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## EC55-1732 Sawmills in Nebraska

Karl Loerch

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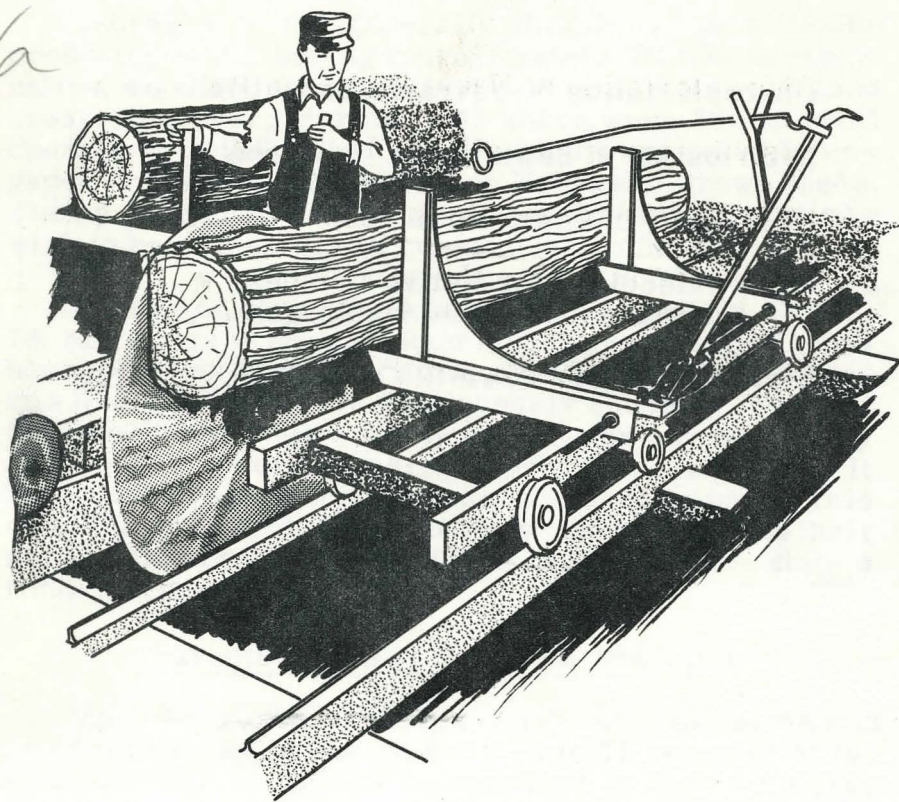
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# Sawmills in Nebraska



EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COOPERATING  
W.V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

## Table Of Contents

Characteristics of Nebraska Sawmills . .	3
Distribution of Sawmills in Nebraska . .	5
Production of Sawmills in 1953 . . . . .	5
Prices Received for Native Lumber, Custom Sawing, and Stumpage . . .	7
List of Nebraska Sawmill Operators . . .	11



# Sawmills In Nebraska

Karl Loerch,  
Extension Forestry Specialist

This publication is designed to better inform the people of Nebraska as to the location and production of sawmills in the state, and the type and cost of services offered by the operators. The material presented is based on a survey <sup>1/</sup> made by the author in 1954 and covers the period from January 1, 1953 to December 31, 1953.

Nebraska is not generally thought of as a timber producing state, having approximately 900,000 acres of native woodlands, which is 3 per cent of its total land area. However, during 1953 there were 286 sawmill operators in the state, 187 of which were actively engaged in sawing lumber from Nebraska grown trees. These sawmills offer a great service to farmers who wish to have their trees converted into lumber.

The list of sawmill operators, on pages 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15, is probably incomplete, even though it was based on a very thorough survey. In addition, the names on a list of this type are continuously changing. The author would appreciate if any errors, or any necessary additions or deletions were brought to his attention. It is hoped that agricultural workers will make use of this circular in directing farmers to the sawmills in their area and in encouraging better utilization of the state's timber resources.

