 9/17                     | 800/825   | 800/825   | UNC | Sept wk 9/17        | 825/925   | 825/925   | UNC |
| Sept wk 9/24                              | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | Sept wk 9/24                     | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | Sept wk 9/24        | 850/950   | 850/950   | UNC |
| FH Oct                                    | 825/850   | 825/850   | UNC | FH Oct                           | 850/900   | 850/900   | UNC | FH Oct              | 875/925   | 875/925   | UNC |
| Oct                                       | 800/850   | 800/850   | UNC | Oct                              | 800/850   | 800/850   | UNC | Oct                 | 825/875   | 825/875   | UNC |
| LH Oct                                    | 725/850   | 725/850   | UNC | LH Oct                           | 750/800   | 750/800   | UNC | LH Oct              | 775/825   | 775/825   | UNC |
| Nov                                       | 650/725   | 650/725   | UNC | Nov                              | 550/650   | 550/650   | UNC | Nov                 | 550/600   | 550/600   | UNC |
| Dec                                       | out       | out       | UNC | Dec                              | 425/475   | 425/475   | UNC | Dec                 | 400/450   | 400/450   | UNC |
| Jan                                       | out       | out       | UNC | Jan                              | 425/450   | 425/450   | UNC | Jan                 | 375/400   | 375/400   | UNC |
| Feb                                       | out       | out       | UNC | Feb                              | 400/425   | 400/425   | UNC | Feb                 | 350/375   | 350/375   | UNC |
| March                                     | out       | out       | UNC | March                            | 400/425   | 400/425   | UNC | March               | 325/350   | 325/350   | UNC |



## ➤ Barge rates on the Mississippi rise as water levels fall

1 September 2023 by John Kingston - Water levels are continuing to fall on key sections of the Mississippi River, raising fears of another autumn shipping crisis like that of 2022. The squeeze on barge rates was spelled out Thursday in the Department of Agriculture's weekly Grain Transportation Report.

"Restrictions — which have grown increasingly stringent since June — lower the amount of grain allowed to be loaded on a barge," the report said. "As a result, barge supply has tightened, because more barges than normal are required to ship the same amount of grain."

According to the report, spot rates for barge shipments out of St. Louis were \$23.34 a ton. That was up 49% from the prior week and up 42% from a year ago. It also is up 85% from the three-year average.

Longer-term rates out of St. Louis also are higher, the report said. The one-month rate was up 53% from the five-year average. The three-year is 48% above the five-year average.

"If these conditions persist, the tight barge supply could be especially problematic as the corn and soybean harvests progress," the report said.

On its website, shipping company American Commercial Barge Line said loading drafts out of St. Louis were about 15% below capacity. That size reduction was cited as prevalent on the entire Illinois and Mid-Mississippi section of the river system.

Mike Steenhoek, the executive director of the Soy Transportation Coalition, which focuses on moving soybeans to market, had a pessimistic assessment of the situation in a note he sent to members and the media Friday afternoon.

"Harvest and the concomitant export season is 'game time' for farmers and the entire agricultural industry," Steenhoek wrote. "During this period, we need our supply chain, including the Mississippi River, to be operating a full capacity. The current low water conditions are therefore clearly a cause for concern."

