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Lincoln MSA Led State in 4th Quarter Business Performance

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The Lincoln MSA (Lancaster County) led all regions with 52 percent of businesses reporting 4th quarter 1999 revenues over year ago. Statewide, only 39 percent of all respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago. Lincoln's 4th quarter rate of 52 percent was nearly equal to the region's 1999 quarterly average of 51 percent, but slightly ahead of its longer-term (three-year) trend of 48 percent. Only 20 percent of the Lincoln MSA respondents reported a decline in 4th quarter revenues. The remaining 28 percent reported no change in 4th quarter revenues from year ago.

The 4th quarter survey is the latest Nebraska Quarterly Business Conditions Survey (NQBCS). The NQBCS is a joint venture between the Nebraska Departments of Economic Development and Labor, and BBR. The NQBCS is a leading indicator of changes in business activity, job hires, and labor shortages. The latest survey covers nearly 1,300 nonfarm, private sector businesses with a combined employment of approximately 84,000 workers. Nearly all the businesses included in the survey employ at least 10 workers. Regional summaries for the 4th quarter 1999 survey are available on the web sites listed at the end of this article where regional definitions also are provided.

Revenue

Tables 1 and 2 provide summaries of revenue reports from the latest survey, along with NQBCS quarterly averages (four-quarter 1999 averages) and 4th quarter trend estimates, based on NQBCS reports for the 1997-1999 period. Fourth quarter 1999 trend estimates were derived from linear trend lines calculated from 1997-1999 NQBCS data. The 1999 quarterly averages and the 4th quarter trend estimates combined provide a useful base to evaluate actual 4th quarter business performance. Table 1 shows regional detail for all

respondents (all industries) and Table 2 shows sector detail for state, metro, and nonmetro regions.

Statewide, 39 percent of the 1,300 NQBCS respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago, which fell below the 1999 quarterly average of 41 percent, but equaled the 4th quarter trend estimate. Only 28 percent reported decreases in revenues from year ago. The remaining 33 percent reported no change in 4th quarter revenues.

The state's top performer in 4th quarter was manufacturing, with 45 percent of respondents reporting increases in revenues over year ago. That rate equaled the 1999 quarterly average, but exceeded the 4th quarter trend estimate by 8 percentage points. The main source of strength for the manufacturing sector was the metro region, where 55 percent of respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago. That rate exceeded both the metro 1999 quarterly average of 53 percent and the 4th quarter trend estimate of 46 percent. The Lincoln MSA was the top metro region in manufacturing, where 67 percent of respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago. The Central region was the weakest nonmetro region where 30 percent of manufacturing respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues. The Southeast and Panhandle regions reported 35 and 38 percent increases, respectively.

Statewide, TCU (transportation, communications, and private sector utilities) and FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) also demonstrated strong 4th quarter revenue performance. Nearly 45 percent of TCU respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago, nearly equal to the quarterly average in 1999, but about 7 percentage points above the 4th quarter trend estimate of 38 percent. A higher percentage of metro than nonmetro TCU respondents reported 4th quarter increases. However, 4th quarter performance

**Table 1
Business Revenue Performance, All Industries by Region**

| | 1999 Quarterly Average | | 4 th Quarter 1999 Trend | | Actual 4 th Quarter 1999 Rate | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|---|-------|
| | ▲ | ▼ | ▲ | ▼ | ▲ | ▼ |
| State | 41.1% | 28.5% | 38.7% | 29.3% | 39.4% | 28.2% |
| Metro ¹ | 46.8% | 24.3% | 45.8% | 23.0% | 43.9% | 25.2% |
| Lincoln MSA ² | 51.0% | 22.8% | 48.3% | 23.8% | 52.4% | 19.5% |
| Omaha MSA ³ | 44.8% | 25.1% | 44.6% | 22.7% | 39.6% | 28.0% |
| Nonmetro | 35.8% | 32.4% | 32.1% | 35.1% | 35.2% | 31.1% |
| Northeast | 32.5% | 32.6% | 27.5% | 35.2% | 32.7% | 30.8% |
| Southeast | 37.5% | 35.2% | 34.1% | 37.6% | 32.6% | 38.4% |
| Central | 35.7% | 38.2% | 32.3% | 40.3% | 33.3% | 37.6% |
| Mid Plains | 36.0% | 27.1% | 34.7% | 31.7% | 40.2% | 22.8% |
| Panhandle | 41.7% | 19.6% | 36.1% | 21.6% | 43.1% | 15.4% |

Notes: ▲ = Increase in current quarter revenues over year-ago levels.
▼ = Decrease in current quarter revenues over year-ago levels.

¹Includes Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

²Includes Lancaster County only

³Includes Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

was strong in both the metro and nonmetro regions, especially when compared to their respective quarterly averages and 4th quarter trend estimates. The performance pattern for FIRE resembles that of TCU, with the exception of the metro FIRE group's deviation from the trend. The metro FIRE group outperformed its 4th quarter trend estimate of 43 percent throughout 1999. The 4th quarter rate was 54 percent, and the 1999 quarterly average was 53 percent. Most of the strong performance was centered in the Lincoln MSA.

Fourth quarter 1999 NQBCS results indicated that the wholesale trade sector rebounded in the nonmetro region. Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago, which surpassed the metro rate of 37 percent. The nonmetro 1999 quarterly average for wholesale trade was 31 percent, and the 4th quarter trend estimate was 22 percent. The rebound was most notable in the Central, Mid Plains, and Panhandle regions, where revenue increases over year ago were in the 42 to 45 percent range. The wholesale trade sector showed considerable weakness in these regions earlier. The turnaround may be short lived if crop producers experience another year of unprofitable prices. Most nonmetro wholesale trade respondents represent farm implement and equipment dealers.

Some weakness in the retail trade sector was indicated in 4th quarter, especially in the nonmetro region. Slightly over 31 percent of the nonmetro retail respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago. Notably, nearly 35 percent reported decreases in revenues. Moreover, 4th quarter performance for nonmetro retailers was about 7 percentage points below the 1999 quarterly average and over 8

percentage points below the 4th quarter trend estimate. Some decline in retail trade activity was foreseen earlier in 1999, predicated on the ripple effect of extremely low farm prices. A rebound is expected as the effect of the farm problem dissipates. Metro retail trade remains strong, but the 4th quarter performance of 43 percent fell short of the 1999 quarterly average of 47 percent and the 4th quarter trend estimate of 49 percent. There is no evidence to indicate that future metro retail trade sector performance will remain below trend

Services has been the most stable sector statewide. There has been little deviation in services sector performance levels between the metro and nonmetro regions. However, the metro services sector has maintained a slight lead over nonmetro. The 4th quarter services sector trend estimates were 46 percent in metro and 40 percent in nonmetro.

Nonmetro construction sector performance continued to fall far behind metro construction. Only 25 percent of the nonmetro construction respondents reported increases in 4th quarter revenues over year ago. The comparable rate for the metro counties was 41 percent. Less than 11 percent of metro respondents reported decreases in 4th quarter revenues from year ago, while nearly 39 percent of nonmetro respondents reported decreases.

