U.S. exports of distillers grains (DG)—a co-product of dry-mill ethanol production—exceeded 10 million metric tons (MMT) for the sixth straight year in 2019. Distillers grains were exported to more than 50 countries on six continents, demonstrating the widespread interest in DG as a high-quality feed ingredient.

On a monthly basis, exports averaged 900,000 MT and exceeded 1 MMT three times in 2019. They peaked at 1.1 MMT in August.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Exports are a vital component of the overall market for U.S.-produced distillers grains. Nearly one of every three tons of DG produced in 2019 was exported.

### Export Share of U.S. Distillers Grains Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Export Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Top Ports of Exit for 2019 U.S. Distillers Grains Exports

- **New Orleans, 30%**
- **Los Angeles, 18%**
- **El Paso, 8%**
- **Pembina, 8%**
- **Seattle, 6%**
- **Duluth, 6%**
- **New York, 2%**
- **Norfolk, 6%**
- **Savannah, 5%**
- **Laredo, 6%**

U.S. DG exports left the country through more than 20 ports and exit points in 2019 (the top 10 by volume are shown on the map). **New Orleans** again handled the most tonnage, followed by **Los Angeles** and **El Paso**.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Mexico remained the top destination for U.S. DG exports in 2019, taking 19% of the total. Shipments to South Korea exhibited double-digit growth, making it the second-largest destination, with a 12% share. Vietnam (11%), Indonesia (8%) and Canada (6%) rounded out the top five markets. China is no longer a top-ten destination, as shipments have fallen 97% since 2015 due to the imposition of duties.
U.S. DISTILLERS GRAINS EXPORTS: MARKET SHIFTS

DG exports to other North American countries held steady. Shipments to East Asia grew despite the near-absence of China, as exports to South Korea and Japan increased. Exports to Central America showed significant growth in percentage terms.

China was the top destination for U.S. DG exports from 2012 to 2016 but fell to 16th place by 2019. Just 2% of U.S. DG exports went to China in 2019 versus 51% in 2015, the record year for exports. The collapse resulted from China’s imposition of punitive duties.
U.S. DISTILLERS GRAINS EXPORTS: VALUE

Total Value of U.S. Distillers Grains Exports

U.S. DG exports had an aggregate value of $2.2 billion in 2019, the fifth highest on record.

U.S. Distillers Grains Export Price per Metric Ton

Unit values for U.S. DG exports were $206 per MT in 2019, roughly on par with 2018, which was the highest in three years. DGs are a key revenue source for dry-mill ethanol facilities, and exports support DG prices.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture.
The United States imported 302,000 MT of DG in 2019, down 5% from 2018 and considerably less than levels experienced over most of the last decade. U.S. DG imports were equivalent to just 3% of DG exports and 1% of domestic DG consumption.

Canada was again the top supplier of U.S. DG imports in 2019, shipping 276,000 MT to the United States. Brazil and China were the only other two significant DG exporters to the U.S. market.
2019 EXPORTS OF OTHER CO-PRODUCTS

U.S. exports of corn gluten meal—a feed co-product made by ethanol wet mills—totaled 796,000 MT in 2019. Indonesia, Egypt and Chile were top destinations.

U.S. exports of corn gluten feed—a feed co-product from ethanol wet mills—were 936,000 MT in 2019. Ireland, Israel and Turkey accounted for 74% of U.S. exports.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture.
ABOUT THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

U.S. Co-product Export and Import Data

• The export and import data in this report include products classified under the following Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) codes:
  • 2303300000: Brewing or distilling dregs and waste (Distillers Grains)
  • 2303100010: Residues of starch manufacture and similar residues: Corn gluten feed
  • 2303100020: Residues of starch manufacture and similar residues: Corn gluten meal

Sources


The Renewable Fuels Association publishes monthly summaries of export and import data for ethanol and distillers dried grains in its Trade Monitor.

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