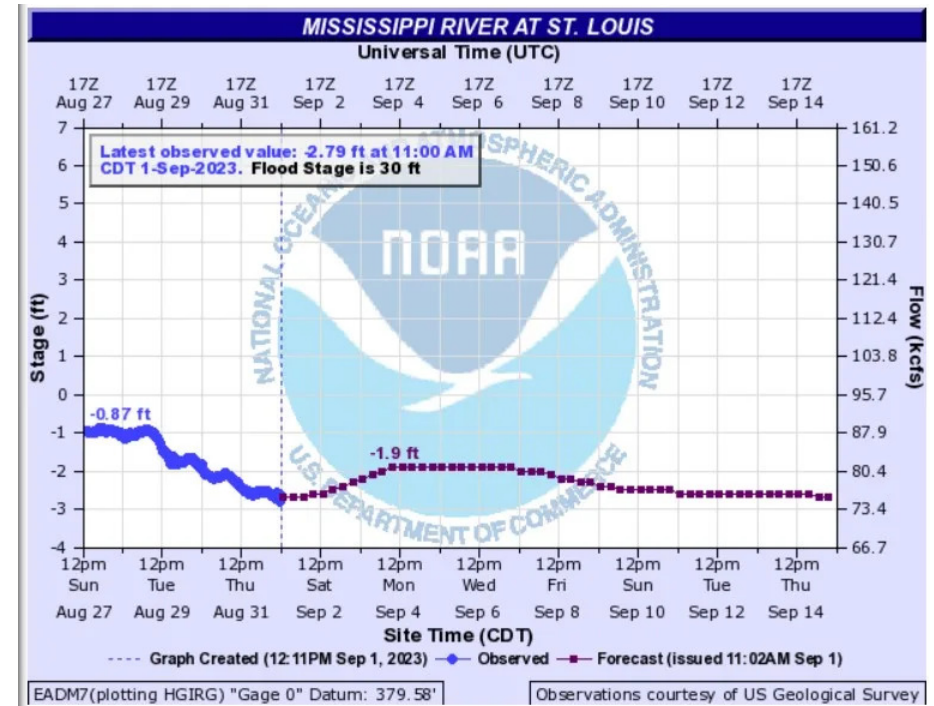
As far as rain, it's a double whammy, according to Steenhoek. The forecast for precipitation is "not favorable," he said. "Moreover, any future rainfall that does occur will be largely absorbed by an increasingly dehydrated farm ground. Abundant and sustained rainfall will need to occur to change the water level trajectory along the inland waterway system."

Barge rates quoted by the agriculture department's report are based on a percentage of a 1976 base line. For example, weekly southbound barge rates out of St. Louis for the week ended Aug. 29 were quoted at 585. A week earlier, they were 392.

Fastmarkets Agricensus, an information service covering agriculture, quoted Diane Klemme, a vice president with Grain Service Corp. as saying that concern about the situation worsening is a factor in the market. "I suspect that freight is the driving factor [for rising barge premiums], with freight sellers perhaps nervous that water levels could continue to drop with the forecast for the first half of September remaining dry for most of the Midwest," Klemme told Agricensus.

The Agriculture report echoed that. "Water levels on the Mississippi River System have been falling since June" the report said. "With lower-than-normal precipitation in the forecast, levels will likely continue to fall in the coming weeks."

The Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service, a division of the National Weather Service, reported that levels at St. Louis had dropped to minus 2.79 feet midday Friday.



The level is negative because it is below a base level. AHPS' forecast calls for some improvement over the next few days but then dropping back again.

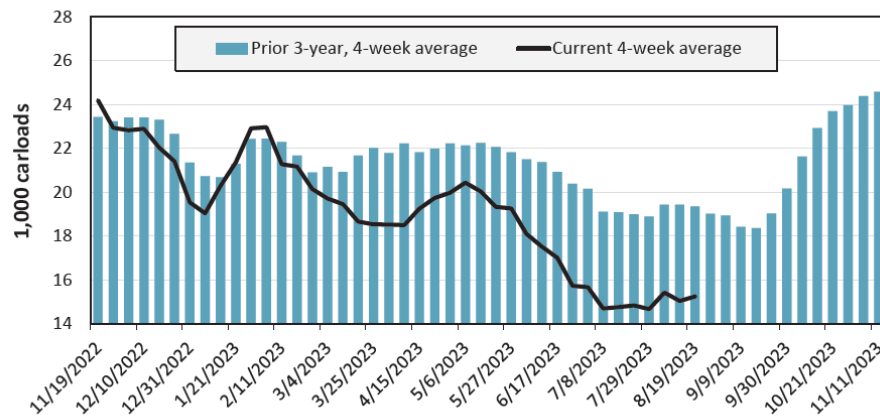
In its weekly report for May 10, the level was more than positive 20 feet.

