U.S. exports of distillers grains (DG)—a co-product of dry-mill ethanol production—were the second-highest on record in 2018, totaling **11.88 million metric tons** (MMT). Shipments rebounded 7% from 2017. Exports were shipped to **50 countries** on six continents last year, demonstrating the global reach of U.S.-produced DG.

Monthly exports exceeded 1 MMT from June through November. They peaked at **1.16 MMT** in August, which was the highest level since August 2016, the month before China imposed anti-dumping and countervailing duties on U.S. DG.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
An estimated 31% of U.S. DG production was exported in 2018, meaning nearly one out of every three tons produced was shipped to foreign markets. That represented a rebound from the previous two years.

U.S. DG exports left the country through more than 20 ports of exit in 2018, with the top 10 ports by volume shown on the map. New Orleans again handled the most tonnage of outbound DG, followed by Los Angeles and Laredo.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Mexico remained the top destination for U.S. DG exports in 2018, taking 17% of the total. Shipments to Vietnam rebounded strongly, making it the second-largest destination, with an 11% share. South Korea (10%), Thailand (9%) and Turkey (7%) continued as top-five markets. Exports to China fell further after plunging 84% in 2017 due to the imposition of duties; it ranked 17th in 2018, accounting for only 2% of U.S. exports.
U.S. DISTILLERS GRAINS EXPORTS: MARKET SHIFTS

DG exports to Southeast Asia surged, as Vietnam returned as a large-scale buyer and shipments to Thailand and Indonesia expanded. Exports to East Asia remained limited, due to Chinese duties. Shipments to the European Union grew, as did exports to North Africa and Central America, showing the breadth of the market for U.S. DGs.

After serving as the top destination for U.S. DG exports five years in a row, China fell to eighth place in 2017 and 17th in 2018. Just 2% of U.S. DG exports went to China in 2018, after the country accounted for 51% of the record exports experienced in 2015. The collapse in exports to China resulted from the country’s imposition of punitive tariffs on U.S. DG.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
U.S. DISTILLERS GRAINS EXPORTS: VALUE

U.S. DG exports had an aggregate value of $2.47 billion in 2018, up 33% from 2017 based on larger shipments and higher unit prices.

Unit values for U.S. DG exports rebounded to $208 per MT in 2018, up 24% from 2017 and the highest in three years.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture.
The United States imported 317,000 MT of DG in 2018, up 9% from 2017 but still 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 2018, shipping 286,000 MT to the United States. Brazil and China were the only other two significant DG exporters to the U.S. market in 2018.
2018 EXPORTS OF OTHER CO-PRODUCTS

U.S. exports of corn gluten meal—a feed co-product made by ethanol wet mills—totaled 821,000 MT in 2018. Indonesia, Chile, and Egypt were top destinations.

U.S. exports of corn gluten feed (CGF)—a feed co-product from ethanol wet mills—were 1.17 MMT in 2018, down slightly from 2017. Ireland, Israel and the United Kingdom accounted for 76% of total U.S. CGF 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.