

Freight Rail's Economic Impact

Freight rail benefits all Americans, helping create jobs across America and bring goods to market.

Freight rail generates nearly \$265 billion in annual economic activity¹ and supports 1.2 million jobs.² In 2012, the railroads are poised to hire more than 15,000 new employees.³

Freight rail brings American goods and commodities to consumers around the country and around the world. One-third of all U.S. exports travel by rail.⁴ In 2008 (the most recent year for data), freight railroads moved about 235 million tons of U.S. goods and materials worth more than \$190 billion to ports and borders.

Freight railroads are the backbone of the United States' transportation network, moving:

- 70% of all automobiles manufactured in the U.S.
- 30% of the entire nation's grain harvest – enough wheat to provide every man, woman and child a fresh loaf of bread six days a week
- 70% of the coal in this country, which provides more than half of the nation's electricity needs⁵

To continue delivering these benefits to America, the railroads must invest in the maintenance, improvement and expansion of their rail network. Balancing investments in infrastructure, technology, and the workforce are key to the railroads' ongoing success.

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce

² Association of American Railroads (AAR)

³ AAR

⁴ AAR

⁵ All shipment data from AAR