

# Business in Nebraska



Volume 55, No. 643

presented by Bureau of Business Research (BBR)

September 1999

## A Strong Economy Dominates the Farm Crisis

Charles Lamphear

The continuing strong momentum in the state's economy is outpacing the adverse effects of depressed farm commodity prices, especially in the metro counties. In the latest Nebraska Quarterly Business Conditions Survey (NQBCS) 41 percent of the respondents statewide indicated that 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues exceeded year-ago levels, which is statistically unchanged from the 1997-1998 quarterly average (Table 1). Only 28 percent reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues below year-ago levels; this too, is statistically unchanged from the 1997-1998 quarterly average.

Metro businesses are doing better than their nonmetro counterparts. Forty-nine percent of the metro businesses reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues above year-ago levels, which is statistically similar to the 1997-1998 quarterly average (Table 2). Thirty-four percent of the nonmetro businesses reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues above year-ago levels, which is about equal to the 1998 quarterly average but approximately 8 percentage points below the 1997 quarterly average. The metro/nonmetro difference in business revenues likely is due to the longer-term trend in the economic growth gap between metro and nonmetro counties than the current farm crisis.

**Table 1**  
Revenue Activity, by Industry Group  
1997, 1998, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters 1999 (percent)

	1997		1998		1999			
	Quarterly Average		Quarterly Average		1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter		2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	
	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼
All Industries	48	26	42	27	44	27	41	28
Manufacturing	55	24	39	31	46	30	46	30
Wholesale Trade	47	26	38	36	36	41	29	47
Retail Trade	43	29	43	26	47	23	44	26
FIRE <sup>1</sup>	59	18	53	18	47	19	38	22
TCU <sup>2</sup>	59	22	46	20	52	20	40	21
Services	49	25	46	23	47	27	45	23
Other	42	23	31	34	34	29	38	27

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

<sup>1</sup>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

<sup>2</sup>Transportation, Communications, and Utilities

### A Must-Read Article

"Where Have All the Packing Plants Gone? The New Meat Geography in Rural America" from the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, *Economic Review*

Go to  
[www.bbr.unl.edu](http://www.bbr.unl.edu)  
and click on this title.

**Table 2**  
**Revenue Activity, by Region**  
**1997, 1998, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters 1999 (percent)**

	1997		1998		1999			
	Quarterly Average		Quarterly Average		1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter		2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	
<b>Metro Counties<sup>1</sup></b>	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼
All Industries	51	26	46	24	49	23	49	22
Manufacturing	58	25	44	27	51	31	54	25
Wholesale Trade	47	30	45	27	39	31	40	33
Retail Trade	43	31	44	26	53	17	51	23
FIRE <sup>2</sup>	71	14	54	21	63	15	50	21
TCU <sup>3</sup>	65	19	52	18	55	21	43	22
Services	53	24	47	23	51	24	51	19
Other	40	25	45	22	34	25	44	13
<b>Nonmetro Counties</b>								
All Industries	46	25	38	29	39	31	34	34
Manufacturing	52	23	35	33	42	29	41	34
Wholesale Trade	48	23	32	42	34	49	21	57
Retail Trade	42	29	42	26	42	28	39	28
FIRE <sup>2</sup>	45	22	51	15	30	23	28	23
TCU <sup>3</sup>	55	24	41	21	50	19	37	21
Services	42	27	46	23	40	32	36	31
Other	45	21	23	38	35	32	23	40

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

<sup>1</sup>Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

<sup>2</sup>Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

<sup>3</sup>Transportation, Communications, and Utilities

latest survey results indicate that the farm crisis is affecting only a small number of other nonmetro businesses.

There are a number of possible explanations why the impact of the farm crisis has not spread to many other nonmetro businesses. Most farmers did not cut back on operating expenses during the planting and growing seasons. Because of the expected high yields, it is unlikely that they will be able to cut back on operating expenses during harvest time. Second, the strong national economy has benefited both urban and rural businesses that market nationally. For example, 41 percent of the nonmetro respondents for manufacturing reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues above year-ago levels, which is only slightly below the metro rate. A third factor is *fixed* income. Somewhere between 70 to 85 percent of nonmetro personal income represents fixed income, meaning income that is not tied to the current depressed farm economy. Major examples of fixed incomes are

transfer payments, e.g., Social Security payments, earnings from interest and dividends, and wages and salaries for government workers. Since approximately three out of every four dollars of nonmetro personal income is unaffected by farming, most rural businesses likely will not experience any significant impact from the current farm crisis.

Turning to job growth, an estimated 19,179 new full-time jobs were added to the state's nonfarm private sector employment base during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999, which is statistically equal to the 1998 quarterly average but somewhat below the 1997 quarterly average (Table 3). Approximately 57 percent of the new full-time jobs occurred in the five metro counties, which is statistically equal to the quarterly average for the 1997-1998 period. Statewide, 61 percent of the new full-time hires were blue-collar jobs (not shown). The rate was much higher for the nonmetro regions at 72 percent. Fifty-three percent of new full-time hires in the metro counties were blue-collar jobs.

An estimated 6,063 new part-time jobs were added during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999, bringing the total new job growth for the quarter to 25,242 (not shown). That level of growth is impressive, especially in light of the state's very low unemployment rate and its very high labor force participation rate. Certainly, it is persuasive evidence of a continuing strong economy.

The current farm crisis is adding to the difficulties of some nonmetro businesses, especially those that serve local markets. So far, most of the impact has been limited to the wholesale trade sector. The wholesale trade sector includes farm implement dealers and grain handlers. Only 21 percent of the nonmetro respondents for this sector reported gains in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues over year-ago levels (Table 2). Moreover, 57 percent of the nonmetro respondents for wholesale trade reported a decline in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues over year-ago levels. That is the highest rate of decline for any business group covered in the survey since the NQBCS was started twelve quarters ago. For the Panhandle region, 68 percent of the respondents for wholesale trade reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 revenues below year-ago levels (not shown). The rate was the same for the Central region, followed by Mid Plains (55%), Southeast (54%), and Northeast (48%). Only 9 percent of the respondents from the Mid Plains region reported 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 wholesale trade revenues above year-ago levels.

