



Recycling Updates

Jennifer Semrau

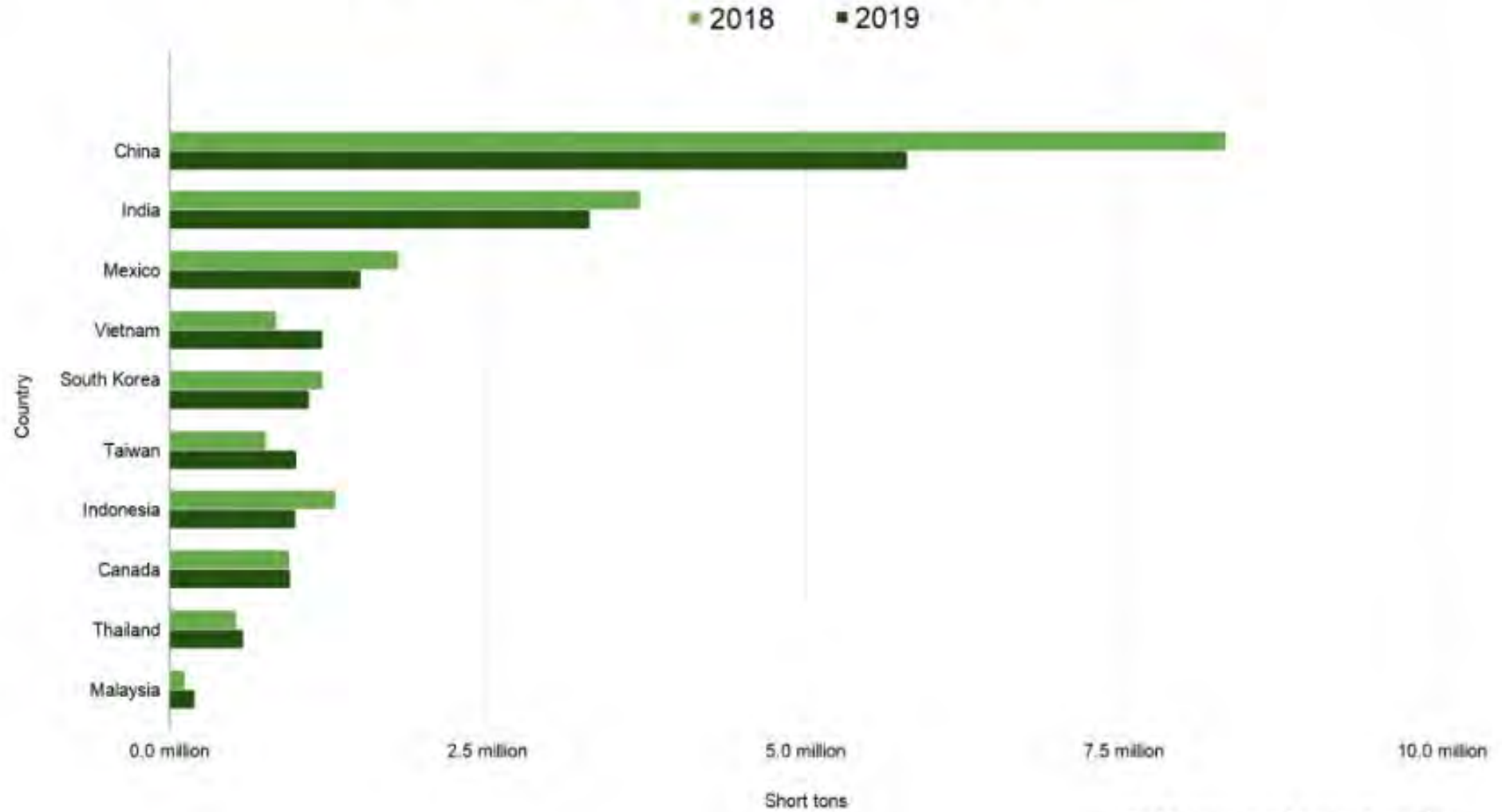
Waste Reduction and Diversion Coordinator