## Characteristics of Nebraska Sawmills

Most Nebraska sawmills are located on farms and are operated by farmers. Only 10 to 15 per cent of the total number of mills are operated by non-farmers. However, non-farmer operated mills account for approximately 75 per cent of the total production of lumber.

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1/ Survey made in cooperation with Central States Forest Experiment Station, U. S. Forest Service, Columbus, Ohio.

Many farmer-operated mills are used for production of lumber needed on the farm. Others do some custom sawing in addition to their own work. Practically all of these mills are operated only for a few months during the winter when other farm work does not keep the operator fully occupied.

Some of the state's sawmills can be considered as commercial operations since they not only do custom work, but also buy timber on a stumpage<sup>2/</sup> basis, cut the lumber, and market it through commercial channels. Many of these operators have contracts for lumber with box factories, planing mills, or other wood using industries.

The breakdown of the number of sawmills active in Nebraska in 1953 by the above mentioned classifications is as follows:

Farm (for use on the farm only) - - - - -	60
Farm and custom sawing - - - - -	87
Commercial (both custom sawing and for sale purposes) - -	<u>40</u>
Total - - - - -	187

The make and size of sawmills in the state varies widely; all those surveyed used circular saws. Most of the mills were of a permanent nature but very few had a roofed shelter. The majority of the mills were powered by farm tractors, some had stationary engines, and at least one utilized steam power.

The number of men usually working at the mills varied from one to six. Most of the mills employed either two or three. Very often only one of these men has had any previous experience in operating a sawmill.

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<sup>2/</sup> Stumpage refers to value of standing timber.



### Distribution of Sawmills in Nebraska

Nebraska's sawmills are widely scattered across the entire state. Of the 93 counties 63 had at least one mill in 1953. Most of the 30 counties that had no mills were in the western one-third of the state.

The greatest concentration of sawmills was found in the Pine Ridge area in the northwest corner of the state and along the major water courses. For the sake of reporting distribution and production of sawmills by districts the state has been divided into seven areas based upon the main watersheds as follows: (1) Missouri River, (2) Elkhorn River, (3) Loup River, (4) Platte River, (5) Blue River, (6) Republican River, and (7) Pine Ridge and Niobrara River.

The distribution of the total number of mills and those active during 1953 by these districts is shown below and their location is shown in figure 1.

	Total Mills	Active in 1953
Missouri River	116	85
Elkhorn River	39	26
Loup River	16	13
Platte River	38	22
Blue River	22	14
Republican River	9	5
Pine Ridge & Niobrara River	<u>44</u>	<u>22</u>
	284	187

### Production of Sawmills in 1953

The total production of native lumber by Nebraska sawmills in 1953 amounted to 8,174,000 board feet. Most of this was dimension lumber and boards with a few timbers being produced. Cottonwood accounted for over 79 per cent of the total, heading the list of species cut in every district except for the Pine Ridge and Niobrara River district where Ponderosa pine was the species most used for lumber.

