

248083

ENTERED
Office of Proceedings
July 2, 2019
Part of
Public RecordDirector
Office of Economics
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Jun 20, 2019

Dear Director,

The purpose of this letter is to request confidential Waybill Sample data. Dr. Nick Piggott, Robert Thompson, and I hope to use these data for research on North Carolina grain and oilseed markets. The required materials for Waybill confidential data requests are below.

These data would be used in a project titled "North Carolina Corn Basis Fundamentals." A primary objective of the project is to establish historical in/outflows of feedstuffs to NC, specifically:

- a. Examining the transportation costs for importing feedstuffs from various locations and utilizing different modes;
- b. Examining the timing of these flows and the impact they may have on North Carolina basis;
- c. Identifying the market conditions under which excess demand for feedstuffs in North Carolina will be met with international sources.

We believe this research is important for agricultural stakeholders in our state. A key fact of NC is that the state is feed deficit due to the large livestock industry. In 2017 North Carolina ranked 1st nationally in poultry and egg production, 2nd in hogs and pigs, and 18th in grains and oilseeds according to the USDA. Other top-ranked poultry and hog producers, such as Iowa and Minnesota, were also high producers of grains and oilseeds (USDA NASS State Reports). Feed accessibility and reliability is a determinant of where livestock production occurs, and the financial sustainability of NC agriculture is contingent on access to supplementary supply. Our research seeks to understand the market dynamics of supplementary feed sources.

The specific data needed are unmasked waybills with STCCs starting 011 and 204 from year 1990 to the present terminating in VA, NC, and SC. Access to the confidential Waybill Sample data is necessary because other potential data sources do not contain enough information. Table 7 of the USDA Grain Transportation Report does include posted rates for two routes (one corn, one soybeans) terminating in NC. However, these rates are unlikely to be representative because they are for a single carrier – NC features two Class I carriers – most movements occur under contract, and USDA data only go back to 2010. Other potential data sources are infrequent and do not include revenue data. Unmasked revenues are necessary to measure cross price elasticities of transportation revenues and basis values needed to characterize regional agricultural commodity flows.

We know there is a responsibility to ensure these data remain confidential and can provide a data management plan if desired. We also have funds for fees associated with obtaining these data. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Heidi Schweizer

Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Grain Production and Logistics
Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
North Carolina State University919.515.5276
hschwei@ncsu.edu