7-2001

Low Per Capita Personal Income in Nebraska and the Great Plains

John Austin
by Bureau of Business Research

Business in Nebraska

Volume 56, No. 659 presented by Bureau of Business Research (BBR) July/August 2001

Low Per Capita Personal Income in Nebraska and the Great Plains

John Austin

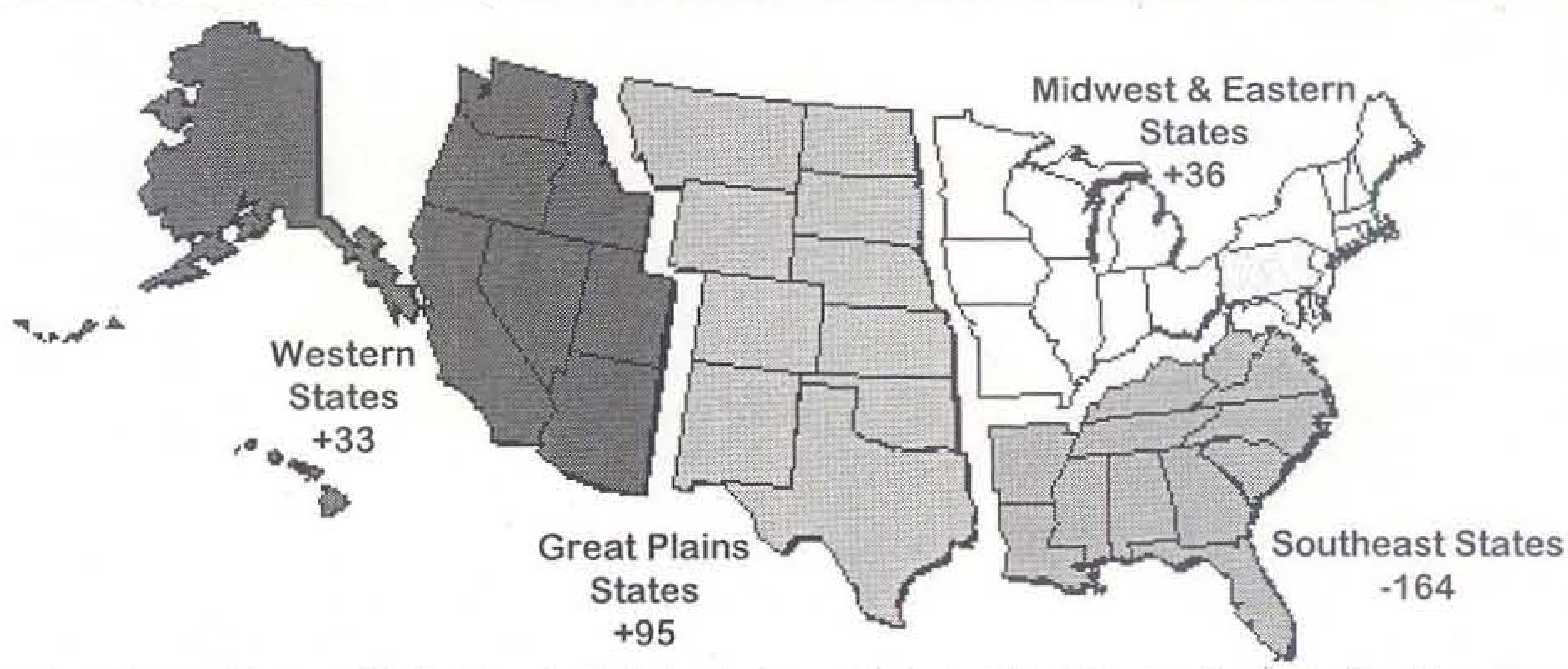
Overview

Over the past 30 years, there has been a major shift in the location of low per capita personal income counties within the U. S. Thirty years ago, poverty was primarily associated with the southeast states. In the period from 1969 to 1973, 76 percent of the nation's low per capita personal income counties were in the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Southeast region[1].

From the initial period until the most recent five-year period, 1994-1998, there was a major shift in U.S. counties in the lowest quintile of per capita personal income (Figure 1). The net movement was 164 counties and the lion's share (95) went from the Southeast to the Great Plains. The Great Plains now has 184 of the 622 U.S. counties in the lowest quintile.

In the 1994-1998 period, there were 17 Nebraska counties in the lowest quintile of per capita personal income. Most were ranching counties in the Sandhills. Since cattle prices have improved from the 1994-1998 period, it is likely that these ranching counties will work their way off the list of lowest per capita personal income counties. However, there is concern that some other Nebraska counties may replace them.

Figure 1
Net Movement of Low Per Capita Personal Income Counties from 1969-1973 to 1994-1998



[1]The Southeast region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The picture is less clear for the Great Plains as a whole. Many Great Plains counties were impacted by low cattle prices, but a majority of the Great Plains low per capita personal income counties had relatively high minority populations. These populations typically receive lower incomes than nonminority populations. A major reversal of these income differentials is unlikely in the near future.

Major personal income components are:
- other labor income
- wages and salaries
- dividends, interest, and rent
- transfer payments
- nonfarm proprietors' income
- farm proprietors' income
- farm income

Per capita personal income is the total of personal income from all sources, divided by total population including all adults and children.

Quintiles of county per capita personal income result from first sorting the county per capita personal income from highest to lowest, then dividing the sorted data into five groups. Each group contains 20 percent of all counties. There are 3,109 counties in the U.S.and each quintile contains about 622 counties.

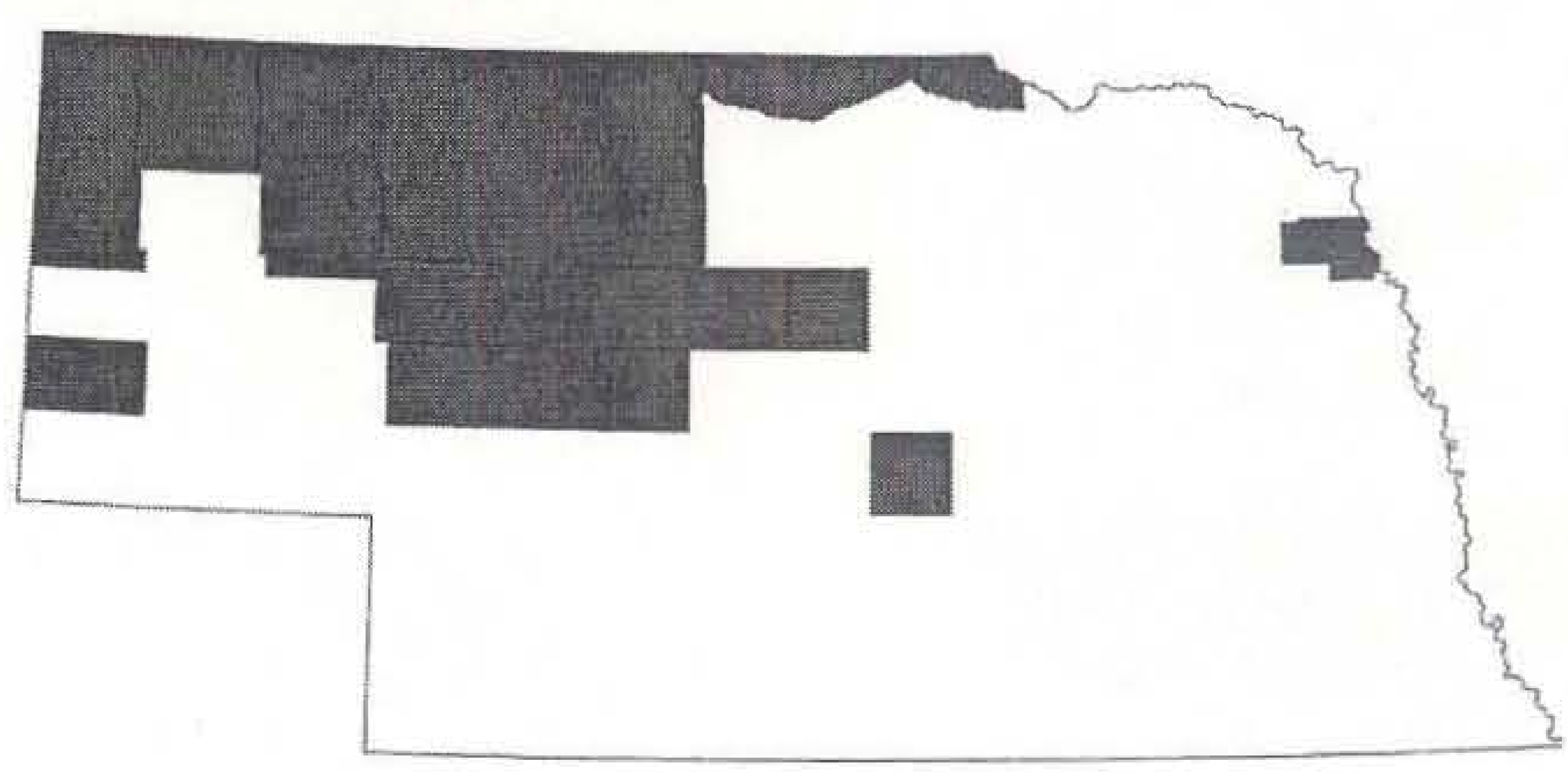
The principle data source for this study is the personal income data from the BEA. Annual county data were available for total personal income and major components from 1969 to 1998. The availability of population data[2] for all the counties allows the calculation of per capita personal income figures for all the major components of personal income and enables the comparison of counties. In order to eliminate some of the random disturbances in the data, the data were grouped into five-year periods and averaged, then divided into quintiles.

The Nebraska Experience

In the 1969 to 1973 period Nebraska had no counties in the bottom quintile of per capita personal income. Over the past three decades, Nebraska has shared in the Great Plains acquisition of low per capita personal income counties. Yet, the local response in those counties to this news was disbelief.[3] In the 1994-1998 period, Nebraska had 17 of the lowest quintile counties in the U.S. (Figure 2).

The primary force behind the descent in per capita personal income was a major drop in farm income in the 17 counties; specifically, livestock operations.

Figure 2
Nebraska Counties in the Lowest Per Capita Personal Income Quintile, 1994-1998



[2] An issue in per capita analysis is data accuracy. Use of five-year averages mitigates the problem somewhat. County population data are based on intercensal estimates. Some intercensal estimates differ substantially with the 2000 census. Errors exceed 5 percent for 6 of the 17 Nebraska counties examined.

[3] "Sand Hills Poverty Not Visible," *Omaha World Herald*, December 31, 2000, Page 1

There are some characteristics in common among the 17 counties. All but one—Dawes—are classified in the lowest quintile of average population in the U.S. It is ranked 630th, just eight from the bottom of the second lowest quintile. All the counties are classified as nonmetro. Nine of 10 of the state's smallest population counties are on the list of lowest per capita personal income counties. Ten of the 17 are in the Sandhills.

All but two low per capita personal income counties are classified as farm dependent by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Fifteen are cattle counties where farm income is a large percentage of total income and above average shares of farm receipts are from livestock. Table 1 displays the percentage of farm cash receipts from livestock and products, the percent of pastureland, and the average farm size in the 17 low per capita personal income counties. This reinforces the idea that most are ranching counties. All but Thurston County have percents of pastureland above the state average. All but three—Thurston, Sherman, and Boyd—have average farm sizes above the state average.

Table 2 shows per capita *farm income* during the 1994-1998 period to be in the lowest U. S. quintile for 11 of the 17. In fact, all had negative farm incomes in that period. However, the farm income story is not uniform across the 17 counties. Of the remaining six counties, four had per capita farm income rankings in the top quintile, and none were in the fourth quintile.

Matching the poor performance in farm income rankings during the period, 11 counties had per capita *wages and salaries* rankings in the lowest quintile. The six remaining counties were evenly split between the third and fourth quintiles. There are few nonfarm employment opportunities available in these counties. Farm dependency for these counties and others like them implies that they are especially vulnerable to agricultural cycles.

Farm dependent counties are defined as nonmetro counties with 20 percent or more labor and proprietors' income from farming.

Table 1
Livestock Receipts, Pastureland, and Farm Size, Selected Nebraska Counties and the State, 1994-1998

County	*Percent of Cash Receipts from Livestock*	*Percent Pastureland*	*Average Farm Size (acres)*
Arthur	85.6	88.3	5,606
Banner	66.3	54.2	2,029
Blaine	91.1	90.6	3,831
Boyd	68.4	64.5	822*
Cherry	93.6	89.1	5,777
Dawes	72.7	76.9	1,745
Grant	95.5	89.6	5,419
Hooker	98.8	68.6	4,221
Keya Paha	84.3	78.8	2,221
Logan	66.4	83.0	2,605
Loup	84.2	88.2	2,372
McPherson	93.1	91.9	3,958
Sheridan	70.2	77.2	2,267
Sherman	46.0*	59.2	671*
Sioux	86.0	91.2	3,250
Thomas	92.8	96.1	4,236
Thurston	49.2*	10.1*	499*
Nebraska	**60.1**	**52.6**	**885**

Note: * Indicates that the county average is below the state average.
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Department of Agriculture

Table 2
Average Per Capita Farm Income, Selected Nebraska Counties 1994-1998 ($)

Arthur	-7,588
Loup	-5,729
Hooker	-4,903
McPherson	-4,763
Grant	-4,189
Thomas	-3,117
Blaine	-2,771
Dawes	-728
Sheridan	-640
Sioux	-509
Cherry	-38
Keya Paha	169
Boyd	867
Sherman	1,397
Thurston	1,901
Logan	2,484
Banner	4,813

These counties were exceptional in their per capita *dividends, interest, and rent (DIR)* rankings. Only Thurston County ranked in the lowest quintile, while six counties were in the top quintile. One theory that explains the DIR positioning is that these counties have populations that generally are older than average. Older persons tend to have relatively high levels of wealth.

As is often the case for agricultural dependent counties, the average ages in the counties are high. That implies that a relatively small percentage of the population is in the prime working-age group—ages 18 to 65. It also implies diminished small future population growth and reliance upon transfer incomes, principally Social Security. All but two counties had a median age above the state's average. Further, the counties have aged rapidly in the last 30 years.

The demographics of these counties indicate that the per capita *transfer payments* should be relatively high. However, seven of the 17 have per capita *transfer payments* in the lowest U. S. quintile.[4] These relatively low Social Security payments are tied to the relative importance of wages and salaries. Low wage and salary employment opportunities mean low contributions to the Social Security System; hence, low Social Security payments.

Since cattle prices have already recovered from the depths experienced in the 1994-1998 period it is likely that the 15 cattle counties will have moved out of the lowest quintile when the data for 1999 and 2003 are released. Of the remaining two counties, it is not clear that either will move from the list. Sherman County is a farm dependent grain county. The near future of grain farming income is not promising. Farm income from farm dependent grain counties is likely to be low when the data for 1999 to 2003 are released. Diversification for such counties is imperative if they are to avoid low incomes in the future.

