

# Bulk Freight Rates Ease in Early June as Diesel Retreats, While Load Volume Holds Well Above Trend

*Bulk freight rates eased 3.8% in early June as diesel fell, but volume held 18.6% above trend and stayed up 22% year over year, per BulkLoads data.*

SPRINGFIELD, MO, UNITED STATES, June 11, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Median per-mile rates across U.S. bulk freight softened during the first week of June, but the pullback was driven largely by falling diesel prices rather than weakening demand, according to the latest Bulk Freight Market Update published by [BulkLoads](#).

Through June 6, the median rate across all bulk freight measured \$4.87 per mile, down about 3.8% from the same window in May. Despite the monthly decline, the figure remained roughly 22% higher than a year earlier and above the trailing 12-month median of \$4.27. Verified load volume reached 7,658 for the period, up 10% month over month and running approximately 18.6% above the trailing 12-month average.

Much of the rate easing tracked a sharp move in fuel. The U.S. average price for on-highway diesel fell to \$5.35 per gallon at the start of June, down more than 5% on the month. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, diesel had climbed past \$5.40 per gallon this spring, its highest level in real terms in more than two years, after conflict in the Middle East disrupted global oil exports earlier in 2026. Crude oil prices have since retreated as regional tensions eased, with West Texas Intermediate falling roughly nine dollars per barrel in the final week of May. Because fuel is a major component of freight pricing, the decline pulled per-mile rate floors lower.



Underneath the fuel-driven dip, freight demand remained firm. Industry data from FTR shows total spot truckload volume in 2026 running well above 2025 and 2024 levels, with dry van and flatbed spot rates near or at multi-year highs, reflecting tighter capacity following sustained carrier exits over the past two years.

Grain freight illustrated a divergence worth noting. While corn futures fell to seven-week lows near \$4.40 per bushel in early June on expectations for another large harvest and soft export sales, corn was the highest-volume commodity in the BulkLoads network and posted a 7.5% increase in per-mile freight rates, to a median of \$5.13. The pattern reflects the volume of grain moving out of storage ahead of the coming harvest, a dynamic that operates independently of commodity price direction.

Regional trends varied. South Central origins, including Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico, led the market with rates up nearly 16% month over month, supported by the start of the winter wheat harvest and continued construction activity tied to data center development across the region. Midwest origins firmed about 8.6% on grain movement, and Northeast origins rose 5.5%. Western origins softened roughly 11%, a shift attributed in part to a pullback in import volumes affecting port-adjacent markets.

Among individual commodities, coal recorded the strongest rate gain at 5.7%, consistent with rising summer power demand, while wheat posted the largest decline at about 11% as harvest pressure and improved growing conditions weighed on values.

"The headline rate makes June look softer than it is," said John F. Calloway, Growth Architect, Enterprise at BulkLoads. "Most of the monthly decline is diesel coming off a spring spike, not a drop in freight demand. Volume is still running well ahead of seasonal norms, and grain is firming into harvest. For carriers and brokers, the more useful signal this month is where the freight is concentrated, which is shorter, regional lanes."

The report noted that the median haul length was 173 miles, and that the three busiest corridors in the network were intrastate moves within Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas, together accounting for 18% of total flow. The concentration reflects a broader industry trend toward regional operations as carriers have reduced long-haul exposure.

BulkLoads publishes the Bulk Freight Market Update monthly, drawing on verified carrier load data from across its marketplace. The full report and underlying lane-level data are available through Bulk Freight [Insights](#), the company's market analytics platform.

#### About BulkLoads

BulkLoads (bulkloads.com) is a bulk freight marketplace and data platform serving carriers, brokers and shippers across North America. Its market analytics platform, Bulk Freight Insights (bulkfreightinsights.com), provides rate benchmarking, lane analysis and fuel-adjusted estimates based on verified bulk freight transactions.

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