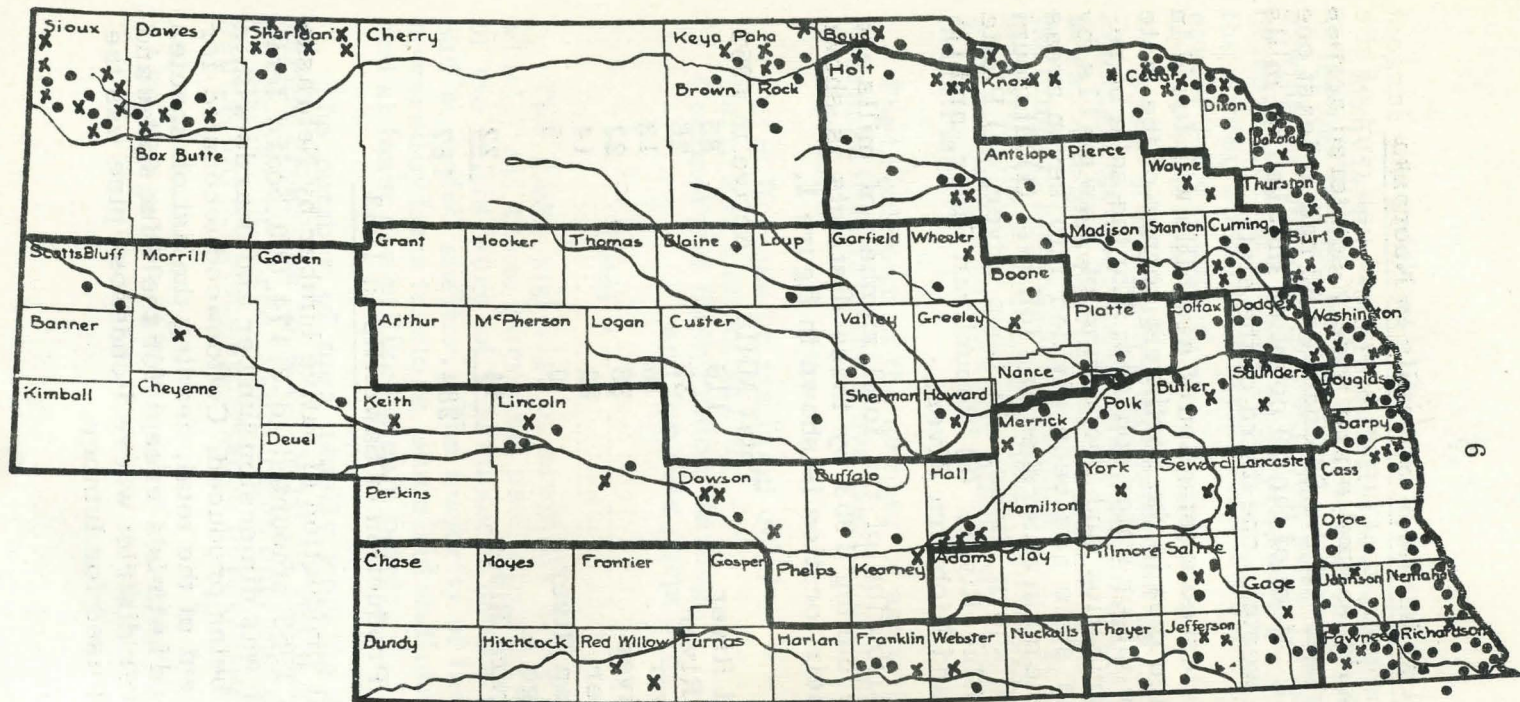


FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF NEBRASKA SAWMILLS

● ACTIVE DURING 1953

X IDLE DURING 1953



The Missouri River district produced the largest volume of lumber, making up nearly 40 per cent of the state's production. Several mills in this area cut lumber from piling, salvaged from the Missouri River including such species as Douglas-fir, cypress, and southern pine.

The annual production of individual mills varied greatly, ranging from less than 1,000 board feet to as much as 700 thousand board feet. The number of mills falling within certain production limits were as follows:

Annual Production M. B. F. <sup>3/</sup>	Number of Mills
1 - 10	92
11 - 50	54
51 - 100	20
101 - 500	17
501 +	4
	<hr/> 187

A complete breakdown of lumber production by districts and by species is shown in table 1 on the following page. The production figures by counties are shown in figure 2.

#### Prices Received for Native Lumber, Custom Sawing, and Stumpage

It is difficult to determine an average or current price for native lumber, custom sawing, or stumpage. Many sawmill operators do not sell lumber, do no custom work, and have never purchased standing timber. The figures presented here are based on information gathered from operators active during 1953.

Prices received for native cottonwood lumber ranged from \$50 - \$85 per thousand board feet with an average of \$60/MBF. Native pine lumber sold for an average of \$70/MBF. The other hardwoods, such as oak, maple, sycamore, hackberry, etc., generally brought a higher price, the average being \$75/MBF. All prices quoted refer to rough, green lumber sold on a mill-run basis.

