



SOY TRANSPORTATION COALITION

FARM TO MARKET: A SOYBEAN'S JOURNEY

Rail Shuttle Elevator Distribution

The shuttle elevator primary utilizes railroads to transport soybeans. The accumulation of soybeans in a single location has increased railroad efficiency and offers incentives to shippers.

- The expansion of soybean production west of the Mississippi River combined with strong Asian demand has increased exports to the Pacific Northwest (PNW).
- Increasingly, shuttle trains are delivering soybeans to St. Louis and East St. Louis to be transloaded onto barge. As the dependability of the locks continues to erode and as deeper hull barges become a greater percentage of the fleet, more soybeans will be loaded downriver from locks at deeper draft capable terminals downriver from St. Louis.
- Export elevators located at Texas and Louisiana ports do receive shuttle trains of soybeans for loading onto ocean going vessels.
- Crushers typically have the ability to receive shuttle trains especially those located outside the Corn Belt and ship products out by unit train.
- Approximately one-third of shuttle train moves have a backhaul. Fertilizer is quoted as the primary backhaul. Crushing plants can ship out products.
 - In addition, empty cars will be attached to the end of the train that is moving products. In effect only a-third of the train is coming back empty.

U.S. Distribution of Soybeans from Rail Shuttle Elevators

	Thousand Bushels	Average Distance (Miles)	Total Ton-Miles (Thousands)	Truck Ton-Miles (Thousands)	Rail Ton-Miles (Thousands)	Barge Ton-Miles (Thousands)
Shuttle Elevator	1,121,400	1,323	44,492,386	-	44,492,386	-
Barge Terminal	78,498	400	941,976	-	941,976	-
Crushing Plant	89,712	600	1,614,816	-	1,614,816	-
Export	953,190	1,467	41,935,594	-	41,935,594	-
PNW	505,191	1,700	25,764,726	-	25,764,726	-
Mexico	238,298	1,600	11,438,280	-	11,438,280	-
Canada	28,596	400	343,148	-	343,148	-
Texas / Louisiana	114,383	900	3,088,336	-	3,088,336	-
East Coast	66,723	650	1,301,104	-	1,301,104	-

Source: USDA, USACOE, USITC, Informa

"Farm to Market: A Soybean's Journey" can be accessed at www.unitedsoybean.org or www.soytransportation.org

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