Jobs

Worker shortages and the lack of sufficient qualified applicants continued to be concerns for many businesses in both metro and nonmetro regions. Regional full-time job rates are presented in Table 3. Regional 4th quarter estimates for total full-time job hires and unfilled jobs are presented in Table 4. The job rates shown in Table 3 are relative numbers that are based

**Table 2
Business Revenue Performance by Sectors and Regions**

| | 1999 Quarterly Average | | 4 th Quarter 1999 Trend | | Actual 4 th Quarter 1999 Rate | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-------|---|-------|
| | ▲ | ▼ | ▲ | ▼ | ▲ | ▼ |
| State | | | | | | |
| All Industries | 41.1% | 28.5% | 38.7% | 29.3% | 39.4% | 28.2% |
| Construction | 33.9% | 25.9% | 32.4% | 27.1% | 34.0% | 23.0% |
| Manufacturing | 44.9% | 30.9% | 36.9% | 35.6% | 45.0% | 28.4% |
| TCU ¹ | 44.4% | 23.3% | 37.7% | 22.5% | 44.6% | 23.1% |
| Wholesale Trade | 34.3% | 41.1% | 29.5% | 46.5% | 37.5% | 36.8% |
| Retail Trade | 41.9% | 27.7% | 43.6% | 25.1% | 36.2% | 30.7% |
| FIRE ² | 42.9% | 20.3% | 39.6% | 22.5% | 44.3% | 17.7% |
| Services | 43.6% | 26.4% | 43.5% | 24.4% | 40.2% | 27.9% |
| Metro³ | | | | | | |
| All Industries | 46.8% | 24.3% | 45.8% | 23.0% | 43.9% | 25.2% |
| Construction | 40.8% | 14.7% | 44.6% | 12.8% | 41.1% | 10.7% |
| Manufacturing | 52.7% | 29.9% | 46.1% | 32.5% | 55.1% | 24.6% |
| TCU ¹ | 48.4% | 23.8% | 43.3% | 23.3% | 48.6% | 22.9% |
| Wholesale Trade | 39.2% | 32.2% | 40.5% | 29.5% | 36.8% | 35.1% |
| Retail Trade | 47.4% | 23.7% | 48.8% | 20.9% | 43.2% | 25.4% |
| FIRE ² | 53.1% | 19.0% | 43.4% | 23.6% | 53.7% | 17.1% |
| Services | 46.7% | 24.6% | 46.1% | 22.5% | 39.7% | 28.7% |
| Nonmetro | | | | | | |
| All Industries | 35.8% | 32.4% | 32.5% | 35.0% | 35.2% | 31.1% |
| Construction | 25.3% | 40.1% | 16.2% | 45.8% | 25.0% | 38.6% |
| Manufacturing | 39.5% | 31.6% | 30.6% | 37.8% | 38.0% | 31.0% |
| TCU ¹ | 40.6% | 22.7% | 32.0% | 22.2% | 40.0% | 23.3% |
| Wholesale Trade | 30.8% | 47.8% | 21.7% | 59.0% | 38.0% | 38.0% |
| Retail Trade | 37.9% | 30.6% | 39.7% | 28.2% | 31.4% | 34.3% |
| FIRE ² | 32.5% | 21.8% | 36.4% | 21.4% | 34.2% | 18.4% |
| Services | 38.7% | 29.3% | 39.6% | 28.4% | 41.2% | 26.5% |

Notes: ▲ = Increase in current quarter revenues over year-ago levels.
▼ = Decrease in current quarter revenues over year-ago levels.

¹Includes Transportation, Communications, and Utilities

²Includes Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

³Includes Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

on 1,000 existing jobs. For example, a 12.4 new job rate means that for every 1,000 existing nonfarm, private sector jobs, 12.4 new job hires occurred. Total estimates of job hires and unfilled jobs are based on the job rates.

The 4th quarter metro rate for new job hires was 18.4—significantly below both the 1999 quarterly average of 21.6 and the 4th quarter trend estimate of 21.2. This pattern held for both the Lincoln and the Omaha metro regions, indicating an overall slowdown in new full-time job hires. However, the 4th quarter metro rate of 18.4 still remained substantially above the nonmetro rate of 11.4. The Lincoln MSA led all regions with a rate of 23.4. The Southeast and Central regions had the lowest 4th quarter rates—8.6 and 9.3, respectively. In general, new full-time job hires (i.e., rates) declined in all regions except the Northeast. A statewide shortage of qualified workers may have been a major reason for the slowdown in new job growth.

For the metro regions, the 4th quarter Omaha MSA survey results produced the highest replacement hire rate for existing full-time positions—38.7. However, the Omaha rate was considerably below rates for earlier periods, indicating a

decline in job turnover in the Omaha area. For all regions, Central had the highest rate—44.7. Replacement hire rates are one measure of job turnover. Job turnover declined in all regions except the Northeast.

Fourth quarter rates of unfilled jobs were down or unchanged from earlier periods in all regions except the Northeast. The 4th quarter rate of 14.8 for the Northeast region exceeded its 1999 quarterly average of 11.9 and the 4th quarter trend estimate of 10.4. Fourth quarter rates of 21.9 in the Lincoln MSA and 6.4 in the Mid Plains remained unchanged from previous periods.

At the state level, 40 percent of all unfilled full-time jobs during 4th quarter 1999 were due to the lack of qualified applicants. The percent was higher for nonmetro counties—47 percent. The Southeast region had the highest rate of unqualified applicants—10.4. The Panhandle and Northeast regions had the lowest rates—3.3 and 3.5, respectively. The lack of qualified applicants continued to be a problem across the state, but the situation improved somewhat during the 4th quarter. The improvement was largely due to a general slow-

down in new job hires and replacement hires. Survey results for the Northeast region ran counter to this general observation. New job hires and replacement hires remained strong in the Northeast region, while the rate of unqualified applicants was relatively low, an unexplained anomaly.

In conclusion, the state's economy continued to demonstrate strength, but worker shortages and the lack of qualified applicants at all occupational levels continued to challenge both metro and nonmetro businesses. It is uncertain how much longer Nebraska businesses can maintain strong performances without significant increases in the availability of qualified workers.

See detailed regional reports



www.bbr.unl.edu
www.ded.state.ne.us
www.dol.state.ne.us

Table 3
Full-time Job Rates Per 1,000 Existing Nonfarm, Private Sector Employees

| | 1999 Quarterly Average | 4 th Quarter 1999 Trend | Actual 4 th Quarter 1999 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Metro¹ | | | |
| New Jobs | 21.6 | 21.2 | 18.4 |
| Replacement Hires | 49.9 | 57.0 | 35.9 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 19.6 | 20.3 | 16.2 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 10.6 | 11.3 | 6.9 |
| Lincoln MSA² | | | |
| New Jobs | 26.7 | 32.2 | 23.4 |
| Replacement Hires | 43.3 | 47.0 | 29.6 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 21.0 | 20.0 | 21.9 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 10.5 | 10.3 | 7.9 |
| Omaha MSA³ | | | |
| New Jobs | 20.5 | 18.0 | 16.2 |
| Replacement Hires | 52.8 | 62.1 | 38.7 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 18.6 | 20.0 | 13.7 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 10.7 | 11.8 | 6.5 |
| Nonmetro | | | |
| New Jobs | 15.6 | 12.8 | 11.4 |
| Replacement Hires | 40.8 | 41.6 | 34.0 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 13.3 | 13.9 | 12.9 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 6.6 | 7.0 | 5.3 |
| Northeast | | | |
| New Jobs | 11.7 | 4.0 | 10.9 |
| Replacement Hires | 36.8 | 35.6 | 33.6 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 11.9 | 10.4 | 14.8 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 4.0 | 3.1 | 3.5 |
| Southeast | | | |
| New Jobs | 17.7 | 20.2 | 8.6 |
| Replacement Hires | 31.1 | 33.3 | 26.4 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 19.3 | 22.3 | 16.9 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 13.1 | 16.4 | 10.4 |
| Central | | | |
| New Jobs | 14.5 | 11.9 | 9.3 |
| Replacement Hires | 54.9 | 57.8 | 44.7 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 14.1 | 15.5 | 12.4 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 7.3 | 8.5 | 5.7 |
| Mid Plains | | | |
| New Jobs | 19.8 | 24.6 | 17.2 |
| Replacement Hires | 30.8 | 34.3 | 21.5 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 7.1 | 6.9 | 6.4 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 3.2 | 2.8 | 4.1 |
| Panhandle | | | |
| New Jobs | 26.7 | 25.4 | 17.4 |
| Replacement Hires | 43.6 | 42.1 | 33.2 |
| Unfilled Jobs | 11.4 | 10.8 | 8.9 |
| Lack of Qualified Applicants | 3.7 | 2.5 | 3.3 |