Other forecasts for key points on the river, such as Memphis, show a similar pattern, though in the case of Memphis the falloff is more severe.



## RAIL MOVEMENTS

Figure 3. Total weekly U.S. Class I railroad grain carloads



For the 4 weeks ending August 19, grain carloads were up 1 percent from the previous week, down 23 percent from last year, and down 21 percent from the 3-year average.

Source: Association of American Railroads.

- U.S. Class I railroads originated 15,796 grain carloads during the week ending the 19<sup>th</sup> of August. This was a 9-percent increase from the previous week, 18% fewer than last year, and 17% fewer than the 3-year average.
- Average September shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers (per car) were \$56 below tariff for the week ending the 24<sup>th</sup> of August. This was \$44 more than last week and \$140 lower than this week last year.
- Average non-shuttle secondary railcar bids/offers per car were \$146 above tariff. This was \$17 less than last week and \$60 lower than this week last year.

### ➤ **Union Pacific furloughs workers due to lower volumes**

24 August 2023 Joanna Marsh, *FreightWaves* – Amid a drop in rail traffic, Union Pacific has furloughed at least 94 employees, including 43 machinists in 11 locations, according to an official with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM).

Josh Hartford, special assistant to the international president of IAM, said employees were told that the furloughs were happening because of plans to store 200 locomotives now and potentially an additional 100 within the next few weeks or months.

UP confirmed that furloughs were occurring in response to lower volumes overall, but did not confirm the storing of locomotives nor the number of workers furloughed.

IAM members are affected by the storing of locomotives because that translates into fewer locomotives for mechanics to maintain.

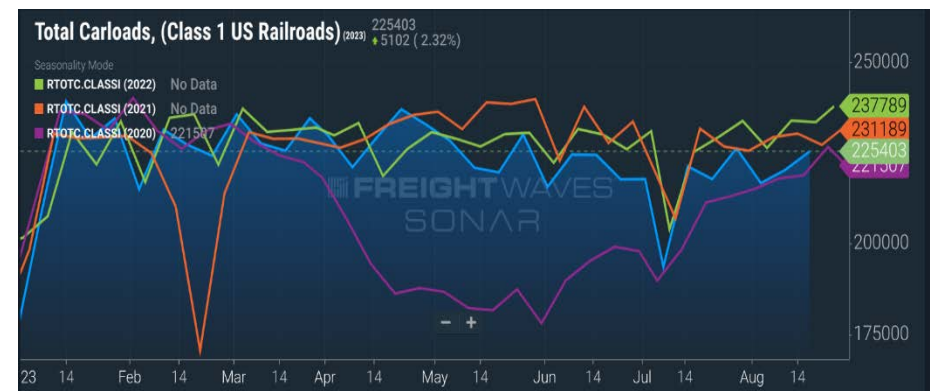
Members were notified of the furloughs around Aug. 23, according to Hartford, with many of the furloughs occurring at outlier points with smaller repair shops than the bigger shops in Kansas City, Missouri, or North Platte, Nebraska.

“It’s always concerning when they [furlough], but especially at this time of year, there should be an increase in demand. Grain season, harvest season coming on, the holidays coming up — they should be seeing increased traffic. To be parking locomotives now is really concerning,” Hartford said.

“There’s no indication that this is a short-term furlough,” he added.

Other unions whose members could be affected by furloughs include the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers (NCFO) and the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers – Mechanical Division (SMART-MD), according to Hartford.

An unconfirmed number of furloughs occurred among SMART-MD members, according to SMART spokesman Ben Nagy. IBEW and NCFO didn’t return requests for comment.