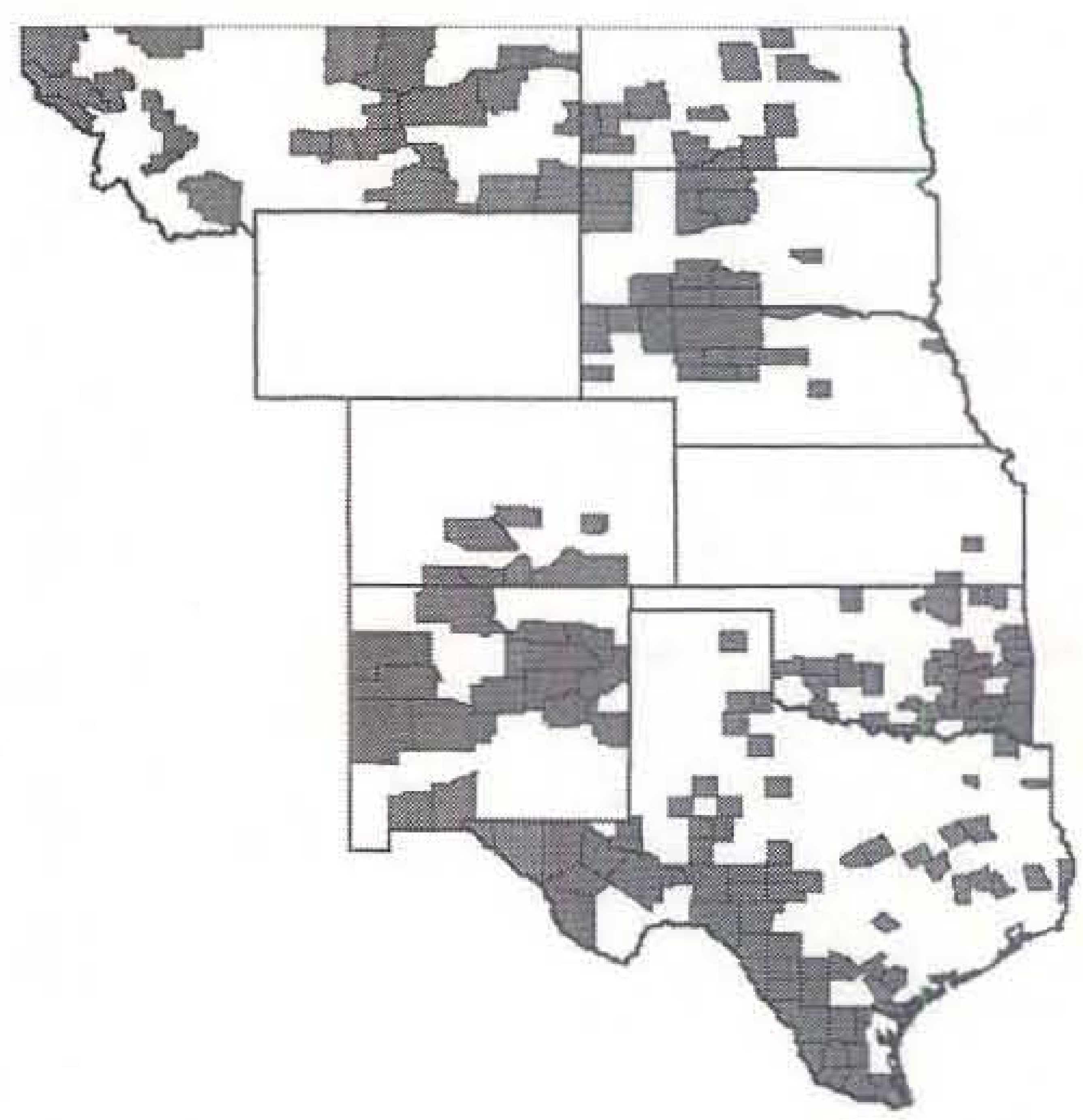
Thurston County may remain on the list of low per capita personal income counties. Native Americans comprise 52 percent of the Thurston County population. Low incomes often are associated with minority populations. Like similar counties in other states, the prospects for higher incomes are small unless employment can be increased. Some progress has been made in this area, based on funds received from an Iowa casino owned by a tribe in Thurston County, Nebraska.

The Great Plains Experience

In the 1994-1998 period, 184 Great Plains counties were in the lowest quintile of per capita personal income (Figure 3). Some of the counties noted in Figure 3 are not in an area strictly defined as the Great Plains. Counties in western Montana, Colorado, and New Mexico are not considered part of the Great Plains. However, for purposes of this article, these counties are enumerated as part of the Great Plains. Groups of low per capita personal income counties are found along the Texas border, southern Oklahoma, western Nebraska, the western Dakotas, western and eastern Montana. There were no low per capita personal income counties in Wyoming during the period.

The Great Plains low per capita personal income counties are not similar to their corresponding Nebraska counties in their dependence on farm income. The majority of low per capita personal income Great Plains counties are nonfarm dependent counties. Table 3 displays the farm dependency status of the 184 Great Plains counties in the lowest quintile of the per capita personal income distribution.

Figure 3
Great Plains Counties in the Lowest Quintile of Per Capita Personal Income, 1994-1998



[4]Transfer payments in personal income accounts are dominated by Social Security and Aid to Families with Dependent Children payments. Farm transfer payments are accounted for in the farm income data.

Table 3
Farm Dependence and Farm Receipts Type, Selected Great Plains Counties

State	*Nonfarm Dependent*	*Farm Dependent* *Grain*	*Livestock*	*State Totals*
Colorado	3	3	1	7
Kansas	1		1	2
Montana	12	2	8	22
Nebraska	2	1	14	17
New Mexico	9		6	15
North Dakota	3	6	3	12
Oklahoma	25	1	5	31
South Dakota	3		8	11
Texas	50	6	11	67
Great Plains Totals	**108**	**19**	**57**	**184**

Only two of Nebraska's counties are classed as nonfarm dependent. In the Great Plains, 108 of the 184 counties are classed as nonfarm dependent. Fourteen of Nebraska's 15 farm dependent counties receive over 50 percent of their marketing dollars from livestock. In the Great Plains, 57 of the 76 farm dependent counties receive over 50 percent of their marketing dollars from livestock. Thus, only 31 percent (57 out of 184) of the Great Plains counties share the cattle county syndrome with Nebraska. Prospects for these cattle counties are that the low per capita personal income status will not persist as long as the cattle markets remain healthy.

In order to establish common characteristics of the low per capita personal income Great Plains counties, their distribution by major per capita personal income categories is presented in Table 4.

Per capita *wages and salaries* are near the bottom of the income distribution, with 83.1 percent of the per capita wages and salaries in the bottom two quintiles. Such a representation indicates that the problem of low per capita personal income in the Great Plains may not be a temporary one, since it could take years for this positioning at the low end of the wages and salaries spectrum to be reversed.

Table 4
Rankings For 184 Great Plains Counties With Lowest Per Capita Total Personal Income, by Major Personal Income Categories

Quintile	*Wages & Salaries*	*Dividends, Interest, & Rent*	*Transfer Payments*	*Nonfarm Proprietors' Income*	*Farm Proprietors' Income*	*Farm Income*
First *(highest)*	0.5	7.6	21.2	7.6	14.1	16.3
Second	2.7	14.7	19.6	19.0	15.2	21.2
Third	13.6	20.1	20.7	15.8	10.3	9.2
Fourth	28.8	20.1	18.5	22.8	6.0	9.8
Fifth *(lowest)*	54.3	37.5	20.1	34.8	54.3	43.5
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

In contrast to corresponding low per capita personal income Nebraska counties, low per capita personal income Great Plains counties are somewhat weighted toward the bottom of the per capita *DIR* category. This distribution indicates that there is a tendency toward low per capita wealth. Low wealth, in turn, indicates that improvement of low incomes will be difficult.

The distribution of per capita *transfer payment* income is nearly uniform in the Great Plains. Transfer payments help to mitigate the impact of low income levels.

Nonfarm proprietors' income is the income of small businesses and some professionals who have formed unincorporated businesses. The per capita distribution is similar to the distribution of DIR.

Per capita *farm proprietors'* income is biased toward the low end of the distribution. Fifty-four percent of the counties are in the lowest quintile of farm proprietors' income. In fact, farm proprietors' income was negative for 101 of the 184 low per capita personal income counties in the Great Plains.

The results for per capita *farm income* are similar to that in farm proprietors' income. The difference between the two is farm wages. Since farm wages are positive, there are fewer counties with negative farm income (72) than with negative farm proprietors' income.

In summary, the low per capita personal income Great Plains counties are diverse, but there is a tendency toward low wages and salaries, lower wealth, and lower farm income. Not all low per capita personal income counties share these problems.

Since minority status often is associated with low per capita incomes, an enumeration of minority status among the low per capita personal income Great Plains counties was undertaken (Table 5). The table has been arranged into southern and northern Great Plains states. The dominant minority is Native American in the northern Great Plains and Hispanic in the southern Great Plains, except in Oklahoma.

Unlike Nebraska where only one county of the 17 has a significant minority population, 122 of the 184 Great Plains counties contain a minority population that exceeds 10 per-

Table 5
Minority Status, Selected Great Plains Counties

State	*Number of Counties with Over 20 Percent*		*Number of Counties with Over 10 Percent*		*Highest Percent Minority*	
	Native American	*Hispanic*	*Native American*	*Hispanic*		
Southern Great Plains						
Colorado	0	5	0	7	67.6	Hispanic
Kansas	0	0	0	0	3.6	Native American
New Mexico	2	13	4	15	81.6	Hispanic
Oklahoma	3	0	22	1	42.5	Native American
Texas	0	49	0	58	97.5	Hispanic
Northern Great Plains						
Montana	5	0	5	0	61.8	Native American
Nebraska	1	0	1	0	52.0	Native American
North Dakota	3	0	4	0	84.6	Native American
South Dakota	9	0	9	0	94.2	Native American
Totals	23	67	45	81		

cent. Ninety counties have minority populations of 20 percent or more. To the extent that minority populations are paid less than their nonminority counterparts, low per capita personal incomes likely will persist in these counties.

Low per capita personal income Great Plains counties are sorted by farm dependence and minority status (Table 6). In farm dependent counties, 36 of 76, or nearly half, have significant minority populations. For nonfarm dependent counties, 86 of 108, or nearly 80 percent, have significant minority populations.

The 22 counties that are neither farm dependent nor have a relatively large minority group are geographically dispersed and all are nonmetro. Livestock is the primary source of farm marketing receipts. Low cattle prices explain low per capita personal incomes, though these counties are not fully farm dependent.

Lessons to Learn

A large number of low per capita personal income, nonfarm dependent Great Plains counties are concentrated in Texas and Oklahoma. To the extent that low per capita personal incomes are associated with minority populations, low per capita personal income status likely will persist. A primary concern is whether that low per capita personal income status will shift to Nebraska. Since the low per capita personal income status of those Great Plains counties is associated with relatively high minority populations and since Nebraska has few counties with high minority concentrations, it is unlikely that Nebraska will experience an increase in the number of low per capita personal income, nonfarm dependent counties.

Instead, Nebraska's low per capita personal income situation largely concerned the cattle cycle. But, the low income status of farm dependent counties could shift to small rural grain farming counties. Grain markets are suffering from high production and low demand. International demand is low due to the weakened state of the world's economies. Further, international competition in the supply of grain is increasing. The future of government supports for farming is unknown. Without supports, last year's net farm income in Nebraska would have been negative. If federal payments are reduced, farm income from grain operations will be depressed. Low population nonmetro counties that continue to be dependent on grain farming run the risk of becoming low per capita personal income counties.

Many farm dependent counties in Nebraska and the Great Plains run the risk of falling into the lowest level of per capita income distribution. Few of the Great Plains small population nonmetro counties have sizeable income from wages and salaries. Relief is available if they diversify employment into private nonfarm activities that are compatible with the available resources.

Table 6
Farm Dependence and Minority Status, Selected Great Plains States

Minority Status	*Farm Dependent*		*Nonfarm Dependent*	*Total*
	Livestock	*Grain*		
High	24	12	86	122
Low	33	7	22	62
Total	57	19	108	184

Note: High minority status means that at least 10 percent of a single minority group lives in the county.

Gross State Product (GSP) Growth: 1992-1999[1]

The 11 states with the fastest growth in real gross state product (GSP) were Arizona, Oregon, Colorado, Idaho, New Hampshire, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada, Georgia, Texas, and North Carolina. Together, these states accounted for about 30 percent of the U.S. growth from 1992 to 1999 (Figure 1).

In all the fast growth states except Nevada and Utah, growth was very strong in business services (includes software development, data processing services, and computer rental and leasing) and in two high-tech manufacturing industries, electronics and electrical devices (includes semiconductor manufacturing and related products); and industrial machinery and computer equipment (includes computer and related hardware manufacturing). In addition:

- In Colorado, Georgia, and Texas, communications (includes telephone, satellite, and multimedia services) contributed significantly to the growth in real GSP.

- In New Hampshire, Utah, and North Carolina, depository institutions (includes banks and other financial institutions) contributed significantly.

- In Nevada hotels and other lodging places contributed significantly, reflecting strength in tourism.

- In New Mexico oil and gas extraction contributed significantly.

Noticeably absent from the group of western states with rapid growth were California and Washington. In California which accounts for the largest share (13 percent) of the nation's GSP and has a heavy concentration of high-tech industries, yet real GSP grew only 3.9 percent. The slow growth in California mainly reflected its longer-than-average recovery from the 1990-91 recession and weakness in federal government (both military and civilian); defense related durables manufacturing, mainly other transportation equipment; health services; and finance, insurance, and real estate, mainly insurance carriers and depository institutions. In Washington real GSP grew 4.7 percent; strength in business services, trade, and real estate was partly offset by declines in depository institutions, transportation equipment excluding motor vehicles, lumber and wood products, and printing and publishing.

The 12 states with the slowest growth in real GSP were Hawaii, Alaska, West Virginia, Wyoming, North Dakota, Maine, Montana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Vermont, Maryland, and Rhode Island. Together, these states accounted for less than 10 percent of the U.S. growth in the 1992-1999 period.

Of the 12 slowest growing states, seven were in the eastern part of the nation; all 12 states had population growth below or near the national average of 1 percent.

