

Shipments of Grain by Rail in Louisiana

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This summary of grain shipments by rail in Louisiana is drawn from *State Grain Rail Statistical Summary*,¹ a report that describes the grain and oilseed shipped by rail in the United States from 2006 to 2010. The full report collects information on rail shipments from each State and to each State and examines some of the factors that influence the amount of grain grown and used. It examines rail shipments, rail receipts, grain and oilseed production, animal and poultry production, grain and oilseed exports, and grain and oilseed rail rates per ton-mile to explain the variations between States in shipments of these commodities.

Louisiana ranks 19th among the grain and oilseed producing States, with a 2006–2010 average yearly production of 202.3 million bushels (mbu).

During the years 2006–2010, 38 percent of Louisiana crops were corn, 29 percent rice, 16 percent soybeans, 6 percent cottonseed, 5 percent sorghum, and 5 percent wheat.

Nationally, Louisiana is ranked 43rd in animal and poultry production, averaging 374,000 Grain Consuming Animal Units (GCAU)² from 2006 to 2010.

For each year from 2006 to 2010, an average of 56 million metric tons of grain and oilseeds were inspected for export from Louisiana.

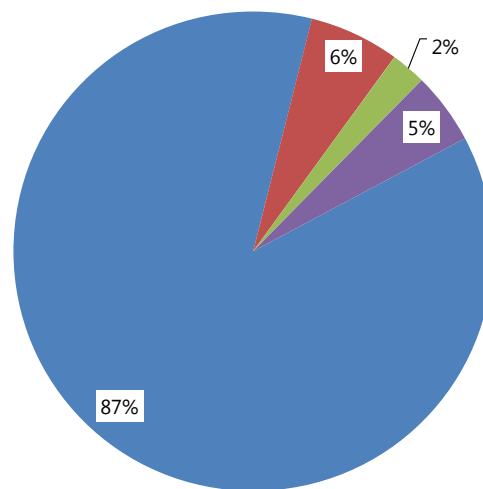
During the crop marketing years from 2001 to 2004, railroad originations of grain and oilseeds had an average market share of 9.4 percent, which dropped to an average of 7.8 percent in the period 2007–2010.

1 Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.9752/TS066.06-2013>

2 A standard unit used to compare feed needs of different livestock and poultry.

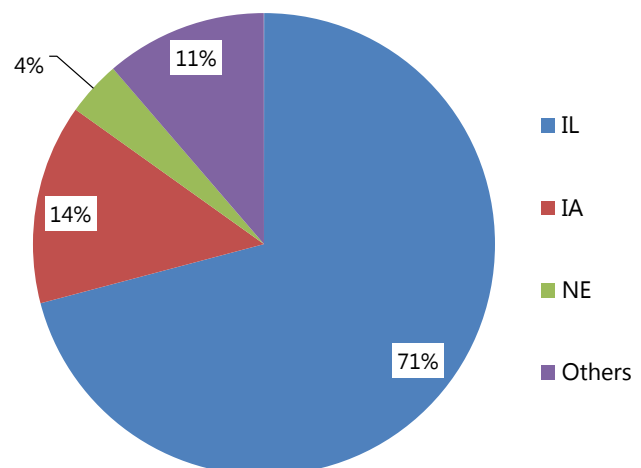
Figure 1. Business Economic Areas Receiving Louisiana Corn by Rail, 2006–2010

■ Jackson, MS-AL-LA
■ Shreveport-Bossier City, LA-AR
■ Tupelo, MS-AL-TN
■ Others



Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Figure 2. Sources of Louisiana Rail Corn Receipts, 2006–2010



Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

During the period 2006–2010, Louisiana shipped 1.5 million tons of corn by rail, up 186 percent from 512,000 tons from 1996 to 2000. (fig. 1)

