



ABOUT IOWA'S RAIL SYSTEM

Overview

Iowa has a robust and thriving rail transportation system consisting of 3,825 miles of mainline track. Of the 19 railroads in Iowa, five are Class I railroads (those that have a national presence); one is a regional railroad spanning two states; the remainder are shortline or switching railroads. The railroads run the gamut from operating hundreds of miles of track within Iowa to only a few miles.

Through connections with the national rail system and ports, Iowa's railroads can send or receive shipments throughout the world.

The rail transportation system is a critical component of Iowa's agricultural and manufacturing economy, carrying more than 86 million tons of inbound or outbound freight. Some routes play a key part in the national freight system carrying more than 265 million tons of freight through the state to other destinations.

Commodities transported by rail in Iowa

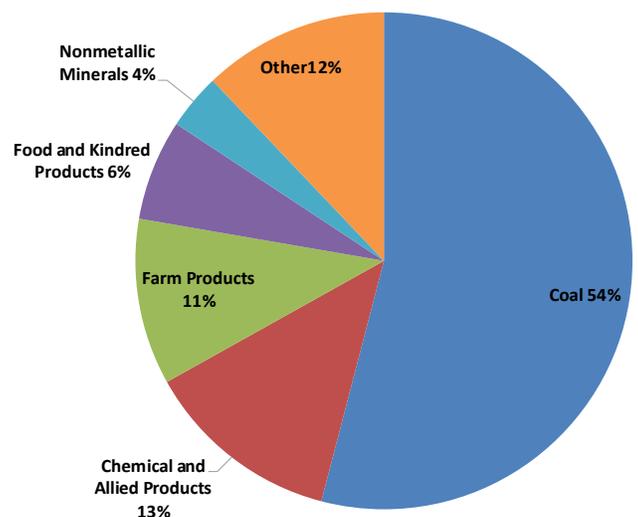
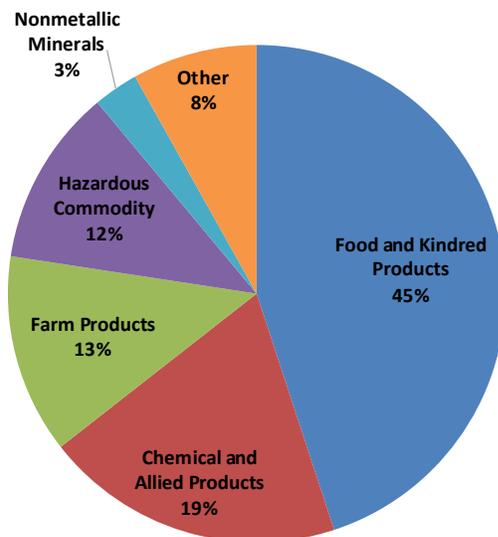
Railroads in Iowa carry just about every product you can imagine. They range from agricultural products to coal, from wind generator components to ethanol. The charts below show the quantities and percentages of commodities shipped to and from Iowa in 2016.

Rail traffic originating in Iowa in 2016

Commodity	Tons	Carloads
Food and kindred products	21,921,912	242,131
Chemical and allied products	9,500,231	113,049
Farm products	6,329,500	142,067
Hazardous commodity	5,627,288	54,055
Nonmetallic minerals	1,428,714	10,392
Other	3,961,363	60,467
Total tons	48,769,008	
Total carloads		622,161

Rail traffic terminated in Iowa in 2016

Commodity	Tons	Carloads
Coal	20,371,929	159,206
Chemical and allied products	4,838,203	46,743
Farm products	4,079,327	36,978
Food and kindred products	2,472,708	30,487
Nonmetallic minerals	1,336,993	15,455
Other	4,558,167	97,839
Total tons	37,687,327	
Total carloads		386,708



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT IOWA RAIL

- One train can carry as much freight as several hundred trucks. It would have taken approximately 3.5 million additional trucks to handle the 86.5 million tons of freight that originated or terminated in Iowa by rail in 2016.
- The American Association of Railroads reports that America's railroads moved a ton of freight an average of 479 miles on one gallon of fuel. That's like going from Des Moines to Indianapolis.
- Farm, food, chemicals, and ethanol products account for 90 percent by weight of the rail shipments originating in Iowa. (2016)
- It would require more than 1 million semitractor trailer loads to move the same amount of farm and food products originated by Iowa's railroads (28.3 million tons) in the year 2016.
- On average, railroads are four times more fuel-efficient than trucks. Moving freight by rail instead of truck reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 75 percent.
- Since 1985, the tons of rail freight originating, terminating, or traveling through Iowa has more than doubled.
- Iowa's rail system moves more freight over fewer miles of track than ever before. Between 1985 and 2010, net ton-miles tripled while rail-miles fell by nearly 800 miles. (2011)
- Iowa railroads move goods in 100 to 110-ton cars and in trains that are often 100-plus cars long. One covered hopper car is capable of hauling 3,500 to 3,900 bushels of grain, which is equivalent to approximately four semitractor trailers.
- Coal, farm products, chemicals, and food products make up 84 percent by weight of the rail shipments terminating in Iowa. (2016)

