



## Nebraska Does Business with the World

**OVERVIEW:** This activity looks at the extensive connections between Nebraska and the international economy. Recent census results indicate that only 9.2% of Nebraska's firms that could export goods or services are involved in international trade.

- Nebraska's exports totaled over \$4.256 billion in 2007.
- Nebraska exporters sell to 180 countries worldwide each year.
- The largest category of Nebraska exports is food products, which totaled over \$1.12 billion in 2007, or 26.3% of all state exports.
- The top three markets for Nebraska exports in 2007 were Canada (28.4%), Mexico (21.2 %), and Japan (6.3%).

Students will have the opportunity to investigate specific companies (some in their own city).that export and their international ties.

**ECONOMIC CONCEPTS:** The students will learn about:

1. international trade
2. exports

**OBJECTIVES:** The students will be able to:

1. describe the effects of international trade on Nebraska companies.
2. identify the countries involved in trade with Nebraska firms.
3. list the major products exported abroad by Nebraska firms.
4. develop case studies of international firms using the examples provided.

**NEBRASKA STANDARDS:**

8.3.5, 8.3.7, 12.3.6, 12.3.10, 12.3.11, 12.3.12, 12.3.13

**MATERIALS:**

1. Access to the local Chamber of Commerce via Internet or phone

2. Examples of Nebraska Companies in International Trade, Teacher Resource or Student Handout
3. Finding Nebraska Firms Involved in Global Trade, Student Handout
4. International Company Survey, Student Handout

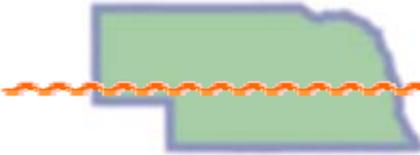
#### **PROCEDURE:**

1. Inform students that they will be investigating local companies involved in international trade using a survey. Ask students to list local companies they think are involved in international trade. The teacher can use the information on the Examples of Nebraska Companies in International Trade as either a handout or as an overhead to aid in this discussion. Ask students the following questions as part of the discussion:
  - Why would a Nebraska company choose to sell its products in the international market?
  - What problems do you think a company might face if it decides to try to sell in the international market?
  - How have the local communities been affected by the activities of these companies?
  - How does this international trade affect the people and countries that receive these products?
2. Inform students that they will be investigating local companies to find out more about their involvement in the international economy. Distribute copies of the student handouts entitled Finding Nebraska Firms Involved in International Trade and the International Company Survey. Assist students in preparing the cover letter and survey of local companies. If necessary, use the Examples of Nebraska Companies in International Trade as a guide to finding local companies, or have students select companies not listed on the handout.
3. Have students prepare a brief report and presentation on the business they chose to research. Encourage the students to compile their information into charts, tables, graphs, and visuals (posters, bulletin boards, or transparencies). On a world map, indicate where the companies trade in the world. On the map, pictures may be used to indicate the products traded. Another map might be drawn to indicate the methods and routes of transportation that would be used to get the products from Nebraska to other parts of the world where they are sold.

4. After presenting their research findings, ask students the same questions posed at the beginning of this lesson to see if their perceptions have changed as a result of this investigation.
- Why would a Nebraska company choose to sell its products in the international market?
  - What problems do you think a company might face if decides to try to sell in the international market?
  - How have the local communities been affected by the activities of these companies?
  - How does this international trade affect the people and countries that receive these products?



Teacher Resource or Student  
Handout 2



*Examples of Nebraska Companies In  
International Trade*

Baldwin Filters - Kearney & Gothenburg  
Behlen Manufacturing - Columbus  
Bison Manufacturing - Neligh  
Cabela's - Sidney  
ConAgra, Inc. - Omaha  
First Data Resources - Omaha  
Henningsen Foods - David City, Norfolk, Omaha & Ravenna  
Tyson Foods - West Point and Lexington  
International Sensor Systems Inc - Aurora  
ISCO, Inc. - Lincoln  
Lindsay Manufacturing - Lindsay  
Lozier Corp. - Omaha  
MDS Harris Labs - Lincoln  
Mutual of Omaha - Omaha  
Omaha Steaks - Omaha  
Sandhills Publishing - Lincoln  
Skylark Meats Inc. - Omaha  
Union Pacific Corp. - Omaha  
Valmont Industries - Valley

This is partial listing only, updates can be found on the International Trade  
Directory at:

<http://www.neded.org/files/international/2007NeInternationalDirectory.pdf>



## *Finding Nebraska Firms Involved in Global Trade*

Your role in this class project is to investigate a Nebraska company that is currently involved in international trade. In order to locate a company in your area, you should consult International Trade Directories from your Chamber of Commerce. Once you have determined a company you would like to research, send a cover letter, explaining that this is a class project, and the prepared survey. Your letter should be sent to the attention of the International Marketing Department. The following is an example of a letter you might want to use or you can prepare your own. Make sure you use the traditional business letter format.

Date

Company

Address

Attention: International Marketing Department

Dear (Company Name):

This questionnaire is part of an economics unit called *Nebraska and the World* that we are currently studying in our class at \_\_\_\_\_. I am writing to you in hopes that you can help our class determine links between Nebraska and the international economy. Once the surveys are returned, our class will compile the results and interpret the data to help us better understand how our state and the world are interdependent. On behalf of my class, I would sincerely appreciate it if you would take time to answer a few questions and return this survey to us by \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_. If you have any printed material on your company, its objectives, and/or history, we would appreciate a copy of this as well. Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely Yours,

Student Name

School Name

Address



## International Company Survey

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Company Employees: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Type of Goods or Services Produced: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions:

1. Does your company produce products to be sold on the international market?  
If so, in what countries or regions of the world?
2. Why did your company choose to sell internationally?
3. Does your company use imports to produce its products? If so, what areas or regions do these products come from?
4. Is any part of the manufacturing done outside of the U.S.? If so, where?
5. Where are your corporate headquarters? Do you have any offices abroad?
6. Approximately what percentage of your profits come from international sales?
7. What impact does international trade have on the community where you are located?
8. What do you feel students at our school need to know to prepare us for doing business in an international economy?

When completed, please return to:  
(Student Name and School Address)