The U.S. exported 1.70 billion gallons of ethanol in 2018—up 24% from 2017 and the highest annual volume on record. American-made ethanol was exported to more than 80 countries on all six inhabited continents around the world.

Undenatured ethanol for fuel use accounted for 51% of total exports in 2018. Denatured ethanol for fuel use made up 43%. Meanwhile, denatured and undenatured ethanol for non-fuel industrial uses accounted for the remaining 6%.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Exports surged to a record 10.6% of total U.S. ethanol production in 2018. More than one out of every 10 gallons produced was exported.

U.S. ethanol exports were valued at $2.75 billion in 2018, up 15% from 2017 and the second-highest on record.
2018 ETHANOL EXPORTS: TOP MARKETS

Top Markets for U.S. Ethanol Exports in 2018

2018 ethanol export volumes to the Top 10 markets are shown in the table below, along with a comparison to 2017 volumes. All figures shown in millions of gallons, unless otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>491.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>513.1</td>
<td>428.1</td>
<td>+20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>317.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>349.2</td>
<td>326.3</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>118.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>156.8</td>
<td>182.5</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>+81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>+139%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>+18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. Arab Emir</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>+74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>+12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>+23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>+166%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Exports to South America continued their strong expansion in 2018, led by Brazil. Exports to East Asia rose, with South Korea the largest destination. Exports to North America, primarily Canada, continued to exhibit slow-but-steady growth.

Exports to Brazil continued strong growth in 2018. While China returned as an export destination early in 2018, the imposition of high import duties caused shipments to cease. Ethanol exports to the EU grew but have not recovered after collapsing in 2013 due to the imposition of duties.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
The U.S. set a new record for net exports in 2018, surging past the level from 2017. The U.S. extended its streak as a net exporter of ethanol to nine years.

Nearly three-quarters of U.S. ethanol exports departed through the Gulf in 2018, up from two-thirds in 2017. Meanwhile, over 10% of exports went through Great Lakes ports, 6% went through Pembina (ND), 4% went out of the Pacific-Northwest, and 2% exited through New York Harbor.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Dept. of Commerce, Dept. of Agriculture, and U.S. International Trade Commission
The U.S. imported just 78 million gallons of fuel ethanol in 2018, virtually the same amount as in 2017. U.S. ethanol imports have centered around 70 million gallons annually over the past four years, considerably less than levels that occurred 5-10 years ago.

Approximately 98% of 2018 fuel ethanol imports came from Brazil. Nearly all of the ethanol imports occurred during the August-December timeframe.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture
Imports accounted for less than 1% of U.S. ethanol consumption for the fifth year in a row. Ethanol import reliance is down dramatically from the 2005-2008 timeframe, when imports typically accounted for 5-10% of U.S. consumption.

California ports received 98% of U.S. fuel ethanol imports in 2018, driven by the state’s Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Miami was the only other significant port of entry for fuel ethanol.

Top Ports of Entry for 2018 U.S. Ethanol Imports

San Francisco, 75%
Los Angeles, 23%
Miami, 2%
ABOUT THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

U.S. Ethanol Export Data

- The export data in this report includes exports classified under the following Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) codes:
  - 2207200010: Ethyl alcohol and other spirits, denatured, of any strength: For fuel use
  - 2207106010: Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength by volume of 80 percent vol. or higher: For non-beverage purposes: For fuel use
  - 2207200090: Ethyl alcohol and other spirits, denatured, of any strength: Other
  - 2207106090: Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength by volume of 80 percent vol. or higher: For non-beverage purposes: Other

- 2207200090 and 2207106090 are included in this report because there is some anecdotal evidence that exports of ethanol intended for fuel use are sometimes classified under these codes. In any case, ethanol classified under these codes represented just 5% of the 2017 U.S. exports discussed in this report.

U.S. Ethanol Import Data

- The import data in this report includes imports classified under the following Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) codes:
  - 2207200010: Ethyl alcohol and other spirits, denatured, of any strength: For fuel use
  - 2207106010: Undenatured ethyl alcohol of an alcoholic strength by volume of 80 percent vol. or higher: For non-beverage purposes: For fuel use

Sources


The Renewable Fuels Association publishes monthly summaries of export and import data for ethanol and distillers dried grains on its award-winning E-Blog.

This report was prepared by Scott Richman, who may be contacted at srichman@ethanolrfa.org or 636.594.2287.