Dec. 14, 2020

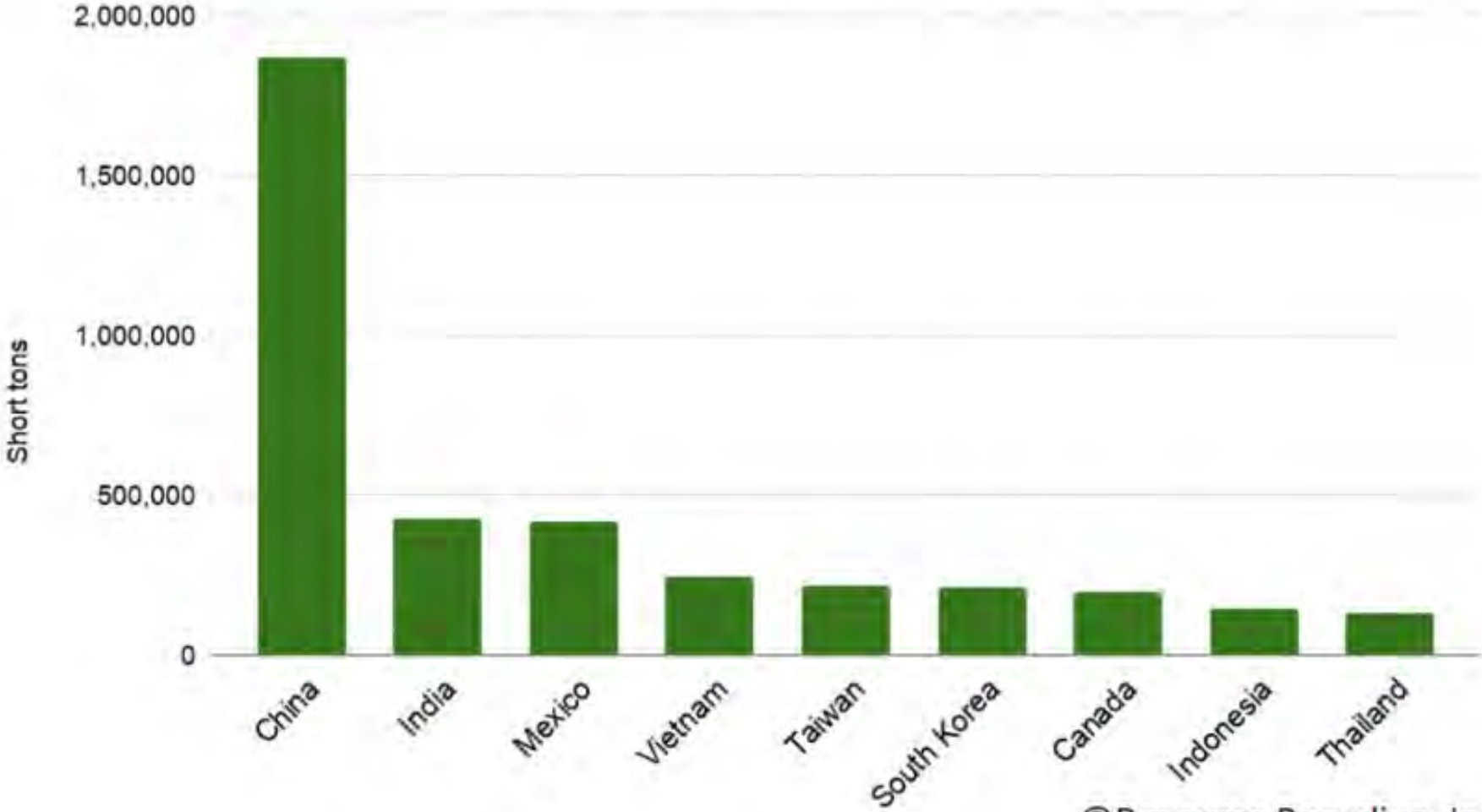
Impacts of National Sword & Import Restrictions: FIBER

