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Over 215.6 million metric tons in goods and commodities passed through the Houston-Galveston Customs District during the first nine months of '18. That figure represents a 9.9 percent increase over same period in '17. Those shipments were valued at over \$172.7 billion, a 24.0 percent increase in over '17.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON CUSTOMS DISTRICT				
	Value - \$ Billions		Metric Tons - Millions	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
Sept '18 YTD	103.2	69.5	143.1	72.5
Sept '17 YTD	77.7	61.6	114.6	81.7
% Change	+32.9	+12.9	+24.9	-11.2
	Total Value (\$ Billions)		Total Tonnage (Million Metric Tons)	
Sept '18 YTD	172.7		215.6	
Sept '17 YTD	139.3		196.3	
% Change	+24.0		+9.9	

Source: WISERTrade from US Census Bureau data

Despite ongoing global events that could derail trade, the district showed significant growth in the first nine months of '18. Several factors have contributed to the increase:

- The global economy continues to expand, driving the demand for crude, refined products, chemicals, and industrial and electrical machinery that Houston exports.
- Commodity prices have risen in recent years, increasing the overall value of Houston exports.
- In December '15, Washington eliminated restrictions on exports of U.S. crude, and much of that crude passes through Houston on its way to global markets.
- The deepening and widening of the Panama Canal has improved access of U.S. exporters to Asian markets and vice versa.

Houston ranked first in tonnage and seventh in value among U.S. customs districts during the first nine months of '18.

<b>BUSIEST U.S. CUSTOMS DISTRICTS – SEPT '18 YTD</b>				
<b>Value</b>			<b>Metric Tons</b>	
<b>Rank</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>\$ Billions</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Millions</b>
1	Los Angeles	337.1	<b>Houston</b>	<b>215.6</b>
2	New York	292.4	New Orleans	107.8
3	Laredo	245.3	Los Angeles	91.6
4	Detroit	202.5	Port Arthur	65.4
5	Chicago	184.5	New York City	61.1
6	New Orleans	175.4	Norfolk	45.8
<b>7</b>	<b>Houston</b>	<b>172.7</b>	San Francisco	45.6

Source: WISERTrade from US Census Bureau data

Houston exported to 212 countries during the first nine months of '18 and received shipments from 188. Mexico remains the region's top trading partner, followed by China, Brazil, the Netherlands and Germany. Even Kiribati and Palau received cargoes shipped from Houston.

<b>TOP TRADING PARTNERS – SEPT '18 YTD*</b>			
<b>Houston/Galveston Customs District</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>\$ Billions</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
1	Mexico	18.2	10.5
2	China	15.9	9.2
3	Brazil	9.0	5.2
4	Netherlands	7.6	4.4
5	Germany	7.3	4.2
6	South Korea	7.2	4.2
7	Japan	6.4	3.7
8	Italy	5.7	3.3
9	United Kingdom	5.3	3.1
10	India	4.9	2.8
Total Top 10		87.6	50.7
All Others		85.1	49.3
<b>Total Trade</b>		<b>172.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Combined imports and exports

Source: WISERTrade from US Census Bureau data

During the first nine months of '18, the district handled goods and commodities from 97 categories—everything from gasoline to live animals to cork. The top 5 export commodity groups, accounting for 81.4 percent of all exports by value, include crude and refined products, chemicals, industrial machinery, plastics and motor vehicles. The top 5 import commodity groups, accounting for 63.4 percent of all imports by value, include crude and refined products, industrial machinery, iron and steel, motor vehicles and chemicals.

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