¹Includes Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

²Includes Lancaster County only

³Includes Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

Table 4
Estimated Total Filled and Unfilled Full-time Jobs by Region, 4th Quarter 1999

| | State | Metro ¹ | Nonmetro | Omaha MSA ² | Lincoln MSA ³ | Southeast | Central | Mid Plains | Panhandle | Northeast |
|---|--------|--------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| New Position Hires | 11,035 | 7,874 | 3,161 | 5,202 | 2,672 | 404 | 732 | 593 | 510 | 921 |
| Replacement Hires | 25,253 | 15,666 | 9,587 | 12,304 | 3,362 | 1,278 | 3,611 | 766 | 999 | 2,933 |
| Unfilled Positions | 10,597 | 7,000 | 3,597 | 4,451 | 2,549 | 814 | 1,000 | 227 | 266 | 1,290 |
| Unfilled Due to Lack of Qualified Applicants | 4,471 | 2,975 | 1,496 | 2,075 | 900 | 498 | 456 | 146 | 98 | 298 |

¹Includes Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

²Includes Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

³Includes Lancaster County only

Regional Composition

Omaha MSA—Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington Counties
 Lincoln MSA—Lancaster County
 Northeast—Antelope, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Platte, Rock, Stanton, Thurston, and Wayne Counties
 Southeast—Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York Counties

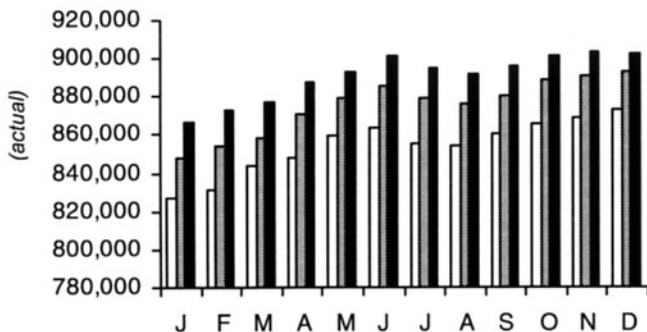
Central—Adams, Blaine, Buffalo, Clay, Custer, Franklin, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and Wheeler Counties
 Mid Plains—Arthur, Chase, Cherry, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas Counties
 Panhandle—Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux Counties

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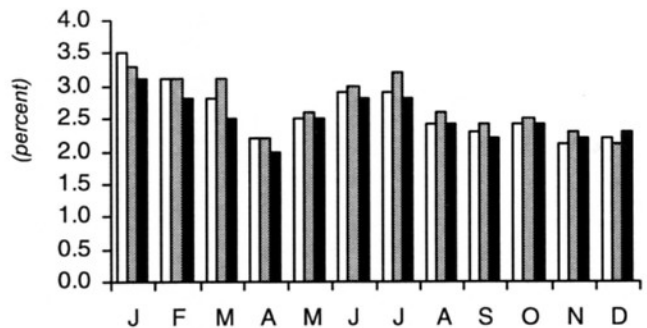
1997
 1998
 1999

Nebraska Stats

Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment



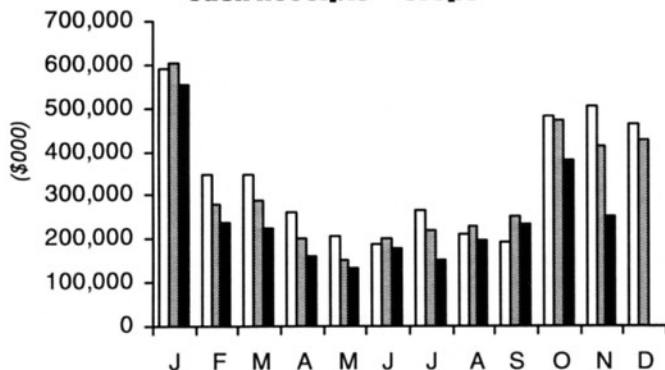
Unemployment Rate



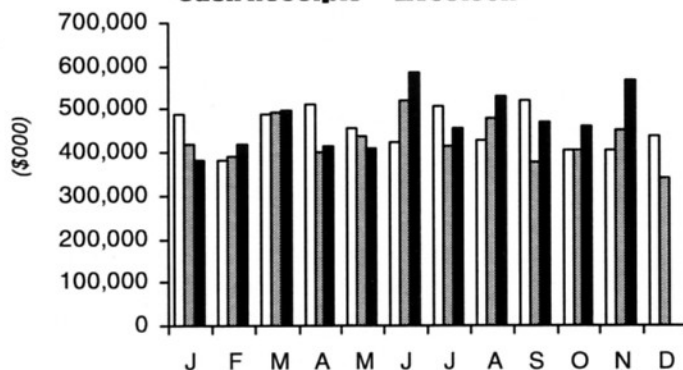
Note: All 1999 monthly employment data are considered estimates until benchmarked in March of 2000. Data shown for 1999 are the most current revised estimates available. Final benchmarked monthly data for 1999 are expected to be released by the Nebraska Department of Labor in mid-2000.

1997
 1998
 1999

Cash Receipts—Crops



Cash Receipts—Livestock



Net Taxable Retail Sales* for Nebraska Cities (\$000)