In these 12 states contributions from business services and high-tech manufacturing were offset by weakness in more traditional industries: agriculture, forestry, and fishing (mainly farms); manufacturing (mainly food and related products, apparel and textile products, lumber and wood products, printing and publishing, and instruments and scientific products); finance, insurance, and real estate (mainly depository institutions and insurance carriers); services (mainly legal and repair services); and government (mainly federal military and civilian government). In addition:

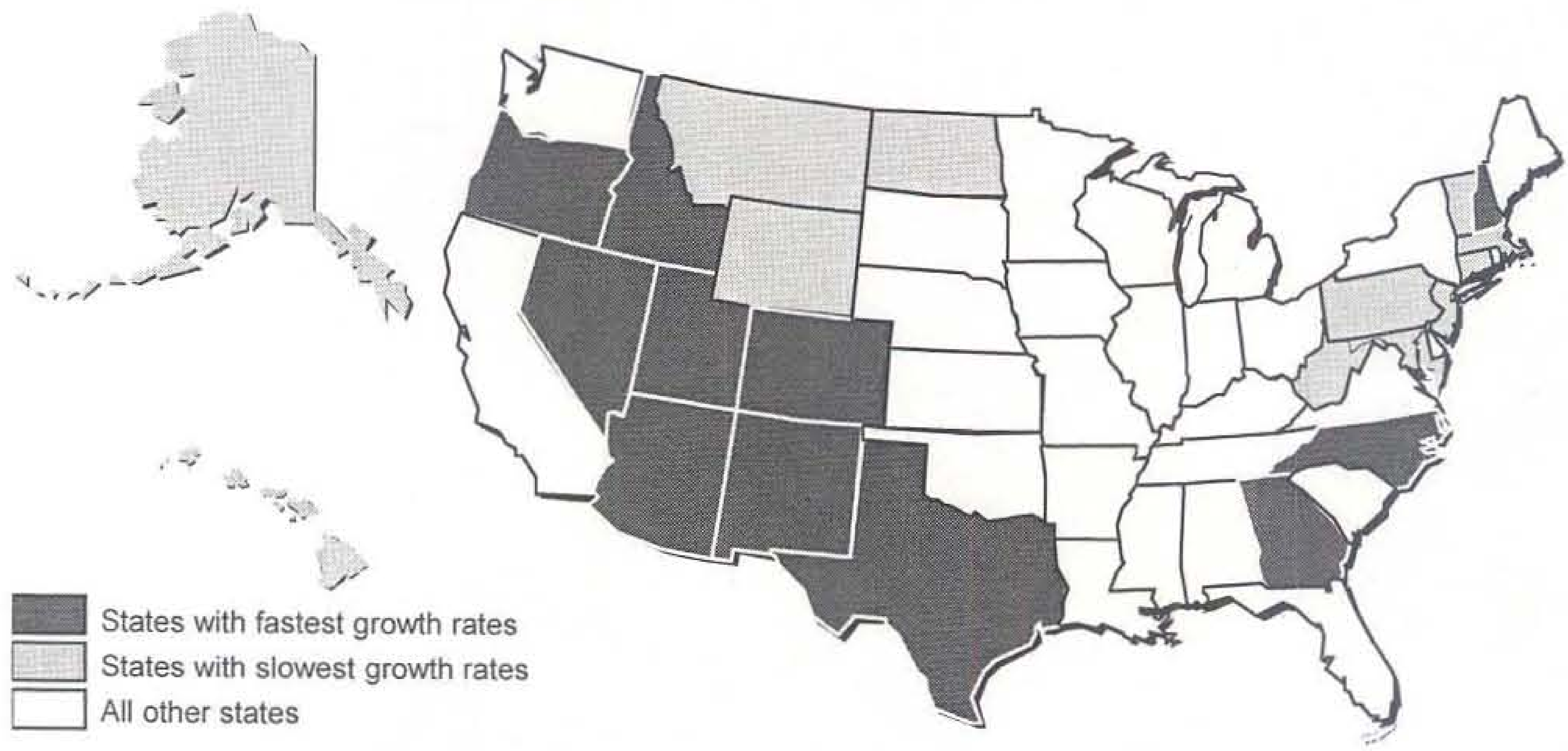
- In Alaska, Vermont, and Maryland, declines in paper products contributed significantly to the slow growth in real GSP.

- In Alaska, Wyoming, and Montana, declines in oil and gas extraction contributed significantly to the slow growth in real GSP; the declines in oil and gas extraction mainly reflected low crude oil prices in the late 1990s. In Wyoming nonmetallic minerals also declined.

- In Hawaii weakness in all major industries contributed to the decline in real GSP. The decline reflected the state's slow recovery from the 1990-91 recession and impacts from the 1998 Asian financial crisis, which affected growth in tourism, in exportable agriculture-related products, and in the construction industries.

[1]Copied from a recent U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis report.

Figure 1
Average Annual Percent Change in Real Gross Stae Product, 1992-1999

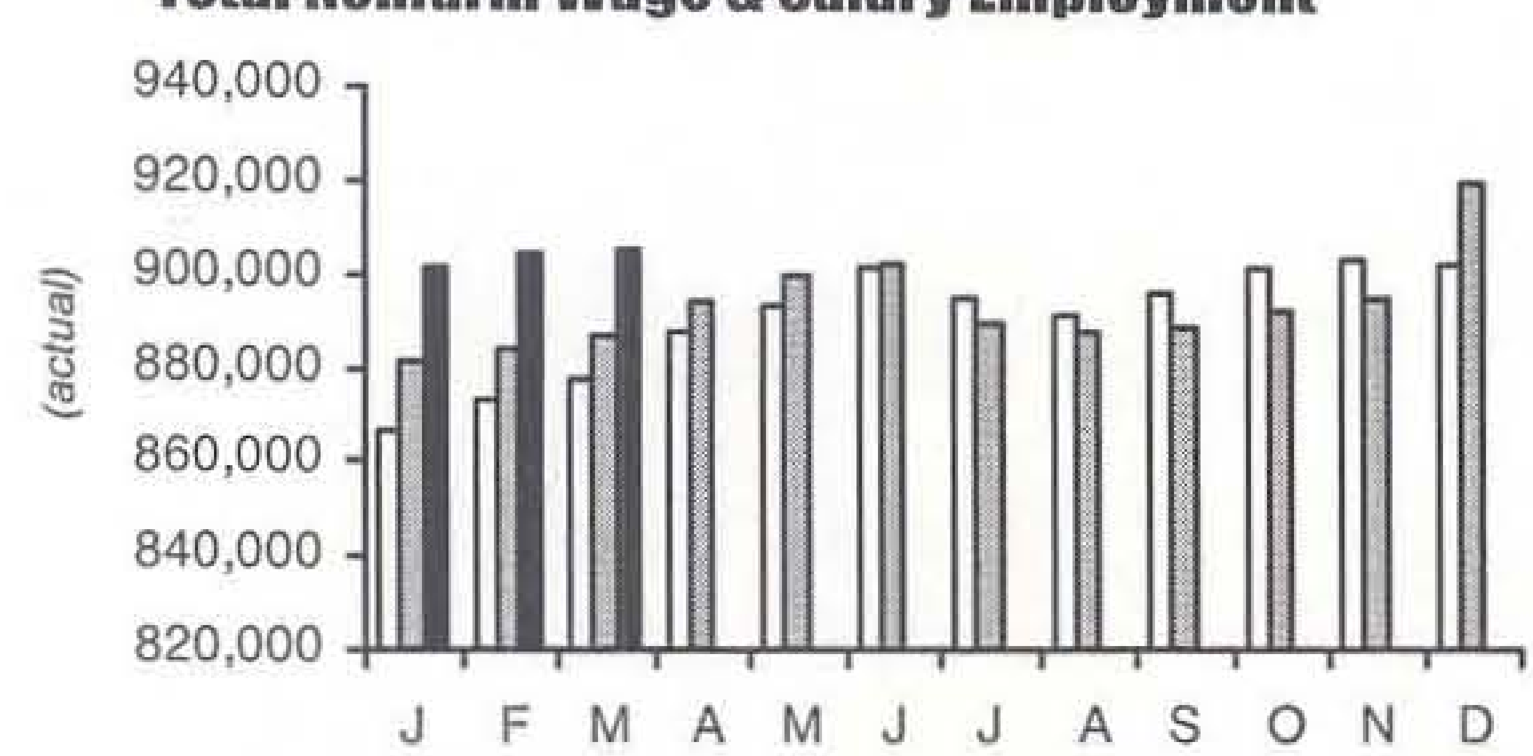


Note: The 11 fastest growing states (and 12 slow-growing states) were picked because their average annual growth rates in 1992-99 in real GSP are more than one-half of one standard deviation above or below the average annual GSP growth rates for all states
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