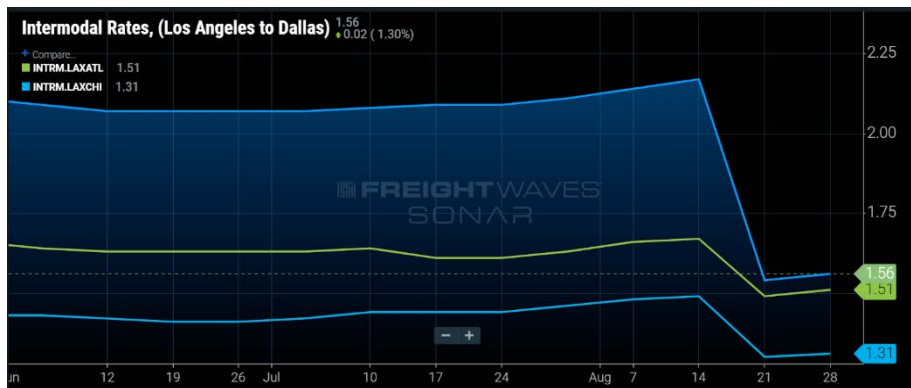
Carloads in 2023 have been trending lower than in 2021 and 2022 since May of this year. (*FreightWaves SONAR*)

The railroad said it has reached out to individuals affected by the furloughs.

“As a routine part of business, we constantly examine our resources against volume needs,” UP told *FreightWaves*. “While some targeted furloughs are occurring in a handful of mechanical shops and an intermodal terminal, we are also hiring train crew professionals in several locations impacted by attrition and tight labor markets. Our Recruiting team has connected with every individual impacted by furloughs to consider pursuing other openings. The furloughs represent about 0.3% of all craft employees and 2% of mechanical craft employees.”



A comparison between grain carloads of the Class I railroads overall and Union Pacific's grain volumes. (FreightWaves SONAR)



Spot intermodal rail rates dropped sharply in mid-late August, potentially in order to drum up more business ahead of the holiday season and amid higher maritime rates. (FreightWaves SONAR)

Amid the furloughs, Hartford urged lawmakers to pass the Railroad Employee Equity and Fairness (REEF) Act, which he said has bipartisan support in the House and Senate. The bill also has stakeholder support from the unions as well as from the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association.

The bill would remove the sequestration constraints on the unemployment insurance program for railroad employees, according to an April release. AAR defines the bill as permanently removing railroad unemployment insurance and sickness insurance benefits from the impacts of budget sequestration, "the only unemployment program to have these impacts."

A temporary version of the REEF Act was included in the December 2020 COVID-19 relief bill, but those provisions expired on May 10 of this year.

"We need this passed now, because now we have furloughed members using the unemployment benefit at a reduced rate," Hartford said.