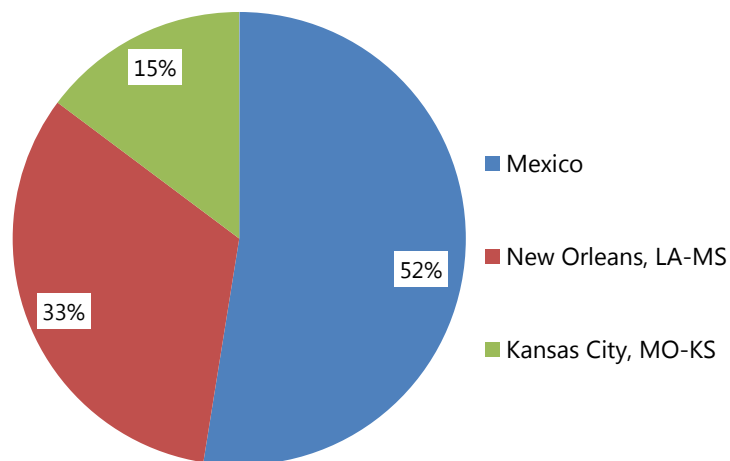
Louisiana received a total of 15.4 million tons of corn by rail during the 2006–2010 marketing years, up 15.1 percent from 13.4 million tons during the 1996–2000 marketing years. (fig. 2)

From 2006 to 2010, Louisiana shipped 252,000 tons of soybeans by rail. (fig. 3)

Louisiana received a total of 14.9 million tons of soybeans by rail during the 2006–2010 marketing years, up 134.5 percent from 6.4 million tons during the 1996–2000 marketing years. (fig. 4)

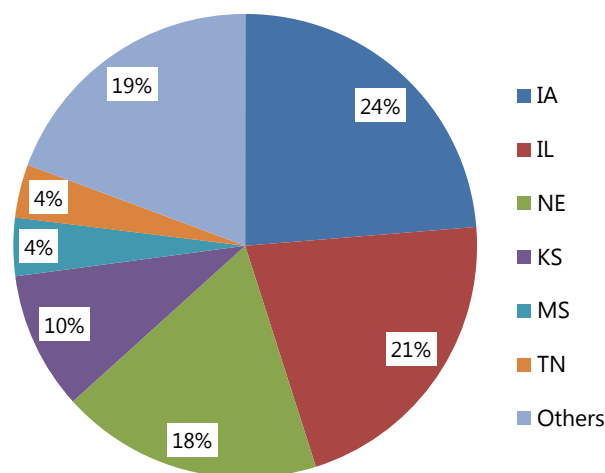
In the years 2006–2010, 173,000 tons of wheat were shipped by rail from Louisiana. (fig. 5)

Figure 3. Business Economic Areas Receiving Louisiana Soybeans by Rail, 2006–2010



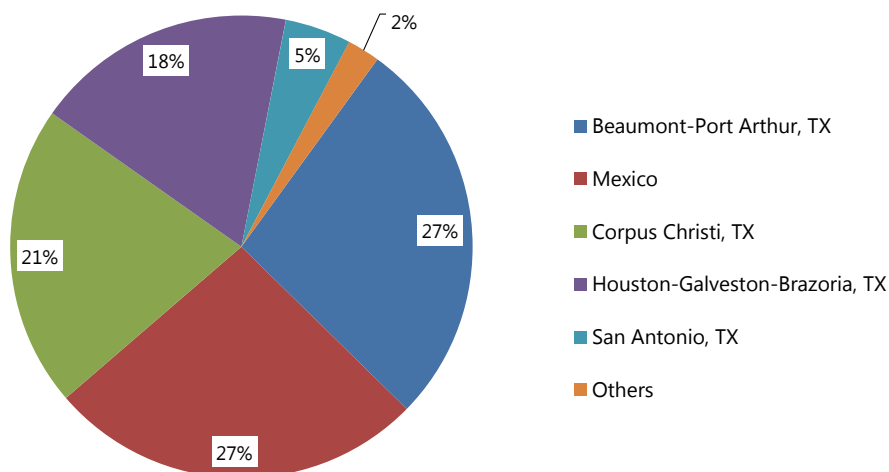
Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Figure 4. Sources of Louisiana Rail Soybean Receipts, 2006–2010



Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Figure 5. Business Economic Areas Receiving Louisiana Wheat by Rail, 2006–2010

