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Zepol Corporation Announces Its Top Five Insights Found in the U.S. Census Bureau's Merchandise Trade Data

Examination of April's Trade Data Leads to A Few Surprises

Minneapolis, MN, 6/12/2009 – On Wednesday, June 10, 2009, the United States Census Bureau released its monthly merchandise trade data report, which tracks the movement of goods between foreign countries and the United States, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.S. Foreign Trade Zones. The report found that the country's deficit in goods and services increased to \$29.2 billion in April from \$28.5 billion in March. To further understand the government's trade numbers, Zepol Corporation has created an update showing the top five surprises within the data.

Specifically, Zepol highlights the following items:

1. Decrease in Imports was driven by Air and Other transportation types

Zepol's containerized trade update for April showed the number of shipments processed by U.S. Customs' Automated Manifest System slightly increased from March (1%). However, this only covered containerized, vessel shipments. The U.S. Census data illustrated that the value of shipments by vessel was flat (down just 0.14%), while air shipments were down over 4.2%. Many of these shipments are higher in value than those imported by other means. In addition, shipments by rail and truck were down about 2%.

2. Exports to Iran grew over 500% in the last year

Exports to Iran are low when compared to most of the United States' other trading partners (only \$36.4m). However today's numbers still dwarf last April's exports to Iran of \$5.7m. Most of the products that were shipped to Iran were from the following Harmonized Tariff System categories: HTS 1201.00.0040 – Soybeans (64%), HTS 30 – Pharmaceutical Products (27%), 4703.21.0040 - Chemical Wood Pulp, Sulfate or Soda (3%), and HTS 3906.90.6000 - Other Acrylic Polymers in Primary Forms (3%).

3. Most highly-trafficked container ports are suffering

Containerized imports for the top 5 container ports are down by at least 17%. Only a couple of years ago, there was great concern over port congestion, but we do not expect as many voices will be raising alarms for some time.

US District of Entry	Value (USD)	Weight (Kg)	Value Change	Weight Change
Los Angeles, CA	\$11,409,349,563	2,257,784,659	-18%	-20%
Newark, NJ	\$4,995,291,083	1,295,097,773	-19%	-18%
Long Beach, CA	\$3,006,700,530	546,035,310	-27%	-33%
Savannah, GA	\$1,946,903,186	488,046,443	-17%	-24%
Norfolk, VA	\$1,884,150,230	425,259,838	-25%	-24%



4. Oil imports are down over 53% from last April

The United States is still importing a lot less oil this year by price, but not by weight. There has been a lot of talk about the trade balance decreasing over the last year. While this is true, a large part of imports, when analyzing the data by value, is tied to the price of oil. With the latest increases in the price of oil, Zepol expects the trade deficit to increase in May and likely in June as well.

5. Corn exports are stable by weight, but value has decreased from 2008

Even in a recession, it appears that corn exports (HTS 1005.90 – Corn or Maize other than Seed) are stable. The price has decreased over the last year, but as the growing season started in April, U.S. farmers were still shipping over 3.75 million metric tons of corn by vessel to the rest of the world. Most corn shipments go to Asia with Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan taking up the top three destinations of U.S. shipments.

“It is said that trade makes up about 15% of the total economy, but the impact on our economic system is more significant because trade is often the bellwether of consumer demand, both in the United States and abroad,” states Paul Rasmussen, CEO & President of Zepol Corporation. “To give businesses a better understanding of what is really happening, what products are growing, and where trade is shrinking, Zepol has developed this monthly update.”

Zepol’s trade data tools analyze the United States trade economy by creating powerful insights using both U.S. Census and U.S. Customs trade data. The monthly U.S. Census Bureau update is created using Zepol’s U.S. Census trade data tool, TradeView™. TradeView™ provides users around the world with access to the latest trade data through a unique interface that allows them to slice and analyze the data in ways no other trade data tool can.

About Zepol Corporation:

Zepol Corporation is a Minnesota-based company working to provide the most complete and up-to-date trade data to organizations around the world. Zepol Corporation provides trade data tools, TradeIQ™ and TradeView™, for analyzing the United States trade marketplace. TradeIQ™ is an up-to-date U.S. Customs import Bill of Lading database and is available through an online interface. TradeView™ provides access to U.S. Census data to visualize the import and export economy. For access to one of Zepol’s trade data tools, visit www.zepol.com and register for a free trial or demonstration. Additional trade data information is available from Zepol’s Trade Data Blog at www.zepol.com/blog. [Click here](#) to view Zepol’s containerized import update for May.

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