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## **Population Decline Characterizes Nebraska's Small Counties**

*John Austin*

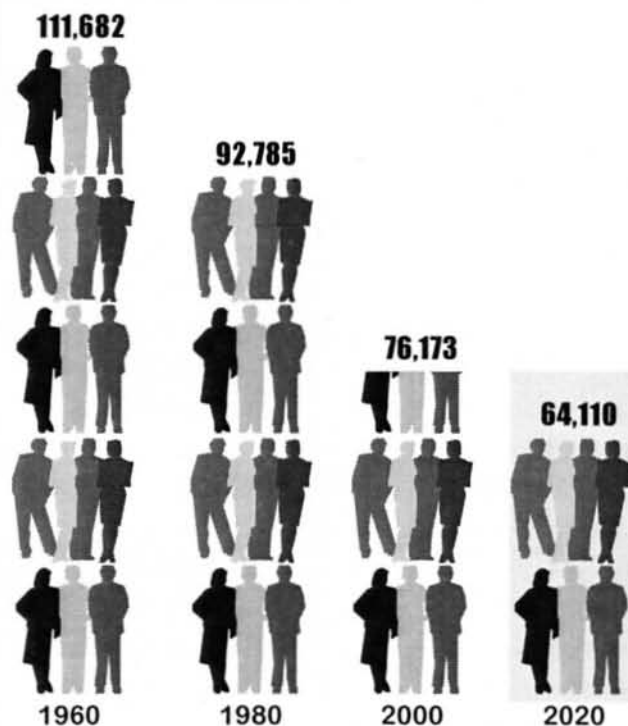
**T**he Bureau of Business Research (BBR) has prepared estimates of future populations, based upon Census 2000 data. This article focuses on the 34 smallest counties in the state. All of these counties had populations below 5,000 in 2000<sup>1</sup>. The demographic of the group is one of continuing decline (Figure 1). Overall, total population in these 34 counties will decrease 15.8 percent during the forecast period—2000 to 2020. Compared to recent history, the population projections for these counties are conservative. Historic population losses were 17 percent from 1960 to 1980 and 18 percent from 1980 to 2000. By 2020 the group will have lost 42.6 percent of its 1960 population.

Additional county data are available on the BBR website, [www.bbbr.unl.edu](http://www.bbbr.unl.edu). The tables include total population for each decade from 1960 to 2020, natural change from 1990 to 2000, net migration rates from 1960 through 2020, and sector share of employment in 1999.

The demographic future of the small counties reflects their economies. All are agriculturally dependent. Since agriculture is a mature industry, growth prospects are limited. Further, they have little nonagricultural industry. Without an expansion in nonagriculture private industry, not

enough new jobs will be generated to retain families of young working-age people. The inevitable result is the exodus of the childbearing age group.

**Figure 1**  
**Total Populations of 34 Small Nebraska Counties, 1960, 1980, 2000, and 2020**



<sup>1</sup>Kimball County had a population below 5,000 in 2000, but is classed as a small trade center county and is excluded from this analysis.

Further compounding the loss of families of young working-age people from these counties is an outmigration at the top end of the age distribution. Since small counties generally cannot support a full range of medical services, the elderly often leave to move into the homes of family members, or into assisted living or nursing home facilities that often are in larger nearby counties. A key consideration in their relocation decision frequently is the quality of medical care available in the new location versus the old location. The state's small counties often have difficulty in attracting adequate medical care facilities and personnel.

### Historic Demographic Change

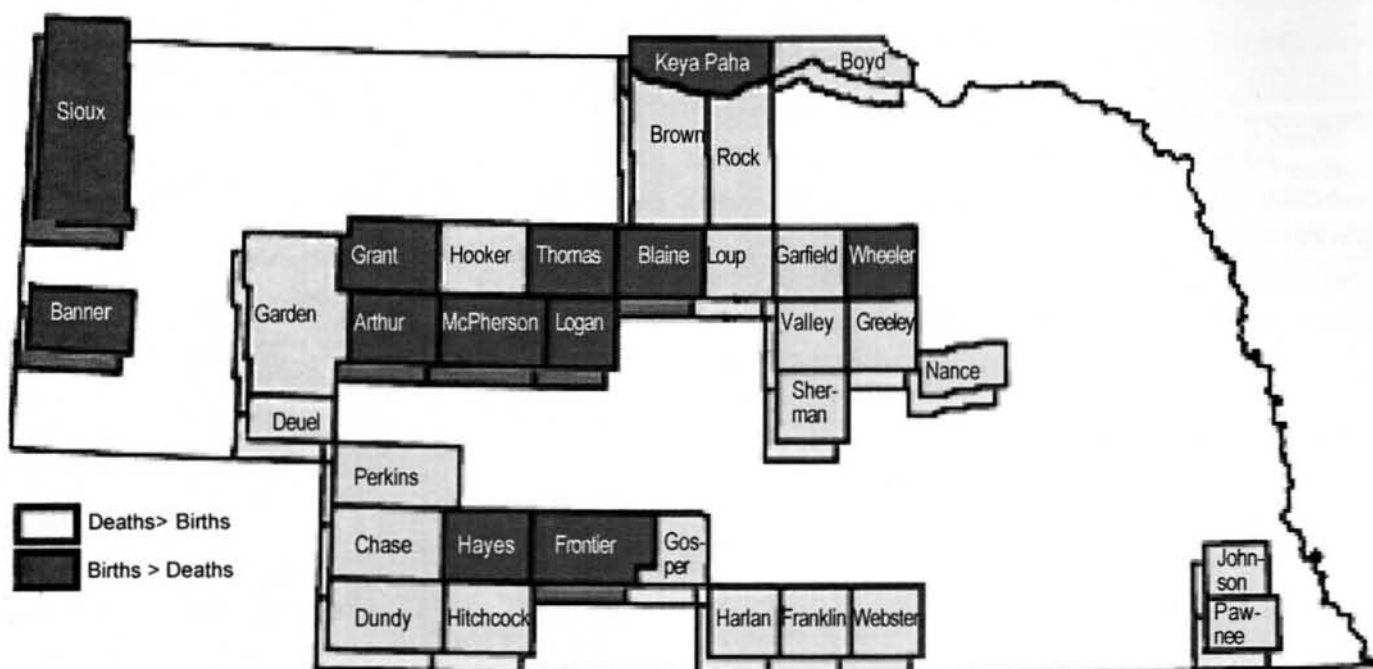
Nebraska's small rural counties have been losing population for many years. From 1960 to 2000 the 34-county group lost over 35,000 people—31.2 percent of the 1960 population (Table 1, page 3). The counties had individual patterns of population decrease over the 40-year period, but all counties lost population. The greatest loss was in Boyd County—46 percent. The smallest loss was in Chase County—5.8 percent. There was no pattern of loss by county size. The total loss for counties under 2,500 was 33 percent, and 30