- From 2017 to 2018 US fiber exports actually **INCREASED** as non-China countries imported more material, offsetting declines from China
- Fiber exports from the US experienced largest year over year decline on record
 - 2019 18.1 million tons (lowest since 2006)
 - 2018 21 million tons
- China imported 2.5 million tons **LESS** fiber in 2019 than 2018
- In 2019, India, Indonesia and South Korea decreased fiber imports & many SE Asian countries rolled out import restrictions
- All out ban of fiber imports by China next year (Jan. 1, 2021)

Top export markets for U.S. recovered fiber, 2018-2019



Major export markets for U.S. recovered fiber, July-September 2020



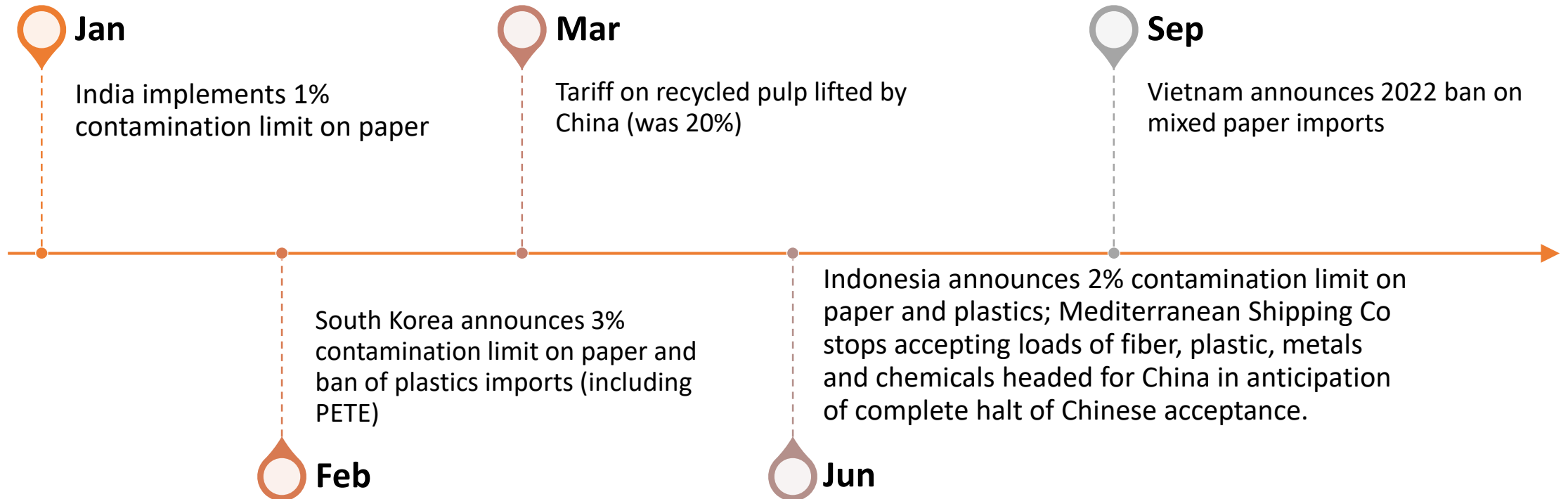
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Instead of Recycled Fiber: PULP

- Recycled pulp exports are increasing (1st quarter)
 - 2018 14,000 tons
 - 2019 50,000 tons
 - 2020 87,000 tons
- Growth driven by China
 - 89% of recycled pulp imports in 2020
- US exports to China
 - 2018 16,000 tons
 - 2019 239,000 tons
 - 2020 YTD 253,000 tons (thru Sept)