➤ **Current Secondary Rail Car Market**

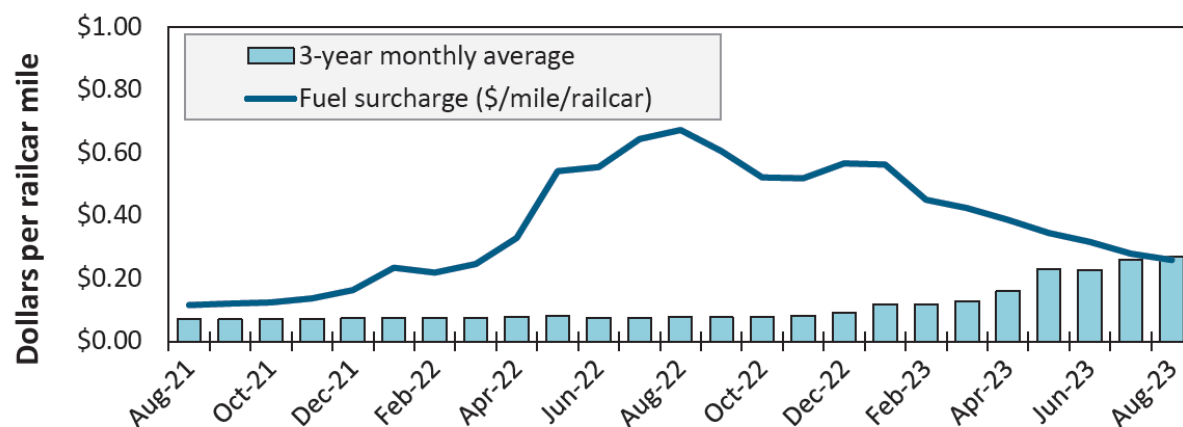
| <b>BN SHUTTLE</b>     | <b>Bid/Ask/Last</b> | <b>Bid/Ask/Last</b> |            |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Return Trip           | -700 / -350         | - / -350            |            |
| F/H September         | -700 / -350         | -500 / -350         |            |
| L/H September         | - / 0               | -200 / 0            |            |
| LP September          | 300 / 800           | 400 / -             |            |
| October (offer is LH) | - / -               | 1000 / 1300         |            |
| November, December    | 350 / -             | 350 / 450           |            |
| Oct, Nov, Dec         | 450 / -             | 450 / -             | <b>UNC</b> |
| Jan, Feb, Mar         | 200 / 350           | 200 / 300           |            |
| April, May            | -200 / 0            | -200 / 0            | <b>UNC</b> |
| <b>UP SHUTTLE</b>     | <b>Bid/Ask/Last</b> | <b>Bid/Ask/Last</b> |            |
| Return Trip           | - / -250            | - / -250            | <b>UNC</b> |
| F/H September         | - / -250            | - / -250            | <b>UNC</b> |
| September             | - / -200            | - / -200            | <b>UNC</b> |
| October               | 800 / -             | 800 / -             | <b>UNC</b> |
| Oct, Nov, Dec         | 400 / 800           | 450 / 700           |            |
| November, December    | - / 350             | - / 400             |            |
| Jan, Feb, Mar         | -100 / 100          | -100 / 100          | <b>UNC</b> |
| April-July            | - / -100            | - / -100            | <b>UNC</b> |

**Table 4. Railcar auction offerings (dollars per car)**

| For the week ending:<br>8/24/2023 |                      | Delivery period |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
|                                   |                      | Sep-23          | Sep-22  | Oct-23   | Oct-22  | Nov-23   | Nov-22  | Dec-23   | Dec-22  |
| BNSF                              | COT grain units      | no offer        | 0       | no offer | 0       | no offer | 0       | no offer | 0       |
|                                   | COT grain single-car | 1               | no bids | 37       | no bids | 37       | no bids | 7        | no bids |
| UP                                | GCAS/vouchers        | 10              | n/a     | no offer | n/a     | no offer | n/a     | n/a      | n/a     |

Note: Auction offerings are for single-car and unit train shipments only. Bids and offers represent a premium/discount to tariff rates. n/a = not available. BNSF = BNSF Railway; COT = Certificate of Transportation; UP = Union Pacific Railroad; and GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System. Minimum bids for UP GCAS/vouchers are \$10.  
Source: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service.

