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The Houston-Galveston Customs District handled 29.8 million metric tons of goods and commodities in the first month of '20, a 12.3 percent increase over the comparable period in '19. These shipments were valued at \$20.0 billion, up 5.2 percent from '19. January numbers do not reflect the trade slowdown due to coronavirus (COVID-19). The World Health Organization had not declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern until January 30. Not until February did China impose strict quarantine measures, shutting down much of its economy to control the virus.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON CUSTOMS DISTRICT		
	Value	Metric Tons
	\$ Billions	Millions
January '20 YTD	20.0	29.8
January '19 YTD	19.1	26.5
% Change	+5.2	+12.3

Source: WISERTrade from U.S. Census Bureau data

Houston ranked first in tonnage and fifth in value among U.S. customs districts during January of '20. Houston and New Orleans have been the busiest two districts in tonnage for decades. Houston has held the top spot in nine of the past 12 years.

BUSIEST U.S. CUSTOMS DISTRICTS – JANUARY '20 YTD				
Value			Metric Tons	
Rank	District	\$ Billions	District	Millions
1	Los Angeles	33.2	<b>Houston</b>	<b>29.8</b>
2	New York	29.6	New Orleans	18.1
3	Laredo	25.8	Los Angeles	9.0
4	Detroit	20.6	Port Arthur	8.7
5	<b>Houston</b>	<b>20.0</b>	New York	6.0
6	Chicago	19.6	San Francisco	4.7
7	New Orleans	17.5	Mobile	4.2
8	Savannah	14.3	Norfolk	4.1
9	Cleveland	12.0	Seattle	3.4
10	San Francisco	11.3	Philadelphia	3.4

Source: WISERTrade from U.S. Census Bureau data

Houston exported to 174 countries and imported from 144 during the first month of '20. Mexico remains the region's top trading partner, followed by South Korea, Brazil, China and the Netherlands. In '19, China had already fallen from second to third place as Houston's largest trading partner due to effects of the trade war. The effects of coronavirus are yet to be seen in the Houston-China trade data.

TOP TRADING PARTNERS – JANUARY '20 YTD*			
Houston/Galveston Customs District			
Rank	Country	\$ Billions	% of Total
1	Mexico	1.9	9.3
2	South Korea	1.4	6.9
3	Brazil	1.2	6.1
4	China	1.1	5.5
5	Netherlands	1.0	4.9
6	United Kingdom	0.9	4.5
7	India	0.8	4.2
8	Japan	0.8	4.2
9	Germany	0.8	3.8
10	Canada	0.7	3.5
Total Top 10		10.6	52.9
All Others		9.4	47.1
<b>Total Trade</b>		<b>20.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Combined imports and exports (sums may not total due to rounding)

Source: WISERTrade from U.S. Census Bureau data

Compared to the first month of '19, exports increased in both volume and value in '20, driving the increase in overall value and weight. Imports decreased by 11.6 percent in value and slipped 14.8 percent in weight.

HOUSTON-GALVESTON CUSTOMS DISTRICT				
	Value - \$ Billions		Metric Tons - Millions	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
January '20 YTD	13.3	6.8	23.0	6.7
January '19 YTD	11.4	7.6	18.6	7.9
% Change	+16.4	-11.6	+23.8	-14.8

Source: WISERTrade from U.S. Census Bureau data

During the first month of '20, the district handled goods and commodities from 97 trade categories—everything from gasoline to live animals to cork. The top five exports, accounting for 85.4 percent of all exports by value, were crude and refined products, organic chemicals, plastics, industrial machinery and motor vehicles. The top five imports, accounting for 61.0 percent of all imports by value, were crude and refined products, industrial machinery, iron and steel, electric machinery and motor vehicles.

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