| | November 1999 (\$000) | YTD (\$000) | YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago | | November 1999 (\$000) | YTD (\$000) | YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Ainsworth, Brown | 1,586 | 19,091 | -5.6 | Kenesaw, Adams | 185 | 2,385 | -6.9 |
| Albion, Boone | 1,546 | 19,120 | -2.7 | Kimball, Kimball | 1,583 | 18,888 | 9.7 |
| Alliance, Box Butte | 5,403 | 63,546 | -2.9 | La Vista, Sarpy | 10,812 | 102,628 | 9.2 |
| Alma, Harlan | 508 | 7,179 | -3.0 | Laurel, Cedar | 270 | 3,945 | 6.0 |
| Arapahoe, Furnas | 734 | 8,126 | -2.5 | Lexington, Dawson | 6,817 | 76,999 | -0.3 |
| Arlington, Washington | 234 | 2,306 | 12.3 | Lincoln, Lancaster | 224,229 | 2,285,695 | 6.4 |
| Arnold, Custer | 255 | 2,980 | 4.2 | Louisville, Cass | 387 | 6,114 | -25.7 |
| Ashland, Saunders | 1,312 | 13,753 | 2.9 | Loup City, Sherman | 418 | 6,638 | -3.4 |
| Atkinson, Holt | 894 | 10,615 | -1.7 | Lyons, Burt | 466 | 5,218 | -6.5 |
| Auburn, Nemaha | 2,219 | 25,517 | -1.8 | Madison, Madison | 796 | 8,419 | 0.7 |
| Aurora, Hamilton | 2,096 | 27,742 | -2.9 | McCook, Red Willow | 11,961 | 126,581 | 3.3 |
| Axtell, Kearney | 40 | 639 | -14.9 | Milford, Seward | 650 | 9,994 | 1.0 |
| Bassett, Rock | 326 | 5,141 | 0.4 | Minatare, Scotts Bluff | 148 | 1,650 | -0.8 |
| Battle Creek, Madison | 520 | 7,023 | 2.4 | Minden, Kearney | 1,544 | 20,016 | 6.9 |
| Bayard, Morrill | 359 | 4,605 | -4.4 | Mitchell, Scotts Bluff | 600 | 7,615 | -0.7 |
| Beatrice, Gage | 10,721 | 116,939 | 1.2 | Morrill, Scotts Bluff | 455 | 5,341 | 4.9 |
| Beaver City, Furnas | 136 | 1,429 | -5.2 | Nebraska City, Otoe | 6,423 | 71,322 | 0.3 |
| Bellevue, Sarpy | 20,072 | 216,563 | 6.2 | Neligh, Antelope | 1,183 | 14,791 | -2.5 |
| Benkelman, Dundy | 493 | 6,087 | -1.7 | Newman Grove, Madison | 282 | 3,079 | -3.9 |
| Bennington, Douglas | 455 | 5,953 | 24.1 | Norfolk, Madison | 32,013 | 324,462 | 3.4 |
| Blair, Washington | 6,486 | 74,102 | 4.3 | North Bend, Dodge | 422 | 5,336 | 0.2 |
| Bloomfield, Knox | 523 | 6,667 | -7.3 | North Platte, Lincoln | 22,369 | 250,700 | 5.2 |
| Blue Hill, Webster | 422 | 4,894 | -4.6 | O'Neill, Holt | 4,287 | 46,747 | 2.9 |
| Bridgeport, Morrill | 1,013 | 12,453 | 5.1 | Oakland, Burt | 484 | 7,485 | -1.5 |
| Broken Bow, Custer | 3,529 | 40,025 | -2.2 | Ogallala, Keith | 5,003 | 63,383 | 2.3 |
| Burwell, Garfield | 718 | 8,373 | -1.1 | Omaha, Douglas | 489,053 | 5,296,974 | 4.5 |
| Cairo, Hall | 226 | 2,788 | -12.2 | Ord, Valley | 1,835 | 20,760 | -2.2 |
| Central City, Merrick | 1,677 | 19,535 | 3.9 | Osceola, Polk | 484 | 7,504 | -11.5 |
| Ceresco, Saunders | 1,311 | 15,363 | 12.5 | Oshkosh, Garden | 423 | 4,900 | -6.0 |
| Chadron, Dawes | 4,498 | 51,340 | 6.1 | Osmond, Pierce | 551 | 5,386 | 6.8 |
| Chappell, Deuel | 521 | 5,380 | 11.7 | Oxford, Furnas | 392 | 4,923 | 7.2 |
| Clarkson, Colfax | 329 | 4,556 | -2.9 | Papillion, Sarpy | 7,005 | 79,590 | 11.3 |
| Clay Center, Clay | 227 | 3,932 | -1.9 | Pawnee City, Pawnee | 294 | 3,458 | 4.3 |
| Columbus, Platte | 21,017 | 224,667 | 0.5 | Pender, Thurston | 756 | 8,305 | 4.5 |
| Cozad, Dawson | 2,923 | 33,443 | 2.2 | Pierce, Pierce | 604 | 7,062 | -1.3 |
| Crawford, Dawes | 490 | 6,162 | 4.2 | Plainview, Pierce | 585 | 6,834 | -3.3 |
| Creighton, Knox | 935 | 12,776 | 8.6 | Plattsmouth, Cass | 3,215 | 37,853 | 2.9 |
| Crete, Saline | 2,724 | 36,816 | 6.1 | Ponca, Dixon | 214 | 5,204 | -7.1 |
| Crofton, Knox | 370 | 4,501 | 4.8 | Ralston, Douglas | 3,304 | 35,882 | -0.8 |
| Curtis, Frontier | 302 | 3,798 | -1.6 | Randolph, Cedar | 353 | 4,320 | -9.1 |
| Dakota City, Dakota | 307 | 4,456 | 7.3 | Ravenna, Buffalo | 506 | 7,316 | -11.5 |
| David City, Butler | 1,557 | 16,434 | 6.4 | Red Cloud, Webster | 620 | 7,292 | -4.2 |
| Deshler, Thayer | 218 | 3,011 | -12.5 | Rushville, Sheridan | 400 | 5,391 | -4.0 |
| Dodge, Dodge | 194 | 2,619 | -0.3 | Sargent, Custer | 176 | 2,196 | 5.8 |
| Doniphan, Hall | 825 | 9,758 | -21.1 | Schuyler, Colfax | 1,614 | 19,511 | -6.1 |
| Eagle, Cass | 229 | 4,508 | 3.3 | Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff | 21,881 | 236,144 | 7.3 |
| Elgin, Antelope | 471 | 4,506 | 1.3 | Scribner, Dodge | 525 | 4,995 | -4.3 |
| Elkhorn, Douglas | 2,274 | 27,809 | 7.5 | Seward, Seward | 4,756 | 51,793 | 1.4 |
| Elm Creek, Buffalo | 374 | 4,359 | 11.4 | Shelby, Polk | 363 | 3,938 | 13.1 |
| Elwood, Gosper | 230 | 4,760 | 1.2 | Shelton, Buffalo | 399 | 6,356 | -10.9 |
| Fairbury, Jefferson | 3,400 | 36,261 | 3.0 | Sidney, Cheyenne | 11,406 | 99,376 | 19.8 |
| Fairmont, Fillmore | 152 | 1,699 | -7.5 | South Sioux City, Dakota | 8,107 | 88,102 | 2.4 |
| Falls City, Richardson | 2,601 | 28,011 | 1.8 | Springfield, Sarpy | 603 | 6,087 | 19.0 |
| Franklin, Franklin | 506 | 6,024 | -2.1 | St. Paul, Howard | 1,257 | 13,519 | 1.7 |
| Fremont, Dodge | 23,559 | 249,636 | 9.2 | Stanton, Stanton | 561 | 6,663 | -0.6 |
| Friend, Saline | 379 | 5,178 | 6.7 | Stromsburg, Polk | 1,043 | 10,037 | -9.1 |
| Fullerton, Nance | 492 | 5,618 | 1.0 | Superior, Nuckolls | 1,448 | 17,114 | 0.9 |
| Geneva, Fillmore | 1,177 | 17,386 | -7.2 | Sutherland, Lincoln | 391 | 4,112 | 15.9 |
| Genoa, Nance | 251 | 3,085 | -3.7 | Sutton, Clay | 726 | 9,027 | -4.3 |
| Gering, Scotts Bluff | 3,825 | 42,851 | 12.7 | Syracuse, Otoe | 1,076 | 12,479 | 2.3 |
| Gibbon, Buffalo | 804 | 9,017 | -1.6 | Tecumseh, Johnson | 881 | 9,763 | 5.2 |
| Gordon, Sheridan | 1,496 | 18,495 | 0.4 | Tekamah, Burt | 965 | 12,397 | 2.5 |
| Gothenburg, Dawson | 2,069 | 25,807 | 7.3 | Tilden, Madison | 253 | 4,507 | -4.4 |
| Grand Island, Hall | 52,606 | 553,723 | 1.6 | Utica, Seward | 254 | 3,248 | 2.0 |
| Grant, Perkins | 794 | 11,039 | 1.3 | Valentine, Cherry | 4,002 | 45,857 | 3.2 |
| Gretna, Sarpy | 2,995 | 34,027 | -4.5 | Valley, Douglas | 1,457 | 14,384 | 7.2 |
| Hartington, Cedar | 1,443 | 17,392 | -2.7 | Wahoo, Saunders | 2,007 | 24,792 | -2.7 |
| Hastings, Adams | 20,372 | 226,295 | 1.3 | Wakefield, Dixon | 301 | 3,523 | -6.3 |
| Hay Springs, Sheridan | 322 | 3,824 | 7.9 | Wauneta, Chase | 280 | 3,282 | 2.0 |
| Hebron, Thayer | 1,359 | 19,607 | -4.4 | Waverly, Lancaster | 614 | 7,559 | -13.3 |
| Henderson, York | 524 | 6,544 | -6.4 | Wayne, Wayne | 3,482 | 40,347 | 12.6 |
| Hickman, Lancaster | 238 | 2,708 | -2.7 | Weeping Water, Cass | 636 | 7,381 | -0.3 |
| Holdrege, Phelps | 4,142 | 47,391 | 0.0 | West Point, Cuming | 3,453 | 39,312 | -3.9 |
| Hooper, Dodge | 320 | 3,932 | 3.6 | Wilber, Saline | 436 | 5,221 | 8.0 |
| Humboldt, Richardson | 264 | 5,218 | -1.7 | Wisner, Cuming | 676 | 6,884 | 5.3 |
| Humphrey, Platte | 701 | 8,100 | -4.6 | Wood River, Hall | 291 | 4,332 | -1.2 |
| Imperial, Chase | 1,725 | 21,688 | -2.0 | Wymore, Gage | 390 | 4,623 | 5.4 |
| Juniata, Adams | 210 | 2,354 | 11.7 | York, York | 9,822 | 111,282 | -0.5 |
| Kearney, Buffalo | 35,332 | 364,586 | 6.7 | | | | |

