



# Q2 Disposable Glove Market Update

April 2025



The Right Glove for The Job™

## Q2 Market Update 2025

As we near the end of Q1 2025 and prepare for Q2, the disposable glove market, along with the rest of the business world, is volatile and fixated on the impact of tariffs.

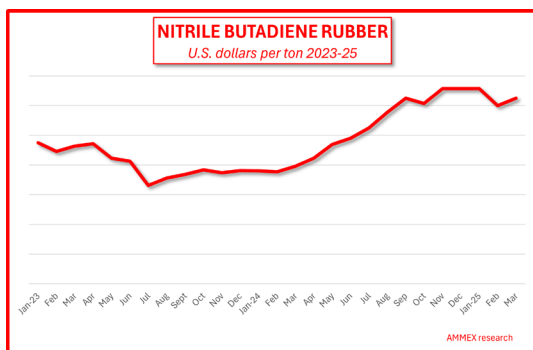
The first weeks since Inauguration Day in the U.S. have been dynamic. The good news may appear to be that, apart from exam-grade nitrile gloves from China, tariffs have not directly targeted the disposable glove market. However, the movement of product demand to Southeast Asia has been pushing prices higher across the whole market.

In addition to the effect of tariffs, raw materials, labor, and logistics costs continue to influence the market.

## Tariffs Impact World Markets

Almost everyone in the disposable glove market is aware that tariffs on exam/medical-grade nitrile gloves from China increased from 7.5% to 50% on Jan. 1, 2025, and will further increase to 100% on Jan. 1, 2026.

In addition, the U.S. government has implemented an additional 20% tariff on all products from China and appears to be using the threat of additional tariffs as leverage—or a tool to remake trade agreements. However, that may further scramble supply chains and trade flows that are already changing as companies seek alternatives to China as the source of their goods.



The disposable glove market is likely to feel the impact of trade wars simply because over 90% of production is outside of the United States and is beholden to global supply and logistics networks.

Several Chinese manufacturers are in the process of setting up production operations in Southeast Asia and will likely remain active market participants.

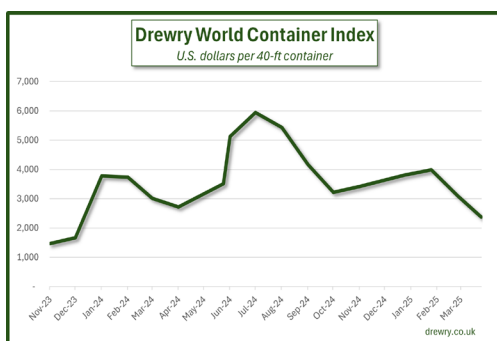
## Logistics and Supply Chain

Despite the tariff wars, the demand outlook in the disposable glove industry remains relatively bright. Gloves are need-based and largely recession-proof—consumers use them regardless of market conditions. Global demand for medical and industrial-grade nitrile gloves continues to expand with consistent consumption patterns.

Ocean freight rates continue to be volatile, with ocean contract rates forecast to increase from May onward while spot rates are softening. The industry survey by maritime consultancy [Drewry](#) reveals that most container shipping stakeholders expect Suez Canal transits to resume before the end of 2025, while bracing for escalating [U.S. tariffs](#) that could reshape global trade patterns.



Despite uncertainties, shipping giant Maersk [is forecasting](#) that the container market will grow by a healthy 4% in 2025 and that the company will remain at pace with it. The company gave a positive outlook for 2025 after highlighting that 2024 was the third-best financial performance in its history.



Rates will likely remain volatile as [port congestion continues](#) in major Asian manufacturing hubs, [fuel costs rise](#) due to geopolitical tensions in oil-producing regions, [container shortages](#) are exacerbated by uneven global trade recovery, and implementation of new environmental rules requires shipping lines to invest in cleaner technologies.

## Glove Production Costs

Raw material costs remain the most significant expense category, accounting for a large portion of total disposable glove production costs. Nitrile butadiene rubber (NBR), a primary component in nitrile gloves, could experience supply constraints due to production capacity limitations caused by maintenance at major chemical facilities and increasing competition from the automotive and construction industries for nitrile-based gloves.

Meanwhile, manufacturing bottlenecks are appearing as production facilities are challenged with labor costs, rising energy costs, implementation of new quality control measures in the wake of regulatory changes, and technological transition challenges as manufacturers upgrade equipment.

For natural rubber latex, [prices have dropped](#) after the volatility of previous years due to a balanced supply from Southeast Asian producers. NBR prices, however, [remain elevated](#) due to continued strong demand and petroleum price fluctuations. The price spread between natural latex and nitrile has narrowed compared with historical averages.

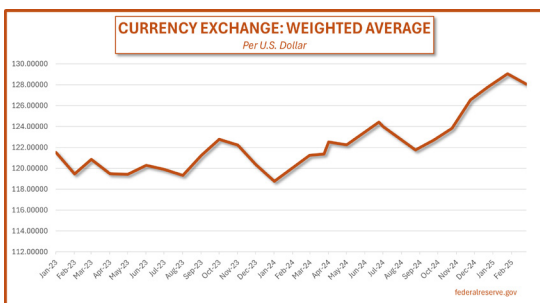
Another key variable is energy, representing approximately up to a quarter of production costs, with significant regional variations. Among the cost factors are electricity prices, with manufacturing facilities in Southeast Asia facing 5-7% higher electricity costs compared with 2024.

## Market Implications

The combined effect of these cost factors has resulted in an increase in production costs for most manufacturers since Q4 2024.

Given the market's overall pricing pressures, premium and specialized nitrile gloves will likely maintain more substantial pricing power in 2025 than commoditized latex or vinyl products.

Glove suppliers with advanced automation, energy-efficient facilities, and operational excellence are better positioned to maintain margins in this challenging cost environment.



Despite its essential role across multiple industries and disposable gloves' status as commodities, the U.S. disposable glove market continues to operate as a niche segment within the broader personal protective equipment landscape.

This highlights the importance of working with your glove supplier to understand the market

dynamics within the specialized product segments—based not only on the material (nitrile, latex, vinyl, polyethylene) but also on unique specifications, including thickness, texture, powder content, cuff length, and color. These factors create niches in the market that can develop different dynamics specific to items, such as chemotherapy-safe gloves, food-grade blue nitrile products, or gloves that resist permeation by fentanyl.

We expect the fragmented distribution landscape to continue evolving into sub-segments, which amplifies the importance of customer relationships across multiple channels.

## Why Work with AMMEX® in Uncertain Times

After 36-plus years in the disposable glove business, we know our way around market uncertainty. Of course, we have no crystal ball and can't predict the future. However, we believe that our team offers capabilities unique in the industry.

We focus all our attention on the disposable glove market and look to create unmatched value for our clients and partners:

**We offer 98%-plus fill rates:** Our singular focus on gloves enables us to provide the highest disposable glove fill rates in the industry.

**We proactively focus on quality:** Our on-location team inspects 100% of all shipments, working to prevent quality issues before products leave the factory.

**We work to prevent compliance issues:** Our program combines ethical sourcing policies, documented processes, and third-party audits to enable factory and product compliance.

**We provide outstanding expertise and service:** We draw on more than 35 years of service to set expectations and provide insights to our customers.

Our team looks forward to helping you and your customers enjoy great success in the disposable glove market.

**AMMEX® The Right Glove for the Job™**