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<sup>3/</sup> M. B. F. means thousand board feet.



Table 1 - 1953 Lumber Production of Districts by Species  
(Expressed in board feet)

	DISTRICT							Totals
	Missouri	Elkhorn	Loup	Blue	Platte	Pine Ridge & Niobrara	Republican	
Cottonwood	2, 449, 000	1, 964, 000	1, 138, 000	411, 000	394, 500	29, 000	78, 000	6, 463, 500
Piling	368, 000			5, 000	2, 000			375, 000
Ponderosa Pine				2, 000	2, 000	367, 500		371, 500
Oak <sup>1/</sup>	254, 500	4, 000	3, 000	85, 000	6, 000	3, 500	2, 000	358, 000
Soft Maple	3, 000		1, 000	284, 000				288, 000
Elm <sup>2/</sup>	95, 000	8, 000	4, 000	28, 000	5, 000	2, 500	20, 000	162, 500
Black Walnut	35, 500	7, 000	2, 000	18, 000	500	1, 000		64, 000
Green Ash	16, 000	5, 000	4, 000	5, 000	3, 500	5, 500	2, 000	41, 000
Hackberry	14, 000	1, 000	500	10, 000	1, 000		1, 000	27, 500
Eastern Redcedar	1, 000		1, 500	2, 000	1, 500	3, 000	1, 000	10, 000
Basswood	5, 000	1, 000				500		6, 500
Sycamore	4, 500							4, 500
Kentucky Coffeetree	1, 000	1, 000						2, 000
Total	3, 246, 500	1, 991, 000	1, 154, 000	850, 000	416, 000	412, 500	104, 000	8, 174, 000

1/ Includes bur, white, red, and black oak

2/ Includes American and red elm



The rates for custom sawing varied greatly. Some operators had only one price while others quoted one price for cottonwood and a somewhat higher rate for other hardwoods. The condition of the logs also had some influence on the rate charged. The charge for custom sawing varied from \$22 - \$40/MBF with the average around \$28/MBF when the operator had to do all the work himself or provide his own help. If the farmer whose logs were being sawed helped at the mill or furnished the help the rate ranged from \$12.50 - \$32/MBF with an average of \$21/MBF. If the sawmill operator did all of the logging, hauling, and sawing, which was the case in a few instances, the rate was around \$40/MBF.

Since in Nebraska very few sales of timber are made on a stumpage or standing tree basis, it is very difficult to arrive at a fair estimate of stumpage price. For most species it would fall between \$5 - \$10/MBF. Some of the more valuable species such as black walnut or red cedar would, of course, demand a much higher price.

Although these price figures are based on rather limited information, they should be of some help to those who are contemplating sale or purchase of wood products and those that have native trees that can be converted to lumber.



List of Nebraska Sawmill Operators in 1953

(Mills preceded by an asterisk were inactive in 1953)