*Does not include motor vehicle sales. Motor vehicle net taxable retail sales are reported by county only.

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

Net Taxable Retail Sales for Nebraska Counties (\$000)

| | Motor Vehicle Sales | | | Other Sales | | | Motor Vehicle Sales | | | Other Sales | | | |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|-----------|---------------------|---------|-----------|-------------|---------|-----------|------|
| | November | | YTD | November | | YTD | November | | YTD | November | | YTD | |
| | 1999 | YTD | % Chg. vs | 1999 | YTD | % Chg. vs | 1999 | YTD | % Chg. vs | 1999 | YTD | % Chg. vs | |
| | (\$000) | (\$000) | Yr. Ago | (\$000) | (\$000) | Yr. Ago | (\$000) | (\$000) | Yr. Ago | (\$000) | (\$000) | Yr. Ago | |
| Nebraska | 197,190 | 2,332,651 | 4.8 | 1,423,159 | 15,315,997 | 4.2 | Howard | 738 | 8,786 | 4.9 | 1,568 | 17,427 | 2.3 |
| Adams | 3,178 | 39,391 | 6.9 | 20,946 | 234,271 | 1.4 | Jefferson | 913 | 11,475 | -2.0 | 4,388 | 47,312 | 3.3 |
| Antelope | 759 | 10,248 | -2.6 | 2,049 | 23,912 | -2.1 | Johnson | 599 | 6,222 | -2.6 | 1,170 | 13,345 | 3.3 |
| Arthur | 73 | 813 | 10.5 | (D) | (D) | (D) | Kearney | 950 | 10,027 | -1.8 | 1,700 | 22,067 | 5.2 |
| Banner | 185 | 1,321 | -0.8 | (D) | (D) | (D) | Keith | 1,434 | 14,756 | 22.8 | 5,506 | 69,825 | 2.6 |
| Blaine | 61 | 874 | -28.2 | (D) | (D) | (D) | Keya Paha | 85 | 1,270 | 11.2 | 83 | 1,094 | 9.9 |
| Boone | 905 | 8,994 | 3.4 | 1,989 | 24,335 | -2.9 | Kimball | 550 | 5,685 | 8.8 | 1,614 | 19,267 | 9.1 |
| Box Butte | 1,317 | 16,609 | -0.3 | 5,639 | 66,648 | -2.9 | Knox | 893 | 11,156 | 7.1 | 2,440 | 30,894 | 3.3 |
| Boyd | 258 | 2,658 | 2.5 | 511 | 6,107 | 6.3 | Lancaster | 24,497 | 305,018 | 5.1 | 226,129 | 2,311,309 | 6.3 |
| Brown | 436 | 5,072 | 14.6 | 1,678 | 20,272 | -4.2 | Lincoln | 4,183 | 48,884 | 9.4 | 23,322 | 261,320 | 5.3 |
| Buffalo | 4,489 | 55,035 | 2.6 | 37,769 | 396,031 | 5.9 | Logan | 222 | 1,573 | 3.4 | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Burt | 1,086 | 11,108 | -0.5 | 2,100 | 27,270 | 0.1 | Loup | 72 | 824 | -16.8 | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Butler | 936 | 12,536 | 11.6 | 1,942 | 21,205 | 2.7 | McPherson | 89 | 753 | 4.7 | (D) | (D) | (D) |
| Cass | 3,235 | 41,615 | 8.2 | 5,858 | 72,716 | 2.3 | Madison | 3,646 | 45,671 | 2.3 | 33,911 | 348,061 | 3.2 |
| Cedar | 1,204 | 13,426 | 10.3 | 2,385 | 28,974 | -3.6 | Merrick | 1,213 | 11,703 | 9.2 | 2,205 | 26,330 | 3.3 |
| Chase | 522 | 7,291 | 8.0 | 2,009 | 25,353 | -1.6 | Morrill | 657 | 8,195 | 22.8 | 1,385 | 17,311 | 2.6 |
| Cherry | 905 | 9,365 | -4.1 | 4,177 | 48,178 | 3.1 | Nance | 379 | 5,090 | -2.9 | 771 | 9,000 | -1.8 |
| Cheyenne | 1,339 | 16,219 | 24.8 | 11,656 | 102,443 | 19.3 | Nemaha | 717 | 10,427 | -2.9 | 2,392 | 28,217 | -2.1 |
| Clay | 976 | 10,681 | 7.0 | 1,753 | 23,390 | 1.5 | Nuckolls | 560 | 6,917 | 13.1 | 2,026 | 23,508 | 0.8 |
| Colfax | 1,121 | 13,137 | 5.7 | 2,460 | 28,372 | -5.1 | Otoe | 2,159 | 21,954 | 2.0 | 7,938 | 88,648 | 1.1 |
| Cuming | 1,035 | 13,139 | -2.6 | 4,584 | 52,246 | -3.1 | Pawnee | 374 | 4,057 | -5.0 | 539 | 5,732 | 5.5 |
| Custer | 1,445 | 15,904 | 4.4 | 4,415 | 51,228 | -0.7 | Perkins | 606 | 6,617 | 18.0 | 973 | 13,409 | 3.2 |
| Dakota | 2,177 | 26,777 | 12.1 | 8,929 | 99,245 | 2.3 | Phelps | 1,259 | 14,839 | 1.6 | 4,354 | 50,209 | -0.5 |
| Dawes | 1,172 | 10,498 | 13.4 | 4,988 | 57,536 | 5.9 | Pierce | 1,157 | 10,752 | 10.2 | 1,803 | 20,184 | 0.1 |
