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Preliminary: U.S. Imports for Consumption of Steel Products March 2006

The U.S. Census Bureau, announced today that preliminary March steel imports were **\$2.4 billion (3.5 million metric tons)** compared to the preliminary February totals of \$2.2 billion (3.2 million metric tons).

The February to March change in steel imports, based on metric tonnage, reflected increases primarily in hot rolled sheets and blooms, billets, and slabs. A decrease occurred primarily in wire rods. Monthly changes in steel imports reflected increases primarily with Brazil and Australia.

The year to date final statistics through February 2006 showed steel imports of 6.5 million metric tons, an increase of 1.4 million metric tons from the 5.1 million metric tons through February 2005. The largest commodity increases were in blooms, billets, and slabs and reinforcing bars. The largest country increases were with Russia, China, and Australia. The largest country decrease was with Mexico.

Notes:

The data in this report are preliminary and subject to revisions.

Analysis of recent months for steel product imports indicates the value of preliminary data should equal about 96 percent of the final value reported in the regular monthly trade statistics report. Preliminary data reported for individual steel categories and at the individual country of origin level have been less consistently predictive of the final data reported in the regular monthly trade statistics. For further details visit the Foreign Trade Division web site at: www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/. On the web site you can access product by country and country by product tables.

The next release is May 31, 2006.