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A Nebraska Success Story—The Tri-Cities

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The Tri-Cities—Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney—have defied what the first American explorer of the area predicted. In 1806 Zebulon Pike believed it would "...become in time equally celebrated as the sandy deserts (*sic*) of Africa." In fact, the opposite is true. The Tri-Cities area is one of the fastest growing in Nebraska.

How has this area become so prosperous? A review of growth in the Tri-Cities and the surrounding area over the past half century reveals some key facts that tell the success story. This review considers the Tri-Cities' past, present, and future population growth.

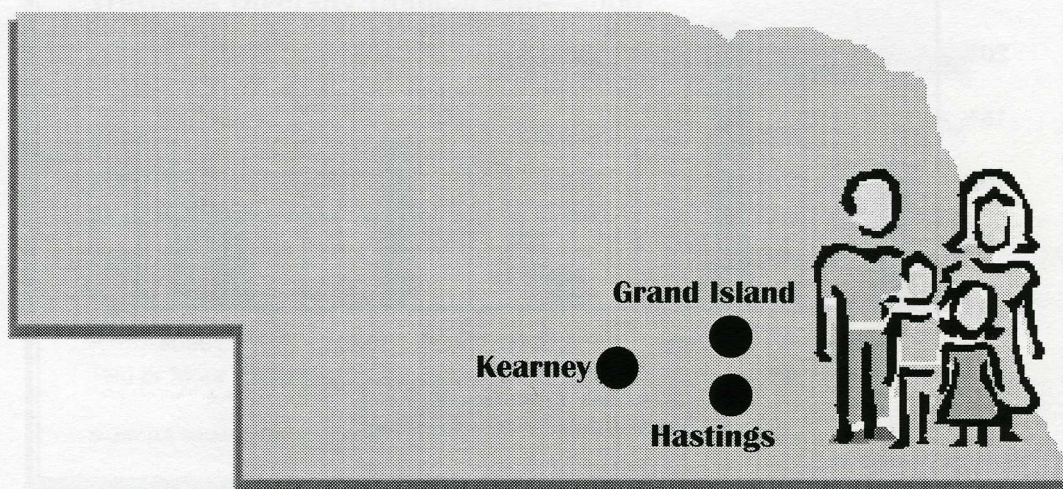
This study examines the Tri-Cities and their corresponding counties, Adams, Buffalo, and Hall, along with the communities within a 35-mile radius of the Tri-Cities. Clay,

Hamilton, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Phelps, and Webster Counties were studied, as well as portions of Dawson, Franklin, Harlan, Nuckolls, Polk, Sherman, and York.

Demographic Characteristics

The population growth rate is important to and indicative of the health of an economy since it supplies workers and consumers. A major component of the Tri-Cities' expansion has been the substantial population growth over the past 50 years.

The Tri-Cities grew at rates that closely followed the U.S. rate. In 2000 the population of the Tri-Cities was 71.7 percent larger than in 1950. During that period, the national population growth rate was 86 percent, while Nebraska's population growth was 29.1 percent.



Although population growth in the Tri-Cities fluctuated during those 50 years, positive average annual growth prevailed from 1950 to 2000. This was true for Grand Island and Kearney, but Hastings experienced some negative growth in the 1970s.

The Tri-Cities' boom and bust decades were unique and did not coincide with those of the U.S. or the state. Rapid growth in the Tri-Cities began in the 1960s. The U.S. grew rapidly a decade earlier, while Nebraska's growth spurt happened later in the 1990s (Figure 1).

During the 1960s, the Tri-Cities grew 22.4 percent, or 2 percent per year. This rapid growth was analogous to the expansion of the 1870s and 1880s when the intercontinental railroad was constructed. Aspiring landowners poured into the area, the weather was good, and crops were plentiful. Similarly, in the 1960s Nebraska's portion of the interstate highway system was completed. This opened the Tri-Cities to new opportunities as a natural hub since the area is equidistant from both coasts. Also, the advent of new agricultural technology, particularly advanced irrigation techniques, coupled with favorable weather, resulted in generous crop yields.

In the 1970s the Tri-Cities' aggregate growth slowed drastically. In contrast, growth in Nebraska and the U.S. did not slow until the 1980s. Hastings had negative growth during the decade, resulting in a 2.3 percent population decline. Grand Island grew only 2.5 percent from 1970 to 1980. In contrast, Kearney's population increased 10.3 percent. Overall, by the end of the 1970s, the Tri-Cities averaged only 3 percent growth, while Nebraska's growth was 5.8 percent.

Diversity

There are more ethnicities, cultures, and classes in the U.S. than ever before. The Tri-Cities, like the rest of the state, have seen increases in minority populations. In 1950 the Tri-Cities were almost exclusively comprised of white residents—99.4 percent. Simultaneously, Nebraska's population

also was largely homogeneous. The 1950 Census indicates that only 1.8 percent were nonwhite.