| Dawson | 2,950 | 30,889 | -2.7 | 12,221 | 140,900 | 1.5 | Platte | 3,881 | 46,406 | 16.7 | 22,231 | 239,092 | 0.3 |
| Deuel | 341 | 2,957 | -0.2 | 1,068 | 11,783 | 8.4 | Polk | 925 | 9,033 | 2.0 | 2,004 | 23,130 | -5.5 |
| Dixon | 833 | 8,846 | 1.3 | 633 | 9,925 | -7.0 | Red Willow | 1,740 | 16,415 | 15.3 | 12,257 | 130,169 | 3.1 |
| Dodge | 3,786 | 47,472 | 3.8 | 25,268 | 269,860 | 8.5 | Richardson | 911 | 11,160 | -2.1 | 3,053 | 35,460 | 0.2 |
| Douglas | 49,902 | 609,178 | 2.8 | 498,111 | 5,400,139 | 4.5 | Rock | 191 | 2,722 | 4.4 | 337 | 5,359 | 1.7 |
| Dundy | 346 | 3,691 | 0.7 | 499 | 6,233 | -2.5 | Saline | 1,406 | 17,047 | 1.3 | 3,894 | 51,497 | 6.1 |
| Fillmore | 1,068 | 8,981 | -9.3 | 1,819 | 25,920 | -5.7 | Sarpy | 16,287 | 182,493 | 8.0 | 43,916 | 460,488 | 8.4 |
| Franklin | 340 | 4,692 | 1.6 | 758 | 8,768 | -0.7 | Saunders | 2,576 | 30,632 | 1.9 | 6,108 | 65,475 | 4.6 |
| Frontier | 381 | 4,626 | -4.9 | 610 | 7,248 | 0.3 | Scotts Bluff | 4,864 | 52,078 | 18.1 | 26,977 | 294,466 | 7.7 |
| Furnas | 779 | 7,653 | 0.2 | 2,000 | 23,173 | -1.9 | Seward | 1,657 | 23,238 | 1.9 | 5,848 | 67,670 | 1.3 |
| Gage | 2,610 | 28,789 | 0.5 | 11,842 | 129,771 | 1.1 | Sheridan | 774 | 8,052 | -9.3 | 2,483 | 30,745 | 0.2 |
| Garden | 332 | 3,101 | -13.2 | 590 | 6,914 | -2.1 | Sherman | 453 | 4,487 | 6.2 | 556 | 8,038 | -1.8 |
| Garfield | 201 | 2,552 | 1.4 | 718 | 8,368 | -1.1 | Sioux | 322 | 2,877 | 11.0 | 137 | 1,386 | -6.5 |
| Gosper | 304 | 3,530 | 4.6 | 299 | 5,432 | 3.1 | Stanton | 558 | 8,660 | 2.9 | 755 | 8,719 | 4.4 |
| Grant | 56 | 1,669 | 12.5 | 179 | 2,514 | 1.6 | Thayer | 823 | 8,326 | -3.2 | 2,167 | 28,446 | -4.2 |
| Greeley | 328 | 3,464 | -10.9 | 560 | 7,160 | -5.1 | Thomas | 176 | 1,419 | 35.7 | 291 | 3,086 | -4.6 |
| Hall | 6,056 | 70,726 | 0.8 | 54,239 | 574,198 | 1.0 | Thurston | 353 | 4,997 | 3.2 | 860 | 9,672 | 4.3 |
| Hamilton | 1,150 | 14,620 | 17.7 | 2,371 | 31,664 | -3.7 | Valley | 496 | 5,826 | 4.9 | 2,056 | 23,317 | -1.6 |
| Harlan | 675 | 5,947 | 8.4 | 675 | 9,613 | -1.1 | Washington | 2,719 | 33,011 | 8.7 | 7,084 | 81,263 | 4.0 |
| Hayes | 177 | 1,893 | 17.0 | (D) | (D) | (D) | Wayne | 1,072 | 10,816 | -0.8 | 3,644 | 42,143 | 12.4 |
| Hitchcock | 585 | 4,702 | 14.6 | 505 | 6,617 | 4.9 | Webster | 416 | 5,041 | 5.5 | 1,126 | 13,404 | -4.1 |
| Holt | 1,421 | 16,167 | -2.7 | 5,806 | 64,867 | 1.4 | Wheeler | 110 | 1,444 | -12.2 | 83 | 1,002 | -8.7 |
| Hooker | 98 | 1,197 | -10.7 | 191 | 3,977 | 5.7 | York | 1,587 | 19,633 | -3.2 | 10,780 | 122,640 | -1.0 |

*Totals may not add due to rounding
(D) Denotes disclosure suppression

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

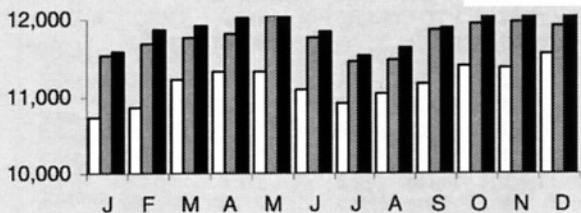
Note on Net Taxable Retail Sales

Users of this series should be aware that taxable retail sales are not generated exclusively by traditional outlets such as clothing, discount, and hardware stores. While businesses classified as retail trade firms account for, on average, slightly more than half of total taxable sales, sizable portions of taxable sales are generated by service establishments, electric and gas utilities, wholesalers, telephone and cable companies, and manufacturers.

Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment* 1997 to December** 1999

1997 1998 1999

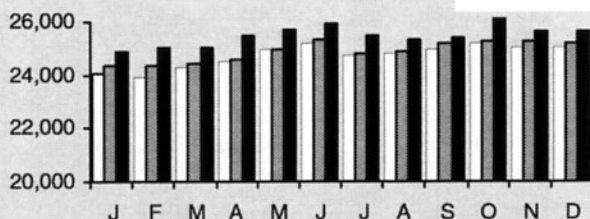
Northwest Panhandle



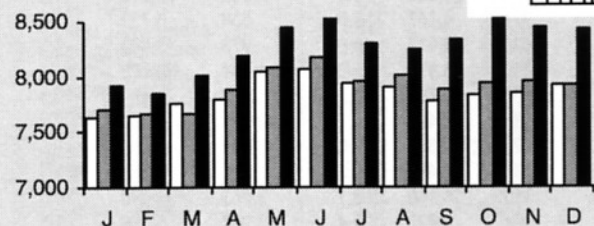
Note to Readers

The charts on pages 8 and 9 report nonfarm employment by place of work for each region.

