DIATOMITE
(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The estimated value of processed diatomite, f.o.b. plant, was $182 million in 1998. Production was from 6 companies with 12 processing facilities in 4 States. Three companies produced more than 75% of the total. California and Nevada were the principal producing States. Estimated end uses of diatomite were filter aids, 64%; absorbents, 13%; fillers, 12%; and other (mostly cement manufacture), 11%.

Production 646 722 729 773 767
Imports for consumption ( ) ( ) 2 2 2
Exports 157 144 143 140 140
Consumption, apparent 489 578 588 635 629
Price, average value, dollars per ton, 236 238 242 244 237
f.o.b. plant
Stocks, producer, yearend 36 36 36 36 36
Employment, mine and plant, number 1,000 1,000 1,000 1,000 1,000
Net import reliance as a percent E E E E E
of apparent consumption

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (1994-97): France, 85%; Mexico, 5%; and other, 10%.

Tariff: Item Number Normal Trade Relations (NTR) Non-NTR
Diatomite, crude or processed 2512.00.0000 12/31/98 Free Free

Depletion Allowance: 14% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.
**DIATOMITE**

**Events, Trends, and Issues**: The United States remained the largest producer and consumer of diatomite and exported processed diatomite to about 70 countries, primarily for filtration use.

In the United States, diatomite use in filtration applications appears to be stabilizing with cost a factor in preventing further growth of ceramic, polymeric, and carbon membrane technologies. Applications as an absorbent continue to grow.

**World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base**:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mine production</th>
<th>Reserves$^5$</th>
<th>Reserve base$^5$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1998$^a$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States$^1$</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark$^6$</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>countries:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>550,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, Republic of</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Soviet Union$^7$</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World total (may be rounded)</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>800,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**World Resources**: World resources of crude diatomite are adequate for the foreseeable future, but the need for diatomite to be near markets encourages development of new sources for the material.

**Substitutes**: Many materials can be substituted for diatomite. However, the unique properties of diatomite assure its continuing use for many applications. Expanded perlite, and silica sand compete for filtration purposes, other filtration technologies utilize ceramic, polymeric, or carbon membrane. Alternate filler materials include talc, ground silica sand, ground mica, clay, perlite, vermiculite, and ground limestone. For thermal insulation, materials such as various clays and special brick, mineral wool, expanded perlite, and exfoliated vermiculite can be used.

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$^a$Estimated.  E Net exporter.  NA Not available.

$^1$Processed ore sold and used by producers.

$^2$Less than ½ unit.

$^3$Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

$^4$See Appendix B.

$^5$See Appendix D for definitions.

$^6$Includes sales of molder production.

$^7$As constituted before December 1991.