The first indication that the effects of the farm crisis had spread beyond the wholesale trade sector was observed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 1998 NQBCS results. Further findings were observed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 1998 survey results. However, the

**Table 3**  
**Full-time Job Hires**  
**1997, 1998, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters 1999<sup>1</sup>**

	1997	1998	1999	
	Quarterly Average	Quarterly Average	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
<b>New Job Hires</b>				
Metro <sup>2</sup>	13,548	11,415	7,519	10,839
Nonmetro	9,595	6,642	3,707	8,340
State	23,143	18,057	11,226	19,179
<b>Replacement Hires</b>				
Metro <sup>2</sup>	18,127	22,412	20,766	22,392
Nonmetro	12,712	11,228	11,780	12,671
State	30,839	33,640	32,546	35,063

<sup>1</sup>State estimates based on Nebraska Quarterly Business Conditions Survey (NQBCS) results since 1997

<sup>2</sup>Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

The state estimate of full-time replacement hires for 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 is 35,063, which is statistically equal to the 1997-1998 quarterly average (Table 3). Approximately 64 percent of the full-time replacement hires occurred in the metro counties. In addition, an estimated 18,566 part-time replacement hires occurred during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (not shown). Sixty-five percent of the part-time replacement hires represent service worker positions. Service worker jobs, especially part-time jobs, represent one of the highest turnover occupations in the state. Businesses that depend on service workers are finding it extremely difficult to find qualified workers. The tight labor market plus the attraction of other occupational

opportunities are major reasons for the service worker shortage. There is no indication that the situation will improve in the foreseeable future.

Most all businesses in the state continue to struggle with the problem of qualified workers. The problem is most acute in the vocational trades. Statewide, an estimated 11,521 full-time jobs were unfilled in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 (Table 4). Fifty-seven percent of these unfilled jobs represent blue-collar jobs. Respondents indicate that nearly half of the unfilled full-time jobs were not filled because of a lack of qualified applicants. In addition, 4,155 part-time jobs were unfilled during 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (not shown). Half of these unfilled jobs represent service worker jobs.

**Table 4**  
**Total Full-time Unfilled Positions and Positions Unfilled Due to Lack of Qualified Applicants**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 1999<sup>1</sup>**

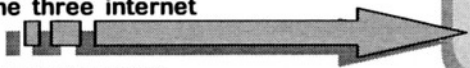
Occupation	State		Metro <sup>2</sup>		Nonmetro	
	Total Unfilled	Unfilled Due to Lack of Qualified Applicants	Total Unfilled	Unfilled Due to Lack of Qualified Applicants	Total Unfilled	Unfilled Due to Lack of Qualified Applicants
Executives/Administrators	230	107	192	92	38	15
Managers	636	261	506	223	130	38
Professional Specialists	1,832	1,050	1,449	797	383	253
Marketing/Sales	1,127	636	790	582	337	54
Administrative Support/Clerical	1,150	322	1,066	276	84	46
Service Workers	2,024	974	1,150	644	874	330
Transportation/Material Movers	682	115	138	69	544	46
Production/Craft/Repair	1,686	874	1,364	721	322	153
Operators/Fabricators/Laborers	2,154	1,142	1,288	721	866	421
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,521</b>	<b>5,481</b>	<b>7,943</b>	<b>4,125</b>	<b>3,578</b>	<b>1,356</b>

<sup>1</sup>State estimates based on 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 1999 Nebraska Quarterly Business Conditions Survey (NQBCS)

<sup>2</sup>Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington Counties

Second quarter 1999 wages by occupation for both full-time new position hires and replacement hires are summarized in Table 5. In general, for both metro and nonmetro counties, wages for new positions exceed those for replacement hires. Furthermore, metro wages, on average, exceed comparable nonmetro wages. Table 6 summarizes wages for new full-time blue-collar jobs for 1997 and 1998. Hourly wages in the Omaha MSA have been averaging nearly \$4 an hour above the nonmetro average. This considerable wage differential amounts to an \$8,000 annual salary difference, which presents a very strong incentive for blue-collar workers to migrate to the Omaha area.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 1999 NQBCS represents nearly 1,400 businesses with a combined employment of approximately 100,000 workers. The survey is limited to nonfarm private sector establishments. It is almost evenly split between metro and nonmetro county establishments. The metro counties are Cass, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, and Washington. NQBCS is the only regular statewide gauge of current business conditions. Quarterly NQBCS results are reported in the January, March, June, and September issues of *Business in Nebraska* (BIN). Regional summaries of NQBCS results are available on the three internet sites shown here.



[www.bbr.unl.edu](http://www.bbr.unl.edu)  
[www.ded.state.ne.us](http://www.ded.state.ne.us)  
[www.dol.state.ne.us](http://www.dol.state.ne.us)

**Table 6**  
**Average Hourly Wages for Full-time, New Position Hires for Blue-Collar Workers<sup>1</sup>, by Region for 1997 and 1998**

Region	1997	1998
Metro		
Lincoln MSA <sup>2</sup>	\$9.71	\$9.63
Omaha MSA <sup>3</sup>	\$12.19	\$13.16
Nonmetro		
Central	\$8.76	\$9.68
Mid-Plains	\$8.26	\$7.85
Northeast	\$8.57	\$8.82
Panhandle	\$8.09	\$7.38
Southeast	\$9.57	\$8.16

<sup>1</sup>Blue collar workers include transportation and material movers; production, craft, and repair workers; and operators, fabricators, and general laborers

**Table 5**  
**Average Hourly Wages for Full-time, New Position and Replacement Hires, by Occupation 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 1999<sup>1</sup>**

