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MARKET NEWS

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Grain movements at northern Brazil ports jumped 80 pct in 2017

Reuters Staff



SAO PAULO, Feb 16 (Reuters) - The amount of soy and corn moved through Brazil's new port terminals in the country's north reached 51.2 million tonnes in 2017, 80 percent more than a year earlier, as traders increase shipments through the terminals that are closer to export destinations.

According to annual statistics released late on Thursday by Brazilian government agency Antaq, northern ports such as Barcarena, Itaqui and Santarém are quickly expanding their share of grains transportation compared to traditional export routes such as Santos and Paranaguá in the South.

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The new terminals in the north are closer to clients in Central America, Asia and Europe, reducing shipping costs and increasing competitiveness of soybeans and corn produced in places such as Mato Grosso, Tocantins and Pará, all areas of expansion for Brazilian agriculture in the northern and northeastern regions.

The port of Itaqui, in the state of Maranhão, is already the number 3 grain exporting port in Brazil, reporting movement of 8 million tonnes of soybeans and corn in 2017, said Antaq, behind Santos with 26.6 million tonnes and Paranaguá with 15 million.

Those northern terminals transported 23 percent of total soy and corn that passed through Brazilian ports in 2010 and ended 2017 with 41 percent of the total, in a period when grains production in Brazil surged. They increased total volumes moved by 356 percent in that interval.

Several of those terminals are managed by private companies, such as the Hermasa terminal in Amazonas state (Amaggi), the Barcarena grains terminal in Pará state (Bunge Ltd), and the Ponta da Montanha terminal also in Pará state (Archer Daniels Midland Co).

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