Other International Market Updates



Domestic Markets: FIBER

- OCC generation growing (e-commerce), but recovery is not (shift from commercial generation to residential)
- Recovery of commercial OCC ~90%; residential 40-45%
- Mixed paper remains largest fiber grade and most under-recovered
- Newsprint grade disappearing; high-grade (office/writing) declining
- Domestic demand for OCC up ~6% Jan-May, 2020 (vs 2019)
- US mills consumed ~4% more mixed paper Jan-May, 2020 (vs 2019)
- OCC demand expected to outstrip supply, so more mixed paper will be needed

Domestic Markets: FIBER (cont)

- 4 million tons/year of North American capacity projected to come online through 2023
- Newly online or coming online in 2020
 - International Paper, AL
 - McKinley Paper, WA
 - Nine Dragons, ME
 - North Pacific Paper, WA
 - Verso, MN
 - Pratt Industries, OH
 - Cascades, VA
 - Green Bay Packaging, WI
 - Copamex, Mexico
- Mills taking mixed and OCC



COVID-19 Impacts

- OCC recovery as a whole dropped 30-50% during second quarter
 - Retail/schools down 20-30%
 - Exception- grocery stores
 - Value of OCC exceeded \$100/ton (May) for 1st time since 2017
 - Pricing has since fallen, but not to pre-COVID levels
- Printing/writing paper mills idling or shifting to packaging
- Shift in public perceptions around plastic
 - Demand for HDPE natural spiked
 - Pricing increased May-Sept, w/Sept-Dec pricing higher than that of Aluminum!
- Overall, commodity values higher in 2020 than 2019 except aluminum, PETE and HDPE color
- Recycling considered essential



COVID-19 Impacts (cont)

At DNR...

- Staff working from home
- DNR offices/service centers closed to the public
- When authorized to go into office, masks required
- Virtual meetings
- Reduced on-site inspections

SWANA urging high priority for COVID-19 vaccines for solid waste and recycling workers

DNR Updates: Staff

- Brad Wolbert returns as WMM Program Director
- Non-Landfill Team Changes (regional MRF contact)
- Hiring freeze presently in effect

Waste and Materials Management Regional Non-Landfill Solid Waste Staff

As of April, 2020



| Staff | Email | Phone | Office |
|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Bob Germer | robert.germer@wisconsin.gov | 715-635-4060 | Spoooner |
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Updated 4/20 AD

DNR Updates: Annual MRF Report

Added new “Optional Reporting” Section

- Additional Materials (fiber, plastics, metal)
- Contamination
- Challenging Markets
- Consumer Education

Completed by 36 MRFs

Result highlights

- Only paperboard packaging was highly accepted (86%) & not detrimental to any facility
- Several fiber types (junk mail, paperback books, paper bags, wrapping paper, shredded paper), metals (scrap, aerosols) and #5 PP accepted by majority yet all detrimental to some
- Contamination- plastic bags/film, cords/tanglers, foam polystyrene
- Difficulty marketing- #3-7, mixed bulky rigids, mixed paper; no one had trouble w/OCC
- Consumer edu: Caps on- 56%; Remove 33%; Size restriction- Yes 33%, No 61%

DNR RESPONSE TO COVID-19:

[Details on changes to DNR programs and services](#) and links to resources in Wisconsin.



Other DNR Updates

- **New DNR website launched**
- **Waste characterization study underway**
 - SCS Engineers
 - Began in Sept.
 - C&D and MSW
 - Sorting into 8 categories and up to 85 material types
 - Final report by June 2021
- **Celebrating 30-year anniversary of Recycling law and 10-year anniversary of E-cycle WI**
 - Spread in fall [Natural Resources](#) magazine

In case you missed it...

- [LAB](#) released results of statewide audit of recycling program
 - Modifying funding source of beneficial reuse program
 - Improving RU reviews and annual report documentation
 - Updating administrative code (ch. NR 544)
 - Less staff allocated to recycling
 - Legislative consideration: modifying recycling grant formula
 - High satisfaction with DNR recycling program assistance
- [EPA National Recycling Strategy](#)
 - Reduce contamination in the waste stream
 - Increase processing efficiency
 - Improve markets



Questions?

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