

QUARTZ CRYSTAL (INDUSTRIAL)

(Data in metric tons unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: Lascas¹ mining and processing in Arkansas ended in 1997, and in 2006, no U.S. firms reported the production of cultured quartz crystals. Cultured quartz crystal production capacity still exists in the United States using imported and stockpiled lascas as feed material. In the past several years, cultured quartz crystal was increasingly produced overseas, primarily in Asia. Electronic applications accounted for most industrial uses of quartz crystal; other uses included special optical applications.

Virtually all quartz crystal used for electronics was cultured rather than natural crystal. Electronic-grade quartz crystal was essential for making filters, frequency controls, and timers in electronic circuits employed for a wide range of products, such as communications equipment, computers, and many consumer goods, such as electronic games and television receivers.

Salient Statistics—United States: Production statistics for cultured quartz crystals were withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data. The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), which is the primary Government source of U.S. trade data, does not provide specific import or export statistics on lascas. The DOC collects export and import statistics on electronic and optical-grade quartz crystal; however, the quartz crystal export and import quantities and values reported in previous years included zirconia that was inadvertently reported to be quartz crystal. The average value of as-grown cultured quartz and lumbered quartz, which is as-grown quartz that has been processed by sawing and grinding, was estimated to be about \$156 per kilogram in 2006. Other salient statistics were not available.

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2002-05): The United States is 100% import reliant. Brazil, Germany, and Madagascar are reportedly the major sources for lascas with Canada becoming an important supplier. Other possible sources of lascas include China, South Africa, and Venezuela.

Tariff:	Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations
			<u>12-31-06</u>
	Sands:		
	95% or greater silica	2505.10.10.00	Free.
	Less than 95% silica	2505.10.50.00	Free.
	Quartz (including lascas)	2506.10.00.50	Free.
	Piezoelectric quartz	7104.10.00.00	3% ad val.

Depletion Allowance: 22% (Domestic), 14% (Foreign).

Government Stockpile:

Material	Stockpile Status—9-30-06²				
	Uncommitted inventory	Committed inventory	Authorized for disposal	Disposal plan FY 2006	Disposals FY 2006
Quartz crystal	7	—	—	—	—

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Trends indicate that demand for quartz crystal devices should continue to grow, and consequently, quartz crystal production should remain strong well into the future. Growth of the consumer electronics market (for products such as personal computers, electronic games, and cellular telephones) will continue to promote global production. The growing global electronics market may require additional production capacity worldwide.

World Mine Production, Reserves, and Reserve Base:³ This information is unavailable, but the global reserve base for lascas is thought to be large.

World Resources: Limited resources of natural quartz crystal suitable for direct electronic or optical use are available throughout the world. World dependence on these resources will continue to decline because of the increased acceptance of cultured quartz crystal as an alternative material; however, use of cultured quartz crystal will mean an increased dependence on lascas for growing cultured quartz.

Substitutes: Quartz crystal is the best material for frequency-control oscillators and frequency filters in electronic circuits. Other materials, such as aluminum orthophosphate (e.g., the very rare mineral berlinite) and lithium tantalate, which have larger piezoelectric coupling constants, have been studied.

¹Lascas is a nonelectronic-grade quartz used as a feedstock for growing cultured quartz crystal and for production of fused quartz.

²[See Appendix B for definitions.](#)

³[See Appendix C for definitions.](#)