New Position Hires	State	Metro	Nonmetro
Executives/Administrators	\$23.17	\$24.41	\$19.88
Managers	\$19.86	\$20.53	\$18.70
Professional Specialists	\$16.93	\$17.81	\$13.97
Marketing/Sales	\$11.85	\$13.94	\$9.87
Administrative Support/Clerical	\$11.04	\$11.93	\$8.85
Service Workers	\$8.69	\$9.56	\$8.19
Transportation/Material Movers	\$11.57	\$11.94	\$9.23
Production/Craft/Repair	\$10.96	\$11.22	\$10.48
Operators/Fabricators/Laborers	\$12.53	\$11.36	\$12.97
Average	\$12.84	\$13.76	\$11.64
Full-time Replacement Hires	State	Metro	Nonmetro
Executives/Administrators	\$26.03	\$26.47	(D)
Managers	\$18.03	\$19.01	\$13.87
Professional Specialists	\$16.47	\$17.19	\$13.46
Marketing/Sales	\$9.65	\$9.83	\$8.50
Administrative Support/Clerical	\$9.51	\$9.86	\$7.72
Service Workers	\$7.72	\$7.91	\$7.41
Transportation/Material Movers	\$12.89	\$10.61	\$15.11
Production/Craft/Repair	\$9.44	\$10.53	\$7.98
Operators/Fabricators/Laborers	\$8.53	\$9.01	\$8.06
Average	\$10.11	\$10.84	\$8.82

(D) = Disclosure

## 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

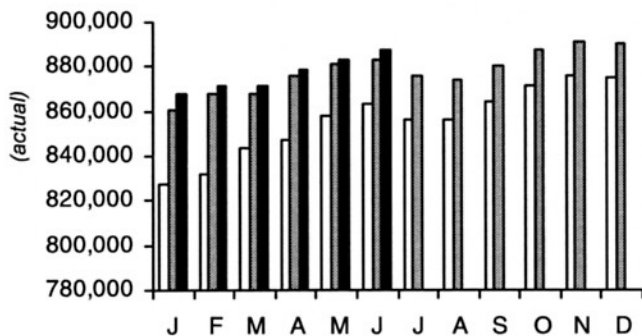
Panhandle—Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, and Sioux Counties

NQBCS is a joint project of the Nebraska Departments of Economic Development and Labor, and BBR. The following individuals contributed to the completion of this report: Phil Baker, Jolee Wheatley, Jane Sutherland, and Clarence Waldman, Nebraska Department of Labor; Tom Doering and Stu Miller, Nebraska Department of Economic Development; and David Bennett and Charles Lamphear, BBR.