percent in counties with populations between 2,500 and 5,000. Overall, these counties lost population during the 40-year period, but some had slight growth during the 1970s.

To gain some perspective on the population losses between 1960 and 2000, in 1960, there were only two Nebraska counties with populations below 1,000. In 2000 there were 11 counties in this group.

All of the state's smallest counties experienced net outflows of migrants from the total population over the historic period. Perhaps of greater concern, the loss of working-age populations from these counties has degraded their abilities to increase populations in order to offset the tide of outmigration. Twenty-two of the counties experienced more deaths than births from 1990 to 2000 (Figure 2). The inability to balance births and deaths is perhaps surprising in that the small counties in the state tend to have birth rates above those suggested by standard fertility tables. For example, the births in counties with under 1,000 persons would have to increase by 11 percent in order to match fertility records of the 1990s. Further, since farms likely will continue to grow in size, the farm population will continue to decline.

**Figure 2**  
**Natural Change (Births Less Deaths) in Nebraska's 34**  
**Small Counties, 1990-1998**



Source: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

**Table 1**  
**Population Growth Rates of Nebraska's**  
**Smallest Counties**

		<b>Growth Rates (Percent)</b>	
		<i>2000/1960</i>	<i>2020/2000</i>
<i>Population 2000</i>			
Arthur	444	-34.7	-14.3
Banner	819	-35.5	-11.0
Blaine	583	-42.6	-33.3
Boyd	2,438	-46.0	-31.6
Brown	3,525	-20.5	-13.4
Chase	4,068	-5.8	-16.6
Deuel	2,098	-32.9	-11.6
Dundy	2,292	-35.8	-24.1
Franklin	3,574	-34.4	-15.3
Frontier	3,099	-28.1	-1.2
Garden	2,292	-34.0	-14.0
Garfield	1,902	-29.5	-25.1
Gosper	2,143	-13.9	-0.6
Grant	747	-26.0	-18.9
Greeley	2,714	-40.9	-26.2
Harlan	3,786	-25.5	-5.7
Hayes	1,068	-44.3	-32.3
Hitchcock	3,111	-35.6	-32.2
Hooker	783	-30.7	-6.2
Johnson	4,488	-28.5	0.7
Keya Paha	983	-41.2	-24.3
Logan	774	-30.1	-22.7
Loup	712	-35.1	-10.3
McPherson	533	-27.5	-7.4
Nance	4,038	-28.3	-12.8
Pawnee	3,087	-42.4	-12.7
Perkins	3,200	-23.6	-10.2
Rock	1,756	-31.2	-30.3
Sherman	3,318	-38.4	-24.3
Sioux	1,475	-42.7	-18.8
Thomas	729	-32.4	-31.1
Valley	4,647	-29.5	-20.4
Webster	4,061	-34.8	-10.1
Wheeler	886	-31.7	-23.1
<b>All 34 counties</b>	<b>76,173</b>	<b>-31.2</b>	<b>-15.8</b>

## Employment and Agriculture

All 34 counties are heavily dependent on agriculture, and are listed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as farm dependent. A county analysis of farm employment as a percent of total employment was undertaken. Since it combines proprietors and paid labor, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) employment data for 1999, the most recent data available, were used for this analysis. According to these data, 29.4 percent of all employees (including proprietors) in these counties worked on farms. That contrasted to an average of 5.9 percent for the state as a whole. When the data were separated into two groups by county size, the smallest 20 counties in the state—those with populations below 2,500—averaged 41 percent farm employment. The 14 remaining counties averaged 26 percent.

Further, it is not uncommon that the private employers in these counties were linked to agriculture—local elevators, farm and feed stores, and farm equipment dealers, among others. The implication of agriculture dependence is that the local economies of these counties were tied to a mature, slow-growth industry resulting in local economies unlikely to experience economic growth. To the extent that both farmers and nonfarmers expand their purchasing from other than local sources and send their products to more distant markets, the prospect of slow growth or no growth at all is amplified.

The primary nonagricultural employer in Nebraska's 34 smallest counties was the government sector—26.5 percent of total nonfarm employment. Government employed 38.6 percent of nonfarm wage and salary workers when proprietors were not included. Nine of the counties had government shares of nonfarm wage and salary employment above 50 percent. All nine were counties with populations under 2,500 in 2000. There were few state and federal workers in these counties. Local government accounted for 7,010—83 percent—of the 8,468 total government jobs in the 34 counties.

The next largest group of nonfarm employers was the services sector with 20.7 percent of total nonfarm employment, including proprietors. Retail trade was the next largest at 17.4 percent. Many of these service and retail jobs were closely tied to agriculture-based customers. All other sectors fell below 10 percent. Manufacturing employed only 1.3 percent of the total nonfarm employment in these counties, combined, compared to a state share of 10.3 percent. The lack of a broad range of jobs not closely tied to agriculture will be a constraint on future economic and population growth in Nebraska's small counties.