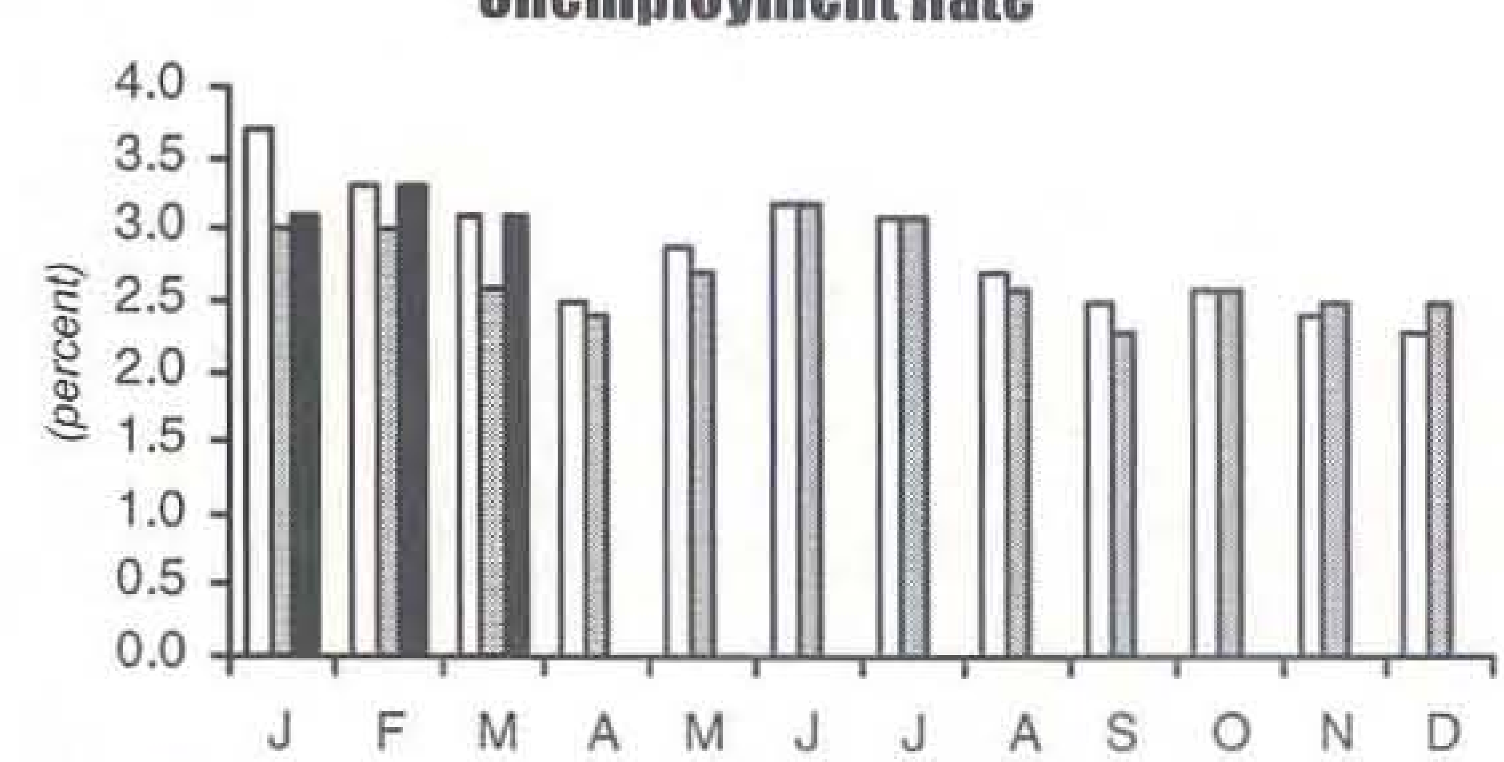
Nebraska Stats

1999 2000 2001

Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment



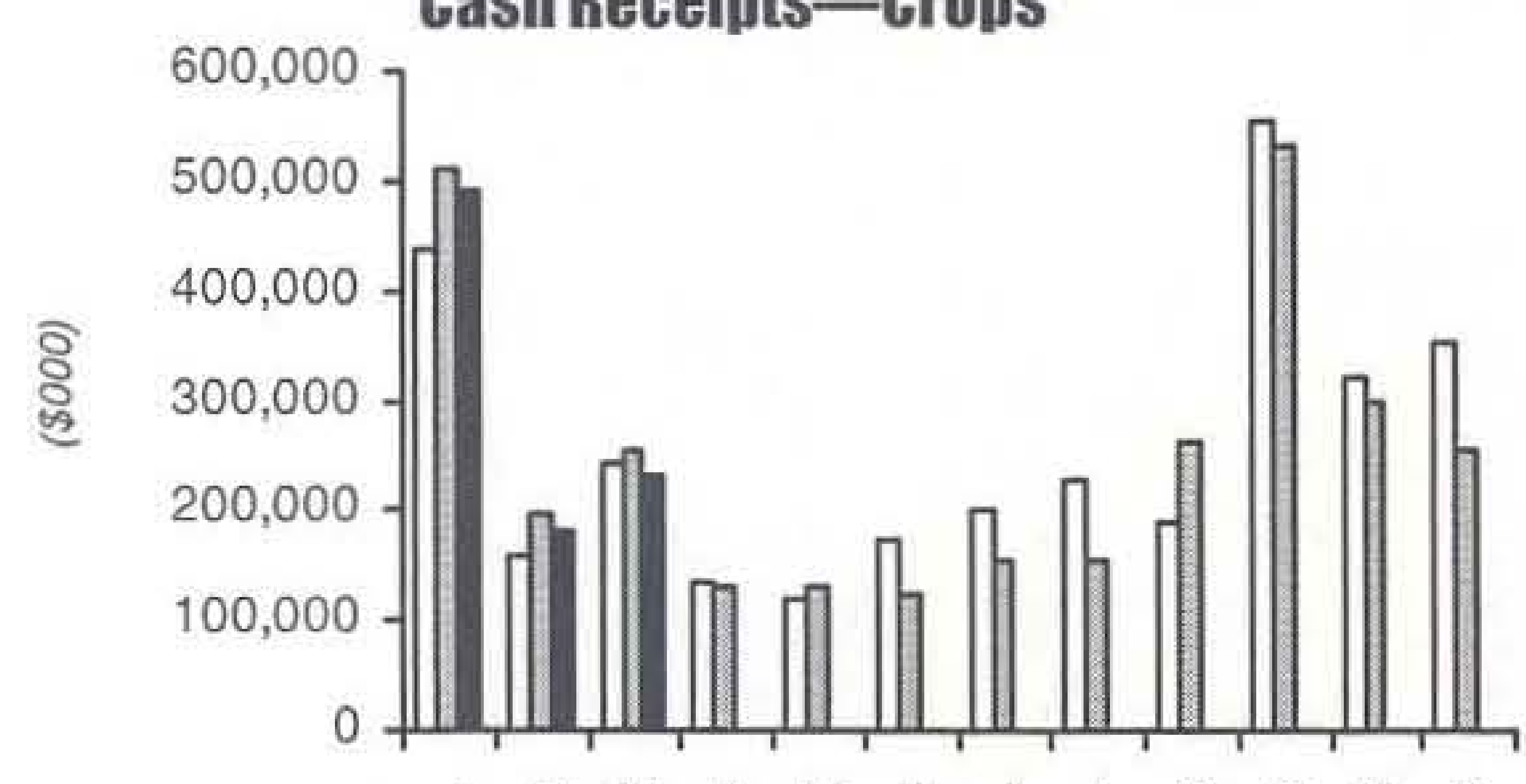
Unemployment Rate



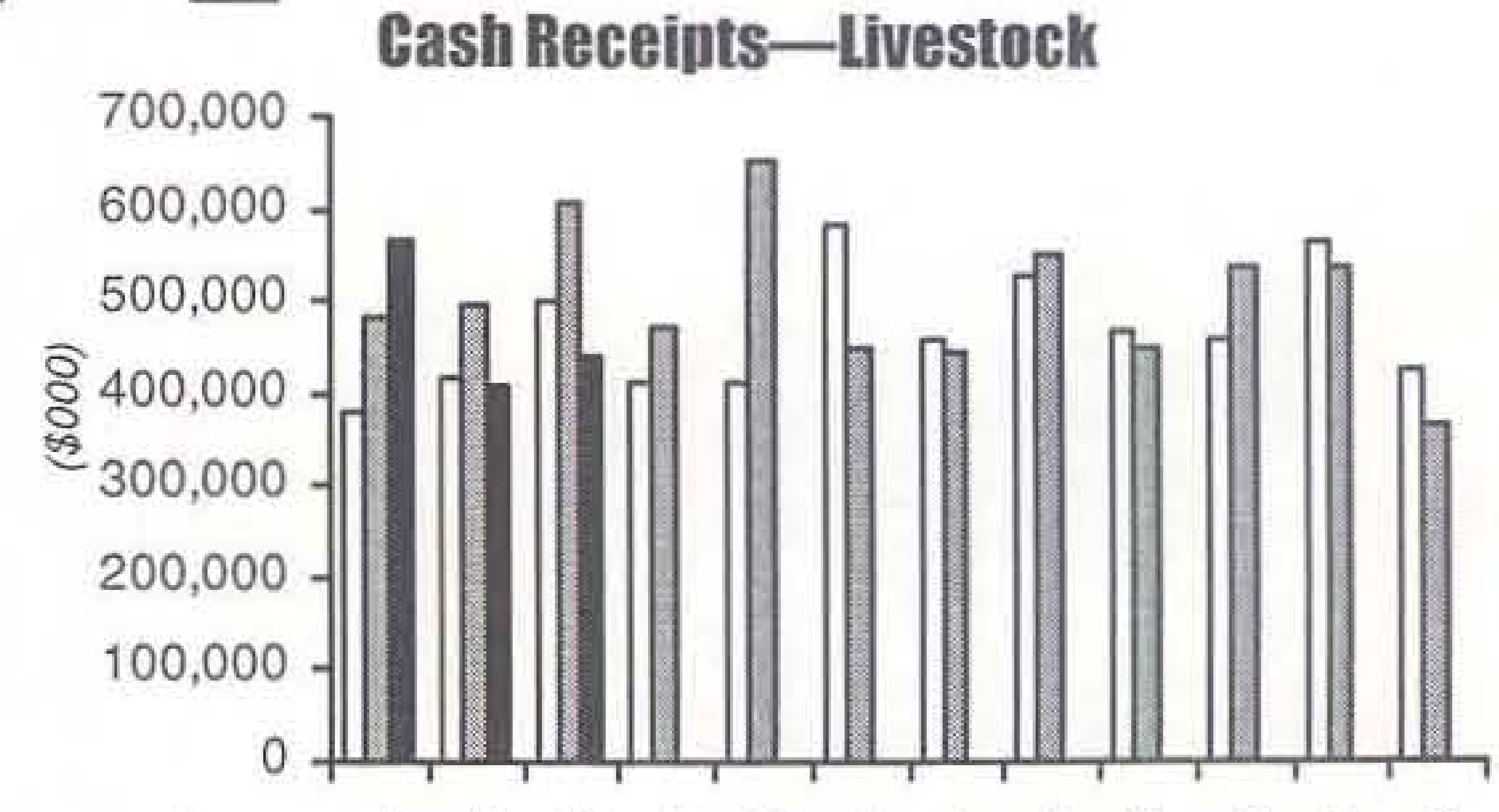
Note: All 1999 and 2000 monthly employment data are considered estimates until benchmarked. Data shown for 1999 and 2000 are the most current revised estimates available. Final benchmarked monthly data for 1999 are expected to be released by the Nebraska Department of Labor in mid-2000.

1999 2000 2001

Cash Receipts—Crops



Cash Receipts—Livestock



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

	February 2001 ($000)	YTD ($000)	YTD % Chg. vs Yr. Ago	March 2001 ($000)	YTD ($000)	YTD % Chg. vs Yr. Ago
Ainsworth, Brown	1,322	2,869	5.3	1,547	4,416	5.5
Albion, Boone	1,311	2,653	-7.5	1,662	4,315	-6.9
Alliance, Box Butte	5,407	10,855	6.4	5,525	16,380	3.3
Alma, Harlan	514	1,007	27.0	572	1,579	7.7
Arapahoe, Furnas	658	1,403	4.2	760	2,163	1.3
Arlington, Washington	259	511	14.6	295	806	19.1
Arnold, Custer	202	441	-37.7	231	672	-35.6
Ashland, Saunders	1,107	2,283	24.3	1,307	3,590	18.2
Atkinson, Holt	815	1,737	6.0	1,093	2,830	2.8
Auburn, Nemaha	2,180	4,538	4.7	2,604	7,142	0.9
Aurora, Hamilton	2,177	4,484	12.9	2,809	7,293	10.6
Axtell, Kearney	38	98	8.9	79	177	12.7
Bassett, Rock	352	721	14.4	445	1,166	8.7
Battle Creek, Madison	894	1,783	40.7	790	2,573	39.5
Bayard, Morrill	470	993	13.1	516	1,509	9.0
Beatrice, Gage	11,104	22,926	10.3	12,390	35,316	6.6
Beaver City, Furnas	100	237	1.3	142	379	5.6
Bellevue, Sarpy	20,026	39,545	14.3	24,108	63,653	15.8
Benkelman, Dundy	561	1,060	1.7	627	1,687	1.6
Bennington, Douglas	460	929	-4.9	488	1,417	-9.5
Blair, Washington	6,719	14,221	10.3	7,910	22,131	9.2
Bloomfield, Knox	451	1,008	18.9	604	1,612	15.5
Blue Hill, Webster	416	840	2.7	436	1,276	-11.2
Bridgeport, Morrill	930	2,047	7.0	1,293	3,340	9.0
Broken Bow, Custer	3,208	6,644	-7.5	3,803	10,447	-5.4
Burwell, Garfield	682	1,392	17.6	865	2,257	14.6
Cairo, Hall	200	399	11.8	279	678	12.1
Central City, Merrick	1,587	3,198	1.5	2,080	5,278	2.9
Ceresco, Saunders	1,008	2,197	-13.6	1,213	3,410	-13.9
Chadron, Dawes	6,664	13,720	61.8	7,209	20,929	62.2
Chappell, Deuel	432	964	9.9	463	1,427	-3.1
Clarkson, Colfax	366	720	12.3	385	1,105	-1.3
Clay Center, Clay	243	498	-38.8	260	758	-37.3
Columbus, Platte	17,777	36,296	-3.0	21,137	57,433	-2.8
Cozad, Dawson	1,958	4,835	-15.9	3,843	8,678	-4.5
Crawford, Dawes	452	912	20.5	484	1,396	11.4
Creighton, Knox	995	2,127	14.4	1,249	3,376	20.1
Crete, Saline	2,483	5,418	8.6	3,110	8,528	9.8
Crofton, Knox	309	628	12.9	374	1,002	10.8
Curtis, Frontier	352	726	21.2	394	1,120	9.8
Dakota City, Dakota	349	731	13.9	474	1,205	8.2
David City, Butler	1,573	3,167	12.6	1,774	4,941	14.2
Deshler, Thayer	324	689	26.2	369	1,058	23.3
Dodge, Dodge	179	404	12.8	357	761	-1.7
Doniphan, Hall	600	1,881	-33.7	1,098	2,979	-24.6
Eagle, Cass	177	388	5.1	255	643	2.1
Elgin, Antelope	428	873	14.0	493	1,366	10.8
Elkhorn, Douglas	1,769	3,705	31.0	2,159	5,864	14.6
Elm Creek, Buffalo	308	659	-4.1	365	1,024	-4.8
Elwood, Gosper	203	455	6.1	244	699	6.6
Fairbury, Jefferson	2,781	5,811	-1.6	3,216	9,027	-2.3
Fairmont, Fillmore	171	362	20.3	186	548	16.6
Falls City, Richardson	2,262	4,544	4.0	2,946	7,490	5.5
Franklin, Franklin	507	1,111	12.4	613	1,724	5.6
Fremont, Dodge	20,927	42,695	1.0	24,087	66,782	0.8
Friend, Saline	668	1,315	57.1	937	2,252	69.7
Fullerton, Nance	517	1,082	5.5	648	1,730	5.2
Geneva, Fillmore	1,241	2,477	3.1	1,507	3,984	-1.1
Genoa, Nance	323	672	22.4	428	1,100	22.0
Gering, Scotts Bluff	3,486	7,239	-4.7	4,343	11,582	-2.6
Gibbon, Buffalo	804	1,608	11.7	914	2,522	9.0
Gordon, Sheridan	1,386	2,713	-3.7	1,785	4,498	0.7
Gothenburg, Dawson	2,000	4,196	9.2	2,440	6,636	5.8
Grand Island, Hall	46,723	98,008	4.5	56,228	154,236	2.7
Grant, Perkins	1,231	2,195	25.4	1,236	3,431	19.5
Gretna, Sarpy	2,109	4,508	14.3	3,303	7,811	11.7
Hartington, Cedar	1,447	3,085	18.6	1,742	4,827	17.3
Hastings, Adams	19,293	39,506	6.0	21,320	60,826	2.2
Hay Springs, Sheridan	363	775	15.2	417	1,192	9.0
Hebron, Thayer	1,046	2,023	-34.7	1,161	3,184	-31.9
Henderson, York	531	1,075	11.2	662	1,737	5.0
Hickman, Lancaster	237	511	4.5	247	758	2.7
Holdrege, Phelps	3,858	8,050	5.8	4,626	12,676	3.3
Hooper, Dodge	385	941	24.1	386	1,327	9.9
Humboldt, Richardson	261	580	6.6	445	1,025	-0.5
Humphrey, Platte	587	1,242	2.9	770	2,012	2.4
Imperial, Chase	1,372	2,986	-2.2	1,785	4,771	-2.2
Juniata, Adams	300	607	28.9	306	913	26.1
Kearney, Buffalo	29,443	61,628	1.3	36,521	98,149	1.6
Kenesaw, Adams	427	854	44.7	404	1,258	47.5
Kimball, Kimball	1,732	3,446	19.3	1,915	5,361	16.8
La Vista, Sarpy	8,486	18,415	5.1	10,944	29,359	5.5
Laurel, Cedar	306	616	7.5	410	1,026	-1.2
Lexington, Dawson	7,042	14,259	5.4	7,716	21,975	3.6
Lincoln, Lancaster	192,276	406,350	3.2	223,989	630,339	2.7
Louisville, Cass	417	789	8.1	541	1,330	12.4
Loup City, Sherman	379	813	12.4	511	1,324	12.0
Lyons, Burt	330	741	18.4	332	1,073	6.2
Madison, Madison	710	1,520	4.9	961	2,481	7.2
McCook, Red Willow	7,924	16,508	-20.4	9,607	26,115	-20.6
Milford, Seward	736	2,249	20.8	1,407	3,656	20.9
Minatare, Scotts Bluff	124	234	-12.7	190	424	-2.5
Minden, Kearney	1,590	3,215	11.3	1,792	5,007	1.8
Mitchell, Scotts Bluff	490	990	-25.0	535	1,525	-25.0
Morrill, Scotts Bluff	404	889	3.9	509	1,398	-1.4
Nebraska City, Otoe	5,205	10,583	2.5	6,669	17,252	1.0
Neligh, Antelope	1,121	2,284	1.0	1,465	3,749	3.1
Newman Grove, Madison	317	650	17.3	341	991	10.9
Norfolk, Madison	27,147	56,145	0.6	32,259	88,404	1.4
North Bend, Dodge	526	1,055	25.7	518	1,573	12.4
North Platte, Lincoln	21,592	44,013	9.5	24,223	68,236	5.9
O'Neill, Holt	3,626	7,773	-1.0	4,466	12,239	0.2
Oakland, Burt	532	1,175	10.4	625	1,800	-0.7
Ogallala, Keith	4,527	9,327	-1.6	5,464	14,791	0.6
Omaha, Douglas	446,987	935,371	1.2	508,861	1,444,232	0.3
Ord, Valley	1,771	3,609	5.5	2,225	5,834	7.2
Osceola, Polk	452	869	0.9	498	1,367	2.2
Oshkosh, Garden	402	953	20.8	440	1,393	18.2
Osmond, Pierce	371	641	-0.2	301	942	-22.8
Oxford, Furnas	453	1,005	14.9	504	1,509	11.0
Papillion, Sarpy	7,007	15,107	18.5	7,735	22,842	10.4
Pawnee City, Pawnee	303	661	8.9	337	998	4.4
Pender, Thurston	597	1,312	11.7	872	2,184	15.5
Pierce, Pierce	637	1,304	18.7	762	2,066	17.5
Plainview, Pierce	679	1,364	4.0	691	2,055	0.6
Plattsmouth, Cass	3,043	6,515	11.9	3,469	9,984	7.9
Ponca, Dixon	246	506	22.2	307	813	15.6
Ralston, Douglas	2,923	6,411	11.8	3,469	9,880	3.1
Randolph, Cedar	396	816	10.4	485	1,301	10.4
Ravenna, Buffalo	673	1,293	19.1	684	1,977	13.4
Red Cloud, Webster	571	1,233	3.7	736	1,969	0.5
Rushville, Sheridan	375	786	5.9	478	1,264	1.4
Sargent, Custer	208	423	24.8	298	721	20.2
Schuyler, Colfax	1,746	3,880	16.6	2,001	5,881	9.7
Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff	19,582	40,750	4.7	22,079	62,829	3.0
Scribner, Dodge	312	712	13.6	365	1,077	-1.7
Seward, Seward	4,100	8,818	-0.4	4,626	13,444	-1.3
Shelby, Polk	393	767	21.0	430	1,197	11.3
Shelton, Buffalo	488	989	24.6	584	1,573	28.8
Sidney, Cheyenne	7,830	15,524	2.7	8,541	24,065	3.0
South Sioux City, Dakota	7,213	14,149	-1.9	7,993	22,142	-2.2
Springfield, Sarpy	527	936	-16.1	606	1,542	-12.9
St. Paul, Howard	1,274	2,615	23.4	1,424	4,039	20.6
Stanton, Stanton	640	1,348	23.4	704	2,052	20.4
Stromsburg, Polk	667	1,478	15.0	966	2,444	10.0
Superior, Nuckolls	1,319	2,710	3.2	1,534	4,244	1.2
Sutherland, Lincoln	373	787	8.0	437	1,224	10.6
Sutton, Clay	870	1,689	12.3	886	2,575	3.5
Syracuse, Otoe	983	1,968	-1.2	1,155	3,123	-1.2
Tecumseh, Johnson	839	1,800	12.4	970	2,770	10.7
Tekamah, Burt	1,054	2,052	13.4	1,147	3,199	12.4
Tilden, Madison	196	449	-24.4	254	703	-19.8
Utica, Seward	373	796	41.4	399	1,195	28.5
Valentine, Cherry	4,363	9,107	24.6	5,262	14,369	25.4
Valley, Douglas	833	1,637	-20.2	904	2,541	-28.9
Wahoo, Saunders	1,984	4,426	7.5	2,536	6,962	7.4
Wakefield, Dixon	316	609	-2.6	583	1,192	24.4
Wauneta, Chase	323	677	-0.1	332	1,009	-2.9
Waverly, Lancaster	1,171	2,280	54.0	960	3,240	43.6
Wayne, Wayne	3,604	8,001	23.5	3,959	11,960	17.2
Weeping Water, Cass	541	1,156	14.1	774	1,930	12.7
West Point, Cuming	4,482	9,437	47.1	5,288	14,725	46.2
Wilber, Saline	469	968	12.4	590	1,558	13.6
Wisner, Cuming	491	975	-2.2	830	1,805	7.1
Wood River, Hall	318	685	10.5	461	1,146	6.5
Wymore, Gage	457	1,002	17.3	505	1,507	14.6
York, York	8,854	18,162	-0.9	9,926	28,088	-0.7

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

Net Taxable Retail Sales for Nebraska Counties ($000)