<u>Antelope</u>		<u>Cedar</u>	
Fuller, Byron	Neligh	*Arens, Edmond	Hartington
Fuller, Charles	Elgin	Bruening, Otto	St. Helena
Galyen, Gwyn	Tilden	*Feiner, Frank	St. Helena
Reinke, F. F.	Neligh	Hausman, Carl	St. Helena
		Hausman, George	St. Helena
		Lammers, Ludwig	Hartington
		Paulsen, August	Hartington
<u>Blaine</u>		*Pick, W. H., Jr.	Hartington
Wilkinson, Geo.	Brewster	Schram, Wesley	Obert
		Shulte, Alphonse	Fordyce
<u>Boone</u>		Smith, George	St. Helena
*Dobson Bros.	Cedar Rapids	*Stevens, Louis	Bow Valley
Koskovich, Adam	Petersburg		
		<u>Colfax</u>	
<u>Boyd</u>		Dostal, Amos	Dodge
Anderson, Vance	Butte	Kracman, Ben	Schuyler
*Kibby, Clarence	Naper		
Mashino, Clay	Lynch	<u>Cuming</u>	
		*Behling, Henry	Beemer
<u>Brown</u>		*Lase, Hans	Bancroft
Adams, John	Ainsworth	Liermann Bros.	West Point
		Miserez, Vernon	West Point
<u>Buffalo</u>		Rabe, Dale	Wisner
Green, Myron	Amherst	Schademann Bros.	West Point
Nutter, Donald	Gibbon	Schmidt, John	Bancroft
		Sharp, Grover	Beemer
		<u>Custer</u>	
<u>Burt</u>		Reiter, Maurice	Mason City
*Bowman, Alfred	Craig		
Deaver, Harry	Tekamah	<u>Dakota</u>	
Gill, Delmar	Tekamah	Bennett, Jess	Jackson
*Gustafson, Oscar	Oakland	Gaynor Lbr. Co.	So. Sioux City
Penny, Bernard	Decatur	Hinz, Charles	Waterbury
Sparks Bros.	Decatur	*Kipper, Fred	Dakota City
*Tryon, Charles	Lyons	Laird, Henry	So. Sioux City
*Weaver, Jess	Oakland	O'Dell, Paul	So. Sioux City
Williams, Lloyd	Decatur	Rohde, Ed.	Emerson
		Sage, Louis	Jackson
<u>Butler</u>		Saunders, Gene	Jackson
Eret, William	David City	*Sides, Porter	Dakota City
Frohner, Joe	Abie		
*Hudson, Art	Bellwood	<u>Dawes</u>	
McDonald, Harry	Bellwood	Dodd, William	Crawford
		*Fickel, Coyd	Belmont
<u>Cass</u>		*Lebo, B. E.	Chadron
Becker, Henry	Union	Lindegan, Jack	Chadron
*Foster, Doyle	Plattsmouth	Mann, Edwin	Chadron
Lloyd, Oliver	Murray	McGannon, Andrew	Chadron
*Mather, Ervin	Plattsmouth	*Richardson, Walter	Whitney
*Tyson, Albert	Plattsmouth		
Warga, Charles	Plattsmouth		

Dawson

\*Hiles, Harry  
McCance, Ed.  
\*Pearson, V. N.  
\*Street, Art

Dixon

\*Ellyson, W. D.  
Good, R.P.  
Hoelsing, Peter  
Magnuson, Ray  
Osbahr, Myron  
Shellenberger, Henry  
Watchhorn Bros.

Dodge

Beebe, Henry  
Dvorak, Wencil  
\*Hula, Walter  
Malzahn Bros.  
\*Rink, Edgar  
Smeal, Lawrence  
Wolf, Berkely

Douglas

\*Dyer, John  
Marquette Sawmill  
& Lbr. Co.  
2134 Washington  
\*Meyer, Marion  
3917 No. 56th  
Phillips Basket Co.  
2821 Grebe  
\*Ralston Sawmill Co.

Franklin

Adams, Art  
Churchill, Orville  
\*Owens, Harold  
Whitehead, Robert

Furnas

Harding, Vern

Gage

Glombitza, Gus  
\*Holsing, Carl  
Ramsey & Lohmeyer  
Trump, Dudley  
Vicars, Lester

Gothenburg  
Cozad  
Lexington  
Gothenburg

Newcastle  
Allen  
Newcastle  
Allen  
Allen  
Newcastle  
Ponca

North Bend  
Dodge  
Fremont  
Scribner  
Hooper  
Dodge  
Fremont

Garden

Nolte, Ralph

Hall

\*Lilly, Ed  
\*Lockwood, C. W.  
Opps, Frank  
\*Schmidt, Rudy

Holt

\*Cihlar, Joe  
Durre, Lloyd  
\*Fleming, Henry  
Hamik, Frank  
Kolina, Joe  
\*Miles, H. H.  
Rahn, David  
\*Slaymaker, Elmer  
\*Spittler Bros.  
Urban, Edward  
\*Weatherwax, Robert

Howard

\*Keldson, Andrew  
Mortensen, Einor

Jefferson

Buchle, Melvin  
\*Hinz, Harvey  
Koppes Bros.  
\*Rice, C. E.  
Scheuler, Omer  
Seachord, Attig  
\*Wanek, Victor

Johnson

Kuhlman, William  
\*Poppe, Walter  
Werman, Fred  
Woltermuth, Eldon

Kearney

\*Stade, August

Keith

\*Berry, John K.

