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# BUREAU OF THE CENSUS Statistical Brief

## Chemicals Trade and Production

The Census Bureau provides a wide variety of data on the chemicals industry, covering imports, exports, and domestic production. The chemicals industry is quite large, with \$38 billion of exports and \$286 billion worth of domestic shipments in 1990. Its products are also diverse, including drugs, toiletries, paints, and organic, inorganic, and agricultural chemicals.

### Trade in chemicals shows consistent surpluses.

U.S. trade in chemical products showed a surplus of \$16 billion in 1990, and exports have exceeded imports annually since 1970. Plastics materials, synthetic rubber, synthetic organic fibers, and industrial organic chemicals comprised 51 percent of the value of all American chemicals exports.

Canada has historically been our largest trading partner. From 1989 to 1990, our exports of chemicals to Canada rose \$1.4 billion, or 32 percent—the largest increase for any trading partner. This increase is due largely to a \$490 million rise in exports of plastics, synthetic rubber, and man-made synthetic fibers.

Taiwan was our eighth largest chemicals trading partner in 1990, and our largest drop in chemicals exports (\$242 million) was with Taiwan.

### Chief Chemical Trading Partners: 1990

	1990 Value*	Percent change from 1989
<b>Exports</b>		
Canada	5.7	+31.8%
Japan	4.3	-4.8%
Belgium	2.4	+7.1%
Mexico	2.2	+3.9%
Netherlands	2.1	+6.8%
All others	21.7	+2.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>+5.5%</b>
<b>Imports</b>		
Canada	4.1	+3.7%
West Germany	2.9	+9.5%
Japan	2.1	-0.8%
United Kingdom	1.9	+1.6%
France	1.5	+5.1%
All others	9.4	+12.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>+7.5%</b>

\*In billions of dollars

### Industrial organics are our largest chemicals export.

The largest chemical group exported was industrial organic

chemicals, with a total value of shipments of \$10 billion.

These exports were down 2 percent from 1989 to 1990, largely due to a drop of over 5 percent in exports to our largest organic chemical export partner, Japan. In 1990, Japan accounted for \$1.1 billion of all U.S. industrial organic chemical exports.

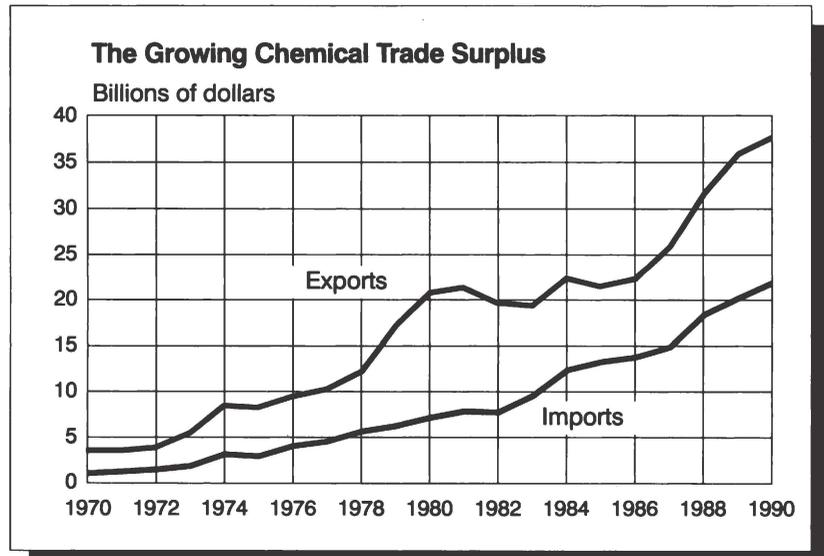
This drop, on top of decreases in other chemical groups, combined to show a total decline of nearly 5 percent in U.S. chemicals exported to Japan.

While we're seeing large yearly swings in exports to many trading partners, imports have remained more stable. The largest volume commodity imported is aluminum oxide, with 4.7 million short tons imported in 1989. Due to the high domestic demand for aluminum oxide, we import as much as we produce.



