

# Fastener Trade Overview: The United States and Turkey

by Chelsea Craven

So far this year the United States has imported nearly US\$1.5 billion worth of screws, bolts, nuts, and other fasteners. Compared to last year at this time, imports are down about 5%. On the contrary, U.S. exports of fasteners have reached over US\$1.1 billion, and are up by over 5% from last year at this time. The decrease in imports and the increase in exports may be attributed to more manufacturing of fasteners in the United States, coupled with the growing support to buy American-made goods.

Most recently for the U.S. fastener trade we've seen imports decrease significantly from China and Canada, while Taiwan remains the number one country of origin by a landslide. On the export side, fasteners headed to Canada, the number one destination, are down 3.6% this year, while exports to Mexico, the number two destination, are up 10%. Development in Brazil for the World Cup next summer has had positive effects for U.S. exports of fasteners, with a 25% increase so far this year.

Turkey is one of the few countries that has seen an increase in fasteners flowing to the United States. In the first quarter of the year, fastener imports from Turkey to the U.S. were up by 3.4% and totaled

over US\$1.4 million. On the flipside, U.S. exports of fasteners to Turkey are up over 25% and first quarter exports totaled over US\$2 million. The fastener trade between the United States and Turkey is unique in that the U.S. has a positive trade balance, most recently, of about US\$500 thousand. **Figure A** shows the trade balance for the most recent quarters.

This article will focus on the fastener trade between the United States and Turkey. We will take a look at what products are up, the price fluctuations, and what we can expect for future trends.

Figure A

U.S. Fastener Trade With Turkey

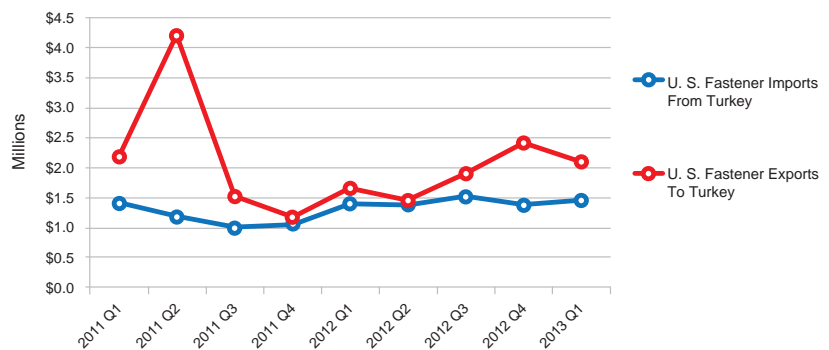
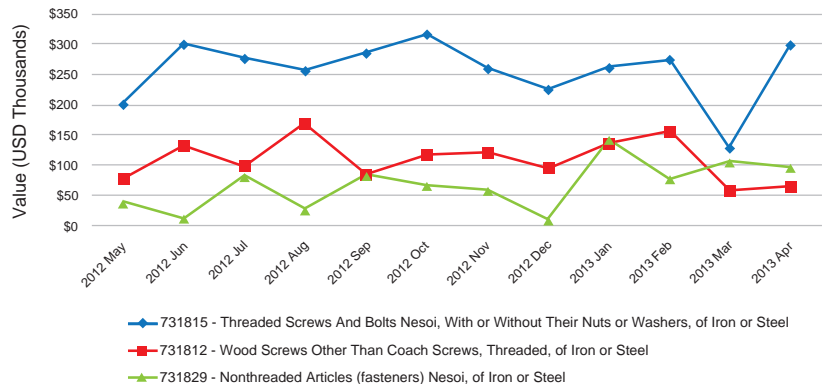
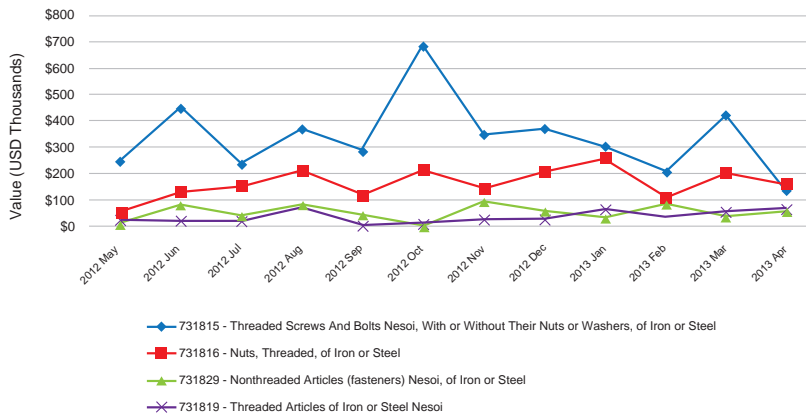