	Motor Vehicle Sales				Other Sales			
		March 2001 ($000)	YTD ($000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago		March 2001 ($000)	YTD ($000)	% Chg. vs Yr. Ago.
Nebraska	173,701	223,490	585,107	-8.2	1,271,814	1,521,385	4,183,628	1.1
Adams	3,153	3,283	9,637	-13.6	20,104	22,515	63,735	2.4
Antelope	1,094	1,183	3,177	-7.4	1,836	2,395	6,146	5.3
Arthur	136	75	248	1.6	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Banner	155	144	463	-7.6	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Blaine	164	91	361	-5.5	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Boone	739	959	2,474	-10.9	1,659	2,413	5,835	-1.5
Box Butte	1,436	1,673	4,240	-11.3	5,716	5,884	17,377	4.1
Boyd	164	306	637	-21.3	411	632	1,509	-4.9
Brown	563	506	1,461	-6.1	1,360	1,639	4,599	4.6
Buffalo	4,636	5,279	14,403	-9.6	32,015	39,462	106,248	2.3
Burt	854	1,011	2,950	-10.7	2,149	2,399	6,840	8.4
Butler	877	988	3,197	-11.5	2,051	2,422	6,619	14.9
Cass	2,866	4,084	9,601	-5.6	5,777	6,667	18,770	8.9
Cedar	1,237	1,225	3,665	-7.5	2,366	2,964	7,941	12.8
Chase	812	666	2,333	-6.2	1,724	2,186	5,911	-4.6
Cherry	996	1,135	3,144	17.9	4,568	5,504	14,982	24.7
Cheyenne	1,445	1,440	4,116	-18.8	8,125	8,884	25,010	3.0
Clay	845	981	2,883	-20.5	1,954	2,287	6,286	-4.9
Colfax	1,030	1,335	3,681	2.6	2,339	2,901	8,211	4.4
Cuming	1,284	1,362	4,087	-10.0	5,444	6,698	18,119	36.8
Custer	1,336	1,984	5,180	-6.0	4,183	5,022	13,656	-5.2
Dakota	1,803	2,429	5,768	-16.9	8,230	9,221	25,462	-0.2
Dawes	768	910	2,604	-1.0	7,116	7,694	22,327	57.6
Dawson	2,727	3,550	9,282	-12.6	11,269	14,490	38,335	1.5
Deuel	229	231	810	-27.9	949	1,050	3,104	1.9
Dixon	555	941	2,180	-7.8	679	1,031	2,382	19.0
Dodge	3,499	4,438	11,469	-11.1	22,644	26,028	72,482	1.3
Douglas	42,412	55,828	140,942	-6.3	454,341	517,587	1,468,443	0.3
Dundy	378	467	1,362	13.1	562	647	1,715	0.6
Fillmore	871	940	2,895	-13.5	2,114	2,608	6,954	7.6
Franklin	453	571	1,768	3.3	728	940	2,503	10.1
Frontier	541	379	1,558	-11.0	673	781	2,147	15.2
Furnas	595	1,039	2,560	-8.5	2,123	2,439	6,995	13.1
Gage	2,269	2,851	7,891	-9.3	12,543	14,222	40,245	9.7
Garden	391	388	1,111	40.8	516	594	1,816	6.8
Garfield	113	207	600	-6.8	682	865	2,257	14.6
Gosper	344	437	1,196	-2.0	257	299	880	5.5
Grant	88	77	355	-31.1	260	292	879	25.8
Greeley	206	198	1,097	-4.7	528	760	1,877	6.1
Hall	4,873	6,990	17,231	-11.7	48,181	58,566	160,233	2.2
Hamilton	1,090	1,465	3,933	-16.2	2,464	3,169	8,214	9.5
Harlan	500	634	1,817	-3.0	620	775	2,001	3.1
Hayes	102	246	649	0.5	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Hitchcock	408	507	1,622	-4.4	612	712	2,019	13.0
Holt	1,558	1,537	4,358	-8.7	4,850	6,190	16,695	-0.6
Hooker	114	132	387	7.2	231	247	773	23.9
Howard	454	982	2,336	-12.0	1,643	1,898	5,242	18.5
Jefferson	744	936	2,715	-22.0	3,660	4,272	12,001	-1.0
Johnson	395	542	1,498	-5.7	1,175	1,428	3,944	10.1
Kearney	917	998	3,064	-12.5	1,691	2,001	5,462	1.5
Keith	1,008	1,238	3,752	-14.3	4,846	5,983	15,918	0.2
Keya Paha	232	168	528	9.1	100	144	318	17.3
Kimball	598	458	1,712	-2.4	1,759	1,993	5,496	16.4
Knox	1,128	1,240	3,363	-9.7	2,365	2,910	7,946	15.3
Lancaster	21,165	28,500	73,042	-7.4	196,008	227,923	641,967	3.3
Lincoln	3,793	5,172	12,935	6.7	22,388	25,312	71,032	5.8
Logan	173	181	533	20.9	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Loup	113	110	290	-5.5	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
McPherson	75	71	278	-12.0	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)
Madison	3,265	3,732	10,204	-13.8	29,357	34,720	95,463	2.3
Merrick	1,015	1,258	3,423	-10.6	2,107	2,767	7,084	3.4
Morrill	669	755	2,360	-12.2	1,419	1,840	4,925	9.5
Nance	525	432	1,640	-11.1	857	1,125	2,912	11.7
Nemaha	817	1,146	2,822	-7.0	2,404	2,885	8,079	1.0
Nuckolls	500	658	1,797	-21.8	2,112	2,421	6,773	14.8
Otoe	1,654	2,209	5,534	-7.6	6,504	8,342	21,614	0.1
Pawnee	353	545	1,225	-0.6	474	575	1,612	6.4
Perkins	621	496	1,746	-22.2	1,425	1,541	4,119	18.3
Phelps	1,320	1,538	4,390	-8.0	4,154	4,971	13,635	4.3
Pierce	864	940	2,586	-14.5	1,744	1,843	5,266	0.9
Platte	3,351	4,199	11,220	-15.8	18,992	22,676	61,424	-2.4
Polk	553	1,056	2,354	-29.1	1,687	2,066	5,573	9.2
Red Willow	1,434	1,596	4,562	-12.6	8,194	9,945	27,009	-20.2
Richardson	907	1,100	3,003	-12.6	2,805	3,709	9,465	6.2
Rock	306	329	866	2.4	360	460	1,199	6.3
Saline	1,402	1,711	4,842	-8.4	4,032	5,098	13,731	17.5
Sarpy	13,053	18,199	44,352	-2.6	40,188	49,644	132,233	10.1
Saunders	2,149	2,879	7,715	-13.4	5,186	6,594	18,046	3.1
Scotts Bluff	3,737	4,691	12,283	-8.1	24,129	27,758	77,976	1.3
Seward	1,891	2,157	6,108	-2.7	5,447	6,784	19,146	4.4
Sheridan	544	802	2,282	-9.6	2,404	3,024	7,864	2.8
Sherman	373	721	1,594	21.7	478	678	1,703	10.7
Sioux	123	233	650	-31.7	75	112	279	-1.4
Stanton	746	1,062	2,480	10.5	855	978	2,768	28.6
Thayer	418	853	2,212	-30.5	1,801	2,191	5,839	-19.4
Thomas	68	140	383	-33.2	235	258	709	5.3
Thurston	453	435	1,355	-5.4	804	1,105	2,849	22.8
Valley	557	693	1,868	-7.2	1,899	2,406	6,301	5.3
Washington	2,373	3,195	8,193	-5.7	7,784	8,890	25,297	13.2
Wayne	713	1,388	3,294	8.6	3,743	4,165	12,448	16.7
Webster	378	415	1,444	-28.8	1,074	1,317	3,587	-3.2
Wheeler	168	205	627	32.6	48	52	164	-21.2
York	1,829	2,194	6,013	1.0	9,759	11,092	31,177	-0.3