Oshkosh

Wood River  
Kenesaw  
Wood River  
Wood River

Redbird  
Ewing  
Ewing  
Stuart  
Inman  
Dorsey  
Stuart  
Stuart  
Ewing  
Ewing  
Redbird

Elba  
Cotesfield

Powell  
Plymouth  
Odell  
Odell  
Thompson  
Steele City  
Western

Elk Creek  
Cook  
Vesta  
Elk Creek

Kenesaw

Lemoyne

Keya Paha

Amick, Harold  
 \*Barmore, Lawrence  
 \*Davis, Morris  
 Higgins, Lee  
 Hogan, Francis  
 \*Jansen, Rudy  
 \*Kaup Bros.

Knox

\*Fitch, John  
 \*Meyer, John  
 Phillip, Frank  
 Ruzicka, Henry  
 \*Snowden, Kirk  
 Sukup, Puul  
 \*Wirth, Otto

Lancaster

Wilson, Clyde

Lincoln

Anderson and Sons  
 \*Hardesty, Earl  
 \*McNeel, William  
 Middleton, Cecil  
 Tracy, A. J.  
 Young, Charles

Loup

Goos, Ted,

Madison

Clark, O. W.  
 Dover, Ralph  
 Duhachek, Harry  
 Hamley, Stuart  
 \*Morris, W. A.

Merrick

Barcel, Don  
 Ferris, Rex & Elwin  
 \*Kruse, Herman  
 Tyler, Leslie

Morrill

\*Hutchinson, E. B.

Springview  
 Springview  
 Norden  
 Springview  
 Mariaville  
 Springview  
 Gregory, S. D.

Niobrara  
 Crofton  
 Verdel  
 Verdel  
 Niobrara  
 Verdigre  
 Verdel

Roca

Brady  
 Maxwell  
 Sutherland  
 North Platte  
 North Platte  
 North Platte

Taylor

Norfolk  
 Madison  
 Meadow Grove  
 Meadow Grove  
 Norfolk

Central City  
 Central City  
 Chapman  
 Clarks

Bridgeport

Nance

Hornung, John  
 Juhl, Leslie

Nemaha

Biere, Herman  
 \*Boatman, Lloyd  
 Good, Arthur  
 Oestmann, August  
 Rademacker, Herman  
 Rowell, Chauncy  
 Spittler, Gerald  
 Stivers, J. L.

Otoe

James, Medford  
 Johnson, Claude  
 Lyons, Dayle  
 Martin, Louis  
 Mortimore, John  
 Roll, Joe  
 Sporhase, Joy

Pawnee

Bredemeier, Fred  
 Chauza, Arnold  
 Conrad Bros.  
 Huntzeker, Ben  
 Huntzeker, Rudolph  
 \*Kruesberg, Hubert  
 \*North, Wayne  
 Pettinger, Leonard  
 Pfister, Robert  
 Rueter, Arthur  
 Speir, Clarence,  
 Taylor, Lester

Platte

Engel, Oscar  
 Jones Bros.

Polk

Cremeen, L. R.  
 Finecy, Cedric

Red Willow

\*Fette, V. H.  
 \*Gallaton Bros.