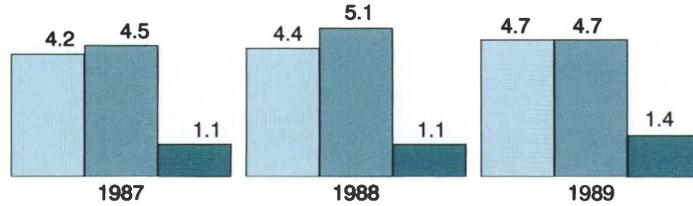
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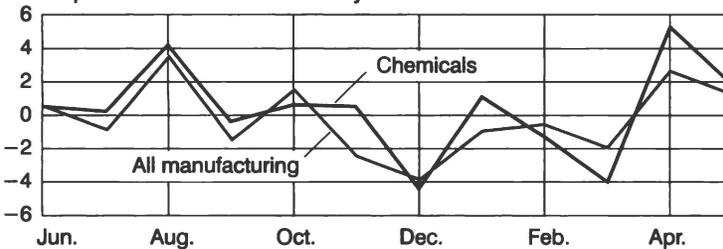
**We Import as Much Aluminum Oxide as We Produce**

Domestic production  
Imports  
Exports (in millions of short tons)



**Chemicals Industry Mirrors Changes in All Manufacturing Activity**

Month-to-month percent change in total value of shipments: June 1990 – May 1991



**Pharmaceuticals and industrial organic chemicals production grew the most.**

Total value of shipments by pharmaceutical preparation establishments grew 12 percent to \$40 billion from 1988 to 1989. Shipments by industrial organic chemicals establishments grew by 11 percent to \$54.5 billion. These increases compare to 7 percent for the entire chemicals industry, and 4 percent for all manufacturing industries.

**Texas leads the way in domestic production.**

The chemicals industry had \$229 billion worth of shipments in 1987, 9 percent of the value of shipments of all manufactured goods. The 10 leading chemical-producing States accounted for about two-thirds of total value of shipments. The chemicals industry also is becoming more dominated by these States. While total value of shipments rose 17 percent nationally from 1986 to 1987, it

rose 20 percent in these States. Texas was the biggest dollar gainer (up \$9 billion); New Hampshire was the biggest percentage gainer (up 108 percent to \$214 million). Tennessee suffered the largest dollar drop (\$236 million to \$7 billion).

**Top Chemical Producing States: 1987**

State	Value of shipments (in billions)
Texas	\$34.7
New Jersey	\$20.3
Louisiana	\$15.3
Illinois	\$13.8
Ohio	\$13.0
California	\$11.1
New York	\$10.0
Pennsylvania	\$9.4
North Carolina	\$9.1
Indiana	\$8.4
All others	\$84.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$229.5</b>

**Chemical manufacturers spend large sums on pollution abatement.**

The chemicals industry spent \$1.1 billion on pollution abatement in 1988—1 in 3 of all abatement spending by manufacturing industries. Nearly

one-half (\$488 million) was spent on controlling and preventing water pollution. The remainder was spent on air pollution abatement (\$371 million), and solid waste management (\$237 million).

**For further information on the Chemicals Industry, see the following reports:**

*Census of Manufactures Subject and Industry Series reports*  
*Annual Survey of Manufactures reports M-88 (AS)-1 and 2*

**Current Industrial Reports:**

*Inorganic Chemicals (MA-28A)*

*Fertilizer Materials (MA-28B)*

*Industrial Gases (MA-28C)*

*Paints (MA-28F)*

*Pharmaceuticals (MA-28G)*

*Monthly Shipments, Inventories, and Orders (M3-1)*

*Pollution Abatement Survey (MA-200)*

*Research and Development in Industry (NSF 90-319)*

*Plant and Equipment Expenditures (PESVY 91)-1*

*Trade & Employment (TM-1-89)*

*U.S. Merchandise Trade (FT900).*

*U.S. Merchandise Trade: Exports, General Imports, and Imports for Consumption (FT925)*

**On compact disc:** *U.S. Exports of Merchandise (CDEX), U.S. Imports of Merchandise (CDIM).*

For ordering information, contact Customer Services at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-4100).

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*This is one in a series of occasional reports from the Census Bureau that provide timely information about our people and economy. See the reports cited above for a complete description of statistical methods, quality, and limitations.*