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

Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

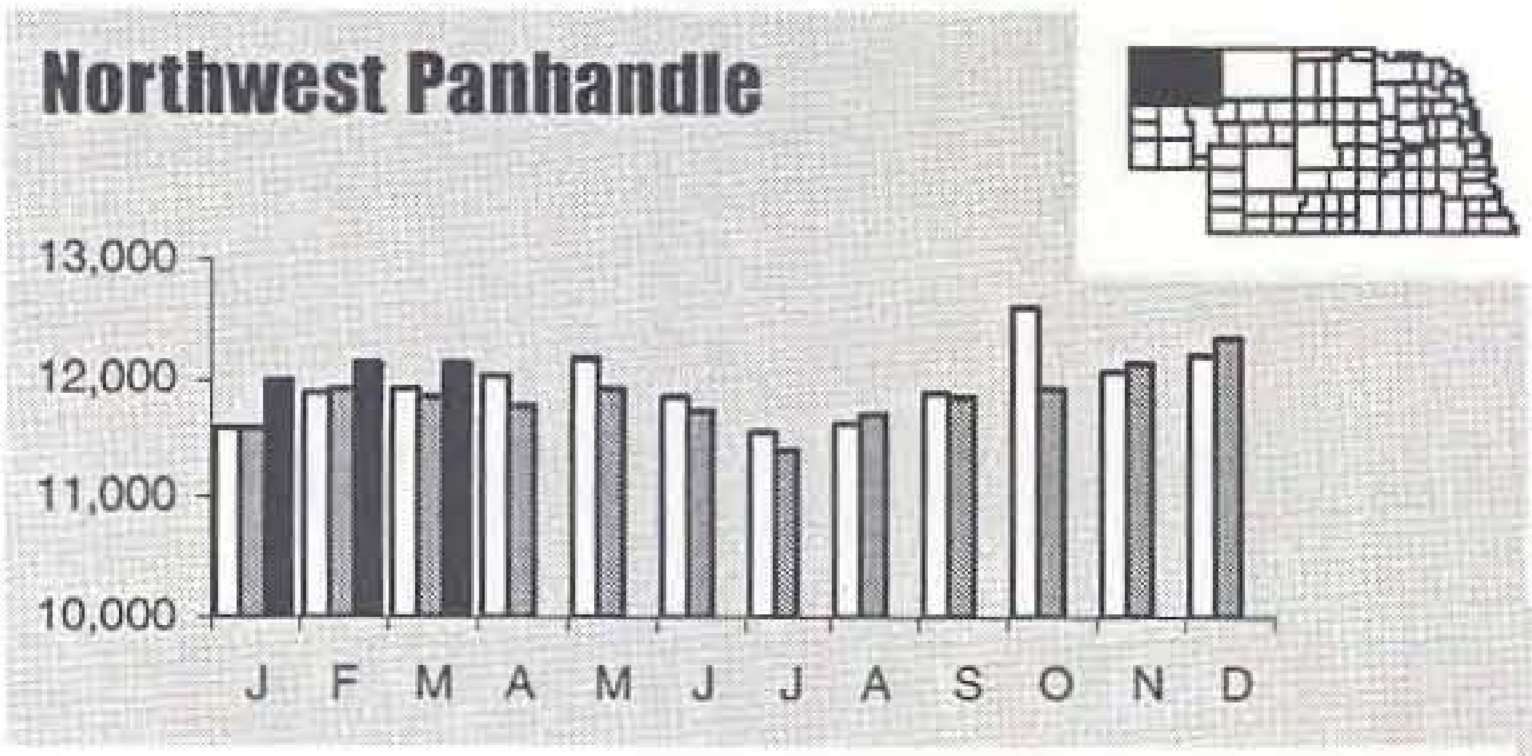
Note on Net Taxable Retail Sales

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 March** 2001

1999 2000 2001

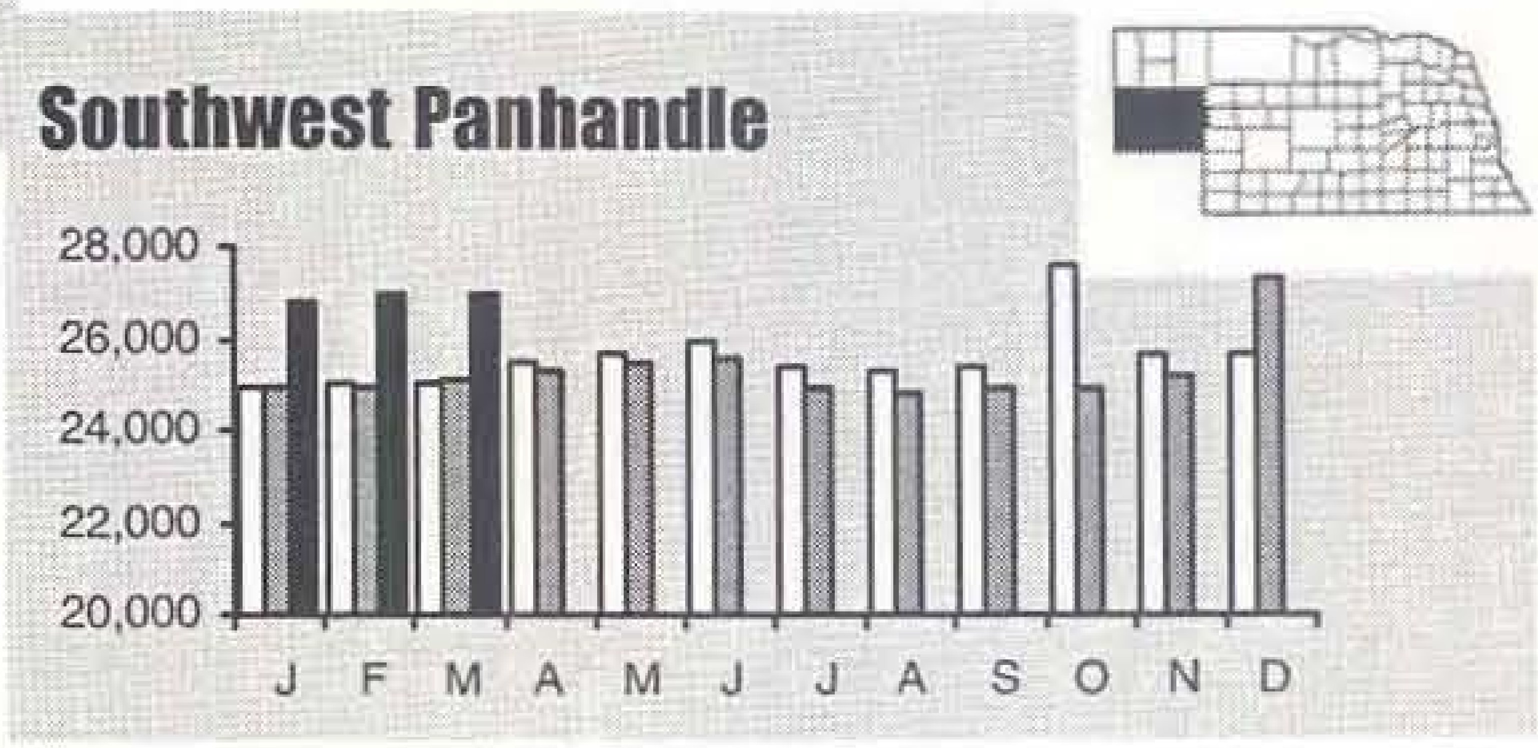
Northwest Panhandle



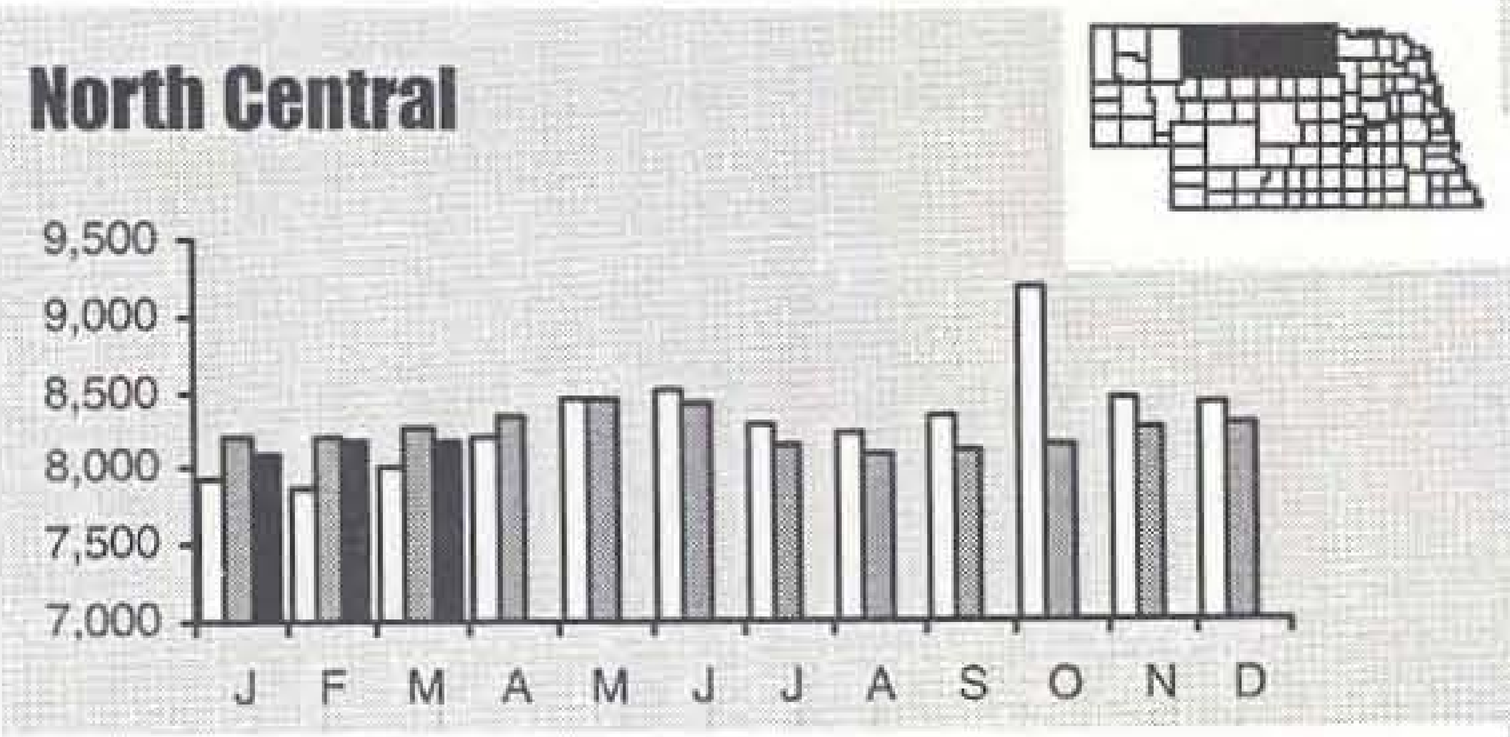
Note to Readers