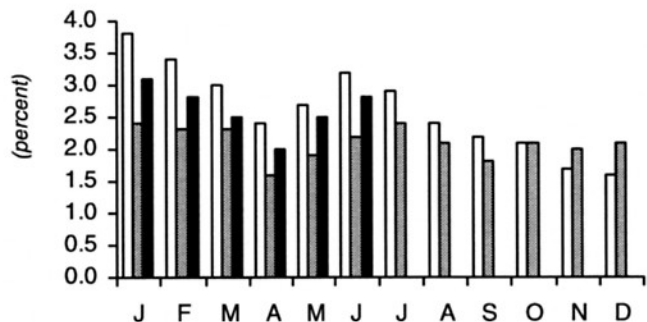
# Nebraska Stats

1997
  1998
  1999

### Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment

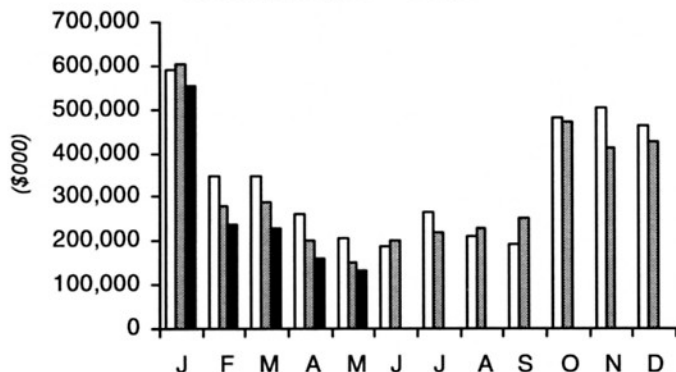


### Unemployment Rate

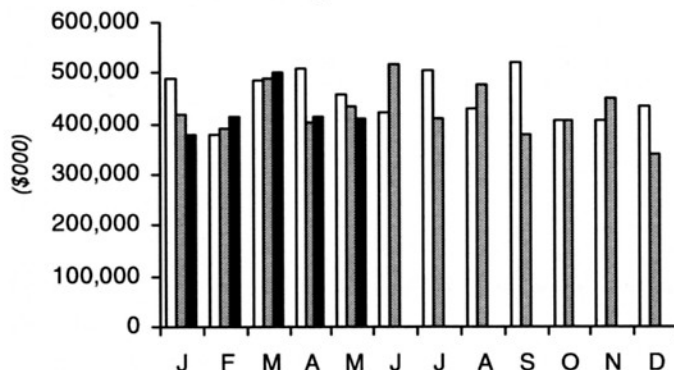


1997
  1998
  1999

### Cash Receipts—Crops



### Cash Receipts—Livestock



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

	May 1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago		May 1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago
Ainsworth, Brown	1,765	8,127	-3.7	Kenesaw, Adams	204	1,413	-0.2
Albion, Boone	1,727	8,094	-3.1	Kimball, Kimball	1,658	8,099	9.5
Alliance, Box Butte	6,076	27,703	-2.5	La Vista, Sarpy	10,097	43,296	8.1
Alma, Harlan	650	3,051	-3.2	Laurel, Cedar	356	1,631	2.5
Arapahoe, Furnas	800	3,506	-1.2	Lexington, Dawson	6,862	33,421	-2.0
Arlington, Washington	191	946	6.1	Lincoln, Lancaster	208,764	984,430	7.5
Arnold, Custer	249	1,206	-7.2	Louisville, Cass	655	2,627	2.5
Ashland, Saunders	1,324	5,037	0.9	Loup City, Sherman	617	3,007	0.9
Atkinson, Holt	955	4,523	-4.6	Lyons, Burt	455	2,081	-2.0
Auburn, Nemaha	2,498	11,354	-2.1	Madison, Madison	723	3,696	2.2
Aurora, Hamilton	2,348	12,590	-0.6	McCook, Red Willow	12,075	53,030	0.4
Axtell, Kearney	65	301	-10.9	Milford, Seward	703	4,436	1.7
Bassett, Rock	406	1,889	-2.8	Minatare, Scotts Bluff	158	650	-13.2
Battle Creek, Madison	519	3,032	4.3	Minden, Kearney	1,887	8,448	6.8
Bayard, Morrill	386	2,027	-7.1	Mitchell, Scotts Bluff	697	3,585	-0.7
Beatrice, Gage	10,714	50,694	0.7	Morrill, Scotts Bluff	509	2,229	-3.9
Beaver City, Furnas	118	597	-1.0	Nebraska City, Otoe	6,492	29,509	-1.8
Bellevue, Sarpy	21,095	91,790	5.3	Neligh, Antelope	1,391	6,558	-2.6
Benkelman, Dundy	537	2,608	-2.1	Newman Grove, Madison	260	1,395	-0.4
Bennington, Douglas	663	2,670	29.5	Norfolk, Madison	29,478	138,757	1.9
Blair, Washington	6,527	31,649	-0.5	North Bend, Dodge	470	2,367	-2.2
Bloomfield, Knox	587	2,812	-9.8	North Platte, Lincoln	24,046	107,349	6.3
Blue Hill, Webster	401	2,168	-2.2	O'Neill, Holt	4,254	19,753	-1.0
Bridgeport, Morrill	1,061	5,186	0.9	Oakland, Burt	619	3,370	5.7
Broken Bow, Custer	3,705	17,656	-2.7	Ogallala, Keith	5,834	25,475	3.5
Burwell, Garfield	676	3,187	-5.3	Omaha, Douglas	480,877	2,296,665	6.1
Cairo, Hall	447	1,253	-16.9	Ord, Valley	1,856	9,158	-0.7
Central City, Merrick	1,710	8,504	3.0	Osceola, Polk	683	3,421	-5.4
Chadron, Dawes	4,822	21,761	4.5	Oshkosh, Garden	420	2,082	-3.0
Chappell, Deuel	413	2,184	3.5	Osmond, Pierce	443	1,898	5.7
Clarkson, Colfax	480	1,904	-7.5	Oxford, Furnas	436	2,378	11.2
Clay Center, Clay	325	1,772	7.7	Papillion, Sarpy	7,262	34,656	13.2
Columbus, Platte	20,606	95,763	0.0	Pawnee City, Pawnee	316	1,639	10.3
Cozad, Dawson	2,926	14,656	2.7	Pender, Thurston	735	3,427	9.5
Crawford, Dawes	540	2,144	-1.4	Pierce, Pierce	597	2,992	-2.8
Creighton, Knox	1,055	5,802	13.9	Plainview, Pierce	578	3,099	-0.7
Crete, Saline	4,336	16,319	10.5	Plattsmouth, Cass	3,682	16,298	3.7
Crofton, Knox	460	1,809	6.9	Ponca, Dixon	448	2,291	-4.6
Curtis, Frontier	348	1,713	2.1	Ralston, Douglas	3,106	15,096	-1.1
Dakota City, Dakota	314	2,086	4.3	Randolph, Cedar	376	1,906	-7.0
David City, Butler	1,400	7,066	7.8	Ravenna, Buffalo	678	3,449	-9.0
Deshler, Thayer	221	1,393	-8.8	Red Cloud, Webster	639	3,169	-1.4
Dodge, Dodge	174	1,026	-4.4	Rushville, Sheridan	468	2,499	-0.3
Doniphan, Hall	795	4,992	4.9	Sargent, Custer	159	860	1.9
Eagle, Cass	568	1,485	-1.6	Schuyler, Colfax	1,652	8,345	-9.1
Elgin, Antelope	332	1,856	-5.9	Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff	21,579	98,241	2.4
Elkhorn, Douglas	2,856	10,831	7.8	Scribner, Dodge	390	1,792	-12.6
Elm Creek, Buffalo	412	1,911	33.5	Seward, Seward	4,757	22,534	1.5
Elwood, Gosper	486	2,026	5.4	Shelby, Polk	368	1,583	9.3
Fairbury, Jefferson	3,336	16,050	9.8	Shelton, Buffalo	579	3,084	-3.7
Fairmont, Fillmore	121	728	13.8	Sidney, Cheyenne	9,035	34,561	8.8
Falls City, Richardson	2,548	12,058	3.3	South Sioux City, Dakota	8,253	38,216	0.4
Franklin, Franklin	454	2,621	-2.9	Springfield, Sarpy	544	2,273	37.7
Fremont, Dodge	23,502	107,050	9.2	St. Paul, Howard	1,211	5,710	-1.3
Friend, Saline	397	2,350	6.9	Stanton, Stanton	545	2,853	-1.1
Fullerton, Nance	460	2,481	-1.3	Stromsburg, Polk	739	3,746	-6.4
Geneva, Fillmore	1,724	7,897	-2.5	Superior, Nuckolls	1,565	7,397	-1.1
Genoa, Nance	266	1,403	-2.0	Sutherland, Lincoln	337	1,690	10.7
Gering, Scotts Bluff	3,755	17,414	4.7	Sutton, Clay	662	3,937	-3.9
Gibbon, Buffalo	789	3,959	1.0	Syracuse, Otoe	1,089	5,381	4.1
Gordon, Sheridan	1,638	7,768	0.4	Tecumseh, Johnson	947	4,310	7.7
Gothenburg, Dawson	2,291	11,025	6.3	Tekamah, Burt	1,071	5,304	3.1
Grand Island, Hall	52,152	238,659	-0.2	Tilden, Madison	377	2,039	2.7
Grant, Perkins	961	4,779	0.1	Utica, Seward	302	1,498	5.0
Gretna, Sarpy	3,104	13,222	-6.6	Valentine, Cherry	4,270	18,489	2.1
Hartington, Cedar	1,570	7,493	-2.3	Valley, Douglas	1,200	4,259	-15.0
Hastings, Adams	21,007	98,157	2.3	Wahoo, Saunders	2,198	10,516	-4.4
Hay Springs, Sheridan	286	1,614	4.3	Wakefield, Dixon	371	1,517	-8.4
Hebron, Thayer	1,670	8,821	-3.1	Wauneta, Chase	258	1,481	0.5
Henderson, York	584	2,876	2.5	Waverly, Lancaster	700	3,516	-8.9
Hickman, Lancaster	212	1,157	7.5	Wayne, Wayne	3,549	17,481	19.3
Holdrege, Phelps	4,493	20,598	-1.1	Weeping Water, Cass	686	3,048	-6.1
Hooper, Dodge	295	1,704	2.8	West Point, Cuming	3,676	17,237	-5.3
Humboldt, Richardson	480	2,451	8.1	Wilber, Saline	446	2,190	2.1
Humphrey, Platte	711	3,200	-5.0	Wisner, Cuming	579	2,682	0.8
Imperial, Chase	2,156	9,694	-1.4	Wood River, Hall	418	1,848	-6.2
Juniata, Adams	169	1,053	9.6	Wymore, Gage	424	2,015	5.9
Kearney, Buffalo	33,559	154,194	7.2	York, York	10,260	47,848	0.8