## Population Projections

The 2000 populations, rates of loss for 1960 to 2000, and the population projections for the 2000 to 2020 period for the 34 counties are presented in Table 1. The overall pattern is one of continuing population loss. The projected rates of loss for the counties parallel past losses. Further, the projected gains in some counties are within the range of their own past growth rates. A few counties are expected to experience population gains on a decennial basis.

Overall, the 34 counties will experience a 15.8 percent decline in population from 2000 to 2020. The decreases are not uniform. The smallest 20 counties—populations less than 2,500—will decrease 19.8 percent while 14 counties in the group with populations between 2,500 and 5,000 will decrease 13.9 percent. These averages belie the range of population changes. From 2000 to 2010 the largest decrease will be 18.2 percent, while two counties will show very slight positive growth. From 2010 to 2020, the range is from negative 18.9 percent to positive 0.8 percent.




The population projections indicate another addition to the group of small counties—populations below 1,000. By 2010 Hayes County will join the 11 other counties in this group. The

state's smallest counties will continue to experience advances in average age. Both children and young to middle-age adults will decrease in numbers (Figure 3). Further, their relative share of total population will decrease slightly. Those 65 and over will show a small decrease in population and an increase in their share of total population from 21.9 percent in 2000 to 25.0 percent in 2020.

## Changing the Future

These projections are based upon a set of assumptions about the future for small rural counties. Some of these counties have shown that they are capable of increasing population. Gosper County was a standout in the 1990s. Reversing the downturn requires fundamental changes that will attract new industries and people. Small rural counties have the added burden of limited resources, both financial and physical, that can be employed to stem the tide of declining population. However, without concerted efforts to attract new industry, the future is clear. The young working-age population that has the potential to generate natural population increases in these counties will be attracted to other locations that offer them meaningful, fulfilling jobs that pay market wages for their services.

**Figure 3**  
**Population by Age Range, 2000 and 2020 Projections**

2000	Ages 0 to 19	2020
20,579		16,521
38,880	Ages 20 to 64	31,579
		
16,714	Ages 65+	16,010
		

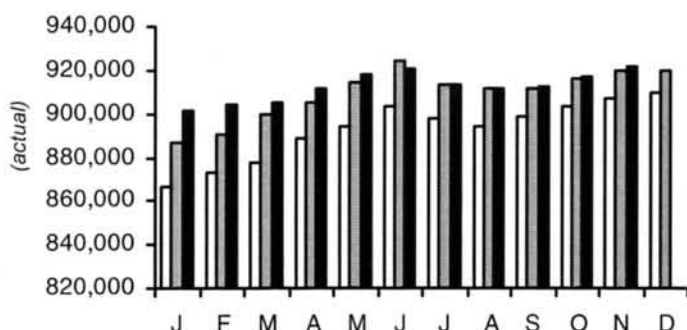


*BBR is grateful to those who participated in a discussion of migration within the state of Nebraska that resulted in a set of projections of net migration rates. Participants were: John Allen, Center for Applied Rural Innovation, UNL; Denny Berens, Nebraska Department of Social Services; Bruce Johnson, Department of Agricultural Economics, UNL; Donis Petersan, NPPD; Senator Ron Raikes, Nebraska Unicameral; Craig Schroeder, Nebraska Rural Development Commission; Sandy Scofield, Center for Science, Mathematics, and Computer Education, UNL; Charles Lamphear and John Austin, BBR. The author is responsible for the net migration rates and population projection methodology.*

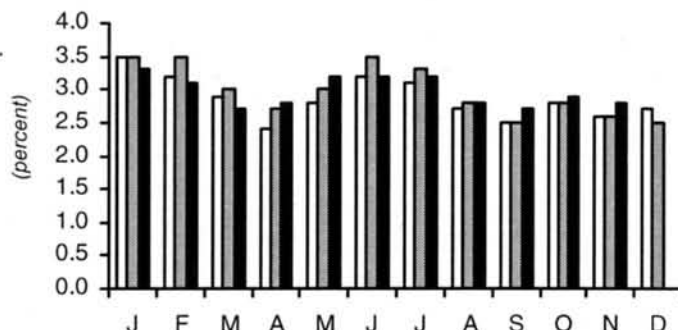
# Nebraska Stats

1999 2000 2001

## Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment



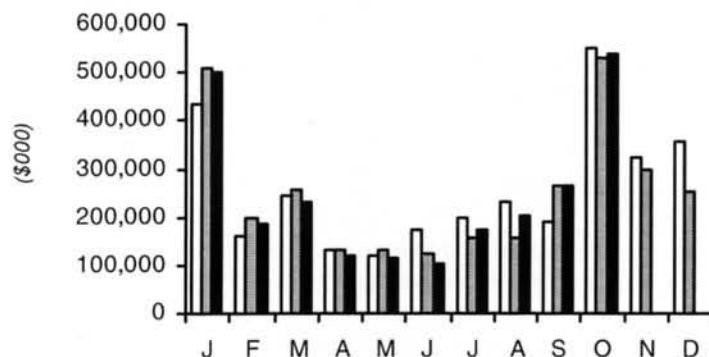
## Unemployment Rate



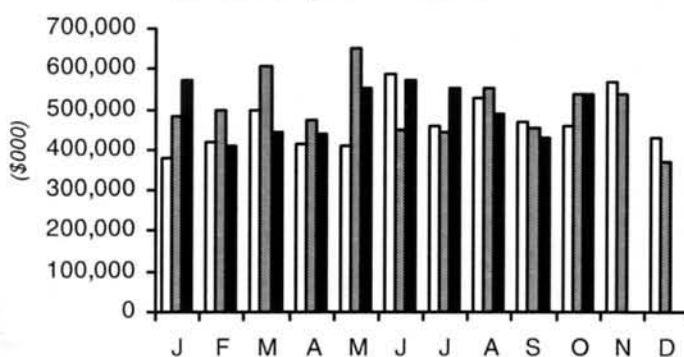
Note: All 1999 and January-March 2000 data are benchmarked. April-March 2000 data are estimates and will be benchmarked in early 2002. Data for April-December 2001 are estimates until benchmarked in 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available.