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

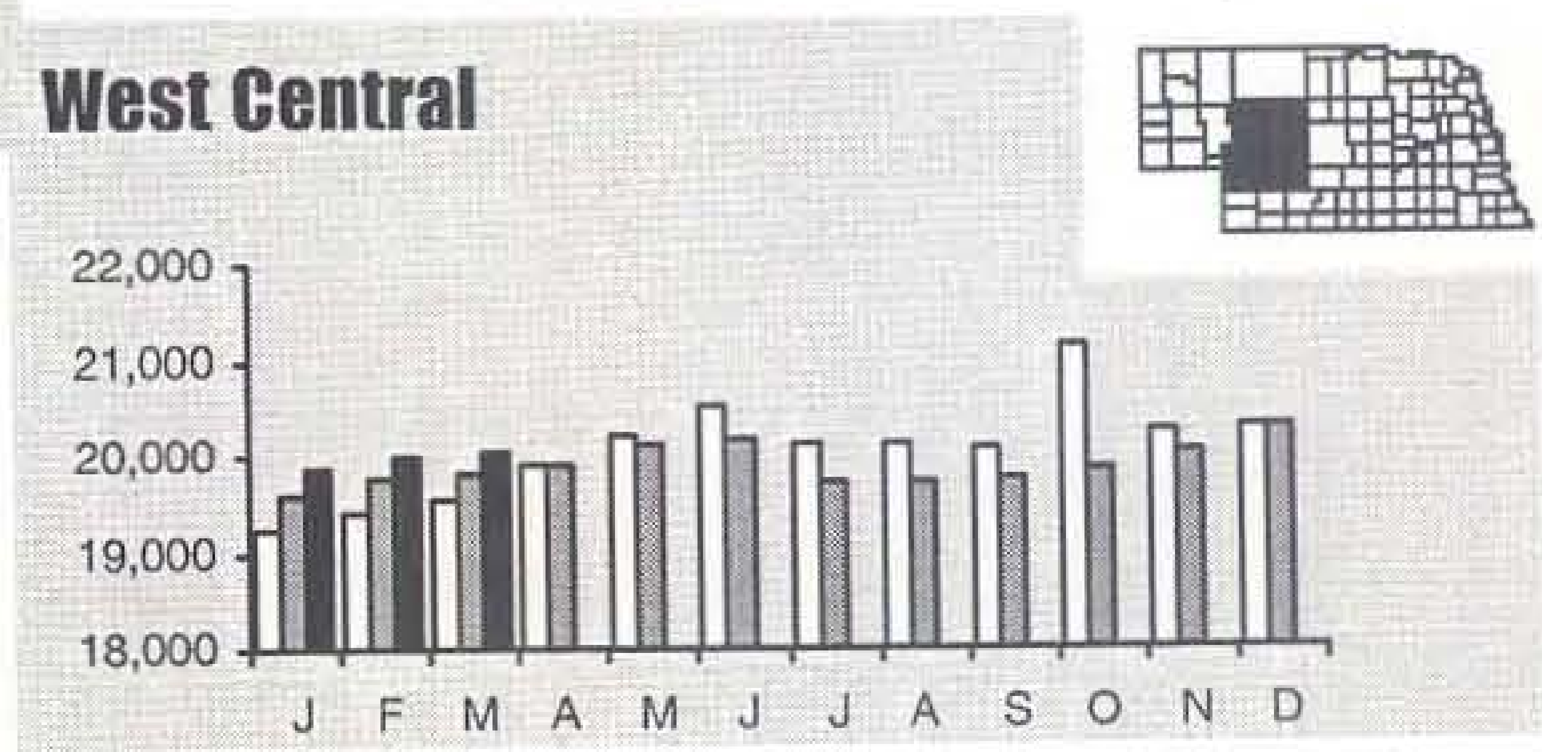
Southwest Panhandle



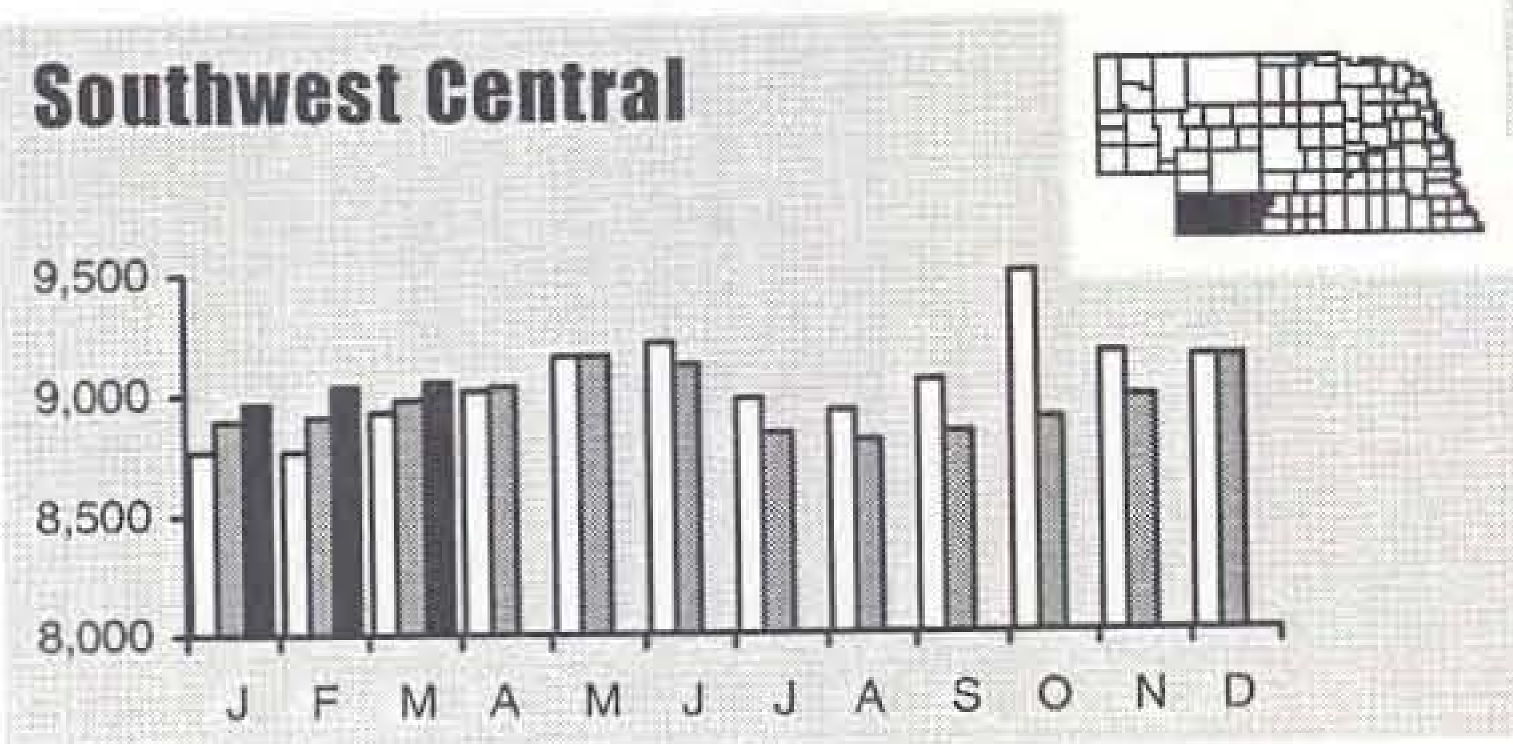
North Central



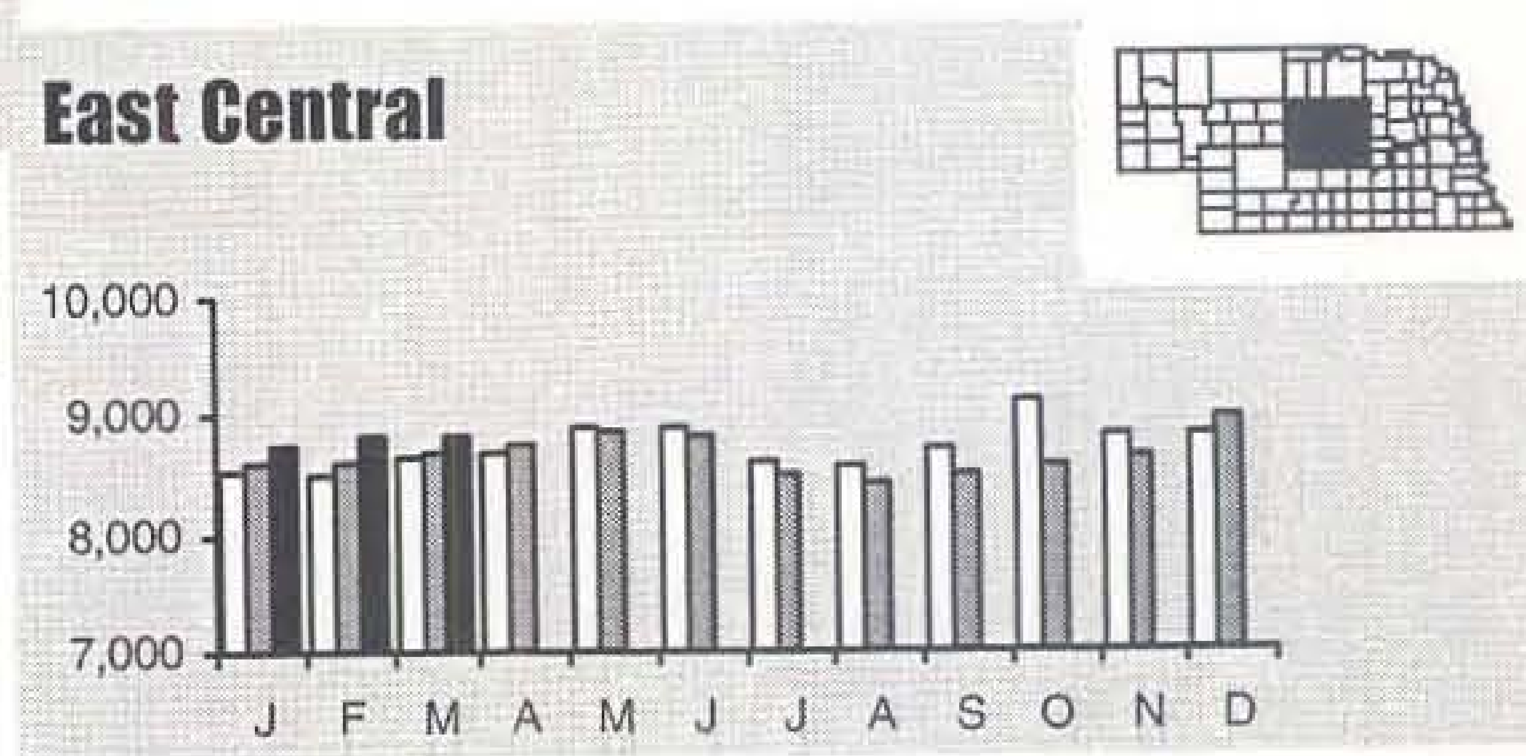
West Central



Southwest Central



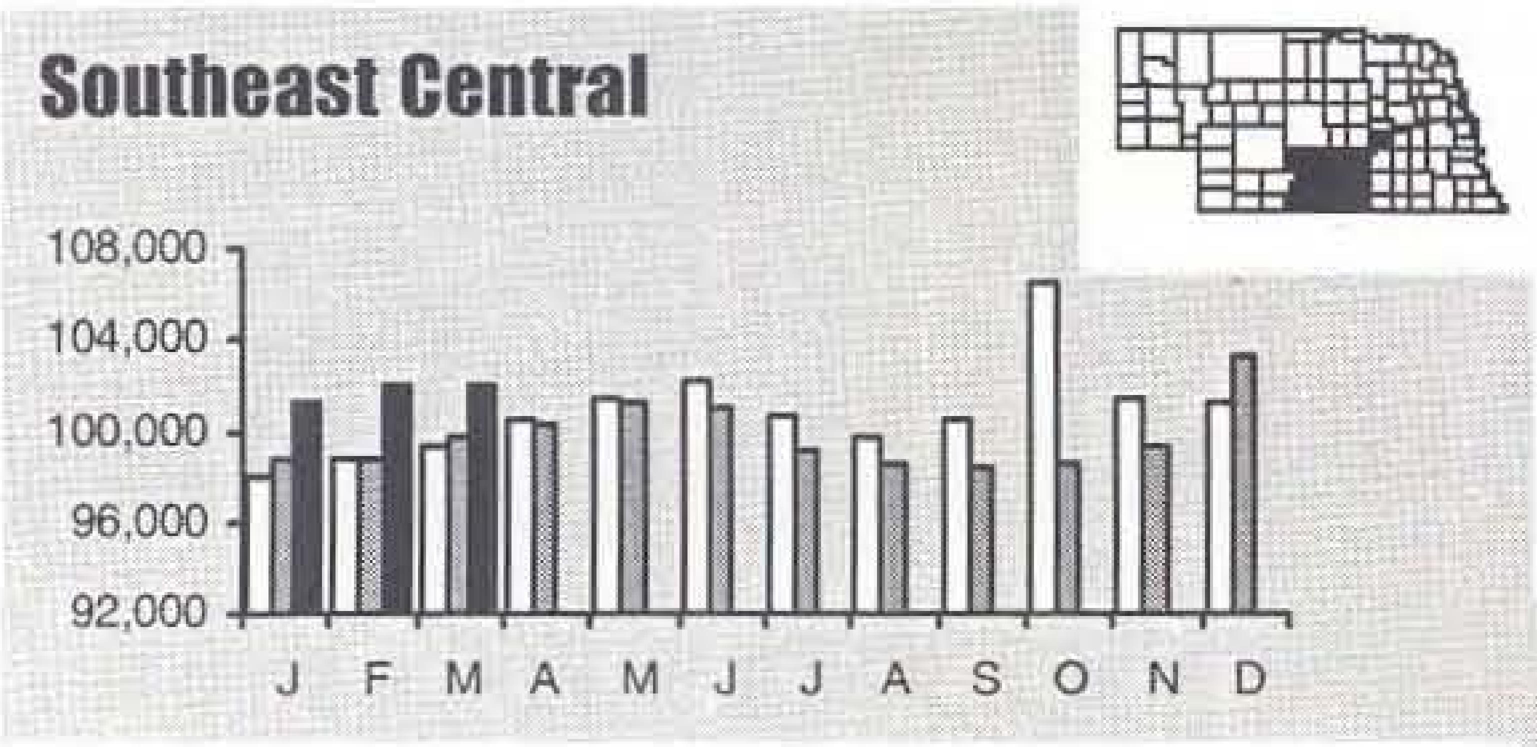
East Central



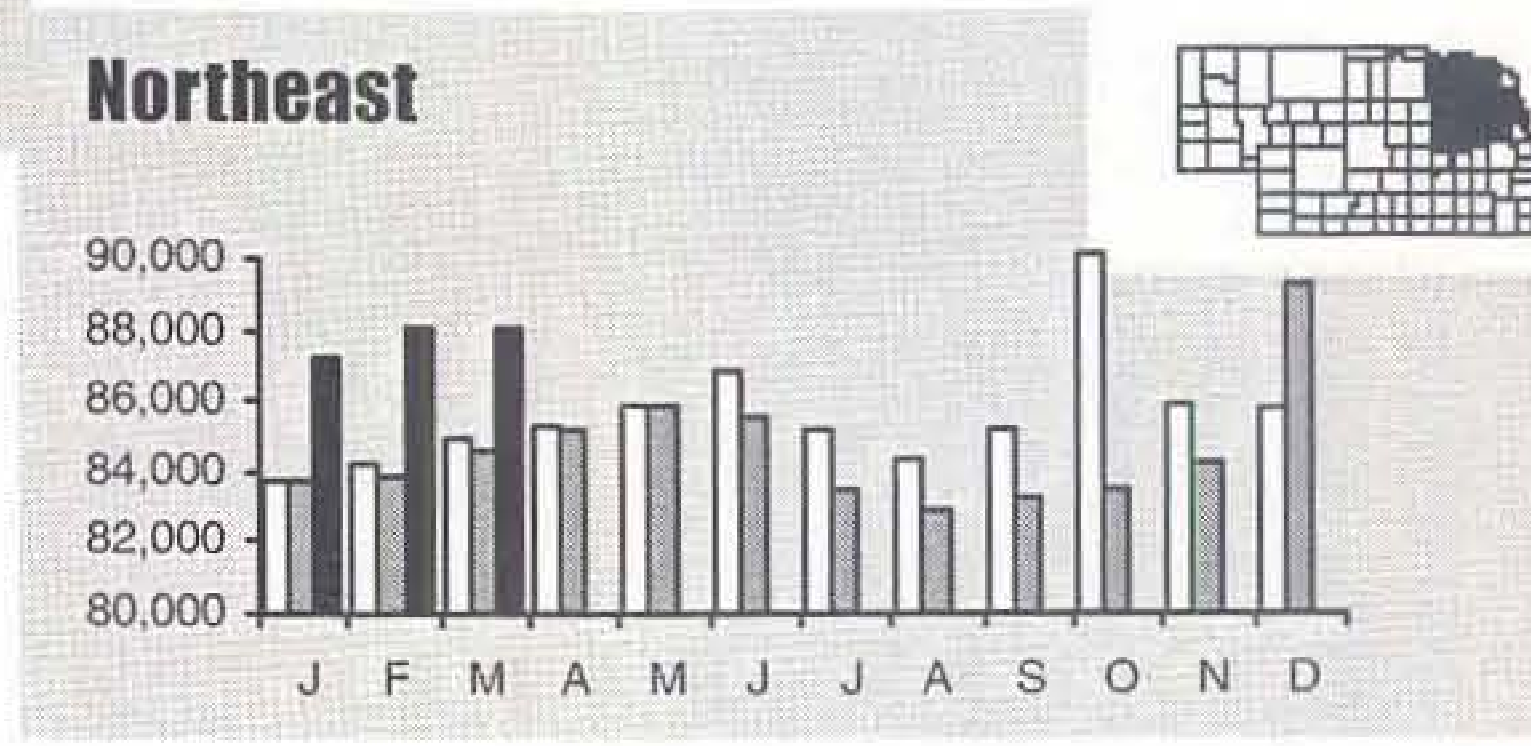
Regional Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment* 1999 to March** 2001