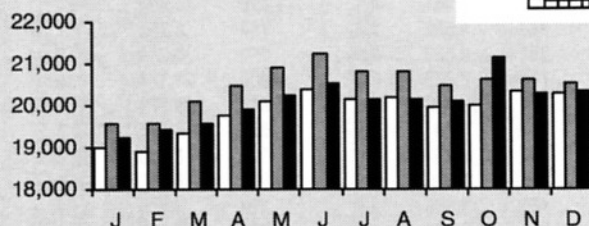
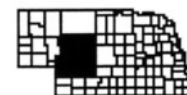
Southwest Panhandle



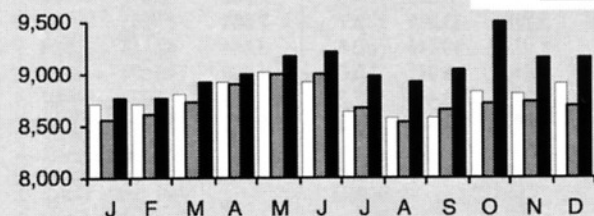
North Central



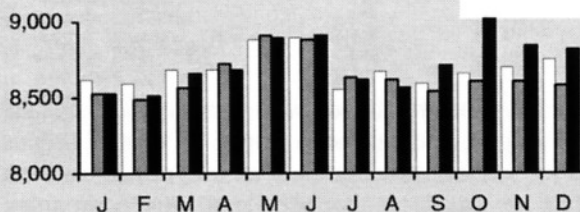
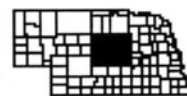
West Central



Southwest Central



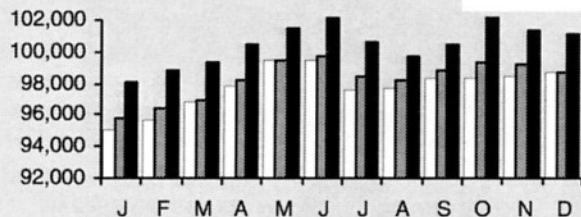
East Central



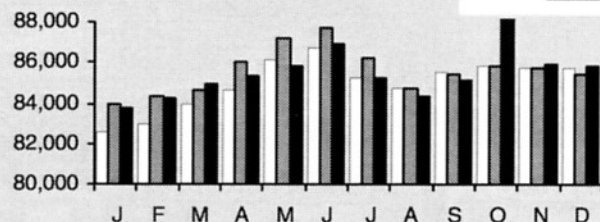
Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment* 1997 to December** 1999

□ 1997 ▒ 1998 ■ 1999

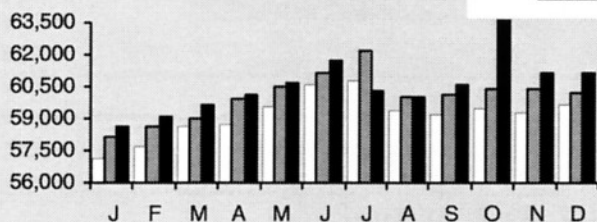
Southeast Central



Northeast

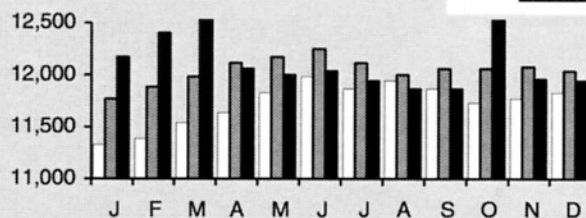


Southeast



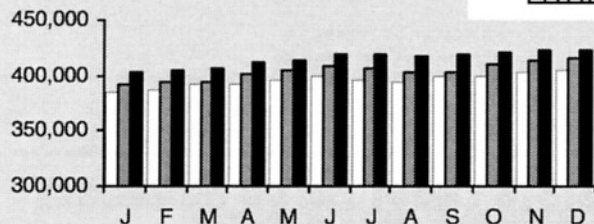
Sioux City MSA

Nebraska portion only

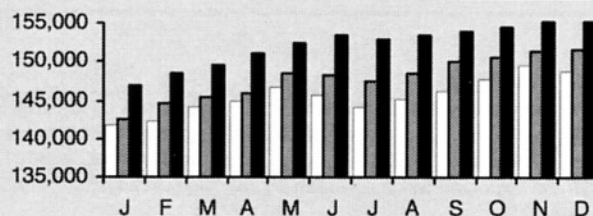
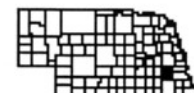


Omaha MSA

Nebraska portion only



Lincoln MSA



*By place of work

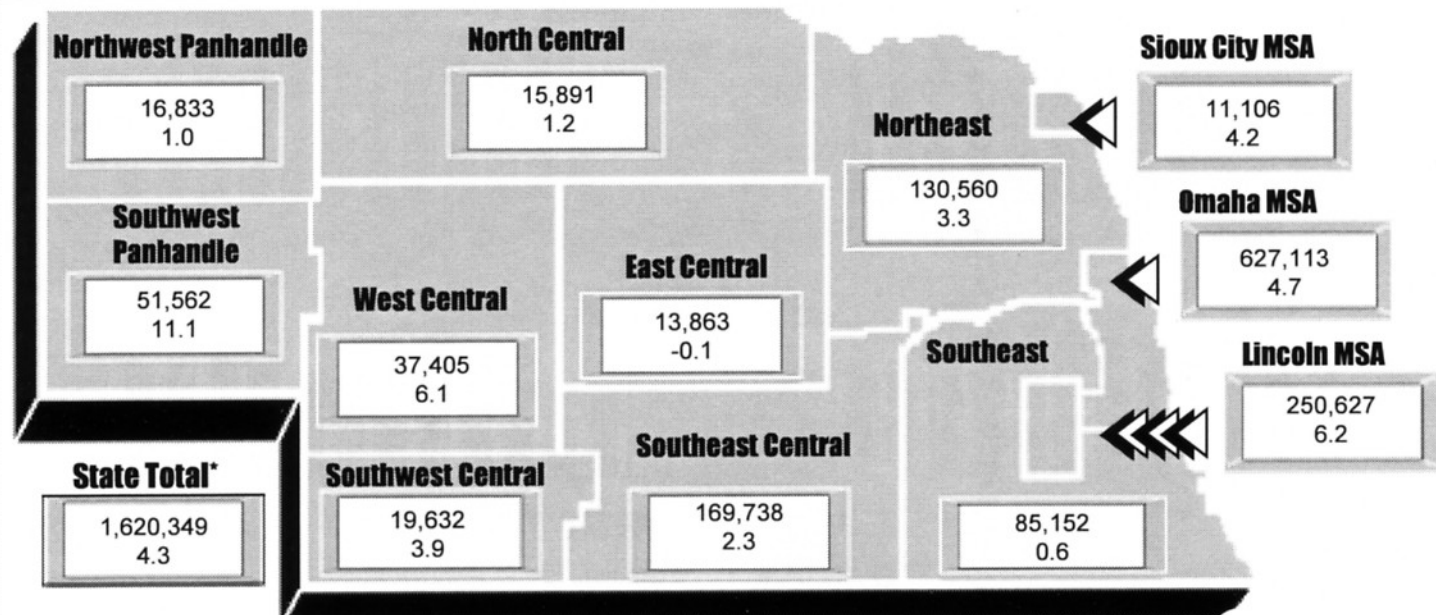
**Current month data are preliminary and subject to revision

Note: All 1999 monthly employment data are considered estimates until benchmarked in March of 2000. Data shown for 1999 are the most current revised estimates available. Final benchmarked monthly data for 1999 are expected to be released by the Nebraska Department of Labor in mid-2000.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information - Kathy Copas and Amy Schofield

November 1999 Regional Retail Sales (\$000)

YTD Change vs Yr. Ago



*Regional values may not add to state total due to unallocated sales
Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

State Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment by Industry*

| | December 1999 |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Total | 901,993 |
| Construction & Mining | 45,141 |
| Manufacturing | 117,071 |
| Durables | 56,839 |
| Nondurables | 60,232 |
| TCU** | 57,570 |
| Trade | 220,188 |
| Wholesale | 55,811 |
| Retail | 164,377 |
| FIRE*** | 61,150 |
| Services | 245,689 |
| Government | 155,184 |

*By place of work

**Transportation, Communication, and Utilities

***Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

Note: All 1999 monthly employment and labor force data are considered estimates until benchmarked in March of 2000. Data shown for 1999 are the most current revised estimates available. Final benchmarked monthly data for 1999 are expected to be released by the Nebraska Department of Labor in mid-2000.