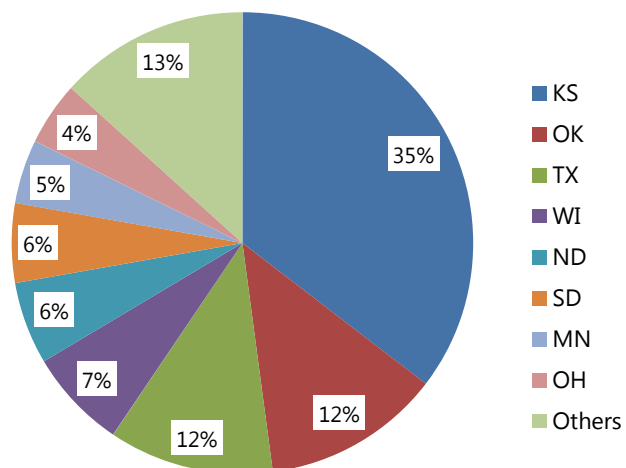


Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Louisiana received a total of 4.4 million tons of wheat by rail during the 2006–2010 marketing years, down 20 percent from 5.6 million tons during the 1996–2000 marketing years. (fig. 6)

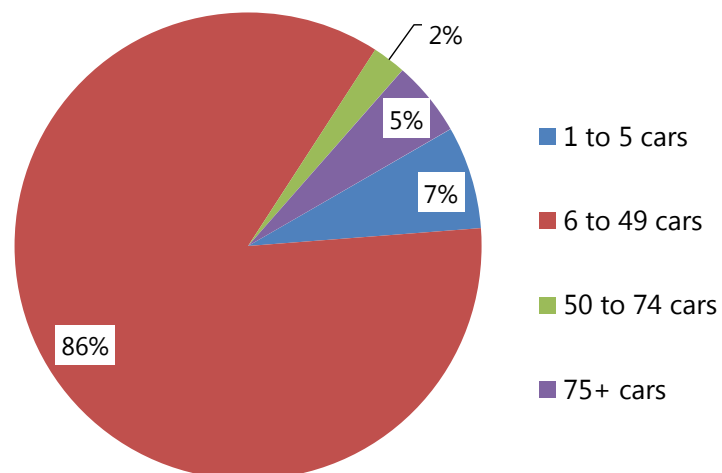
Seven percent of the grain car shipments originating in Louisiana from 2006 to 2010 were 1–5 cars in size, 86 percent were 6–49 cars, 2 were 50–74 cars, and the remaining 5 percent of shipments were 75 cars or greater. (fig. 7)

Figure 6. Sources of Louisiana Rail Wheat Receipts, 2006–2010



Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Figure 7. Louisiana Grain Originations by Shipment Size



Source: USDA analysis of Surface Transportation Board Confidential Waybill Samples

Table 1. Louisiana Grain and Oilseed Production and Rail Shipments, 2006-2010

	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Total Grain and Oilseeds	GCAUs*
Average Yearly Production	76.71 mbu†	33.01 mbu	10.94 mbu	202.32 mbu	374,094
Average Yearly Export Inspections (metric tons)	31,522,285	18,550,816	4,995,091	55,961,451	-
Total Rail Receipts (tons)	15,430,730	14,917,995	4,431,420	-	-
Total Rail Shipments (tons)	1,465,728	252,358	172,832	-	-

* Grain Consuming Animal Units

† Million bushels

Data and Methodology

Data from the Surface Transportation Board's Confidential Waybill Samples over the period 1996-2010 were analyzed to measure grain and oilseed shipments by rail. The data were aggregated and sorted by a number of characteristics, the major categories being shipment origin, destination, and type of grain or oilseed. This information was then organized by both origin and destination State. The data were also sorted by shipment size for each State, showing the relative frequencies of grain and oilseed shipments of different sizes. Data having less than 30 observations are excluded, as are States having data for only 1 or 2 years of the 5-year period. Despite these precautions, States with relatively low volumes are more subject to year-to-year variation than are States with higher volumes because of the number of available observations used to calculate totals. This is a result of the sampling techniques used in the Waybill Samples. Thus, higher volumes are less likely to suffer from sampling limitations and be more representative of actual rail movements for any given year than are lower volumes.

GCAUs were calculated for each State using information on animal populations and the corresponding levels of feed necessary to maintain the populations. These calculations included meat and poultry for consumption and production purposes. Cows, sheep, turkeys, hogs, and chickens were included.

The export inspection numbers in this report were taken from USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration grain and oilseed export inspections at U.S. ports exporting grain and oilseeds in bulk. Grain and oilseed production levels by State were also calculated.

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