1999 2000 2001

## Cash Receipts—Crops



## Cash Receipts—Livestock



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

	October 2001 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago		October 2001 (\$000)	YTD (\$000)	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago
Ainsworth, Brown	1,693	16,961	8.0	Kenesaw, Adams	199	2,859	33.5
Albion, Boone	1,829	16,645	0.1	Kimball, Kimball	1,628	18,598	2.3
Alliance, Box Butte	5,618	57,348	-0.2	La Vista, Sarpy	9,840	101,283	0.2
Alma, Harlan	601	6,125	8.2	Laurel, Cedar	436	3,855	3.7
Arapahoe, Furnas	741	8,307	-0.2	Lexington, Dawson	7,547	77,904	3.4
Arlington, Washington	201	2,367	6.3	Lincoln, Lancaster	219,511	2,193,739	1.2
Arnold, Custer	236	2,569	-11.1	Louisville, Cass	439	4,848	-11.9
Ashland, Saunders	1,322	14,137	2.0	Loup City, Sherman	448	4,798	10.1
Atkinson, Holt	935	10,412	0.4	Lyons, Burt	492	4,462	-1.3
Auburn, Nemaha	2,441	24,192	0.5	Madison, Madison	854	8,388	1.2
Aurora, Hamilton	2,167	23,923	1.9	McCook, Red Willow	9,742	98,071	-16.2
Axtell, Kearney	75	793	27.5	Milford, Seward	1,385	10,275	15.5
Bassett, Rock	473	5,155	5.7	Minatare, Scotts Bluff	138	1,559	-2.3
Battle Creek, Madison	607	7,767	16.6	Minden, Kearney	1,811	19,067	4.2
Bayard, Morrill	382	4,501	2.5	Mitchell, Scotts Bluff	542	5,597	-5.0
Beatrice, Gage	11,886	121,624	4.6	Morrill, Scotts Bluff	487	5,255	-4.5
Beaver City, Furnas	109	1,221	-8.0	Nebraska City, Otoe	6,213	62,213	-0.4
Bellevue, Sarpy	24,477	245,004	20.2	Neligh, Antelope	1,361	14,064	4.0
Benkelman, Dundy	556	6,368	8.1	Newman Grove, Madison	280	3,060	7.4
Bennington, Douglas	784	6,414	2.4	Norfolk, Madison	32,171	315,754	2.0
Blair, Washington	6,996	75,416	9.0	North Bend, Dodge	506	5,431	6.9
Bloomfield, Knox	582	5,923	13.8	North Platte, Lincoln	24,146	247,443	3.6
Blue Hill, Webster	464	4,393	4.2	O'Neill, Holt	4,184	44,981	0.5
Bridgeport, Morrill	1,007	11,379	-1.9	Oakland, Burt	564	6,040	3.3
Broken Bow, Custer	3,825	38,264	-0.4	Ogallala, Keith	5,054	59,018	3.6
Burwell, Garfield	949	9,703	16.9	Omaha, Douglas	498,465	5,053,966	2.3
Cairo, Hall	315	3,120	-1.4	Ord, Valley	2,084	21,449	5.6
Central City, Merrick	1,886	18,870	7.0	Osceola, Polk	620	5,154	0.5
Ceresco, Saunders	1,442	12,387	-5.6	Oshkosh, Garden	454	4,578	8.7
Chadron, Dawes	5,124	63,778	31.3	Osmond, Pierce	432	4,029	-9.1
Chappell, Deuel	469	4,766	0.8	Oxford, Furnas	337	4,281	-1.2
Clarkson, Colfax	400	4,042	-2.2	Papillion, Sarpy	7,121	75,857	4.0
Clay Center, Clay	205	2,219	-18.9	Pawnee City, Pawnee	250	2,964	2.5
Columbus, Platte	20,239	207,975	-0.7	Pender, Thurston	815	8,002	3.4
Cozad, Dawson	3,100	29,945	-2.5	Pierce, Pierce	680	7,164	14.0
Crawford, Dawes	495	6,000	0.5	Plainview, Pierce	610	6,651	-0.4
Creighton, Knox	1,026	10,783	8.0	Plattsmouth, Cass	3,303	35,541	2.8
Crete, Saline	3,005	29,946	6.4	Ponca, Dixon	229	2,899	13.4
Crofton, Knox	389	4,446	16.1	Ralston, Douglas	3,171	35,359	6.3
Curtis, Frontier	373	3,945	11.3	Randolph, Cedar	385	4,186	5.4
Dakota City, Dakota	434	4,480	-0.3	Ravenna, Buffalo	531	5,925	4.2
David City, Butler	1,555	16,920	5.5	Red Cloud, Webster	661	7,013	3.1
Deshler, Thayer	197	3,146	4.5	Rushville, Sheridan	365	4,214	-1.1
Dodge, Dodge	254	2,834	14.6	Sargent, Custer	202	2,360	9.1
Doniphan, Hall	622	7,337	-21.0	Schuyler, Colfax	1,789	19,598	5.8
Eagle, Cass	271	4,182	-1.1	Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff	23,015	226,374	3.2
Elgin, Antelope	628	4,573	11.6	Scribner, Dodge	435	4,323	8.2
Elkhorn, Douglas	2,168	24,245	2.1	Seward, Seward	4,701	46,989	-1.4
Elm Creek, Buffalo	393	3,844	2.1	Shelby, Polk	407	3,943	-1.5
Elwood, Gosper	256	2,807	-7.7	Shelton, Buffalo	428	4,785	13.0
Fairbury, Jefferson	2,862	29,847	-5.8	Sidney, Cheyenne	10,827	96,028	2.3
Farmington, Fillmore	156	1,765	-8.7	South Sioux City, Dakota	8,151	84,328	7.3
Falls City, Richardson	2,430	25,732	1.4	Springfield, Sarpy	288	5,096	-21.5
Franklin, Franklin	575	5,843	5.1	St. Paul, Howard	1,424	14,317	12.6
Fremont, Dodge	23,969	237,758	0.1	Stanton, Stanton	597	6,491	5.6
Friend, Saline	360	5,634	17.3	Stromsburg, Polk	909	9,895	-6.2
Fullerton, Nance	499	5,617	4.9	Superior, Nuckolls	1,349	15,864	3.9
Geneva, Fillmore	1,651	15,134	6.4	Sutherland, Lincoln	382	4,030	0.2
Genoa, Nance	292	3,288	14.8	Sutton, Clay	819	8,419	0.9
Gering, Scotts Bluff	4,713	43,615	3.5	Syracuse, Otoe	1,267	11,950	0.7
Gibbon, Buffalo	844	8,687	5.7	Tecumseh, Johnson	954	9,271	9.1
Gordon, Sheridan	1,459	16,051	0.0	Tekamah, Burt	1,049	10,918	7.1
Gothenburg, Dawson	2,431	25,403	2.4	Tilden, Madison	225	2,642	-5.9
Grand Island, Hall	53,734	538,485	1.0	Utica, Seward	357	3,764	21.2
Grant, Perkins	1,019	13,192	17.3	Valentine, Cherry	4,753	53,124	18.6
Gretna, Sarpy	3,872	31,408	6.0	Valley, Douglas	1,905	16,552	-4.8
Hartington, Cedar	1,750	17,308	15.2	Wahoo, Saunders	2,332	24,801	5.1
Hastings, Adams	20,042	207,782	-0.7	Wakefield, Dixon	380	3,737	7.1
Hay Springs, Sheridan	347	3,830	3.5	Wauneta, Chase	281	3,114	2.3
Hebron, Thayer	1,096	11,294	-17.4	Waverly, Lancaster	907	9,692	17.5
Henderson, York	567	7,200	5.7	Wayne, Wayne	3,949	40,207	7.3
Hickman, Lancaster	230	2,447	-2.4	Weeping Water, Cass	616	6,654	6.9
Holdrege, Phelps	4,438	46,084	2.7	West Point, Cuming	4,313	49,231	32.3
Hooper, Dodge	421	4,043	3.4	Wilber, Saline	396	4,776	7.8
Humboldt, Richardson	288	3,277	-0.9	Wisner, Cuming	661	6,649	0.4
Humphrey, Platte	895	8,185	8.5	Wood River, Hall	339	4,555	13.4
Imperial, Chase	1,864	18,736	4.1	Wymore, Gage	420	4,546	5.5
Juniata, Adams	207	2,559	14.2	York, York	9,729	101,499	-0.5
Kearney, Buffalo	35,557	363,628	3.4				