\*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	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	May	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	
	1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)		1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)		1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)		1999 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)		
Nebraska	216,159	1,010,242	6.9	1,396,419	6,614,693	4.9	Howard	936	4,044	5.9	1,505	7,334	0.3
Adams	3,970	18,960	21.2	21,529	102,286	2.7	Jefferson	982	5,083	-9.4	4,279	20,675	7.8
Antelope	996	4,728	-9.3	2,064	10,255	-2.6	Johnson	807	3,130	11.3	1,241	5,927	6.1
Arthur	67	367	7.6	(D)	(D)	(D)	Kearney	1,054	4,623	-6.2	2,112	9,389	6.4
Banner	80	417	-33.1	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keith	1,399	6,640	35.1	6,438	27,803	3.5
Blaine	79	410	16.5	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keya Paha	104	528	-4.2	118	461	38.4
Boone	731	3,672	-14.2	2,183	10,289	-3.4	Kimball	402	2,539	22.2	1,680	8,263	8.5
Box Butte	1,743	7,550	-0.9	6,345	29,062	-2.4	Knox	927	5,140	-2.2	2,730	13,244	5.0
Boyd	258	1,192	0.7	601	2,528	3.6	Lancaster	29,753	132,095	12.2	211,199	996,041	7.4
Brown	439	2,337	14.8	1,847	8,431	-3.9	Lincoln	4,317	21,643	14.7	24,936	111,810	6.2
Buffalo	5,456	24,243	5.4	36,369	168,255	6.6	Logan	88	596	-13.7	(D)	(D)	(D)
Burt	882	5,015	0.7	2,343	11,617	3.0	Loup	87	425	-7.4	(D)	(D)	(D)
Butler	1,158	5,785	13.6	1,741	9,265	5.1	McPherson	97	284	-11.8	(D)	(D)	(D)
Cass	3,930	18,209	17.2	7,090	29,976	5.1	Madison	4,597	20,356	3.4	31,400	149,213	1.9
Cedar	1,133	6,145	2.2	2,584	12,317	-3.5	Merrick	1,020	5,305	8.0	2,261	11,150	2.6
Chase	506	3,418	8.0	2,425	11,283	-1.7	Morrill	648	3,424	18.6	1,460	7,369	-0.3
Cherry	836	4,015	-8.9	4,470	19,417	2.0	Nance	537	2,292	-5.7	755	3,976	-2.8
Cheyenne	1,262	6,319	12.0	9,267	35,848	8.7	Nemaha	1,183	4,685	0.2	2,663	12,499	-3.0
Clay	889	5,045	1.2	1,782	10,288	0.5	Nuckolls	584	3,153	9.6	2,065	10,132	0.8
Collfax	1,465	5,853	4.4	2,454	12,025	-8.9	Otoe	2,151	9,611	3.5	8,021	36,896	-0.6
Cuming	1,231	5,860	-6.3	4,779	22,461	-4.4	Pawnee	396	1,799	-14.0	459	2,530	7.2
Custer	1,430	7,173	-2.4	4,636	22,241	-2.5	Perkins	526	3,242	24.8	1,166	5,763	0.9
Dakota	2,285	11,754	18.0	9,144	43,305	0.5	Phelps	1,423	6,679	4.0	4,701	21,828	-1.7
Dawes	977	3,893	-0.5	5,369	23,921	4.0	Pierce	784	4,473	0.5	1,693	8,364	0.4
Dawson	2,714	13,567	-9.6	12,493	60,855	0.7	Platte	4,201	20,158	2.5	21,834	101,743	-0.1
Deuel	215	1,276	-10.1	1,015	4,815	5.4	Polk	686	4,174	3.6	1,927	9,585	-2.2
Dixon	774	3,867	-2.4	906	4,285	-7.7	Red Willow	1,712	6,836	4.1	12,417	54,552	0.3
Dodge	4,449	20,758	8.5	25,092	115,319	8.2	Richardson	1,170	4,880	0.3	3,188	15,498	2.6
Douglas	56,683	259,560	8.4	490,477	2,337,455	6.1	Rock	242	1,087	-14.7	418	1,960	-0.5
Dundy	317	1,850	13.1	558	2,673	-3.6	Saline	1,730	7,988	10.4	5,484	22,828	8.6
Fillmore	790	4,304	-10.2	2,361	11,837	-1.1	Sarpy	16,303	73,720	11.2	43,708	192,489	7.7
Franklin	387	2,189	-2.1	722	3,803	0.4	Saunders	3,063	13,356	2.4	5,705	26,018	-0.9
Frontier	330	2,078	2.5	600	3,120	-0.4	Scotts Bluff	3,655	18,986	-2.5	26,768	122,442	2.4
Furnas	496	3,029	-18.8	1,994	10,487	1.2	Seward	2,294	10,290	7.4	6,013	29,689	1.6
Gage	2,862	12,847	-0.4	11,720	56,063	0.5	Sheridan	649	3,464	-15.0	2,705	13,287	1.2
Garden	286	1,265	-21.2	598	2,817	1.6	Sherman	362	2,002	-6.9	700	3,529	1.6
Garfield	242	1,125	17.7	675	3,184	-5.4	Sioux	195	1,011	-26.3	141	527	-8.3
Gosper	331	1,710	8.0	537	2,297	6.6	Stanton	782	3,767	5.0	697	3,773	4.6
Grant	102	669	7.4	212	940	-8.1	Thayer	777	3,998	-3.8	2,301	12,551	-3.5
Greeley	381	1,764	0.1	579	2,934	-1.5	Thomas	88	517	9.8	249	1,162	-11.7
Hall	7,060	31,375	7.5	54,120	248,203	-0.2	Thurston	461	2,449	3.4	847	4,096	8.7
Hamilton	1,429	6,615	15.1	2,683	14,244	-2.1	Valley	615	2,524	-1.9	2,083	10,173	0.8
Harlan	605	2,710	25.5	901	3,885	-2.1	Washington	3,180	14,588	10.8	7,076	34,802	0.1
Hayes	158	809	-8.7	(D)	(D)	(D)	Wayne	1,026	5,049	1.3	3,677	18,171	18.3
Hitchcock	357	1,934	-2.3	548	2,626	-0.8	Webster	415	1,955	-8.1	1,121	5,789	-2.3
Holt	1,561	7,152	-7.6	5,870	27,139	-2.5	Wheeler	102	555	-32.2	78	398	-13.1
Hooker	78	547	-6.0	217	929	-4.0	York	1,891	9,119	2.4	11,198	52,630	0.6