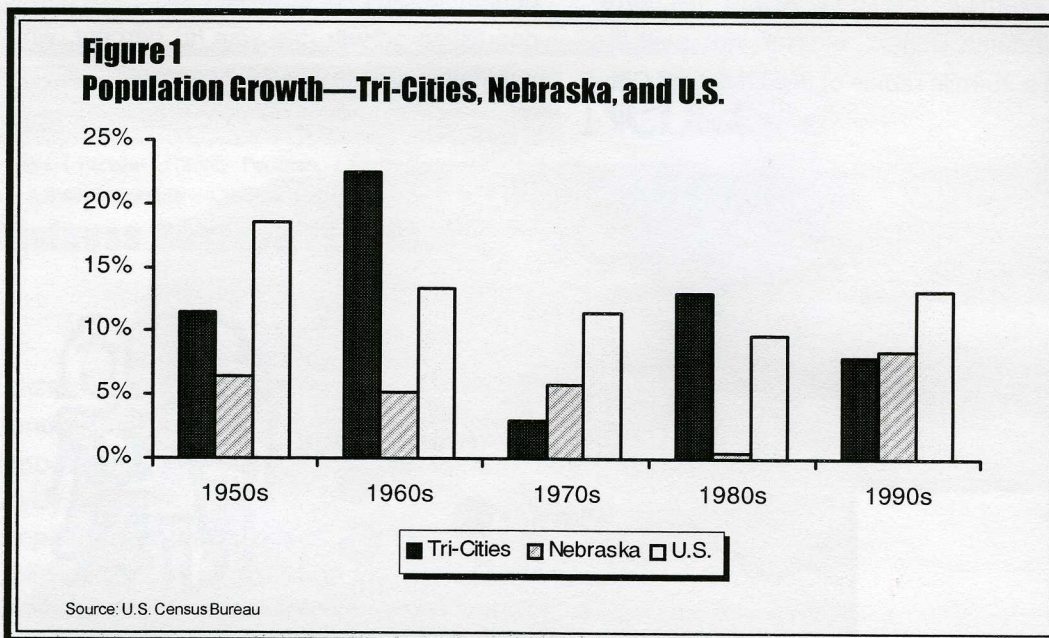
Although trailing the nation, both the Tri-Cities and Nebraska have become more diverse over the past 50 years. In 2000 the Tri-Cities' population

was composed of 90.9 percent whites (Table 1, page 3).

Hispanic Population

The U.S. Census Bureau began collecting data on the Hispanic population in 1970. Those of Spanish heritage were defined as persons of Spanish mother tongue and all other persons in families in which the head or wife reported Spanish as his or her mother tongue.

The Census listed places with populations of 400 or more Spanish-speaking persons and Grand Island and Kearney were listed in 1970. Each had 2.4 percent Spanish-speaking persons.



Larger numbers of persons of Hispanic origin had moved to the Tri-Cities compared to the state by 2000. According to the 2000 Census, the Tri-Cities' population included 9.9 percent Hispanics, while the state had 5.5 percent. Grand Island saw the largest growth in Hispanic population. Since 1970 this group grew 6.5 times as large and represented 16 percent of Grand Island's total population by 2000. Hastings and Kearney substantially trailed Grand Island with Hispanic populations of 5.6 and 4.1 percent, respectively.

Age

The age composition of an area has a prominent impact on the economy. Conditional upon age, residents could be more or less dependent on the local economy to provide goods and services such as retirement and disability insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, family assistance, and food stamps. A high dependence rate (the percent of residents younger than 20 and older than 65) can put a strain on a community, resulting in slower growth and a weakened economy.

The age composition of the Tri-Cities is comparable to that of the state. A trend in the data demonstrates that in 2000 there were fewer residents under the age of 20 and more over

65 than in 1950. The dependency rate did not necessarily change, however, because the percent of residents less than 20 years old decreased at approximately the same rate as the percent of residents 65 years and older increased.

A shift occurred in the age distribution containing the largest percent of residents. In 2000 the majority of Tri-Cities' residents were between 35 and 44, while in 1950 they were in a younger cohort—25 to 34. Nebraska did not have a similar transition. In 2000, as well as in 1950, the largest age group was between 35 and 44.

However, when the Tri-Cities are studied individually, the results are unlike the aggregate composition. Kearney, in particular, differs from Grand Island and Hastings. Kearney's largest percent of residents shifted from 25-to-34 year olds in 1950 to 20-to-24 year olds in 2000. Also, the dependency rate decreased from 43.5 percent in 1950 to 39.7 percent by 2000. Both Grand Island and Hastings had increases in dependency rates.

Differences in age composition could attest to the unique growth patterns among the Tri-Cities. The data reveal that Kearney's population has become less dependent. This could explain why Kearney grew faster throughout the past five decades than Grand Island and Hastings.



Table 1
Tri-Cities Diversity Comparison—2000

	<i>Tri-Cities</i>	<i>Nebraska</i>	<i>U.S.</i>
White	90.9%	89.6%	75.1%
Black/African American	0.6%	4.0%	12.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.9%	0.9%
Asian	1.4%	1.3%	3.6%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Some Other Race	5.5%	2.8%	5.5%
Two or More Races	1.2%	1.4%	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Proximity to the Tri-Cities

The Tri-Cities grew 71.7 percent from 1950 to 2000. The area communities (within a 35-mile radius) grew at different rates depending on their proximity to the Tri-Cities (Figure 2).

Communities within 15 miles of one of the Tri-Cities grew approximately 54.8 percent, on average, from 1950 to 2000. Of the 18 communities in this category, only one experienced negative growth. Two communities grew far above the average. For example, Alda, located about six miles from Grand Island, grew 243 percent, and Juniata, seven miles from Hastings, grew 90 percent.

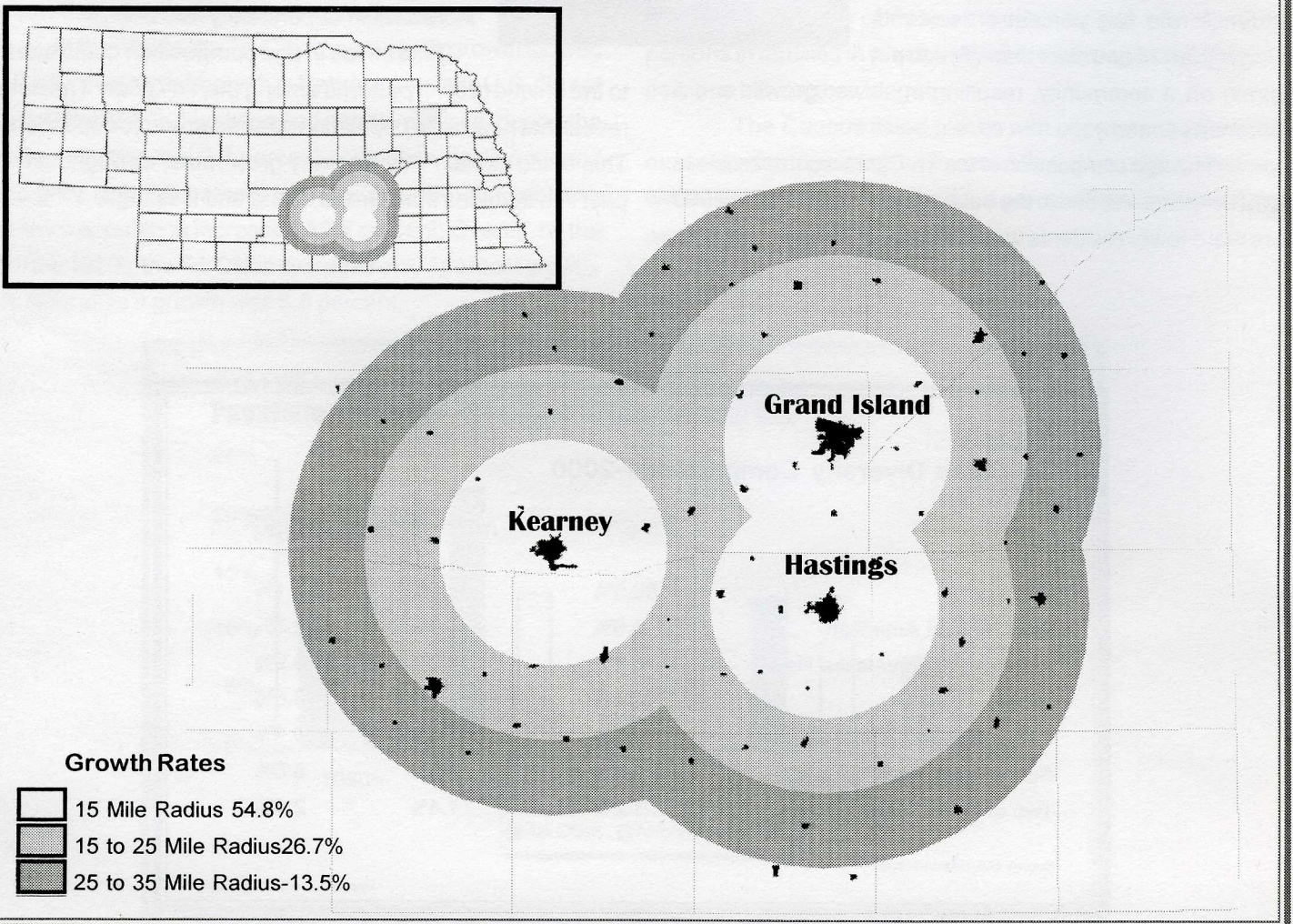
The 29 communities lying between 15 and 25 miles from the Tri-Cities grew roughly 26.7 percent over the 50-year period. Positive growth prevailed, but 31 percent of the communities declined. Two communities grew considerably more than average from 1950 to 2000. Axtell, 17 miles from Kearney,

nearly doubled, while Pleasanton, 18 miles from Kearney, grew 91.5 percent. Reasons for substantial growth in these four nearby communities could be lower housing costs and life style preferences.

Significantly less growth occurred in communities that are 25 to 35 miles from the Tri-Cities. The 29 communities included in this category declined 13.5 percent, on average. Only seven of the 29 communities grew.

Communities 25 to 35 miles from the Tri-Cities were sorted by 2000 population size. Eight communities with less than 100 residents were only half as large as in 1950. Fifteen communities with more than 100 but fewer than 500 residents declined 16.5 percent, on average. The six largest communities, those with more than 500 but less than 1,500 residents, declined 4.7 percent. Populations of all communities in this category were constricted over the period, but the larger the population, the slower the rate of decline.

Figure 2
Proximity and Growth Rates of Tri-Cities Area Communities



Transition from Nonmetro to Metro

The logical question resulting from these statistics is whether or not the Tri-Cities draw residents from the small nearby communities. While many other options are available, the Tri-Cities likely are attractive because of their sizes, locations, and familiarity. The rapid growth in the Tri-Cities also could be attributed to the nonmetro-to-metro phenomenon.

A shift in the population from nonmetro to metro communities occurred during the last century. Over 76 percent of Nebraskans lived in nonmetro areas in 1900; by 1950 53.1 percent; but, by 2000 nearly 75 percent lived in metro areas. The western and central portions of Nebraska are considered nonmetro, while the eastern part is metro. Therefore, a population flow pattern from west to east has occurred over time.

Since the Tri-Cities are centrally located and clustered approximately 40 miles apart, they act as magnet communities that draw people from the western portion of the state—especially those on the fringes of the Tri-Cities area. As people look to the central and eastern parts of the state to relocate, the Tri-Cities may seem more enticing because of their sizes and locations. They are not as large or as far away from home as Lincoln and Omaha.

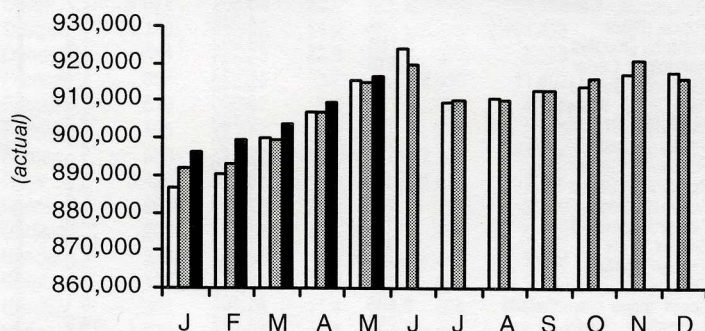
Other Aspects of Growth

Economies are very complex with many factors that affect their performance. This study of the Tri-Cities' population is one aspect of growth. An expanded study of employment and income in the Tri-Cities will be forthcoming.

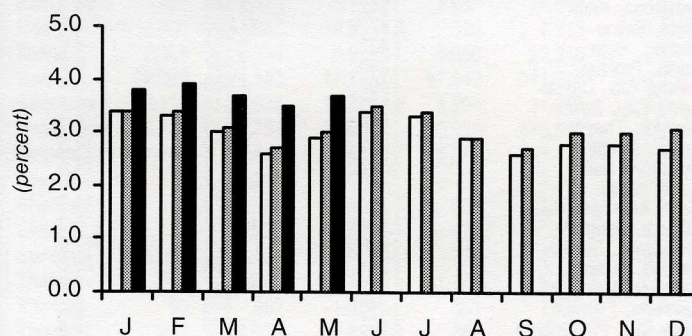
Nebraska Stats

2000 2001 2002

Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment



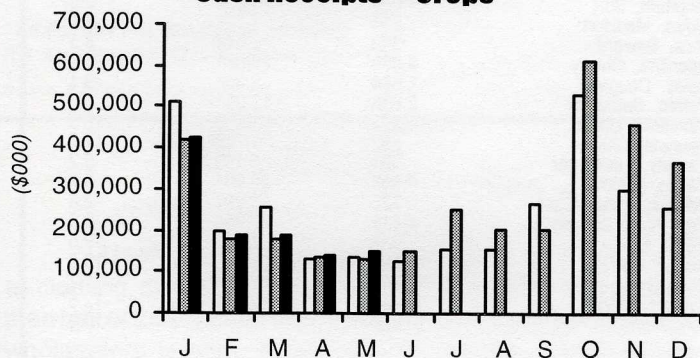
Unemployment Rate



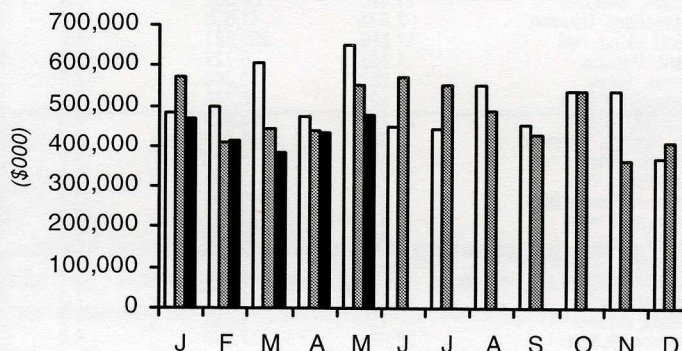
Note: Monthly data through March 2001 are benchmarked. Data for April-December 2001 are estimates until benchmarked in early 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available.

2000 2001 2002

Cash Receipts—Crops



Cash Receipts—Livestock



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

	May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago		May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago
Ainsworth, Brown	1,683	7,657	-0.6	Kenesaw, Adams	251	1,924	8.0
Albion, Boone	1,638	7,540	-1.9	Kimball, Kimball	1,874	8,755	-1.6
Alliance, Box Butte	5,969	27,632	0.5	La Vista, Sarpy	11,800	54,388	7.4
Alma, Harlan	718	3,079	9.5	Laurel, Cedar	355	1,803	4.6
Arapahoe, Furnas	755	3,744	-6.0	Lexington, Dawson	8,149	38,684	3.7
Arlington, Washington	193	1,023	-20.3	Lincoln, Lancaster	235,480	1,077,837	2.8
Arnold, Custer	224	1,192	3.9	Louisville, Cass	499	2,034	-11.7
Ashland, Saunders	1,671	6,135	-3.4	Loup City, Sherman	493	2,363	5.8
Atkinson, Holt	1,085	5,158	1.7	Lyons, Burt	459	1,994	3.4
Auburn, Nemaha	2,498	11,672	-1.9	Madison, Madison	779	4,005	1.2
Aurora, Hamilton	2,241	10,976	-9.0	McCook, Red Willow	10,468	47,240	2.5
Axtell, Kearney	66	355	11.3	Milford, Seward	659	4,898	-3.7
Bassett, Rock	514	2,170	4.3	Minatare, Scotts Bluff	162	729	4.0
Battle Creek, Madison	621	3,511	-10.0	Minden, Kearney	1,918	9,221	5.1
Bayard, Morrill	427	2,437	5.5	Mitchell, Scotts Bluff	560	3,063	18.5
Beatrice, Gage	13,291	60,387	1.0	Morrill, Scotts Bluff	628	2,727	7.2
Beaver City, Furnas	120	578	-3.2	Nebraska City, Otoe	6,218	28,170	-5.9
Bellevue, Sarpy	29,139	124,672	8.8	Neigh, Antelope	1,553	6,897	2.3
Benkelman, Dundy	576	3,027	2.3	Newman Grove, Madison	303	1,412	-6.6
Bennington, Douglas	676	2,704	-3.7	Norfolk, Madison	33,125	155,401	3.0
Blair, Washington	8,080	37,875	0.0	North Bend, Dodge	569	2,651	-1.3
Bloomfield, Knox	533	2,566	-9.5	North Platte, Lincoln	26,486	120,117	2.8
Blue Hill, Webster	396	2,252	7.4	ONeill, Holt	4,879	21,134	0.3
Bridgeport, Morrill	1,102	5,492	-1.4	Oakland, Burt	594	2,782	-7.4
Broken Bow, Custer	4,081	18,519	1.9	Ogallala, Keith	6,185	27,266	5.4
Burwell, Garfield	895	4,120	4.4	Omaha, Douglas	518,008	2,449,065	0.2
Cairo, Hall	604	1,628	9.3	Ord, Valley	2,123	10,442	2.4
Central City, Merrick	1,761	8,817	-3.0	Osceola, Polk	456	2,386	-3.5
Ceresco, Saunders	1,125	5,857	4.1	Oshkosh, Garden	465	2,356	5.3
Chadron, Dawes	5,472	26,298	-25.5	Osmond, Pierce	415	1,809	3.9
Chappell, Deuel	468	2,471	5.7	Oxford, Furnas	419	2,799	19.4
Clarkson, Colfax	366	1,822	-10.3	Papillion, Sarpy	7,853	36,290	-2.6
Clay Center, Clay	192	1,196	5.8	Pawnee City, Pawnee	329	1,521	-5.4
Columbus, Platte	22,253	100,877	2.0	Pender, Thurston	781	3,638	-1.7
Cozad, Dawson	3,054	15,014	3.9	Pierce, Pierce	602	3,209	-5.4
Crawford, Dawes	641	2,645	8.7	Plainview, Pierce	763	3,465	2.9
Creighton, Knox	942	5,146	-4.4	Plattsmouth, Cass	3,698	16,507	-2.2
Crete, Saline	2,872	14,003	-2.2	Ponca, Dixon	284	1,242	-8.2
Crofton, Knox	437	1,738	-6.6	Ralston, Douglas	3,754	16,962	-1.4
Curtis, Frontier	383	1,947	6.2	Randolph, Cedar	418	2,233	7.7
Dakota City, Dakota	407	1,939	-5.4	Ravenna, Buffalo	614	3,249	3.1
David City, Butler	1,659	7,818	-6.7	Red Cloud, Webster	706	3,500	3.9
Deshler, Thayer	250	1,519	-6.1	Rushville, Sheridan	408	2,103	2.7
Dodge, Dodge	272	1,443	10.5	Sargent, Custer	174	969	-12.2
Doniphan, Hall	802	3,743	-14.3	Schuyler, Colfax	1,723	8,736	-7.9
Eagle, Cass	509	1,507	-6.2	Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff	24,045	111,625	5.2
Elgin, Antelope	359	1,976	-11.2	Scribner, Dodge	400	1,760	-5.9
Elkhorn, Douglas	2,964	10,267	-5.3	Seward, Seward	5,018	21,988	-3.6
Elm Creek, Buffalo	300	1,421	-17.0	Shelby, Polk	341	1,759	-13.0
Elwood, Gosper	381	1,554	26.8	Shelton, Buffalo	450	2,596	5.0
Fairbury, Jefferson	2,889	13,927	-5.8	Sidney, Cheyenne	9,920	43,156	2.3
Fairmont, Fillmore	248	863	2.6	South Sioux City, Dakota	8,806	41,405	6.1
Falls City, Richardson	2,585	12,243	-2.8	Springfield, Sarpy	256	1,247	-54.9
Franklin, Franklin	610	3,096	10.6	St. Paul, Howard	1,411	7,324	6.8
Fremont, Dodge	25,780	117,259	1.5	Stanton, Stanton	604	3,099	-4.8
Friend, Saline	481	2,264	-27.9	Stromsburg, Polk	908	4,094	-6.1
Fullerton, Nance	501	2,921	8.9	Superior, Nuckolls	1,621	7,171	-3.5
Geneva, Fillmore	1,625	7,010	-2.7	Sutherland, Lincoln	357	1,979	-2.5
Genoa, Nance	307	1,661	-0.4	Sutton, Clay	743	4,108	-1.3
Gering, Scotts Bluff	4,632	22,052	9.6	Syracuse, Otoe	1,296	6,146	9.2
Gibbon, Buffalo	806	4,022	-3.3	Tecumseh, Johnson	897	3,807	-16.6
Gordon, Sheridan	1,440	7,562	-0.4	Tekamah, Burt	1,096	5,339	2.0
Gothenburg, Dawson	2,624	11,636	-0.2	Tilden, Madison	234	1,194	-4.2
Grand Island, Hall	57,279	266,821	3.0	Utica, Seward	340	2,044	8.3
Grant, Perkins	1,368	6,727	5.2	Valentine, Cherry	4,850	22,691	-8.3
Gretna, Sarpy	3,232	13,368	-2.8	Valley, Douglas	1,864	5,286	-9.1
Hartington, Cedar	1,921	8,748	7.5	Wahoo, Saunders	2,636	12,033	0.6
Hastings, Adams	22,477	102,975	0.5	Wakefield, Dixon	392	1,599	-18.5
Hay Springs, Sheridan	367	1,844	-2.1	Wauneta, Chase	292	1,768	11.7
Hebron, Thayer	1,088	5,628	3.9	Waverly, Lancaster	991	5,165	5.2
Henderson, York	725	3,335	5.3	Wayne, Wayne	4,308	20,601	6.2
Hickman, Lancaster	222	1,153	3.6	Weeping Water, Cass	726	3,291	-2.8
Holdrege, Phelps	4,438	21,707	-2.3	West Point, Cuming	4,419	22,244	-8.9
Hooper, Dodge	429	2,055	1.3	Wilber, Saline	438	2,162	-9.5
Humboldt, Richardson	334	1,579	-5.4	Wisner, Cuming	533	2,735	-10.8
Humphrey, Platte	822	3,860	5.7	Wood River, Hall	360	2,018	1.2
Imperial, Chase	2,194	9,447	7.3	Wymore, Gage	406	2,054	-12.5
Juniata, Adams	190	1,193	-9.8	York, York	10,626	48,577	0.6
Kearney, Buffalo	38,063	177,969	4.8				

*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			
	May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May 2002 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	
Nebraska	263,844	1,216,840	13.2	1,512,836	7,139,080	0.7	Howard	934	4,940	26.0	1,726	9,168	5.3
Adams	3,617	18,927	9.2	23,201	107,260	0.5	Jefferson	1,429	6,111	21.4	3,907	19,247	-3.3
Antelope	1,031	6,020	8.5	2,277	10,706	-0.4	Johnson	567	3,476	37.3	1,172	5,349	-15.0
Arthur	36	486	30.0	(D)	(D)	(D)	Kearney	866	5,621	9.2	2,108	10,046	4.3
Banner	150	838	-7.9	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keith	1,327	7,339	10.5	6,798	29,745	6.3
Blaine	128	471	-29.7	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keya Paha	161	903	21.5	122	567	8.6
Boone	890	4,595	-0.7	2,121	9,748	-3.9	Kimball	770	3,255	14.5	1,914	8,968	-1.5
Box Butte	2,298	10,132	28.0	6,309	29,229	0.5	Knox	1,272	6,154	3.7	2,586	12,698	-4.5
Boyd	392	1,695	20.8	621	2,481	-3.4	Lancaster	36,033	156,863	14.0	238,988	1,096,189	2.7
Brown	511	2,424	-7.7	1,788	8,057	0.1	Lincoln	5,635	25,154	8.9	27,487	124,739	2.6
Buffalo	6,821	29,961	11.9	40,833	191,687	4.7	Logan	107	863	-0.8	(D)	(D)	(D)
Burt	1,185	6,287	23.2	2,526	11,787	0.5	Loup	148	499	-6.6	(D)	(D)	(D)
Butler	1,043	5,933	5.2	2,009	10,052	-6.1	McPherson	108	512	-0.2	(D)	(D)	(D)
Cass	4,801	21,195	23.1	6,941	30,650	-4.1	Madison	5,968	24,912	30.6	35,103	165,836	2.5
Cedar	1,274	7,342	10.9	2,988	14,208	6.7	Merrick	938	5,009	-10.5	2,529	12,046	-1.8
Chase	687	4,582	15.7	2,488	11,306	7.4	Morrill	759	3,971	-2.0	1,549	8,063	0.5
Cherry	1,050	5,590	10.9	5,055	23,621	-8.1	Nance	503	2,879	8.0	855	4,759	4.7
Cheyenne	1,613	7,799	2.2	10,225	44,487	1.8	Nemaha	998	5,309	1.0	2,705	12,963	-2.4
Clay	1,188	5,342	5.0	1,824	10,152	-2.9	Nuckolls	690	3,551	8.3	2,386	11,272	-1.1
Colfax	1,315	6,914	10.9	2,569	12,744	-5.9	Otoe	2,456	11,899	21.0	8,014	36,401	-3.7
Cuming	1,312	7,284	3.6	5,447	27,373	-8.8	Pawnee	461	2,335	5.8	515	2,508	-2.4
Custer	1,784	8,778	0.7	5,053	23,578	0.6	Perkins	713	3,453	3.0	1,563	7,898	5.3
Dakota	2,701	11,966	8.7	9,797	46,348	4.4	Phelps	1,406	8,741	15.9	4,752	23,436	-1.5
Dawes	974	5,549	17.4	6,113	28,943	-23.3	Pierce	1,041	6,110	21.3	1,882	8,875	-0.1
Dawson	3,387	17,311	8.8	14,216	67,133	2.6	Platte	4,909	23,226	12.0	23,620	108,004	2.3
Deuel	343	1,664	11.8	1,145	5,413	3.3	Polk	766	4,054	-2.8	1,926	9,093	-6.0
Dixon	660	3,989	0.5	787	3,389	-13.2	Red Willow	1,738	8,456	11.4	10,750	48,711	2.2
Dodge	5,674	25,886	20.0	27,740	126,584	1.3	Richardson	995	5,823	5.1	3,061	14,864	-4.3
Douglas	71,179	309,432	14.6	528,815	2,491,438	0.1	Rock	202	1,247	-19.9	523	2,213	3.6
Dundy	461	2,343	22.0	577	3,054	2.0	Saline	2,224	9,334	8.9	4,050	20,265	-7.5
Fillmore	897	5,070	3.7	2,650	11,802	-2.7	Sarpy	22,922	101,143	17.1	57,842	247,678	6.2
Franklin	610	2,597	-8.6	783	4,243	4.8	Saunders	3,199	15,937	14.3	6,994	31,219	3.4
Frontier	495	2,572	1.9	648	3,385	-2.0	Scotts Bluff	5,335	25,784	23.6	30,089	140,669	6.2
Furnas	680	3,827	-10.3	2,203	12,068	5.2	Seward	2,180	11,424	5.8	6,260	30,353	-2.7
Gage	3,429	15,303	5.1	14,621	67,591	0.1	Sheridan	810	4,824	22.1	2,575	13,063	0.3
Garden	563	2,126	21.4	706	3,269	7.2	Sherman	454	2,388	-3.5	601	2,954	3.4
Garfield	208	1,352	10.1	895	4,120	4.4	Sioux	172	1,338	15.6	177	554	4.1
Gosper	378	2,095	6.6	443	1,869	24.4	Stanton	1,092	5,101	26.9	770	4,011	-9.4
Grant	125	879	32.2	280	1,407	0.6	Thayer	840	4,765	21.1	1,771	9,624	0.0
Greeley	303	1,798	-11.4	596	3,033	-6.8	Thomas	90	692	-1.0	331	1,290	4.5
Hall	7,879	34,628	8.9	59,368	275,541	2.5	Thurston	473	2,632	12.8	867	4,310	-7.1
Hamilton	1,228	7,225	8.8	2,507	12,455	-8.4	Valley	552	3,057	-12.2	2,320	11,349	2.4
Harlan	749	3,385	13.0	1,023	4,087	9.4	Washington	3,923	18,107	19.6	8,777	41,502	-2.3
Hayes	155	939	-8.7	(D)	(D)	(D)	Wayne	1,077	6,582	13.1	4,415	21,245	5.2
Hitchcock	414	2,348	-7.7	539	3,218	1.8	Webster	609	2,755	7.7	1,238	6,417	5.8
Holt	1,686	8,996	25.7	6,611	29,632	2.3	Wheeler	68	968	1.6	72	367	7.9
Hooker	185	578	-3.0	259	1,162	-6.5	York	2,214	11,411	11.9	11,684	53,885	0.8

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

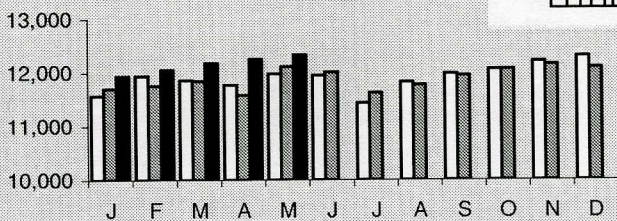
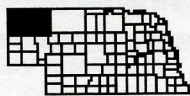
Note on Net Taxable Retail Sales

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* to 2000 to May** 2002

2000
 2001
 2002

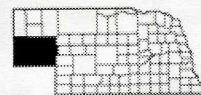
Northwest Panhandle



Note to Readers

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

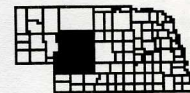
Southwest Panhandle



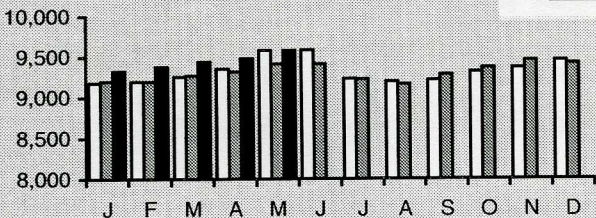
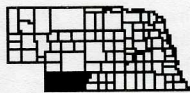
North Central



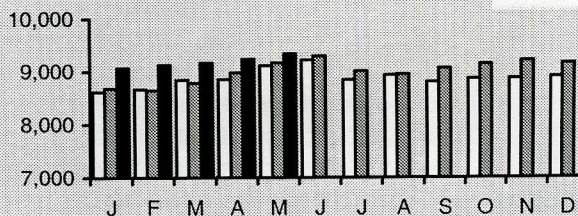
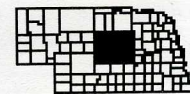
West Central



Southwest Central



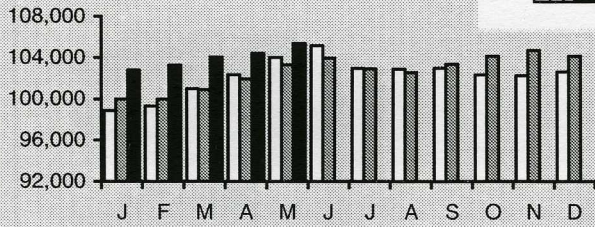
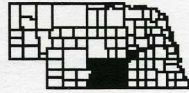
East Central



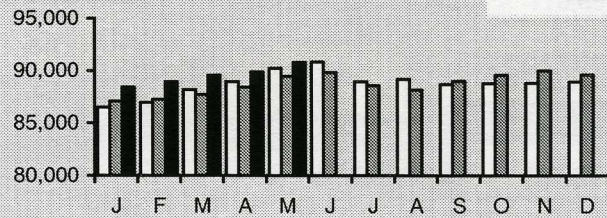
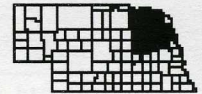
Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment* 2000 to May** 2002

2000 2001 2002

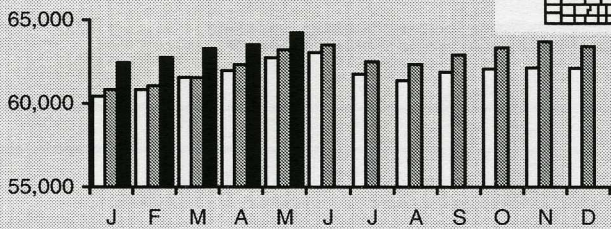
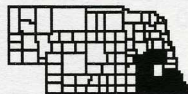
Southeast Central



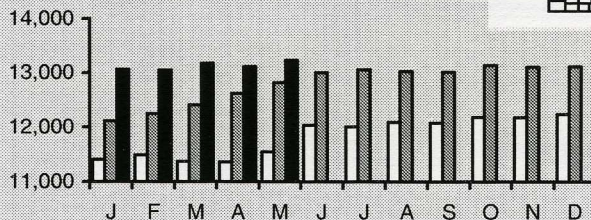
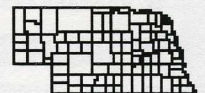
Northeast



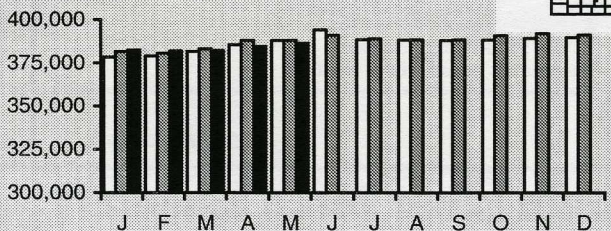
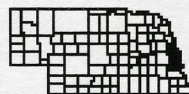
Southeast



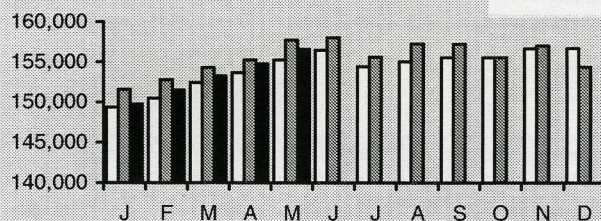
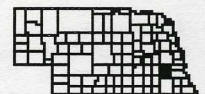
Sioux City MSA Nebraska portion only



Omaha MSA Nebraska portion only



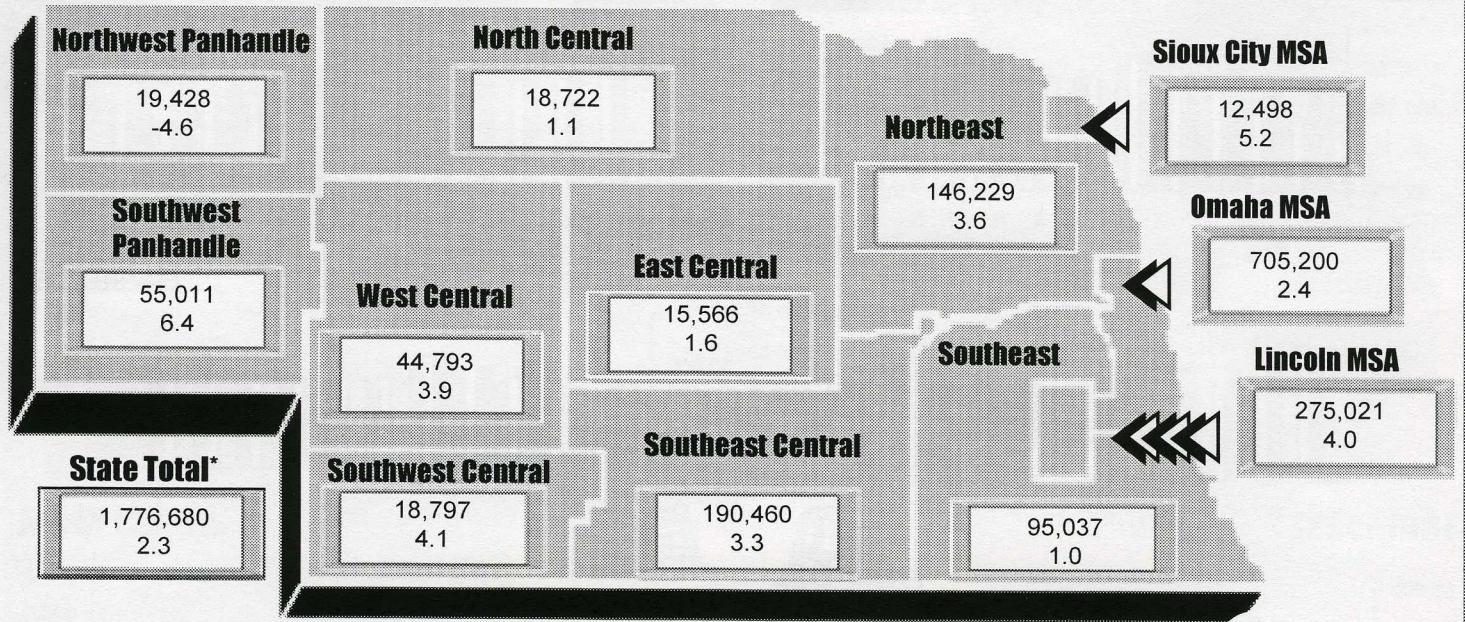
Lincoln MSA



*By place of work
 **Current month data are preliminary and subject to revision
 ***Previously, other than Nebraska data were included in the Omaha and Sioux City MSA
 Note: Monthly data through March 2001 are benchmarked. Data for April-December 2001 are estimates until benchmarked in early 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available.
 Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information - Kathy Copas

May 2002 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*

	May 2002
Total	916,875
Construction & Mining	44,524
Manufacturing	112,626
Durables	51,793
Nondurables	60,833
TCU**	57,284
Trade	214,476
Wholesale	54,500
Retail	159,976
FIRE***	63,034
Services	262,946
Government	161,985

*By place of work
 **Transportation, Communication, and Utilities
 ***Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
 Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

Consumer Price Index

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

	July 2002	% Change vs Yr. Ago	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago (inflation rate)
All Items	180.1	1.5	1.3
Commodities	149.3	-0.7	-1.2
Services	210.7	3.0	3.1

*U = All urban consumers
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Inflation Rate

1.3

State Labor Force Summary*

	May 2002
Labor Force	956,452
Employment	921,500
Unemployment Rate	3.7

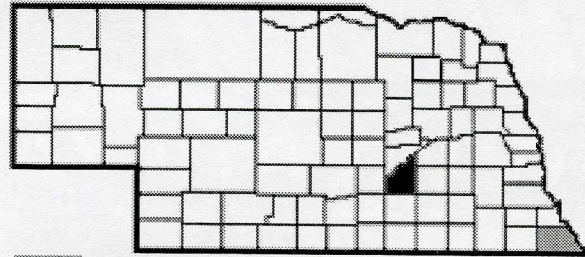
*By place of residence
 Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

Note: Monthly data through March 2001 are benchmarked. Data for April-December 2001 are estimates until benchmarked in early 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available. Labor force data for 2002 will be revised.

County of the Month

Hamilton

Aurora-County Seat



Next County of the Month

License plate prefix number: 28

Size of county: 542 square miles, ranks 70th in the state

Population: 9,403 in 2000, a change of 6.1 percent from 1990

Per capita personal income: \$23,634 in 2000, ranks 32nd in the state

Net taxable retail sales (\$000): \$50,123 in 2001 a change of -0.9 percent from 2000; 19,680 from January through May 2002, a change of -2.8 percent from the same period the previous year.

Unemployment rate: 1.9 percent in Hamilton County, 3.0 percent in Nebraska in 2000

	State	Hamilton County
Nonfarm employment (2001)¹:	909,402	2,632
(wage & salary)	(percent of total)	
Construction and Mining	4.8	2.4
Manufacturing	12.9	15.3
TCU	6.4	7.7
Wholesale Trade	5.8	14.4
Retail Trade	17.6	7.0
FIRE	6.8	5.7
Services	28.5	25.7
Government	17.0	21.8

Agriculture:

Number of farms: 661 in 1997; 664 in 1992; 770 in 1987

Average farm size: 520 acres in 1997; 484 acres in 1992

Market value of farm products sold: \$149.3 million in 1997 (\$225,844 average per farm); \$128.5 million in 1992 (\$193,476 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

Nebraska Business Conditions Survey (NBCS)

July marked the beginning of the monthly Nebraska Business Conditions Survey (NBCS) that is conducted during the first two weeks of each month. The results are reported during the second week of the following month.

The monthly NBCS sample includes approximately 3,000 nonfarm private sector businesses that employ at least 10 workers. The total sample of 3,000 was divided into thirds to create a three-month survey cycle. Roughly 1,000 businesses are surveyed each month. The NBCS is conducted each month from a sample of businesses drawn from files maintained by the Nebraska Department of Labor, Nebraska Workforce Development. The NBCS would not be possible without the support of the Nebraska Department of Labor.

Results of each survey are posted on the (BBR) website.

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NU *ONRAMP*
for
Consumer
Price
Index

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NBCS

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