\*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			
	October	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	October	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago		October	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago	October	YTD	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago		
	2001	YTD		2001	YTD		2001	YTD	2001		YTD	2001		YTD	
	(\$000)	(\$000)		(\$000)	(\$000)			(\$000)	(\$000)		(\$000)	(\$000)			
Nebraska	266,018	2,339,464	5.0	1,443,041	14,701,509	1.8	Howard	916	8,559	-7.6	1,698	18,134	10.6		
Adams	4,358	37,191	-2.5	20,711	215,674	-0.2	Jefferson	1,217	11,382	-3.2	4,031	40,920	-3.0		
Antelope	1,015	11,247	11.2	2,461	23,092	7.6	Johnson	792	5,639	6.7	1,291	12,525	6.6		
Arthur	59	778	8.8	(D)	(D)	(D)	Kearney	1,001	10,617	3.2	1,993	21,045	4.5		
Banner	164	1,800	18.7	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keith	1,619	13,849	-1.8	5,625	64,952	3.3		
Blaine	83	1,148	-11.5	(D)	(D)	(D)	Keya Paha	174	1,735	5.6	88	1,404	19.3		
Boone	1,217	9,667	9.3	2,321	21,833	1.3	Kimball	848	6,476	-3.9	1,667	19,070	2.5		
Box Butte	1,898	17,094	6.7	5,932	60,764	0.4	Knox	1,534	12,140	5.3	2,617	27,993	8.5		
Boyd	390	2,947	10.0	538	5,853	5.5	Lancaster	33,620	303,408	3.3	222,765	2,231,063	1.5		
Brown	602	5,160	-2.6	1,805	18,032	7.0	Lincoln	4,656	47,027	5.1	25,091	257,792	3.5		
Buffalo	6,511	57,604	3.2	38,310	391,647	3.6	Logan	228	1,840	23.7	(D)	(D)	(D)		
Burt	1,437	11,836	10.4	2,503	25,265	10.6	Loup	174	1,219	35.3	(D)	(D)	(D)		
Butler	1,028	11,417	8.4	1,870	21,452	4.7	McPherson	117	1,159	23.6	(D)	(D)	(D)		
Cass	4,442	38,244	1.1	6,178	67,418	0.6	Madison	4,690	42,038	1.8	34,190	338,293	2.3		
Cedar	1,336	13,245	-3.3	2,931	28,708	11.7	Merrick	966	10,678	-2.9	2,622	26,365	7.0		
Chase	831	7,540	-1.5	2,153	22,095	2.4	Morrill	818	8,270	4.6	1,432	16,238	-0.1		
Cherry	1,227	10,089	9.3	4,950	55,315	17.7	Nance	575	5,386	3.2	834	9,403	10.4		
Cheyenne	1,398	15,442	-2.7	11,150	99,286	2.4	Nemaha	1,380	11,053	10.6	2,685	27,251	0.9		
Clay	1,304	10,523	-2.0	1,916	20,860	-0.5	Nuckolls	714	6,800	4.9	2,215	24,895	9.3		
Colfax	1,427	12,645	-0.5	2,631	28,105	3.4	Otoe	2,283	20,927	-0.1	7,905	78,848	0.2		
Cuming	1,365	14,639	-2.4	5,459	61,198	24.0	Pawnee	609	4,485	15.4	435	5,005	3.5		
Custer	1,820	17,790	6.5	4,776	49,574	-0.3	Perkins	761	6,176	2.8	1,268	15,723	16.0		
Dakota	3,053	25,075	4.7	9,118	95,273	7.0	Phelps	1,916	16,240	5.7	4,724	49,341	3.6		
Dawes	1,411	10,557	12.2	5,619	69,781	27.9	Pierce	973	10,106	-1.1	1,808	18,731	2.7		
Dawson	3,400	32,546	-5.6	13,469	138,085	1.7	Platte	4,548	42,390	-1.6	21,631	222,657	-0.4		
Deuel	314	3,295	-7.2	1,096	11,116	2.5	Polk	925	8,426	-13.0	2,037	20,395	-3.1		
Dixon	1,145	8,897	13.1	710	7,824	8.4	Red Willow	1,699	16,372	-1.7	10,048	101,395	-15.9		
Dodge	5,699	48,463	7.4	25,895	257,537	0.6	Richardson	1,456	11,682	1.2	2,939	31,331	1.6		
Douglas	70,410	607,301	8.7	508,259	5,153,751	2.2	Rock	430	3,260	8.3	483	5,284	4.7		
Dundy	566	4,400	16.9	559	6,463	6.8	Saline	1,795	17,555	3.0	4,066	44,222	7.6		
Fillmore	1,094	10,221	0.5	2,326	24,796	5.2	Sarpy	23,072	196,662	13.4	50,755	500,037	11.8		
Franklin	538	5,235	6.0	819	8,471	5.9	Saunders	3,871	30,393	3.6	6,526	64,892	2.0		
Frontier	514	5,448	14.1	636	7,309	8.9	Scotts Bluff	6,151	50,209	9.0	28,961	283,223	2.8		
Furnas	899	8,477	-1.7	2,028	23,298	3.7	Seward	2,235	21,919	2.9	6,698	63,821	2.7		
Gage	3,588	31,025	10.3	13,574	137,585	6.8	Sheridan	1,114	8,824	2.8	2,544	27,359	1.3		
Garden	422	3,549	12.7	663	6,671	5.3	Sherman	485	5,040	16.5	606	6,255	8.5		
Garfield	265	2,416	4.3	949	9,703	16.9	Sioux	339	2,696	-8.4	131	1,263	-6.2		
Gosper	338	3,699	-2.3	330	3,484	-4.4	Stanton	1,163	8,563	14.7	785	8,759	12.1		
Grant	121	1,521	5.0	267	3,000	14.9	Thayer	1,057	8,334	3.2	1,819	20,118	-10.6		
Greeley	464	3,903	9.3	729	7,099	6.8	Thomas	70	1,341	-9.0	312	2,935	9.7		
Hall	7,539	68,839	-2.5	55,321	557,103	0.7	Thurston	456	4,670	1.4	913	9,539	4.4		
Hamilton	1,418	13,308	-8.3	2,524	27,368	1.5	Valley	780	6,470	4.7	2,362	23,679	4.2		
Harlan	726	6,130	16.4	785	8,695	7.6	Washington	4,125	33,193	9.1	7,836	83,774	9.2		
Hayes	291	1,907	3.0	(D)	(D)	(D)	Wayne	1,452	11,674	7.2	4,096	41,759	7.3		
Hitchcock	705	4,951	-2.5	558	6,682	5.5	Webster	877	5,508	-0.2	1,231	12,821	3.4		
Holt	1,869	15,585	-7.5	5,772	62,128	0.2	Wheeler	260	1,774	18.9	69	797	-26.9		
Hooker	114	1,170	-3.6	365	4,276	1.2	York	1,880	20,312	2.4	10,676	112,639	-0.8		