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

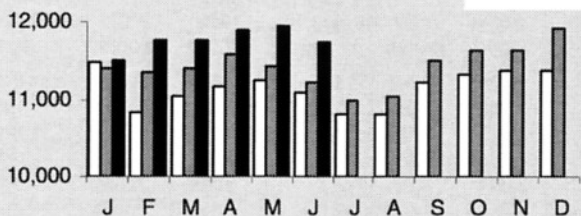
## Note on Net Taxable Retail Sales

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 June\*\* 1999

1997 1998 1999

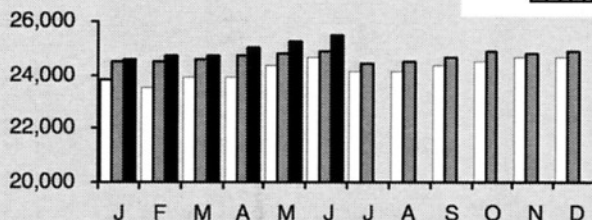
## Northwest Panhandle



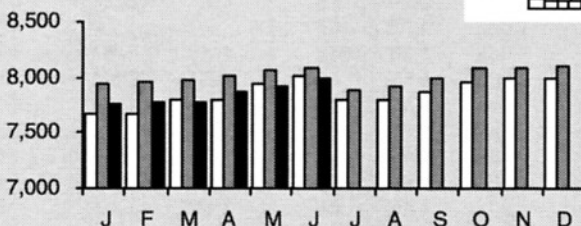
## Note to Readers

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

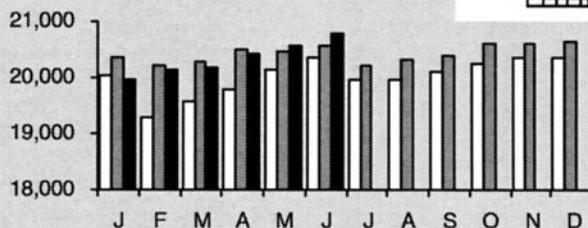
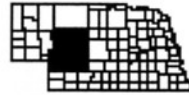
## Southwest Panhandle



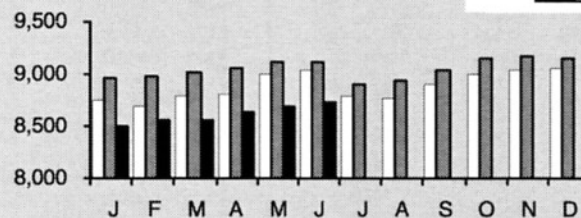
## North Central



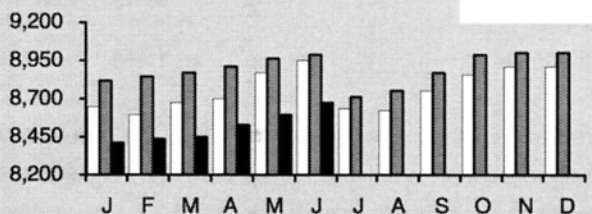
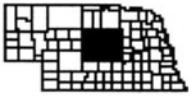
## West Central



## Southwest Central



## East Central

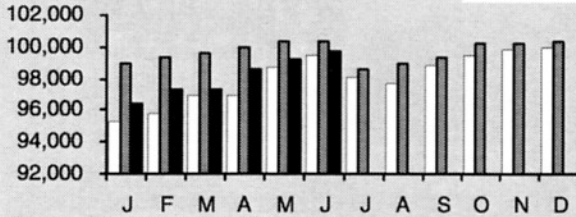




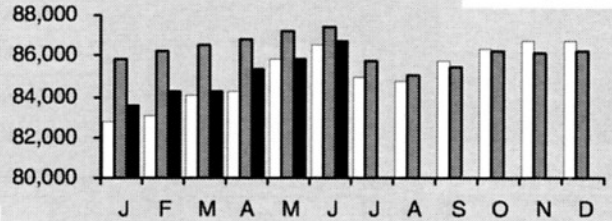
# Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment\* 1997 to June\*\* 1999

1997 1998 1999

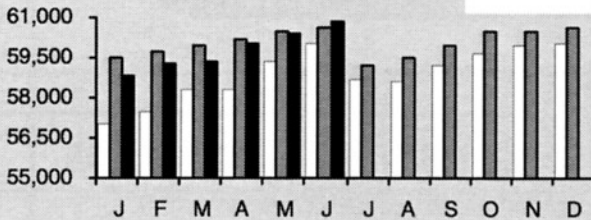
## Southeast Central



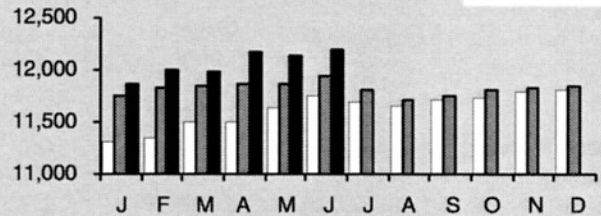
## Northeast



## Southeast

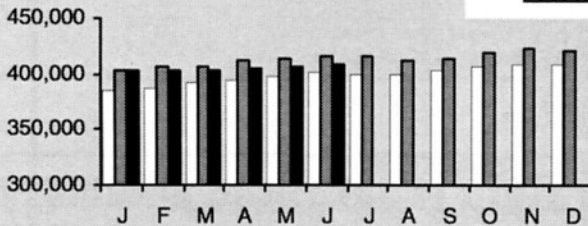
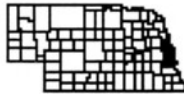


## Sioux City MSA Nebraska portion only

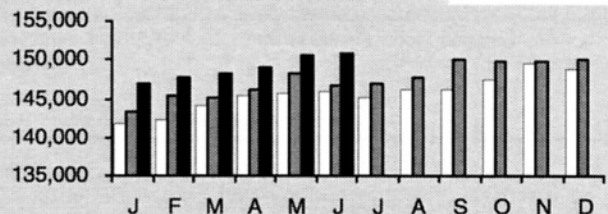


## Omaha MSA

Nebraska portion only



## Lincoln MSA



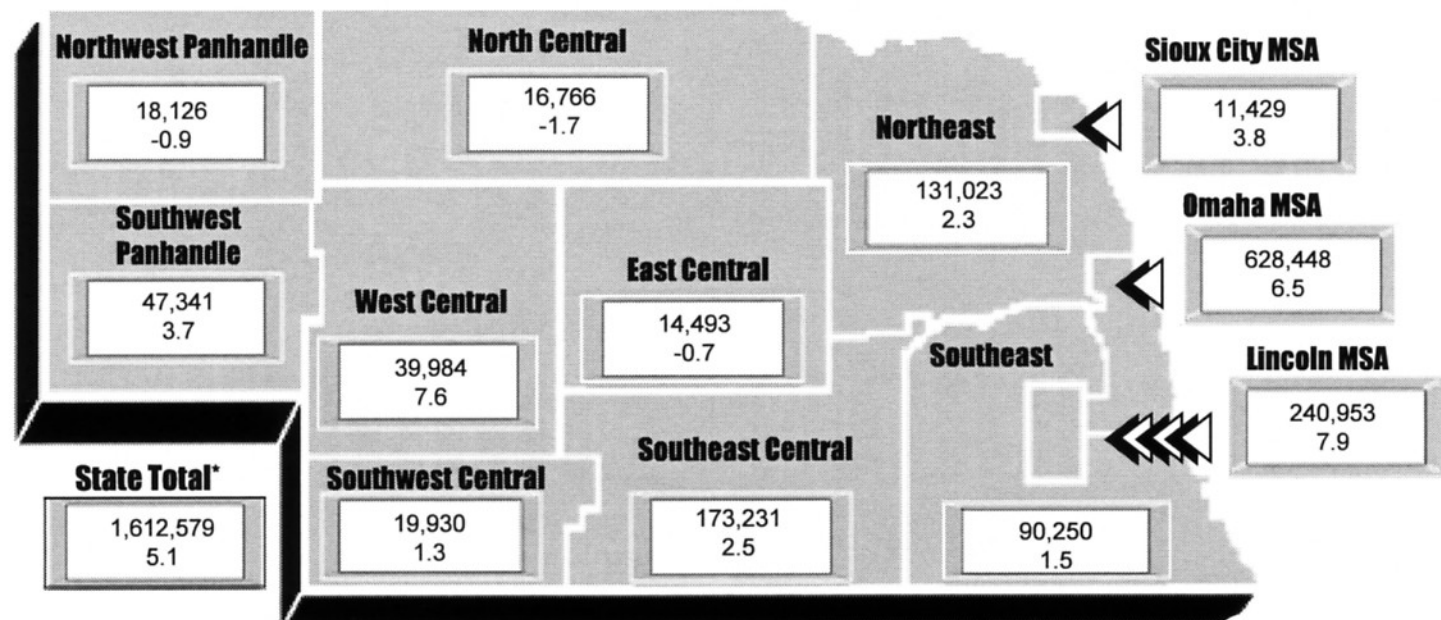
\*By place of work

\*\*Current month data are preliminary and subject to revision

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

# May 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\*

	Preliminary June 1999	Revised May 1999	May % Change vs Yr. Ago
Total	887,138	882,581	0.3
Construction & Mining	45,093	43,186	0.3
Manufacturing	117,539	116,846	-2.3
Durables	57,521	57,034	-2.7
Nondurables	60,018	59,812	-2.0
TCU**	59,776	59,060	6.4
Trade	212,092	212,481	0.5
Retail	155,495	156,275	-0.6
Wholesale	56,597	56,206	3.7
FIRE ***	59,354	58,800	3.2
Services	241,159	239,020	0.5
Government	152,125	153,188	-1.3

\*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 1999	% Change vs Yr. Ago	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago (inflation rate)
All Items	166.7	2.1	2.0
Commodities	143.9	1.6	1.2
Services	189.5	2.5	2.5

\*U = All urban consumers

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Inflation Rate

2.0

## State Labor Force Summary\*

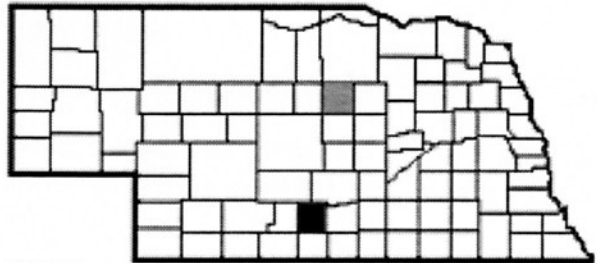
	Preliminary June 1999	Revised May 1999	May % Change vs Yr. Ago
Labor Force	943,736	932,087	2.3
Employment	917,229	909,105	2.4
Unemployment Rate	2.8	2.5	

\*By place of residence

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

# Phelps

## Holdrege-County Seat



Next County of Month

**License plate prefix number:** 37

**Size of county:** 540 square miles, ranks 71<sup>st</sup> in the state

**Population:** 9,908 in 1998, a change of 2.0 percent from 1990

**Per capita personal income:** \$25,814 in 1997, ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the state

**Net taxable retail sales (\$000):** \$72,498 in 1998, a change of -3.9 percent from 1997; \$28,508 from January through May of 1999, a change of -0.4 percent from the same period the previous year

**Number of worksites<sup>1</sup>:** 382 in 1997

**Unemployment rate:** 2.4 percent in Phelps County, 2.7 percent in Nebraska for 1998

	State	Phelps County
<b>Nonfarm employment (1998)<sup>2</sup>:</b>	875,352	4,417
<b>(wage &amp; salary)</b>	<i>(percent of total)</i>	
Construction and Mining	4.8	4.3
Manufacturing	13.6	22.0
TCU	6.4	3.6
Retail Trade	18.0	14.6
Wholesale Trade	6.2	9.9
FIRE	6.6	4.5
Services	27.2	22.5
Government	17.2	18.6

### Agriculture:

**Number of farms:** 578 in 1992, 616 in 1987

**Average farm size:** 650 acres in 1992

**Market value of farm products sold:** \$229.6 million in 1992 (\$397,239 average per farm)

<sup>1</sup>Worksites refers to business activity covered under the Nebraska Employment Security Law. Information presented has been extracted from the Employer's Quarterly Contribution Report, Nebraska Form UI-11. For further details about covered worksites, see the Nebraska Employers Guide to Unemployment Insurance.

<sup>2</sup>By 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's Rank Among States, Including the District of Columbia

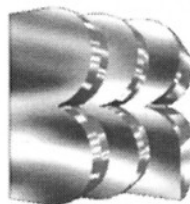
Category	Rank
Population—1997 .....	38
Population change (percent)—1990-1997 .....	36
Percent population White—non-Hispanic—1997 .....	12
Percent population Black—non-Hispanic—1997 .....	32
Percent population Asian—1997 .....	29
Percent population Native American—1997 .....	17
Percent population Hispanic—1997 .....	22
Percent population in metropolitan counties—1997 .....	38
Percent population age 65 and over—1997 .....	13
Percent population age under 18—1997 .....	11
Percent of population (over age 25) with college degree—1997 .....	34
Percent of population without health insurance—1997 .....	7
Live births per 1,000 population—1997 .....	22
Deaths per 1,000 live births—1996-1997 average .....	40
Unemployment rate—1997 .....	2
Employment growth (percent)—1990-1997 .....	23
Employment to population ratio—1997 .....	5
Personal income per capita—1997 .....	28
Median household income—1996-1997 average .....	30
Persons below poverty level (percent)—1996-1997 average .....	13
Federal government employment (percent)—civilian & military—1997 .....	32
Farm employment (percent)—1997 .....	4
Manufacturing employment (percent)—1997 .....	32
State and local taxes (percent of personal income)—1997 .....	39

Source: *State Profiles: The Population and Economy of Each U.S. State*, First Edition, 1999, Berman Press, Lanham, MD

Copyright 1999 by Bureau of Business Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. ISSN 0007-683X. *Business in Nebraska* is published in ten issues per year by the Bureau of Business Research. Subscription orders and inquiries should be directed to Bureau of Business Research, 114 CBA, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 68588-0406. Annual subscription rate is \$10.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln—Dr. James C. Moeser, *Chancellor*  
College of Business Administration—Cynthia H. Milligan, *Dean*

### Bureau of Business Research (BBR)



...business is not our only business

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
Permit No. 46

specializes in ...

- economic impact assessment
- demographic and economic projections
- survey design
- compilation and analysis of data
- public access to information via **NU ONRAMP**

For more information on how BBR can assist you or your organization, contact us  
(402) 472-2334; send e-mail to: [flamphear1@unl.edu](mailto:flamphear1@unl.edu); or use the  
World Wide Web: [www.bbr.unl.edu](http://www.bbr.unl.edu)