Consumer Price Index

Consumer Price Index - U*
(1982-84 = 100)
(not seasonally adjusted)

| | January 2000 | % Change vs Yr. Ago | YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago (inflation rate) |
|-------------|--------------|---------------------|--|
| All Items | 168.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| Commodities | 146.2 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Services | 191.4 | 2.7 | 2.7 |

*U = All urban consumers

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Inflation Rate

2.7

State Labor Force Summary*

| | December 1999 |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Labor Force | 932,491 |
| Employment | 910,921 |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.3 |

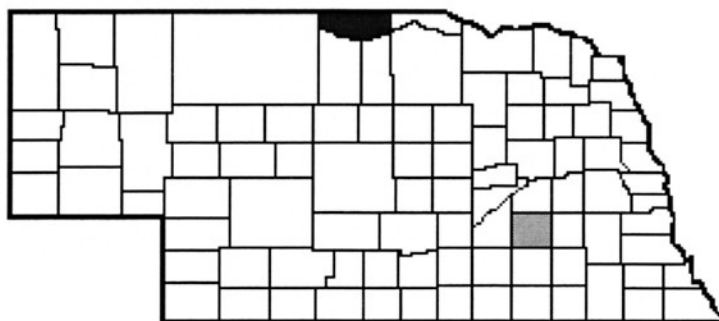
*By place of residence

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

County of the Month

Keya Paha

Springview-County Seat



License plate prefix number: 82

Size of county: 769 square miles, ranks 28th in the state

Population: 972 in 1998, a change of -5.5 percent from 1990

Per capita personal income: \$5,666 in 1997, ranks 92nd in the state

Net taxable retail sales (\$000): \$2,537 in 1998, a change of -6.8 percent from 1997; \$2,371 from January through November of 1999, a change of 10.8 percent from the same period the previous year.

Unemployment rate: 2.1 percent in Keya Paha County, 2.7 percent in Nebraska in 1998

| | State | Keya Paha County |
|---|---------------------------|------------------|
| Nonfarm employment (1998)²: | 875,352 | 99 |
| (wage & salary) | <i>(percent of total)</i> | |
| Construction and Mining | 4.8 | (D) |
| Manufacturing | 13.6 | (D) |
| TCU | 6.4 | (D) |
| Wholesale Trade | 6.2 | (D) |
| Retail Trade | 18.0 | (D) |
| FIRE | 6.6 | (D) |
| Services | 27.2 | (D) |
| Government | 17.2 | 71.7 |

(D) = disclosure suppression

Agriculture:

Number of farms: 225 in 1997, 206 in 1992, 259 in 1987

Average farm size: 2,221 acres in 1997, 2,165 acres in 1992

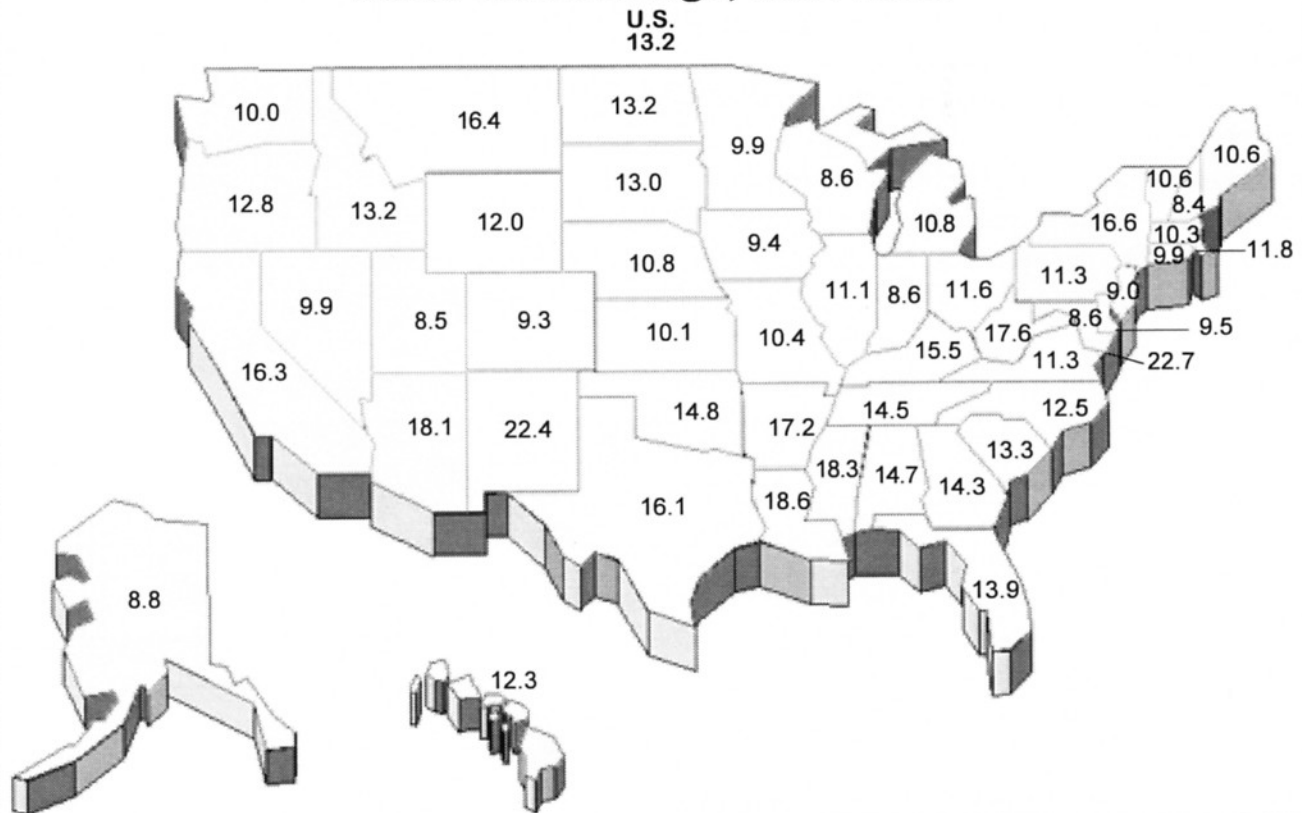
Market value of farm products sold: \$27.1 million in 1997 (\$120,633 average per farm), \$20.6 million in 1992 (\$99,906 average per farm)

¹By place of work

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Nebraska Department of Labor, Nebraska Department of Revenue.

bulletin board

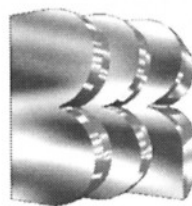
Percent of Persons in Poverty, by State Three-Year Average, 1996-1998



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