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

## Note on Net Taxable Retail Sales

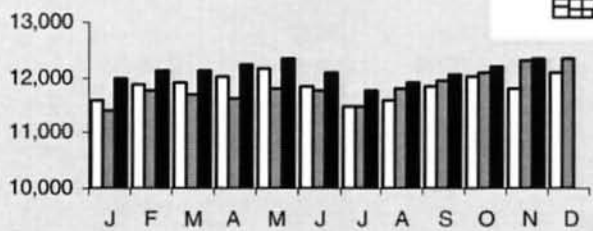
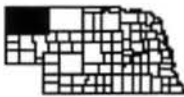
Users of this series should be aware that taxable retail sales are not generated exclusively by traditional outlets such as clothing, discount, and hardware stores. While businesses classified as retail trade firms account for, on average, slightly more than half of total taxable sales, sizable portions 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\* 1999 to November\*\* 2001

1999 2000 2001

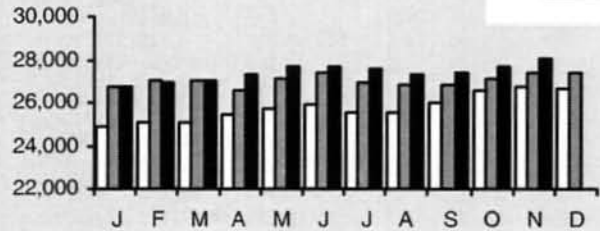
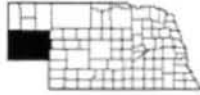
## Northwest Panhandle