Genoa  
 Genoa

Brock  
 Nemaha  
 Peru  
 Johnson  
 Johnson  
 Falls City  
 Peru  
 Brownville

Nebr. City  
 Talmage  
 Julian  
 Nebr. City  
 Palmyra  
 Nebr. City  
 Douglas

DuBois  
 DuBois  
 Steinauer  
 Table Rock  
 Humboldt  
 Pawnee City  
 Pawnee City  
 Burchard  
 Steinauer  
 Table Rock  
 Steinauer  
 Table Rock

Duncan  
 Columbus

Silver Creek  
 Silver Creek

McCook  
 Danbury



Richardson

*Barker, Jess	Shubert	Schmidt, John	Hay Springs
Househand, John	Dawson	*Vaughn, F. W.	Gordon
Huntzeker, Elmer	Rulo	*Wiles Bros.	Rushville
Lock, Boyd	Rulo		
Luthy, Fred	Humboldt	<u>Sioux</u>	
Merz, Orville	Falls City	Bell, Perry	Crawford
Mishler, Floyd	Sabetha, Kans.	Debock, Henry	Harrison
Nitzsche, Herbert	Rulo	Doyle, Tom	Harrison
Roberts and Stice	Rulo	*Engebretson, John	Harrison
Scheutz, George, Jr.	Sabetha, Kans.	*Grote, Earl	Harrison
Scheutz, George, Sr.	Preston	*Haas, John	Harrison
Uhri, John	Humboldt	*James, George	Crawford

Rock

Eberhart, C. M.	Long Pine
Leonard, Raymond	Bassett
McCullough, Cecil	Bassett

Saline

Kvasnicka, Milo	Crete
Synovec, J. C.	Tobias
*Vacek, Adolph	Western
Zabel, Roger	Western

Sarpy

*Allberry, Lee	Gretna
Barr, Carl	Springfield
Lienemann,, George	Bellevue
Snodgrass, Ted	Springfield
Wegand, Leroy	So. Omaha

Saunders

*Dodge, Henry	Morse Bluff
Fulton's Lumber Mill	Greenwood
*Hladek, Charles	Weston
*Homer, Marion	Morse Bluff

Scotts Bluff

Horn Bros.	McGrew
Schooler, Claude	Melbeta

Seward

*Gade, Emil	Seward
*Schildt, August	Pleasant Dale

Sheridan

*DeWolf, Harry	Gordon
*Dranse, Joe	Hay Springs
*Goens, Glen	Rushville
*Jancik, Joe	Hay Springs
Krueger, Otto	Hay Springs
Sager, Clifford	Hay Springs

Schmidt, John  
 \*Vaughn, F. W.  
 \*Wiles Bros.

Sioux

Bell, Perry	Crawford
Debock, Henry	Harrison
Doyle, Tom	Harrison
*Engebretson, John	Harrison
*Grote, Earl	Harrison
*Haas, John	Harrison
*James, George	Crawford
*Kreman, Harry	Glen
*Kuhnel, Earl	Crawford
Leeling, George	Harrison
McCoplin, John	Harrison
McCoy, Lorenzo	Crawford
*Raum, Ross	Crawford
*Snyder, Jack	Harrison

Stanton

Grevson, Louis	Madison
Kabes, Lad	Clarkson

Thayer

Gaston, Joe	Hebron
Lamb, Vernon	Hubbell

Thurston

Brownrigg, Glenn	Macy
*King, Bud	Decatur
Olson, Floyd	Macy

Valley

Anderson, Leo	Arcadia
Bresley, Harry	Ord
Sell, Bert	Arcadia

Washington

Bolton, Chris	Blair
*Cook, Lawrence	Arlington
*Fuhrman, Rudy	Blair
*Hue, Albert	Spiker
Miller, William	Blair
*Sibbersen, Albert	Arlington
Spanton, Dwaine	Blair
Thompson Bros.	Blair
Wulf, Harry	Arlington

Wayne

*Beierman, Arman	Wayne
*Vohlkamp, Fred	Wayne

Webster

\*Crowell, Cecil  
Smith, Carroll

Red Cloud  
Guide Rock

Wheeler

Lockhart, Gerald  
\*Mignery, Melvin

Ericson  
Bartlett

York

\*Goodban, A. J.

York