1999 2000 2001

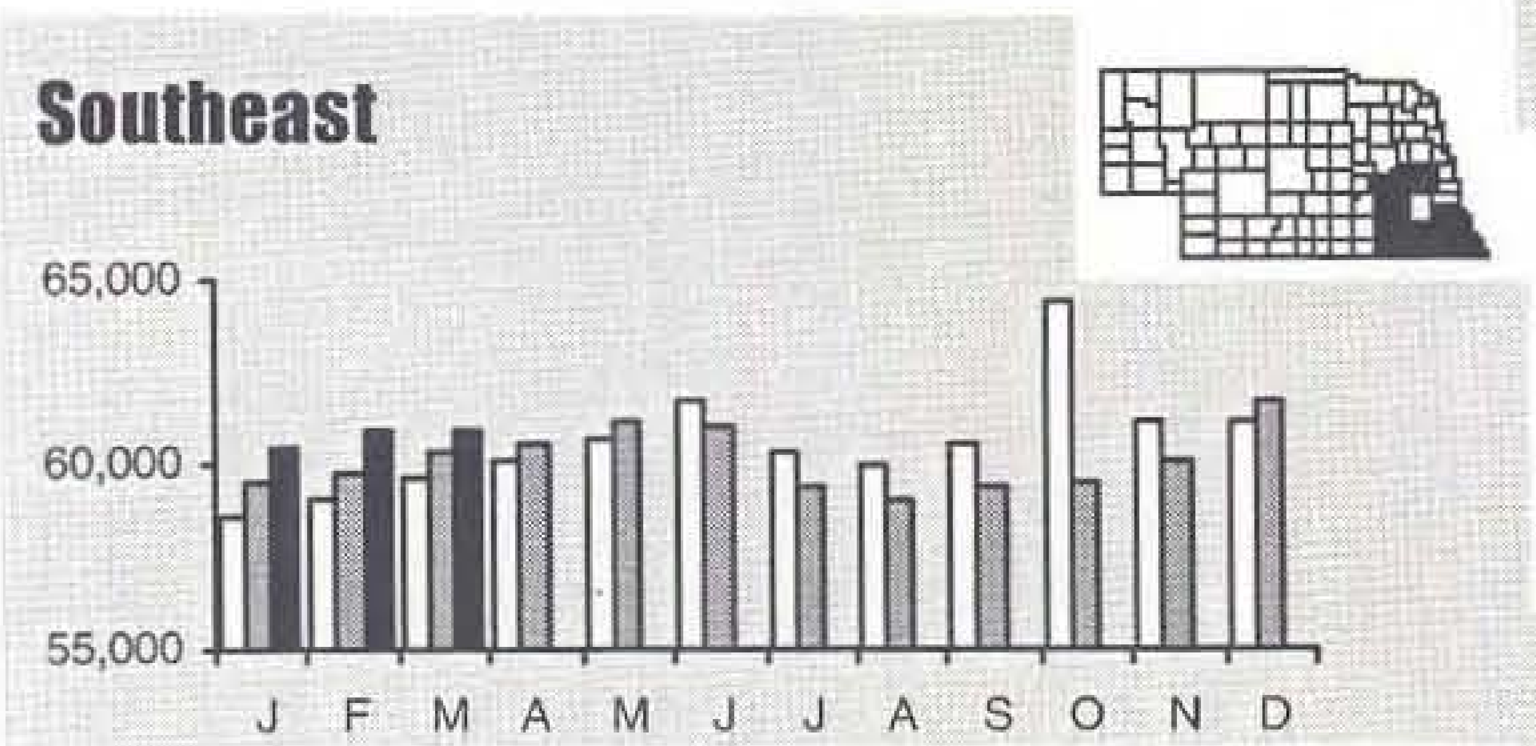
Southeast Central



Northeast

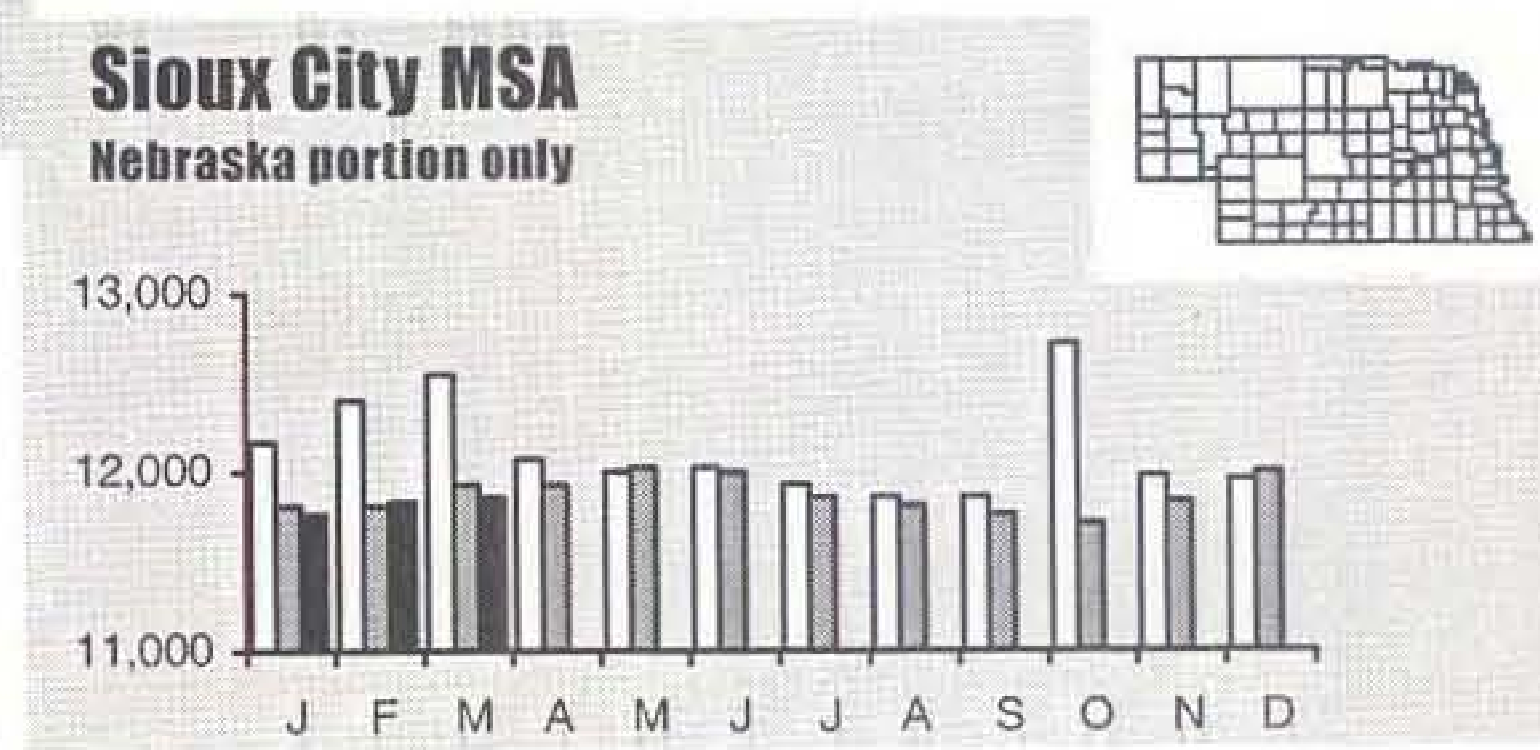


Southeast



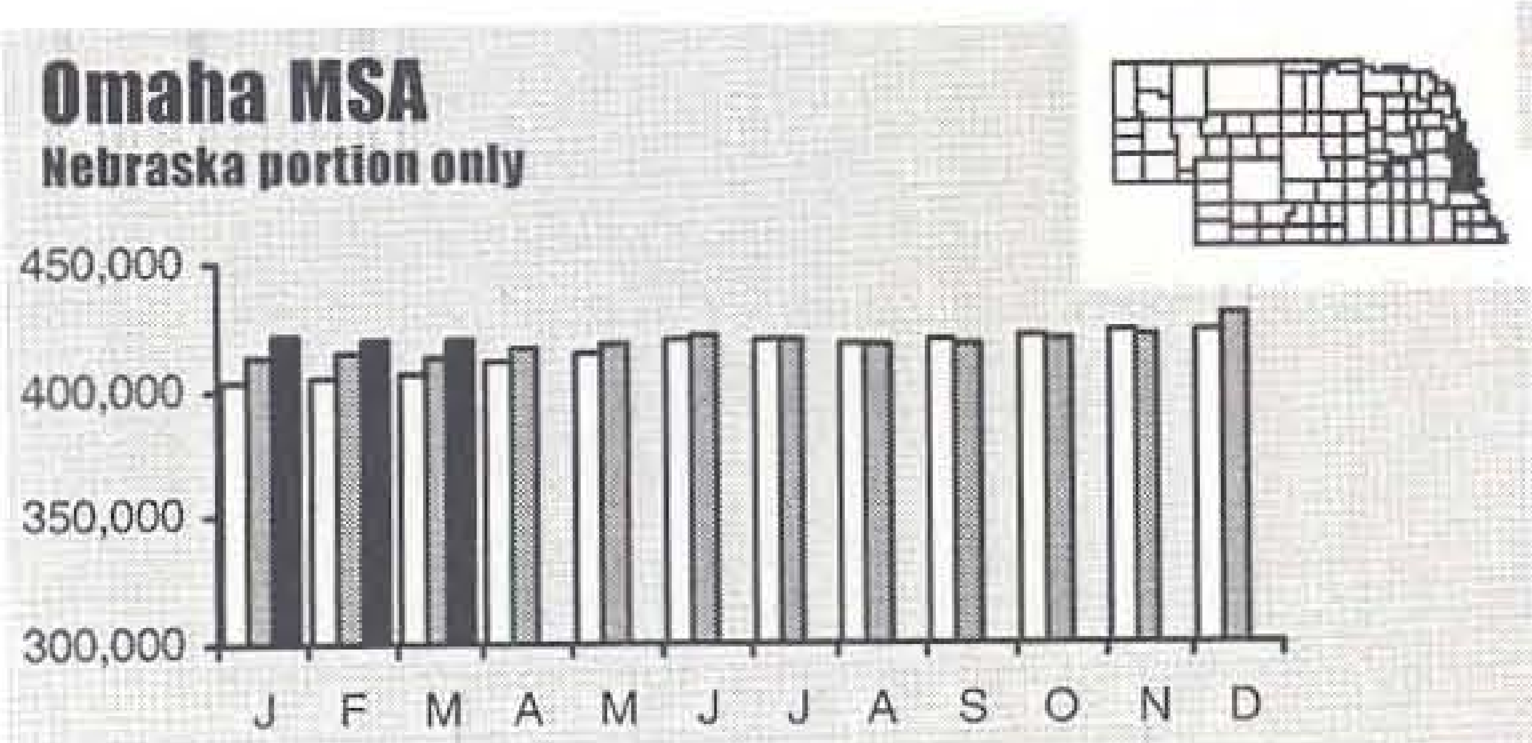
Sioux City MSA

Nebraska portion only

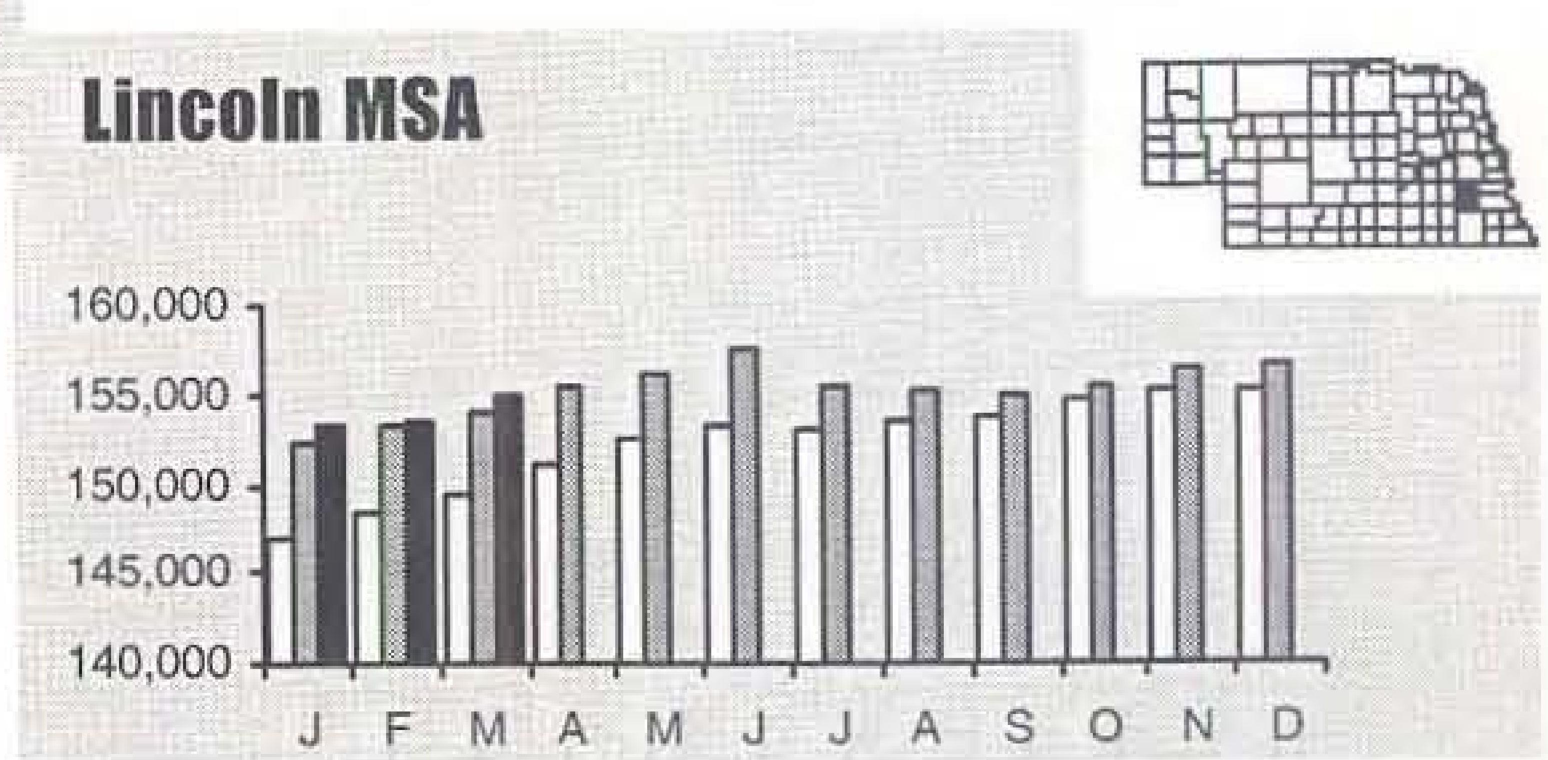


Omaha MSA

Nebraska portion only



Lincoln MSA



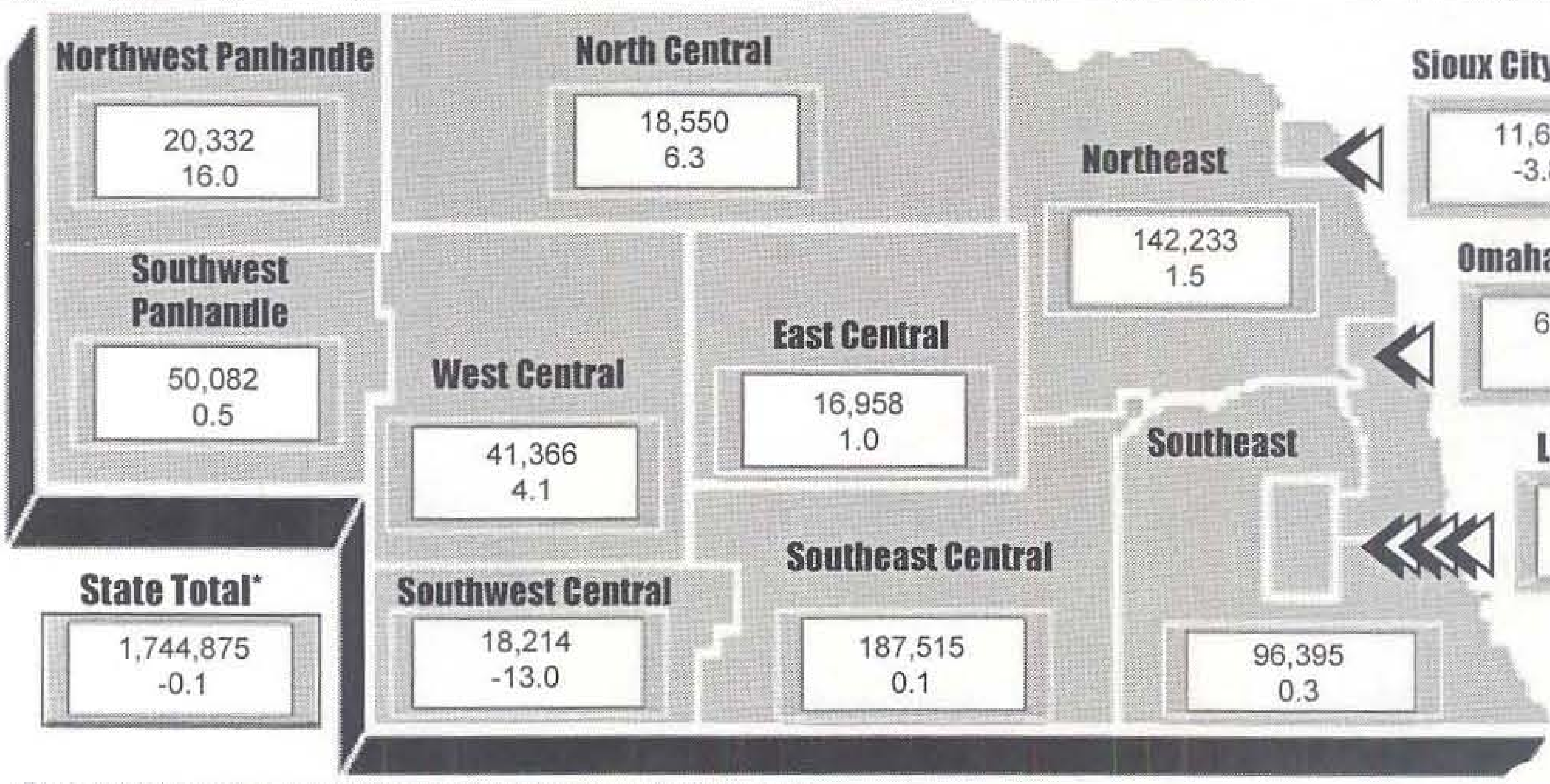
*By place of work

**Current month data are preliminary and subject to revision

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 earlly 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available.

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

March 2001 Regional Retail Sales ($000)
YTD Change vs Yr. Ago



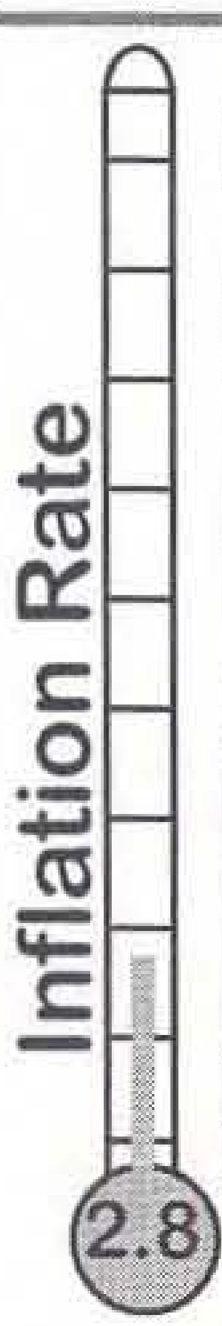
*Regional values may not add to state total due to unallocated sales
Source: Nebraska Department of Revenue

State Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment by Industry*

	March 2001
Total	905,543
Construction & Mining	41,326
Manufacturing	118,281
Durables	56,482
Nondurables	61,799
TCU**	58,098
Trade	213,677
Wholesale	53,344
Retail	160,333
FIRE***	60,994
Services	255,850
Government	157,317

*By place of work
**Transportation, Communication, and Utilities
***Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
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 earlly 2003. All estimates are the most current revised data available. Labor force data for 2000 and 2001 will be revised.



Consumer Price Index

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

	May 2001	*% Change vs Yr. Ago*	*YTD % Change vs Yr. Ago (inflation rate)*
All Items	177.7	3.7	2.8
Commodities	152.9	2.5	1.6
Services	202.5	4.6	3.6

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

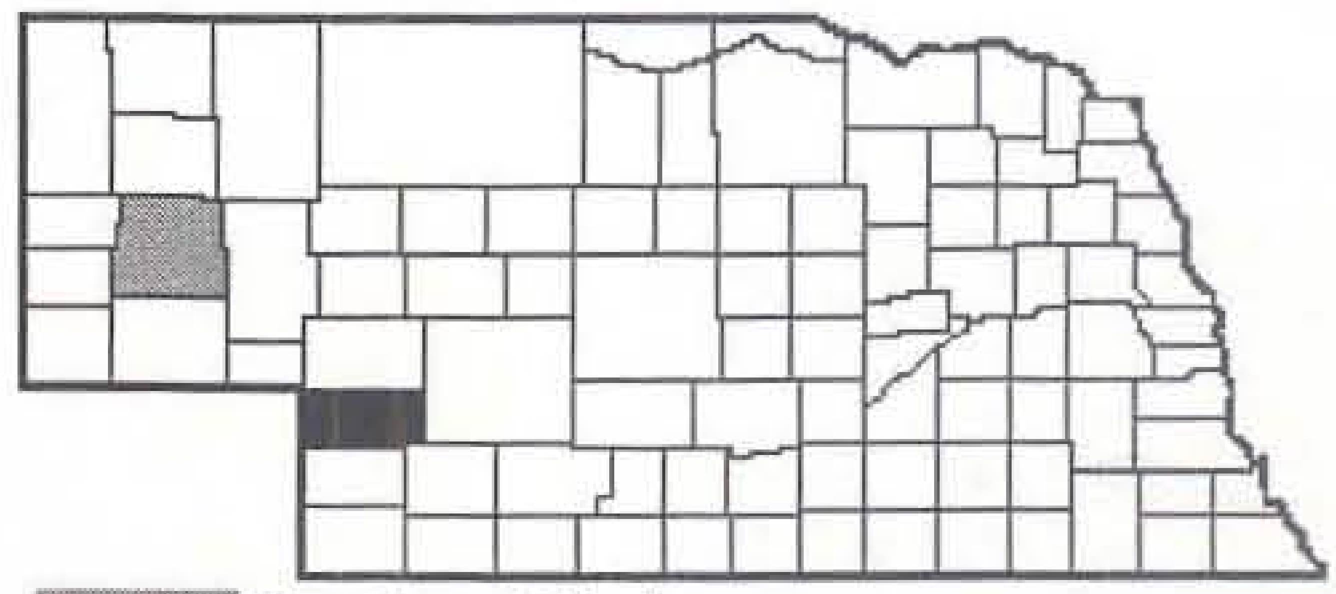
State Labor Force Summary*

	March 2001
Labor Force	943,172
Employment	913,903
Unemployment Rate	3.1

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

County of the Month

Perkins
Grant - County Seat



Next County of Month

License plate prefix number: 74
Size of county: 885 square miles, ranks 22nd in the state
Population: 3,200 in 2000, a change of –5.0 percent from 1990
Per capita personal income: $24,466 in 1999, ranks 14th in the state
Net taxable retail sales ($000): $23,523 in 2000 a change of 6.4 percent from 1999; $5,865 from January through March 2001, a change of 2.4 percent from the same period the previous year.
Unemployment rate: 2.7 percent in Perkins County, 2.9 percent in Nebraska in 1999

	State	Perkins County
Nonfarm employment (1999)[1]:	890,821	950
(wage & salary)	*(percent of total)*	
Construction and Mining	5.0	6.1
Manufacturing	13.2	2.3
TCU	6.4	4.4
Wholesale Trade	6.2	20.2
Retail Trade	18.0	12.7
FIRE	6.8	4.8
Services	27.3	8.3
Government	17.1	41.1

Agriculture:

Number of farms: 490 in 1997; 479 in 1992; 591 in 1987

Average farm size: 1,128 acres in 1997; 1,113 acres in 1992

Market value of farm products sold: $64.9 million in 1997 ($132,353 average per farm); $50.0 million in 1992 ($104,572 average per farm)

[1]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

Be sure to try... ChartMaker in NU *ONRAMP* !!

ChartMaker is a new feature in NU *ONRAMP* that enables users to select a row of data and a series of years, view the information in a chart, format a chart title, and save the chart to a hard drive or print it directly from the website.

ChartMaker currently is applicable to Nebraska income and employment data. Later, other data sets will be added to the feature to give ChartMaker users a broader range of data.

See the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at **BBR Online!**

www.bbr.unl.edu

Copyright 2001 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—Harvey Perlman, *Chancellor*
College of Business Administration—Cynthia H. Milligan, *Dean*

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
An equal opportunity employer
with a comprehensive plan for diversity.

Nebraska
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

...business is not our only business

Bureau of Business Research (BBR)

specializes in ...

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

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