### Note to Readers

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

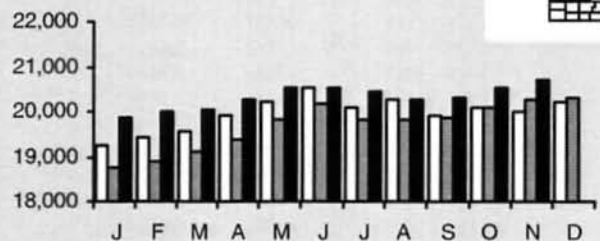
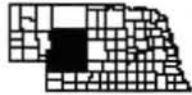
## Southwest Panhandle



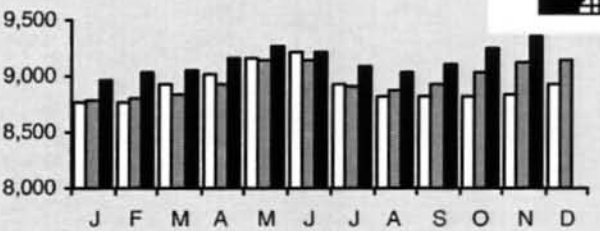
## North Central



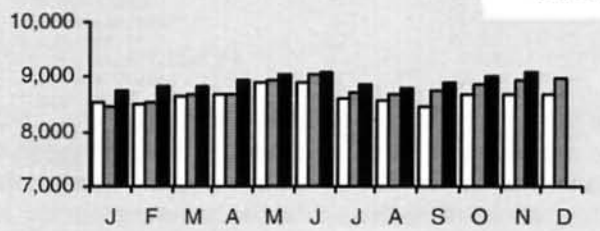
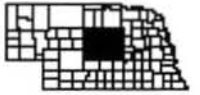
## West Central



## Southwest Central



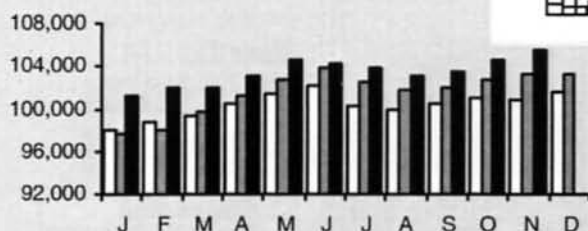
## East Central



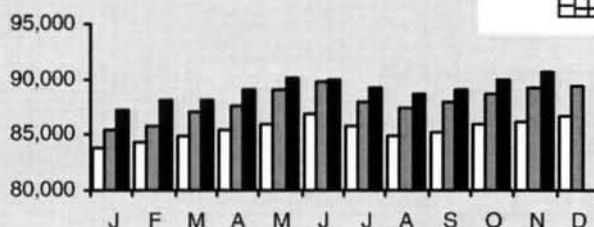
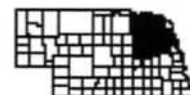
# Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment\* 1999 to November\*\* 2001

1999 2000 2001

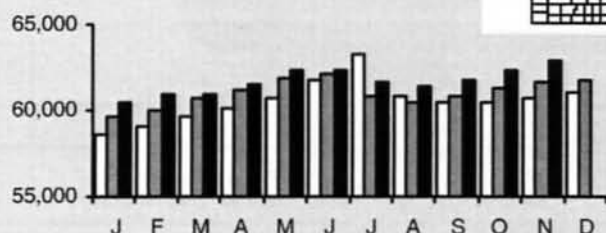
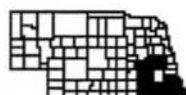
## Southeast Central



## Northeast

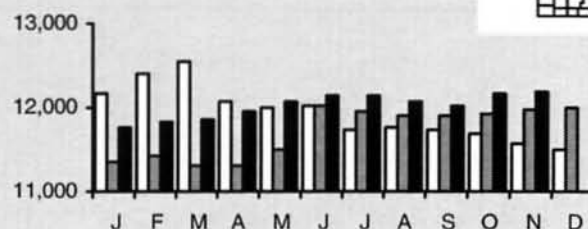
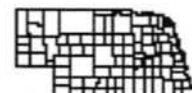


## Southeast



## Sioux City MSA

Nebraska portion only

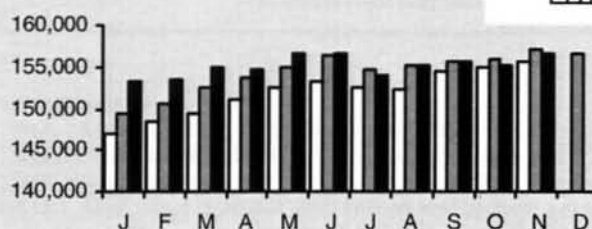
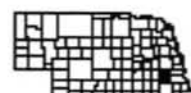


## Omaha MSA

Nebraska portion only



## Lincoln MSA



\*By place of work

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

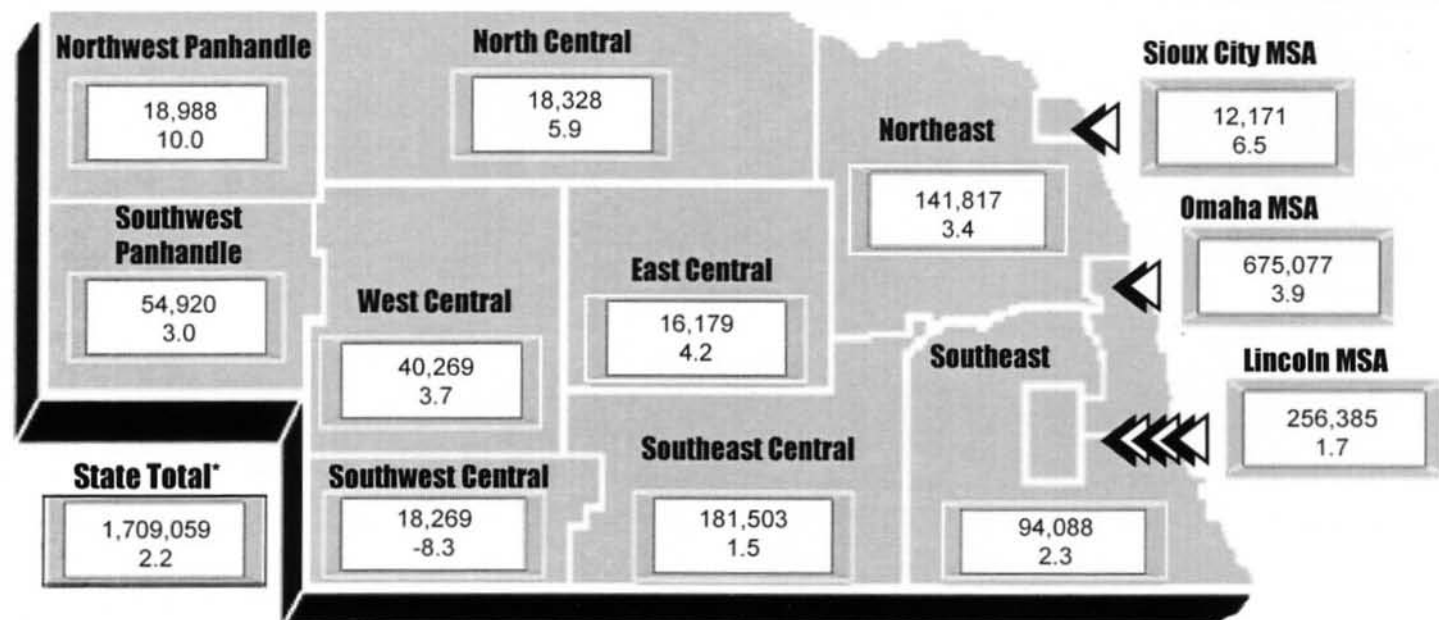
\*\*\*Previously, other than Nebraska data were included in the Omaha and Sioux City MSA

Note: January-March 2000 monthly employment data are benchmarked. April 2000-March 2001 data are estimates and will be benchmarked in early 2002. 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

# October 2001 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\*

	November 2001
Total	921,768
Construction & Mining	45,544
Manufacturing	115,486
Durables	54,388
Nondurables	61,098
TCU**	56,753
Trade	218,446
Wholesale	54,155
Retail	164,291
FIRE***	60,757
Services	263,253
Government	161,529

\*By place of work

\*\*Transportation, Communication, and Utilities

\*\*\*Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

Inflation Rate

1.1

## Consumer Price Index

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

	January 2002	% Change vs Yr. Ago	YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago (inflation rate)
All Items	177.1	1.1	1.1
Commodities	147.8	-1.5	-1.5
Services	206.3	3.0	3.0

\*U = All urban consumers

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## State Labor Force Summary\*

	November 2001
Labor Force	951,591
Employment	924,477
Unemployment Rate	2.8

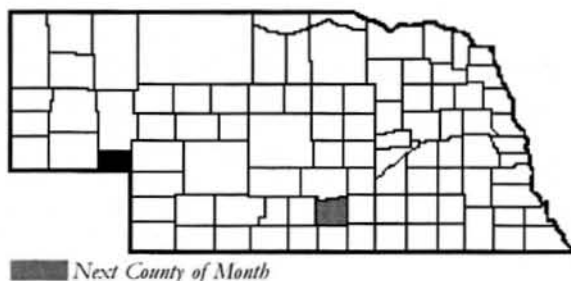
\*By place of residence

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information

Note: January-March 2000 monthly employment data are benchmarked. April 2000-March 2001 data are estimates and will be benchmarked in early 2002. 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 2000 and 2001 will be revised.

## County of the Month

# Deuel Chappell - County Seat



**License plate prefix number:** 78

**Size of county:** 440 square miles, ranks 83<sup>rd</sup> in the state

**Population:** 2,098 in 2000, a change of -6.2 percent from 1990

**Per capita personal income:** \$25,704 in 1999, ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the state

**Net taxable retail sales (\$000):** \$17,488 in 2000 a change of 6.8 percent from 1999; \$14,411 from January through October 2001, a change of 0.1 percent from the same period the previous year.

**Unemployment rate:** 3.9 percent in Deuel County, 3.0 percent in Nebraska in 2000

	State	Deuel County
<b>Nonfarm employment (2000)<sup>1</sup>:</b>	909,543	553
(wage & salary)	(percent of total)	
Construction and Mining	5.0	(D)
Manufacturing	13.2	(D)
TCU	6.4	8.1
Wholesale Trade	6.0	7.4
Retail Trade	18.0	20.3
FIRE	6.7	(D)
Services	27.7	17.0
Government	17.0	34.0
(D) = disclosure suppression		

## Agriculture:

Number of farms: 251 in 1997; 244 in 1992; 262 in 1987

Average farm size: 1,122 acres in 1997; 1,086 acres in 1992

Market value of farm products sold: \$21.1 million in 1997 (\$83,951 average per farm); \$12.7 million in 1992 (\$51,871 average per farm)

<sup>1</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



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Check out these topics!

Job descriptions	Commuting patterns	Resources overview
Benefits	Census demographics	Cooperative studies
Comparable wages	Recruiting workers	Research
Economic forces	Worker retraining	Transferable skills

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### Errata

The table that ranked Nebraska counties on the basis of economic vitality in the February issue of *Business in Nebraska* was incorrect. View the corrected table on the BBR website: [www.bbr.unl.edu](http://www.bbr.unl.edu)



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