**Figure 7. Railroad fuel surcharges, North American weighted average**



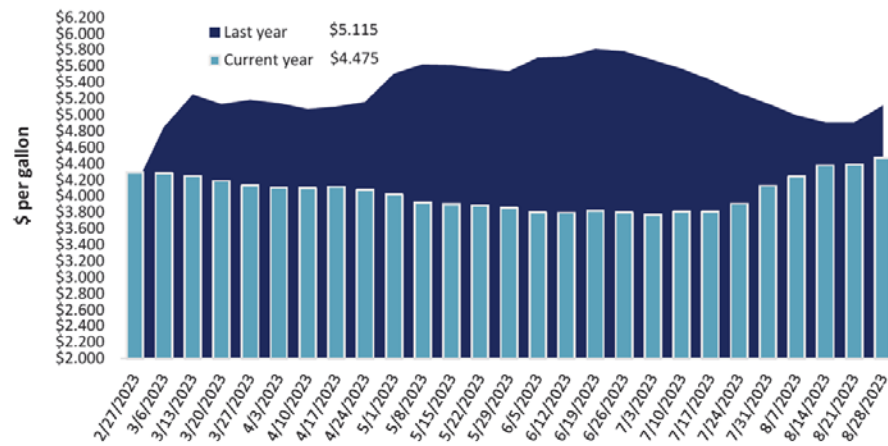
August 2023: \$0.26/mile, down 2 cents from last month's surcharge of \$0.28/mile; down 41 cents from the August 2022 surcharge of \$0.67/mile; and down 1 cents from the August prior 3-year average of \$0.27/mile.

Note: Weighted by each Class I railroad's proportion of grain traffic for the prior year.

Source: BNSF Railway, Canadian National Railway, CSX Transportation, Canadian Pacific Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Kansas City Southern Railway, Norfolk Southern Corporation.

## DIESEL FUEL PRICES

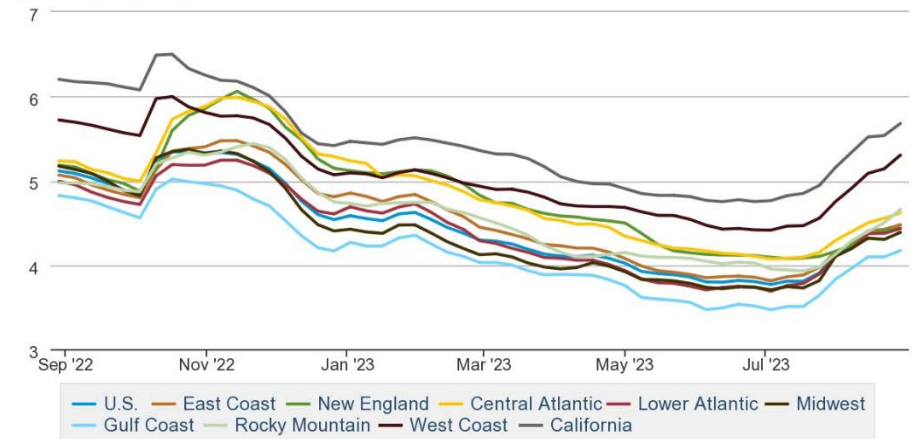
Figure 13. Weekly diesel fuel prices, U.S. average



Note: On June 13, 2022, the Energy Information Administration implemented a new methodology to estimate weekly on-highway diesel fuel prices.  
Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.

## On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

Table 11. Retail on-highway diesel prices, week ending 8/28/2023 (U.S. \$/gallon)

| Region | Location                   | Price | Change from |          |
|--------|----------------------------|-------|-------------|----------|
|        |                            |       | Week ago    | Year ago |
| I      | East Coast                 | 4.475 | 0.053       | -0.591   |
|        | New England                | 4.433 | 0.019       | -0.750   |
|        | Central Atlantic           | 4.616 | 0.063       | -0.618   |
|        | Lower Atlantic             | 4.429 | 0.055       | -0.563   |
| II     | Midwest                    | 4.385 | 0.083       | -0.787   |
| III    | Gulf Coast                 | 4.169 | 0.074       | -0.652   |
| IV     | Rocky Mountain             | 4.658 | 0.158       | -0.314   |
| V      | West Coast                 | 5.302 | 0.162       | -0.417   |
|        | West Coast less California | 4.973 | 0.179       | -0.327   |
|        | California                 | 5.678 | 0.143       | -0.524   |
| Total  | United States              | 4.475 | 0.086       | -0.640   |

Note: Diesel fuel prices include all taxes. Prices represent an average of all types of diesel fuel. On June 13, 2022, the Energy Information Administration implemented a new methodology to estimate weekly on-highway diesel fuel prices.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration.