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Rural Hospitals: A Story of Change and Impact

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Nebraska has 77 rural hospitals (Figure 1). In 1993 they employed nearly 13,000 workers and paid over $250 million in payroll.

The state's rural hospitals are major employers in their local communities, paying higher wages than most other businesses. Consequently, their dollar impact on local businesses and total community employment is significant.

This article reports on a recent study by UNL's Bureau of Business Research and the Center for Rural Community Revitalization and Development on the impact of rural hospitals on local communities. (Local communities were defined in the study as local counties.)

A hospital has a dual mission or objective. Its humanitarian mission is to provide quality medical care. Its business objective is to succeed.

Rural hospitals, like rural communities, are confronted with a set of circumstances that do not exist in most urban metropolitan areas. The demographics of rural areas are significantly different from the demographics of most urban centers. Individuals who live in rural areas are more likely to be older and to live on lower incomes than their urban counterparts (Figures 2 and 3). As a result, the economic status of the patient base that rural hospitals serve tends to be low income elderly households. This means that rural hospitals are heavily dependent on Medicare/Medicaid programs.

For study purposes the state's 77 rural hospitals were aggregated into four categories: Type One (very small), Type Two (small), Type Three (intermediate), and Type Four (large). The aggregation criteria included patient discharges, licensed beds, and gross revenues.

Additional information on hospital characteristics was obtained for a representative sample of 31 of the 77 rural hospitals. Data on hospital purchasing patterns were collected for a subsample of 11 hospitals. Figure 4 shows the location of the 31 sample hospitals. Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of the characteristics of the four hospital types.

Estimates of the total economic impacts (both direct and indirect) of rural hospitals (by category) on local economies were derived through the application of regional input-output models. The interindustry relationships captured in a regional input-output model determine the total impact (or multiplier effect) of direct expenditures (e.g., a hospital's local purchases) on the local economy.

Figure 1
Rural Nebraska Hospitals

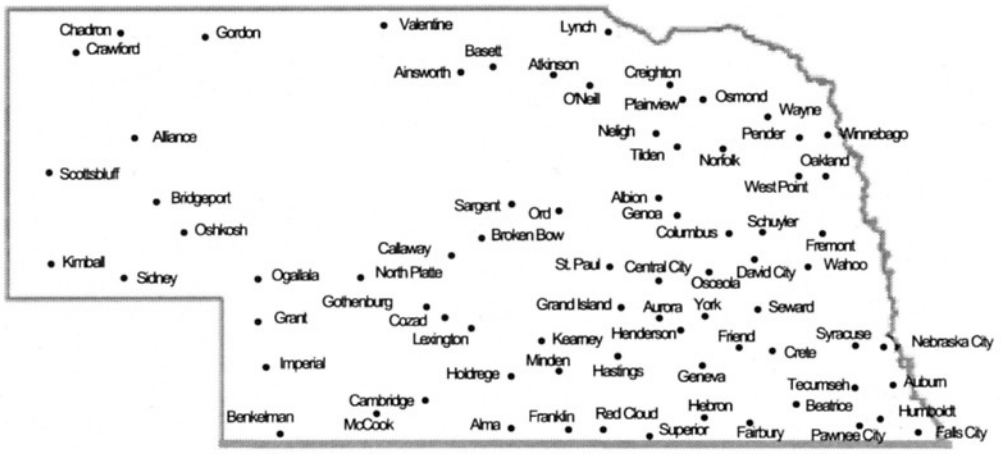
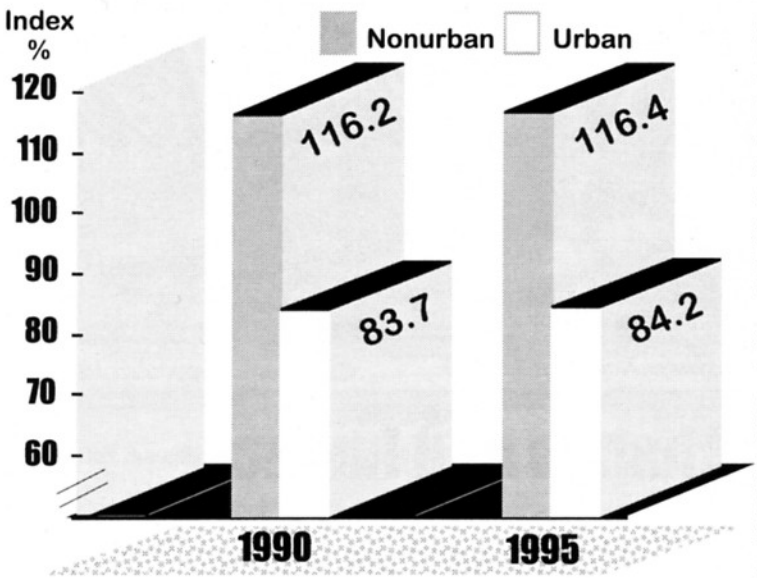
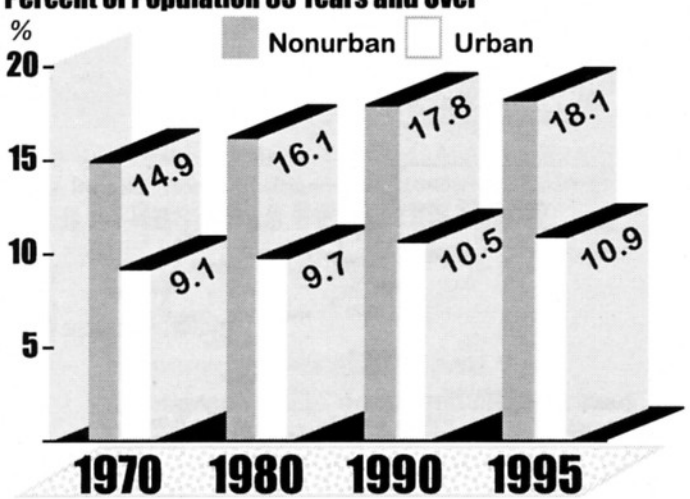


Figure 2
Index of Households With Money Incomes Less Than $20,000 by Area[a]



[a] The urban area includes Dakota, Washington, Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, and Lancaster Counties. The nonurban area includes the remainder of the state. The index is based on state average. An index of 116 means that the area's proportion of households with money incomes less than $20,000 is 1.16 times the state average.

Figure 3
Percent of Population 65 Years and Over[a]



[a] The urban area includes Dakota, Washington, Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, and Lancaster Counties. The nonurban area includes the remainder of the state.

The economic impact of a local hospital begins with patients. The hospital receives both Medicare/Medicaid payments on behalf of patients and direct payments from patients. In a business sense, payments received from patients are revenue that a hospital uses to purchase goods and services and to pay its employees (Figure 5). Some of the purchases involve local business transactions. In addition, the hospital's employees who live in the local area spend a substantial portion of their incomes at local businesses and enterprises. Every dollar spent directly by the local hospital to purchase supplies and services from the local economy or to pay its employees who spend locally triggers multiple rounds of sales for other local businesses. The total multiplier effect or impact is the sum of the multiple (direct and indirect) rounds of purchases/sales.

Table 3 summarizes local economic impacts (direct and indirect) for Nebraska's four types of rural hospitals. Using 1993 economic data impacts were measured in three ways: (gross) business sales, nonfarm employment (part- and full-time jobs), and nonfarm employee earnings. In 1993 the average Type One hospital generated, directly and indirectly, $3.1 million in business sales, supported 77 jobs, and contributed $1 million in employee earnings to the local economy. The average Type Four rural hospital generated, directly and indirectly, over $83 million in business sales, supported over 1,300 part- and full-time jobs, and contributed $24.5 million in employee earnings to the local economy.

Without exception, rural hospitals today are confronted with problems that range from medical cost concerns and Medicare/Medicaid program cuts to weak or declining local economies. Solutions to these problems will change the industry, perhaps in radical ways. Some rural hospitals will experience revenue growth, and some will experience revenue loss. Others will adjust services and/or purchases. A few will go out of business. These expected changes will have varying effects on the local economy.

The study included a limited analysis of local economic impacts due to expected industry change. The analysis and results reflect simulated industry changes. In other words, the analysis was not based on actual situations.

Table 4 shows local economic impacts associated with revenue changes (either increase or decrease) of 5, 10, and 25 percent. Table 5 shows the impact that would occur if all local purchases of inputs other than labor were to end for Type One and Type Four hospitals only. Such a situation could occur if a particular hospital became affiliated with a larger care organization that purchased its supplies and other inputs *centrally*. Also, Table 5 provides estimates of the local economic impacts of reconfiguring the Type One hospital. This reconfiguration reflects scaling back regular acute care capacity and adding outpatient physician services and long-term care capacity. While the employment impact of this new simulated health care center is greater than that of the former hospital, the additional employment may have come at the expense of current jobs and physician clinics already in place. Hence, total local economic activity may not increase. However, the new health care center also may evolve into an entity that can provide additional services not previously present in the community and/or attract those residents who previously went elsewhere for services. In this case the community's total economic activity could increase.

Table 1
Service Characteristics of the 31 Sample Hospitals, 1994

		Type One (9 hospitals)	*Type Two (10 hospitals)*	*Type Three (7 hospitals)*	*Type Four (5 hospitals)*
Number of Licensed Beds					
Average		29	52	83	231
Range	High	56	79	133	262
	Low	12	32	40	192
Total Discharges *(number of patients)*					
Average		279	620	1,284	5,495
Range	High	499	835	1,944	6,840
	Low	152	436	736	3,827
Medicare Discharges *(percent of total discharges)*					
Average		54.3	49.0	45.4	42.3
Range	High	91.4	73.1	50.0	49.3
	Low	41.2	33.9	41.0	39.2
Medicaid Discharges *(percent of total discharges)*					
Average		7.9	7.7	9.2	16.3
Range	High	16.5	15.6	16.7	22.0
	Low	0.5	0.0	0.0	12.8
Case-Mix Index*					
Average		1.1	1.0	1.1	1.3
Range	High	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.5
	Low	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.2

*Case-mix index is based on Medicare data. A higher numerical value on the case-mix index corresponds with a greater proportion of Medicare patients who have more serious and complex medical care needs.
Source: Nebraska Association of Hospitals & Health Systems

Table 2
Economic Characteristics of the 31 Sample Hospitals, 1993

		Type One (9 hospitals)	*Type Two (10 hospitals)*	*Type Three (7 hospitals)*	*Type Four (5 hospitals)*
Employment *(number of jobs)*					
Average		69	99	208	895
Range	High	115	132	398	1,304
	Low	33	78	110	691
Hospital Payroll *($ millions)*					
Average		0.9	1.5	3.8	18.2
Range	High	1.3	1.8	6.3	25.7
	Low	0.5	1.1	2.4	14.5
Operating Revenues *($ millions)*					
Average		1.8	3.3	8.3	44.2
Range	High	2.5	4.3	13.2	62.1
	Low	0.9	2.1	5.3	31.1

Source: Nebraska Association of Hospitals & Health Systems

Table 3
Summary of Estimated Total Economic Impact (Direct and Indirect) of Different Types of Rural Hospitals

	Type One	*Type Two*	*Type Three*	*Type Four*
Business Sales *($ millions)*	3.1	5.2	14.7	83.2
Jobs *(part- and full-time)*	77	118	277	1,332
Employee Earnings *($ millions)*	1.0	1.8	4.8	24.5

The health care industry as a whole is likely to continue to be a growth industry, largely because of population aging. While many locales will benefit from the increased demand and use of services associated with this demographic trend, others will not. Those hospitals that are best positioned and are most responsive in anticipating demographic, structural, and policy changes likely will capitalize on the potential of the health service sector as a growth industry. Those hospitals, communities, and areas that cannot compete effectively in this challenging environment will incur economic losses.

Figure 4
Four Types of Rural Nebraska Hospitals

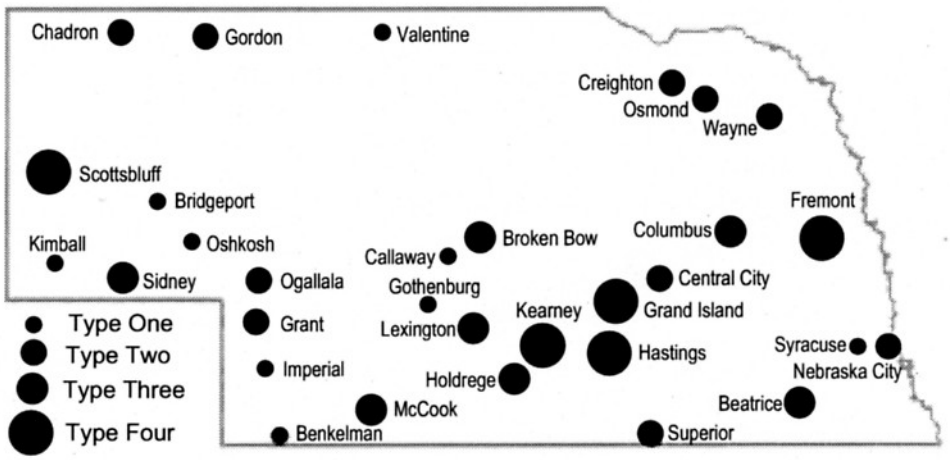


Figure 5
Overview of a Hospital's Economic Impact

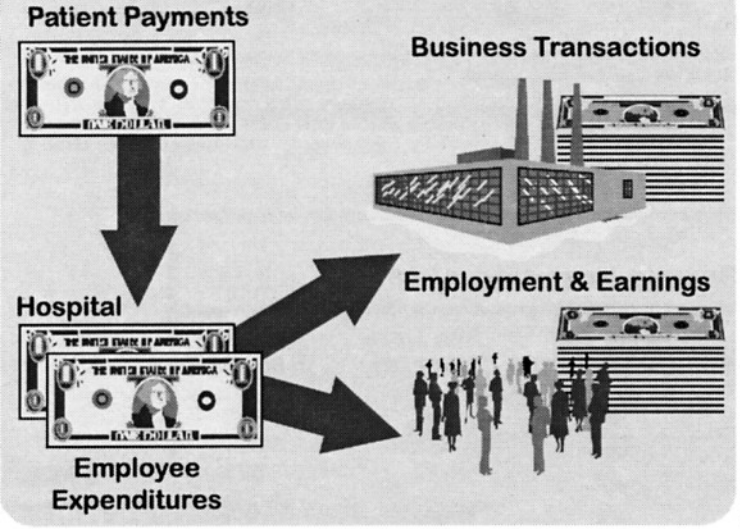


Table 4
The Economic Impacts of Changes in Operating Revenues for Different Types of Rural Hospitals

	Type One	*Type Two*	*Type Three*	*Type Four*
Business Sales *($000)*				
5 percent change	167	253	744	4,158
10 percent change	318	522	1,471	8,316
25 percent change	803	1,297	3,685	20,790
Jobs *(part- and full-time)*				
5 percent change	3	5	12	64
10 percent change	7	11	26	131
25 percent change	19	28	68	331
Employee Earnings *($000)*				
5 percent change	43	77	205	1,143
10 percent change	87	159	428	2,365
25 percent change	231	408	1,136	6,052

Table 5
The Economic Impacts of Simulated Changes in Hospital Operations

		Business Sales ($000)	*Jobs (part- and full-time)*	*Employee Earnings ($000)*
Changes in Local Purchasing Patterns				
Type One	With local purchases	3,108	77	1,010
	No local purchases	2,907	76	976
	Difference	-201	-1	-34
Type Four	With local purchases	83,200	1,332	24,500
	No local purchases	74,425	1,287	23,133
	Difference	-8,775	-45	-1,367
A Hypothetical Restructuring of the Type One Hospital				
Type One	Hospital only	3,108	77	1,010
	Hospital, outpatient, and long-term care	3,397	84	1,052
	Difference	289	7	42

As hospitals and communities evaluate their alternatives, they should realize that local jobs, linkages, and income recapture are important considerations. Income recapture is payments for health insurance policies or taxes that leave the area. When medical care services are provided locally and paid by insurance or government programs, the community recaptures that income and in turn provides jobs locally.

Finally, given the importance of the health sector, it is in the community's interest to participate in local public decision making to determine the future course of the local hospital or health resources.

The Nebraska Association of Hospitals and Health Care System and the Rural Policy Research Institute helped fund the study.

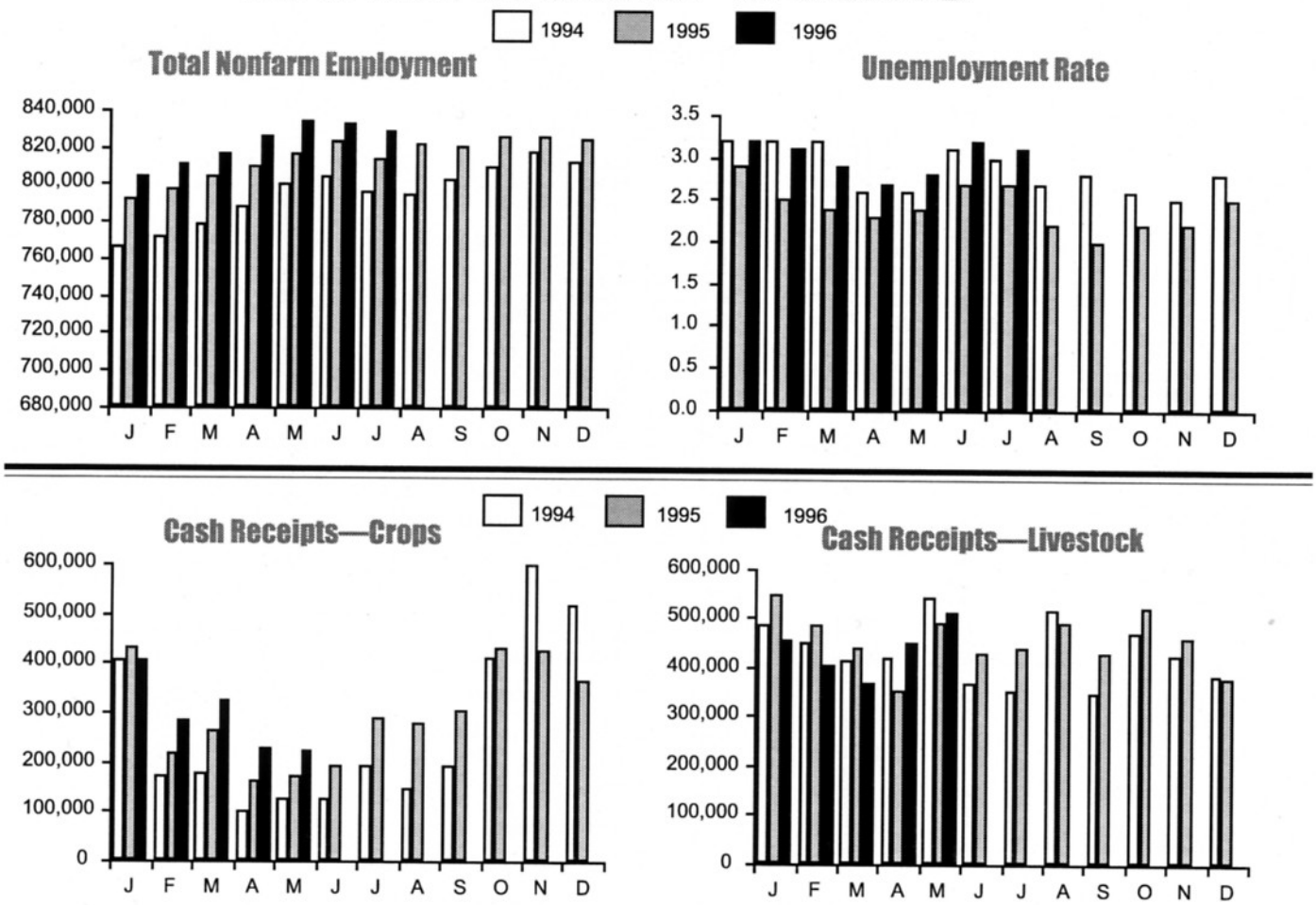
News Briefs

Consumer Price Indexes

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in the prices paid by urban consumers for a fixed market basket of goods and services. The CPI is calculated monthly for two population groups, one consisting only of urban households whose primary source of income is derived from the employment of wage earners and clerical workers, and the other consisting of all urban households. The wage earner index (CPI-W) is a continuation of the historic index that was introduced well over a half-century ago for use in wage negotiations. As new uses were developed for the CPI in recent years, the need for a broader and more representative index became apparent. The all-urban consumer index (CPI-U), introduced in 1978, is representative of the 1982-84 buying habits of about 80 percent of the noninstitutional population of the United States at that time, compared with 32 percent represented in the CPI-W. In addition to wage earners and clerical workers, the CPI-U covers professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, retirees, and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, fuel, drugs, transportation fares, doctors' and dentists' fees, and other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. The quantity and quality of these items are kept essentially unchanged between major revisions so that only price changes will be measured. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

Nebraska Stats



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

	May 1996 $	YTD $	YTD % Change
Ainsworth, Brown	1,690	7,385	-9.2
Albion, Boone	2,069	9,246	20.2
Alliance, Box Butte	5,842	26,345	3.4
Alma, Harlan	725	3,091	1.5
Arapahoe, Furnas	641	2,913	5.4
Arlington, Washington	147	844	-1.1
Arnold, Custer	220	1,166	-4.8
Ashland, Saunders	888	4,225	3.5
Atkinson, Holt	771	3,501	9.0
Auburn, Nemaha	2,457	11,432	1.4
Aurora, Hamilton	2,350	12,324	0.4
Axtell, Kearney	68	359	-9.1
Bassett, Rock	427	1,876	3.7
Battle Creek, Madison	516	2,971	4.6
Bayard, Morrill	318	1,874	-14.2
Beatrice, Gage	9,457	44,214	5.9
Beaver City, Furnas	115	502	-13.9
Bellevue, Sarpy	17,453	79,704	19.6
Benkelman, Dundy	540	2,302	13.9
Bennington, Douglas	391	1,626	33.6
Blair, Washington	6,086	27,421	-2.4
Bloomfield, Knox	553	2,586	5.3
Blue Hill, Webster	366	1,810	7.5
Bridgeport, Morrill	958	4,132	-11.2
Broken Bow, Custer	4,023	22,613	14.7
Burwell, Garfield	543	2,686	-7.0
Cairo, Hall	169	871	3.6
Cambridge, Furnas	1,008	6,035	82.9
Central City, Merrick	1,640	7,450	9.0
Ceresco, Saunders	1,044	5,243	4.3
Chadron, Dawes	3,324	14,004	-8.3
Chappell, Deuel	367	1,725	-10.0
Clarkson, Colfax	449	2,001	6.6
Clay Center, Clay	203	1,132	5.2
Columbus, Platte	19,022	93,102	7.7
Cozad, Dawson	2,906	12,438	-3.9
Crawford, Dawes	422	1,719	4.9
Creighton, Knox	944	4,415	-5.5
Crete, Saline	3,393	15,747	-4.4
Crofton, Knox	358	1,710	17.9
Curtis, Frontier	273	1,307	1.0
Dakota City, Dakota	636	2,748	7.4
David City, Butler	1,439	6,995	4.7
Deshler, Thayer	246	1,069	6.8
Dodge, Dodge	195	988	-6.8
Doniphan, Hall	435	2,322	-7.0
Eagle, Cass	365	1,180	-0.4
Elgin, Antelope	358	1,911	6.5
Elkhorn, Douglas	1,814	7,638	17.3
Elm Creek, Buffalo	383	1,280	50.4
Elwood, Gosper	373	1,546	4.3
Fairbury, Jefferson	2,946	14,188	3.3
Fairmont, Fillmore	104	619	-10.0
Falls City, Richardson	2,475	11,608	4.1
Franklin, Franklin	492	2,119	2.4
Fremont, Dodge	20,553	97,572	3.2
Friend, Saline	445	2,335	-3.2
Fullerton, Nance	409	2,255	-12.9
Geneva, Fillmore	1,839	8,158	3.5
Genoa, Nance	288	1,153	5.2
Gering, Scotts Bluff	3,525	15,087	0.1
Gibbon, Buffalo	650	3,333	-0.9
Gordon, Sheridan	1,676	7,556	2.6
Gothenburg, Dawson	2,036	8,451	-5.7
Grand Island, Hall	46,091	212,833	-0.3
Grant, Perkins	847	4,149	8.6
Gretna, Sarpy	3,300	14,238	-0.5
Hartington, Cedar	1,488	6,573	-13.5
Hastings, Adams	20,986	94,291	3.9
Hay Springs, Sheridan	270	1,545	6.7
Hebron, Thayer	1,449	7,218	-9.4
Henderson, York	624	2,874	22.8
Hickman, Lancaster	160	952	-0.8
Holdrege, Phelps	4,794	21,482	0.8
Hooper, Dodge	240	1,467	13.1
Humboldt, Richardson	448	2,313	5.2
Humphrey, Platte	654	3,297	16.2
Imperial, Chase	1,773	7,668	7.7
Juniata, Adams	128	999	9.2
Kearney, Buffalo	28,939	129,433	6.1
Kenesaw, Adams	124	518	6.2
Kimball, Kimball	1,458	6,430	-11.7
La Vista, Sarpy	7,539	33,691	16.4
Laurel, Cedar	360	1,650	4.4
Lexington, Dawson	7,261	35,012	3.5
Lincoln, Lancaster	170,968	815,835	11.7
Louisville, Cass	361	1,598	3.2
Loup City, Sherman	477	2,478	0.5
Lyons, Burt	364	1,804	-3.2
Madison, Madison	835	3,466	22.2
McCook, Red Willow	10,959	47,794	10.6
Milford, Seward	653	3,957	8.5
Minatare, Scotts Bluff	179	829	-25.1
Minden, Kearney	1,614	6,786	-9.5
Mitchell, Scotts Bluff	639	3,262	-19.3
Morrill, Scotts Bluff	409	1,756	-4.2
Nebraska City, Otoe	5,354	24,193	13.9
Neligh, Antelope	1,286	5,111	-10.2
Newman Grove, Madison	308	1,562	3.9
Norfolk, Madison	26,953	125,423	7.7
North Bend, Dodge	458	2,277	14.1
North Platte, Lincoln	21,324	95,301	3.5
O'Neill, Holt	4,541	20,639	12.2
Oakland, Burt	528	2,931	5.7
Ogallala, Keith	5,639	23,672	5.4
Omaha, Douglas	409,925	1,978,970	7.0
Ord, Valley	1,873	7,931	-7.7
Osceola, Polk	672	3,346	-3.4
Oshkosh, Garden	395	1,933	-14.1
Osmond, Pierce	483	1,685	8.2
Oxford, Furnas	323	1,314	-20.5
Papillion, Sarpy	5,290	22,645	43.3
Pawnee City, Pawnee	297	1,398	-6.5
Pender, Thurston	625	2,966	8.1
Pierce, Pierce	573	2,818	-4.5
Plainview, Pierce	544	2,694	-14.1
Plattsmouth, Cass	3,026	13,531	2.2
Ponca, Dixon	425	2,360	10.7
Ralston, Douglas	2,838	13,522	11.8
Randolph, Cedar	347	1,617	3.9
Ravenna, Buffalo	573	2,920	-10.3
Red Cloud, Webster	578	2,724	-15.0
Rushville, Sheridan	493	2,442	-1.1
Sargent, Custer	162	891	0.3
Schuyler, Colfax	1,788	8,719	6.0
Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff	19,556	89,268	5.5
Scribner, Dodge	474	2,052	14.1
Seward, Seward	4,573	21,493	1.3
Shelby, Polk	258	1,532	15.5
Shelton, Buffalo	512	2,592	-4.4
Sidney, Cheyenne	6,593	26,657	-0.4
South Sioux City, Dakota	8,296	38,513	9.6
Springfield, Sarpy	254	1,175	49.9
St. Paul, Howard	1,199	4,996	-3.5
Stanton, Stanton	462	2,556	4.6
Stromsburg, Polk	763	3,475	2.4
Superior, Nuckolls	1,495	6,610	-1.4
Sutherland, Lincoln	260	1,286	24.1
Sutton, Clay	1,070	6,251	25.8
Syracuse, Otoe	935	4,519	-2.8
Tecumseh, Johnson	1,008	4,782	-0.6
Tekamah, Burt	974	4,654	2.2
Tilden, Madison	379	2,009	3.1
Utica, Seward	280	1,111	4.9
Valentine, Cherry	3,736	16,041	7.4
Valley, Douglas	1,114	4,450	3.1
Wahoo, Saunders	2,322	10,805	-2.1
Wakefield, Dixon	290	1,668	5.8
Wauneta, Chase	248	1,357	-2.5
Waverly, Lancaster	593	2,868	15.4
Wayne, Wayne	2,945	13,936	1.7
Weeping Water, Cass	506	2,484	-9.9
West Point, Cuming	3,699	16,828	12.3
Wilber, Saline	397	1,946	-6.9
Wisner, Cuming	527	2,462	3.6
Wood River, Hall	614	2,044	16.3
Wymore, Gage	361	1,830	-0.5

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

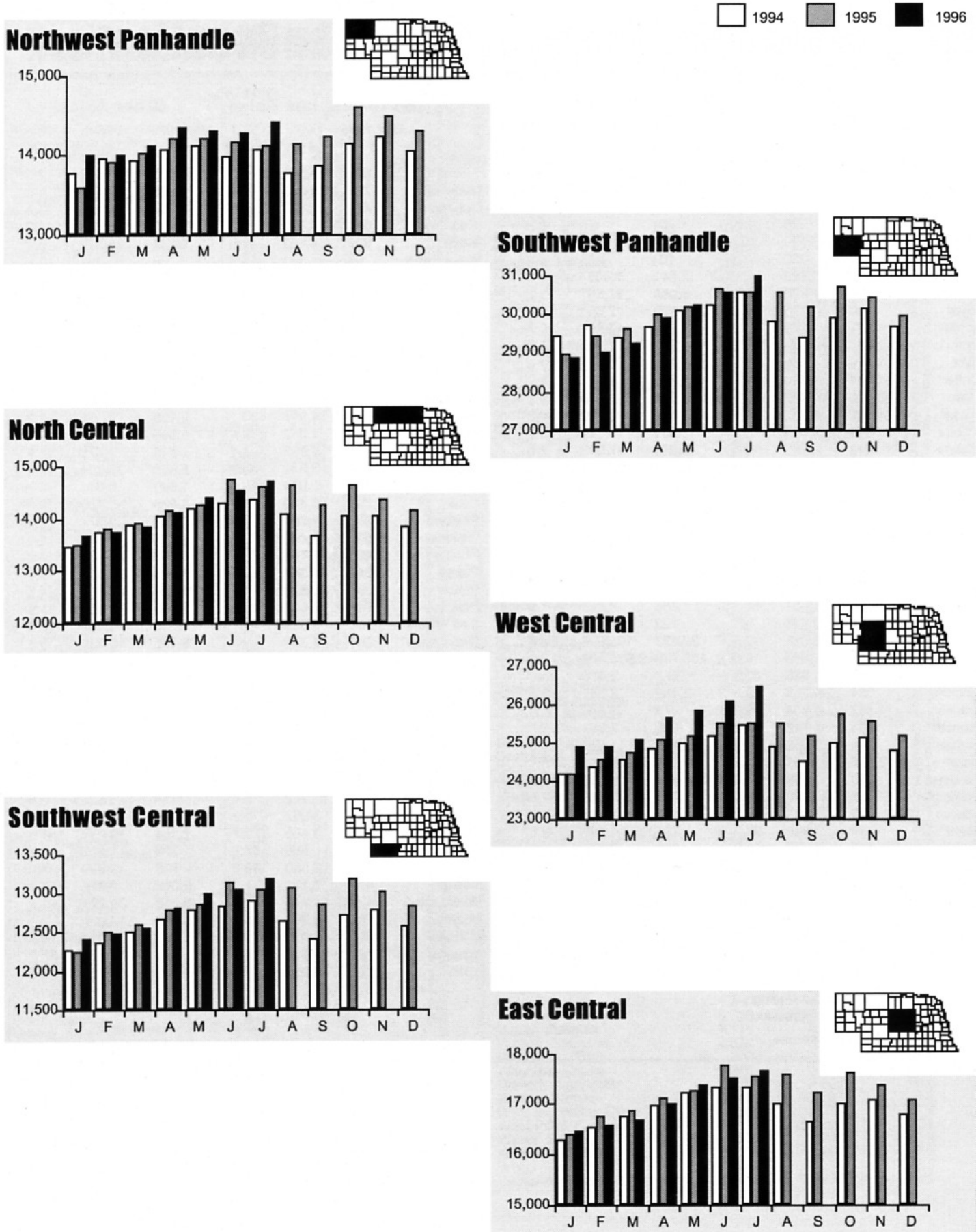
Net Taxable Retail Sales for Nebraska Counties ($000)

	Motor Vehicle Sales			Other Sales		
	May 1996 $	YTD $	YTD % Chg	May 1996 $	YTD $	YTD % Chg
Nebraska *	189,053	837,231	12.3	1,179,635	5,670,367	7.4
Adams	2,991	14,846	13.5	21,366	96,986	3.9
Antelope	847	4,786	26.3	2,015	8,752	-3.5
Arthur	42	226	18.9	(D)	(D)	(D)
Banner	99	599	35.5	(D)	(D)	(D)
Blaine	74	300	-6.3	(D)	(D)	(D)
Boone	706	3,910	2.0	2,541	11,527	15.1
Box Butte	1,596	7,230	0.2	6,068	27,567	3.2
Boyd	269	975	-5.9	509	2,653	8.9
Brown	311	1,276	-18.0	1,739	7,585	-9.6
Buffalo	4,671	20,550	17.8	31,383	141,029	5.7
Burt	1,069	4,480	13.2	2,031	10,292	1.8
Butler	1,144	4,864	9.0	1,720	9,077	2.9
Cass	3,218	14,082	16.1	5,119	23,875	1.9
Cedar	1,109	5,352	-1.5	2,485	11,202	-7.8
Chase	515	2,720	0.3	2,051	9,172	6.1
Cherry	642	2,941	-3.1	3,908	17,013	7.5
Cheyenne	1,110	6,166	15.9	6,804	27,924	0.0
Clay	689	4,419	29.4	1,970	11,269	20.0
Colfax	1,148	4,878	16.8	2,634	12,759	7.7
Cuming	1,105	5,933	14.0	4,777	21,738	10.2
Custer	1,187	6,030	9.6	4,783	26,621	12.5
Dakota	1,830	9,391	14.5	9,527	44,522	9.1
Dawes	595	3,100	-3.0	3,750	15,725	-7.0
Dawson	2,729	12,464	5.4	12,558	57,406	0.1
Deuel	356	1,501	51.0	756	3,450	-1.8
Dixon	576	3,026	9.3	792	4,533	8.5
Dodge	3,537	16,226	12.2	22,137	105,699	3.6
Douglas	52,055	213,659	19.0	418,778	2,015,167	7.0
Dundy	424	1,920	33.9	579	2,475	15.2
Fillmore	964	4,298	14.3	2,702	12,347	6.8
Franklin	352	1,854	2.6	673	3,406	6.9
Frontier	393	1,742	12.7	639	2,811	7.6
Furnas	744	3,052	8.5	2,184	11,521	28.0
Gage	2,293	10,432	3.2	10,395	49,152	6.1
Garden	258	1,485	6.0	535	2,565	-12.6
Garfield	262	989	55.7	543	2,686	-7.0
Gosper	336	1,523	29.2	416	1,806	6.6
Grant	54	335	-30.2	171	701	5.6
Greeley	265	1,420	-8.9	517	2,876	6.9
Hall	6,583	28,010	14.5	47,636	219,634	-0.3
Hamilton	1,195	6,321	10.9	2,665	14,306	1.9
Harlan	442	2,366	12.0	915	3,862	-1.6
Hayes	139	720	16.9	(D)	(D)	(D)
Hitchcock	373	1,805	17.7	501	2,706	-0.6
Holt	1,264	5,730	-2.0	5,899	27,062	10.7
Hooker	67	341	50.9	238	1,089	6.1
Howard	590	3,370	6.8	1,553	6,672	2.6
Jefferson	734	4,393	0.8	3,808	17,445	0.6
Johnson	472	2,427	18.0	1,254	6,487	2.4
Kearney	847	4,392	11.2	1,915	7,818	-7.2
Keith	929	4,782	11.6	6,031	25,518	7.1
Keya Paha	96	531	4.9	68	367	10.9
Kimball	451	2,383	19.3	1,476	6,557	-12.0
Knox	983	4,785	23.9	2,372	11,338	3.1
Lancaster	23,327	97,758	13.8	172,468	824,029	11.7
Lincoln	3,544	16,220	-2.1	22,156	99,344	3.4
Logan	51	385	-30.4	(D)	(D)	(D)
Loup	29	273	-38.8	(D)	(D)	(D)
McPherson	21	332	50.2	(D)	(D)	(D)
Madison	3,819	17,636	9.7	29,024	135,696	7.8
Merrick	868	4,917	34.1	2,156	9,739	10.1
Morrill	553	2,652	8.4	1,303	6,139	-12.7
Nance	618	2,098	1.4	715	3,523	-7.4
Nemaha	831	3,930	10.0	2,663	12,604	-0.6
Nuckolls	541	2,924	16.6	1,990	9,041	1.3
Otoe	1,701	8,330	11.4	6,635	30,460	9.7
Pawnee	300	1,707	55.3	469	2,374	1.5
Perkins	517	2,482	20.0	1,048	5,221	14.0
Phelps	1,495	7,445	29.4	4,999	22,536	0.9
Pierce	844	4,347	10.1	1,699	7,540	-5.1
Platte	3,585	16,878	11.4	20,189	98,931	7.7
Polk	719	3,907	15.3	1,780	8,852	-1.6
Red Willow	1,104	6,009	1.7	11,280	49,167	10.5
Richardson	1,061	4,393	0.7	3,165	15,325	5.3
Rock	91	790	-12.6	431	1,925	4.0
Saline	1,456	7,419	12.4	4,507	21,747	-4.1
Sarpy	14,953	58,463	15.0	34,256	153,213	20.0
Saunders	2,579	11,003	10.2	5,008	24,579	1.8
Scotts Bluff	3,800	17,365	1.8	24,369	110,613	3.3
Seward	1,558	8,074	10.7	5,700	27,637	2.2
Sheridan	565	3,492	34.1	2,724	12,804	1.7
Sherman	293	1,895	14.8	629	3,236	-3.5
Sioux	114	972	0.9	134	591	0.3
Stanton	665	3,292	4.3	578	3,219	3.1
Thayer	627	3,405	8.7	2,154	10,931	-4.5
Thomas	150	586	43.6	396	1,607	14.9
Thurston	483	2,589	12.0	728	3,629	7.0
Valley	513	2,181	-17.4	2,003	8,646	-7.6
Washington	2,429	11,345	15.0	6,558	30,271	-1.2
Wayne	1,000	4,367	14.6	3,067	14,629	2.1
Webster	360	2,037	11.7	1,047	5,018	-6.6
Wheeler	198	714	7.7	80	324	-34.8
York	1,724	8,057	-2.7	9,589	44,155	6.5

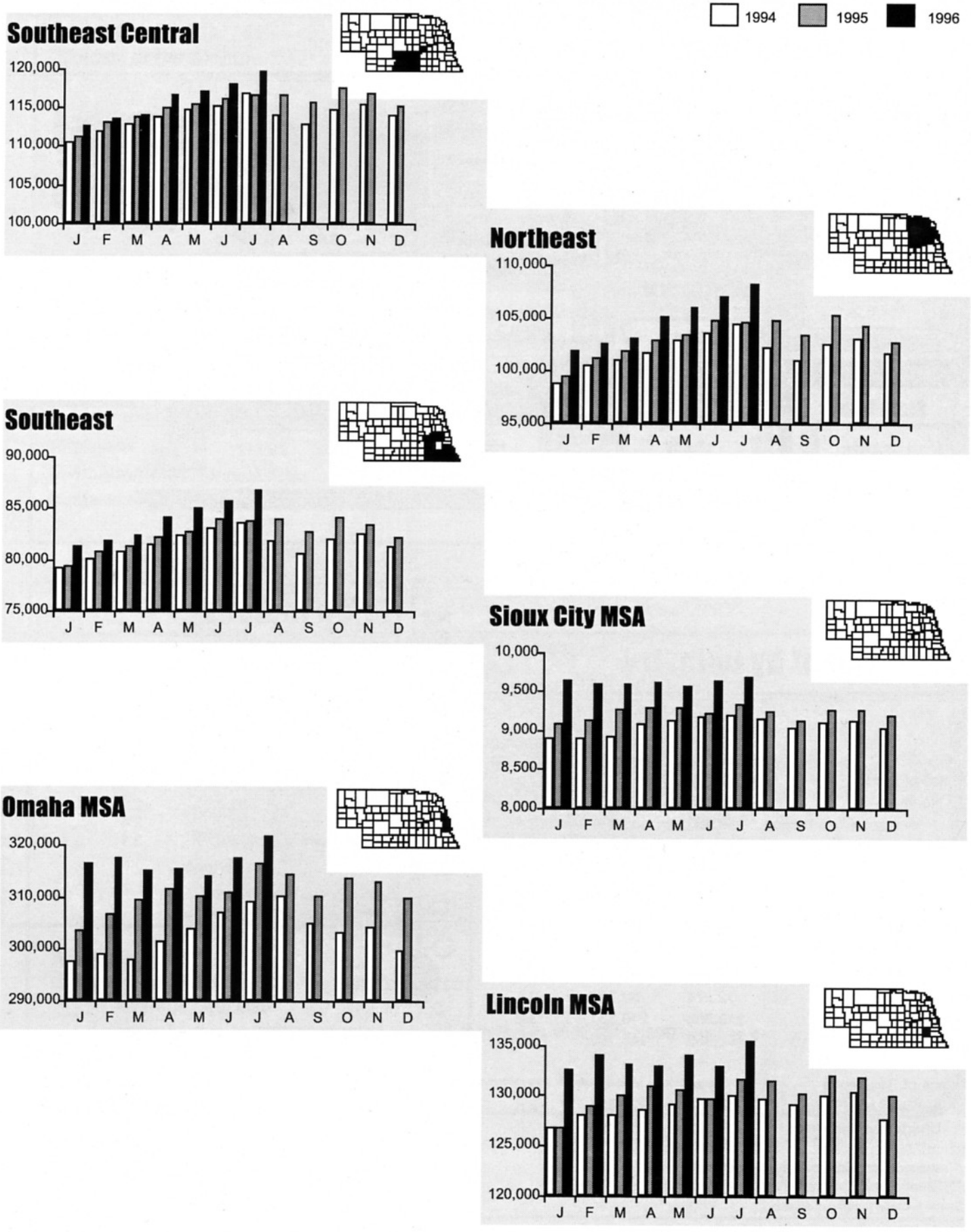
*Totals may not add due to rounding
(D) Denotes disclosure suppression