Figure B

U.S. Imports of Fasteners from Turkey



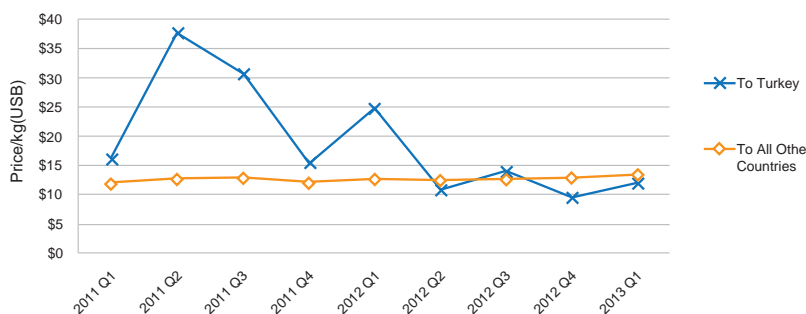
**Figure C** U.S. Exports of Fasteners from Turkey



**Figure D** \$/kg for U.S. Imports of Fasteners



**Figure E** \$/kg for U.S. Exports of Fasteners



## The Products

The most popular fasteners imported to the United States from Turkey are threaded screws and bolts, wood screws, and non-threaded articles. A recent spike in April for threaded screws and bolts can be seen in **Figure B** below. Roughly 50% of the fastener imports to the U.S. from Turkey are threaded screws and bolts. Imports of threaded nuts, on the other hand, have shown a recent decline. Low amounts of washers, rivets, and self-tapping screws are imported from Turkey.

On the export side, the most common fasteners being shipped from the United States to Turkey are threaded screws and bolts, followed by threaded nuts and non-threaded articles. These fasteners are behind the 25% increase in exports that was seen this year. **Figure C** below illustrates the trend of the top fasteners exported for recent months. The least-exported fasteners to Turkey include screw hooks, spring washers, and self-tapping screws.

## The Prices

Fasteners from Turkey destined for the United States cost an average of US\$7.30 per kilogram. The cost per kilogram for all other countries is about US\$2.80, quite a bit lower. Prices on the import side have remained fairly consistent; the United States tends to import the higher-priced fasteners from Turkey and source the lower-cost goods from other countries. **Figure D** below illustrates this price difference.

The price of fastener exports from the United States to Turkey has decreased in recent quarters from a high of over US\$37 per kilogram in quarter two of 2011 to just under US\$10 per kilogram in the first quarter of this year. The price of exports to all other countries has been consistent at about US\$12 per kilogram. The recent dip in prices for fasteners to Turkey has spurred an influx of buyers, thus, we have seen a significant rise in exports. **Figure E** shows this drop-off in price for recent quarters.

## The Future

The fastener trade between the United States and Turkey has shown strong signs so far this year, especially when comparing the trade trends for other countries. Both imports and exports of fasteners have increased this year and it looks hopeful that the trend will continue. Amid tension in Turkey's surrounding regions, it is a good sign that the fastener trade is not slowing down or showing signs that it could be affected. The tight trade ties between the countries makes for an optimistic outlook for both countries. ■