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

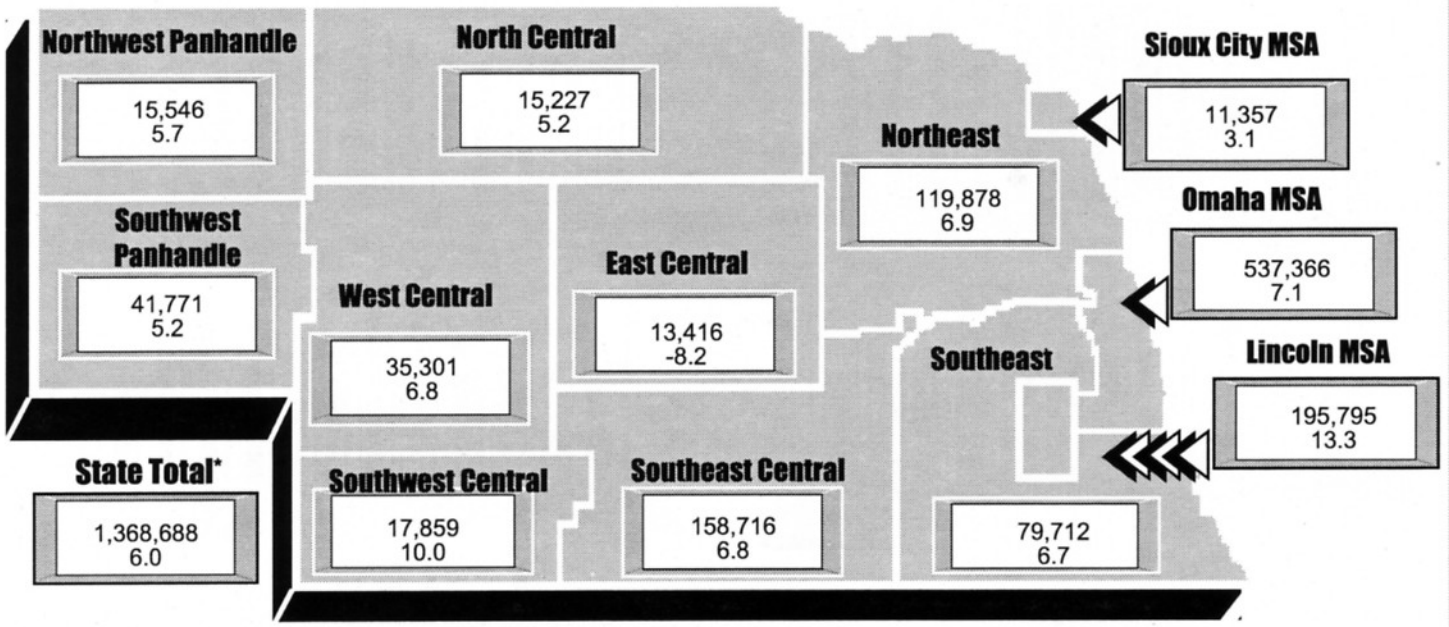
Regional Employment—1994 to July 1996



Regional Employment—1994 to July 1996



May 1996 Regional Retail Sales ($000)
Percent Change from Year Ago



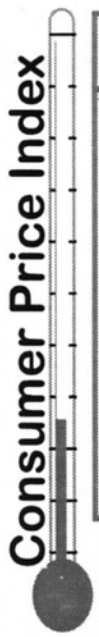
*Regional values may not add to state total due to unallocated sales

Employment by Industry

	Revised June	*Preliminary July*	*% Change vs Yr Ago*
Place of Work			
Nonfarm	833,835	829,061	1.9
Mining & Construction	38,666	39,932	3.4
Manufacturing	113,396	113,024	1.4
Durables	54,513	53,965	0.8
Nondurables	58,883	59,059	2.0
TCU*	49,872	50,347	1.2
Trade	207,386	207,527	0.9
Wholesale	54,416	54,411	1.0
Retail	152,970	153,116	0.9
FIRE**	52,274	52,708	-0.5
Services	219,388	219,331	3.0
Government	152,853	146,192	2.8
Place of Residence			
Civilian Labor Force	916,655	927,865	2.8
Unemployment Rate	3.2	3.1	

*Transportation, Communication, and Utilities
** Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor



Price Indices

Consumer Price Index - U*
(1982-84 = 100)

	June 1996	% Change vs Yr Ago	YTD % Change vs Yr Ago
All items	156.7	2.8	2.8
Commodities	139.9	2.4	2.3
Services	173.9	3.1	3.2

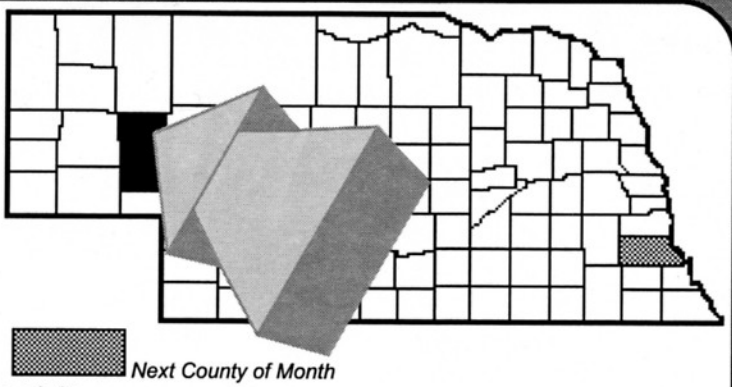
U* = All urban consumers

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

County of the Month

Garden

Oshkosh-County Seat



License plate prefix number: 77
Size of county: 1,680 square miles, ranks 7th in the state
Population: 2,460 in 1990, a change of -12.2 percent from 1980
Per capita personal income: $19,023 in 1994, ranks 49th in the state
Net taxable retail sales ($000): $11,107 in 1995, a change of 2.8 percent from 1994; $4,050 during January-May 1996, a change of -2.8 percent from the same period one year ago
Number of business and service establishments: 77 in 1993, 87.0 percent had less than five employees
Unemployment rate: 4.0 percent in Garden County, 2.4 percent in Nebraska for 1995
Nonfarm employment (1995):

	State	Garden County
Wage and Salary workers	815,089	3,495
	(percent of total)	
Mining & Construction	4.4	1.8
Manufacturing	13.7	(D)*
TCU	6.1	(D)*
Wholesale Trade	6.5	5.6
Retail Trade	18.6	14.1
FIRE	6.4	5.6
Services	25.8	5.8
Government	18.5	53.9

**(D) denotes disclosure suppression*

Agriculture:

Number of farms: 297 in 1992, 335 in 1987
Average farm size: 3,602 acres in 1992
Market value of farm products sold: $46.6 million in 1992 ($157,199 average per farm)

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

bulletin board

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- Dial any Internet provider and use Telnet.
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Telnet and FTP via the Internet:
onramp.unl.edu
login: onramp *(lower case)*

BBR WWW home page:
www.cba.unl.edu/bbr/bbr.html

NU ONRAMP Data Review—Net Taxable Retail Sales

Net Taxable Retail Sales, compiled by the Nebraska Department of Revenue, includes motor vehicle and other (nonmotor vehicle) net taxable sales.

Motor vehicle sales are reported by county of vehicle registration—not necessarily county of purchase. Net taxable sales statistics are calculated from sales tax amounts reported by county treasurers.

Other retail sales are reported for each municipality and reflect sales by establishments or transactions in or near the municipality and in outlying rural areas. All transactions are allocated to a municipality. These statistics are reported by location of the business or transaction, irrespective of the residence of the purchaser.

To find these data files, enter **Data Central** in *ONRAMP* and choose **Trade**** (080000 subject code) from the subject search menu. From the **Trade** submenu, three Retail Sales selections are available. Users familiar with *ONRAMP* note, a Retail Sales file query can be accomplished using a filename search of RS-.

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