

Nebraska Workforce

Trends

March 2013

***Margins
of Error***

**Pet
Project**

Women's
History Month

**Nebraska
Boomers**

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Benchmarking

In this issue of Nebraska Workforce Trends, you might notice a lack of unemployment rates by county or industry numbers. Labor Market Information is in the process of going through its annual benchmarking protocol. Benchmarking is intended to align estimated data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs with known numbers from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage data (QCEW). Benchmarking is a necessary step in insuring the data released by the Department of Labor is of the highest quality.

The CES and LAUS data will be absent for this issue, but there will be two data releases during the month of March. April's issue of Nebraska Workforce Trends will contain both January and February data. Data release dates can be found on the Publications Calendar, located on the LMI Home page under Resource Library.

College Placement Graduate Outcomes

All State Colleges

Mary Findlay, Research Analyst

From July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, 1,648 students graduated from Nebraska State Colleges. Of these graduates, 1,010 (61%) were employed in Nebraska in first quarter 2011. The percentage of graduates working in the state was 61%, one percent lower than the previous year. Females made up 61% of the graduates and were more likely (66%) to be working in the state than males (55%).

The estimated average annual wage for all graduates and all degrees was \$31,256. Males averaged \$32,763 while females averaged \$30,443. Bachelor's degree graduates averaged \$25,030 while master's graduates averaged \$45,470 per year and post-master's certificate graduates averaged \$84,234 with 93% of the 14 graduates working in the state.

State College graduates were employed in 69 of Nebraska's 93 counties. Half of the graduates worked in Douglas, Sarpy, Lancaster, Madison or Dawes counties.

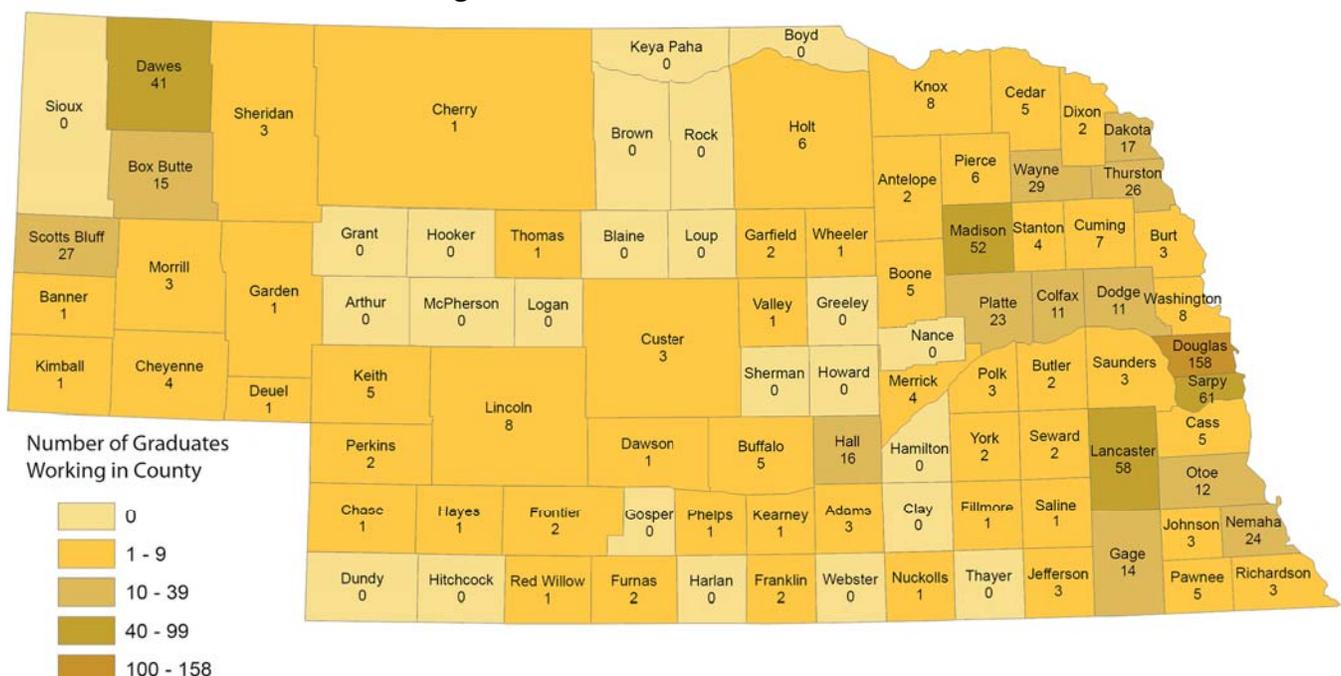
When looking at employment by industry, Educational Services employed the highest number of graduates working in the state with 472, and represented nearly half (47%) of all state college graduates. This was followed by the Health Care and

Retail Trade industries that each employed 86 graduates. The highest wages by industry were earned by the eight graduates employed in Utilities with an average wage of \$56,432. The Management of Companies and Enterprises, Manufacturing, and Educational Services industries all had graduates with average wages above \$38,000 per year.

Majors or groups of majors are classified into fields of study. The Superintendentcy and Educational System Administration post master's certificate graduates had the highest discloseable earnings of all fields of study with \$84,234. This was followed by Educational Leadership and Administration, General master's degree graduates with \$62,634. There were 14 degree/field of study combinations that had 88% or more of the graduates employed in the state.

For more outcome information on Chadron State College, Peru State College, Wayne State College, University of Nebraska – Kearney, Central Community College, Metropolitan Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College and Western Nebraska Community College, contact the Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information.

All State College 2009-2010 Graduates Working in Nebraska in First Quarter 2011



Feature Story

Pet Project

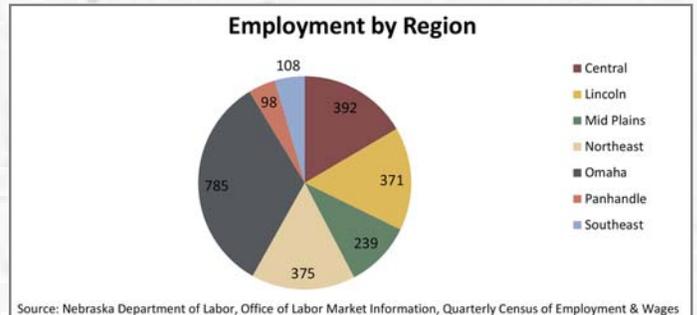
Nancy Ritchie, Research Analyst

There are many things that make a house a home. Family, of course, is one big factor that makes our homes a warm, loving place to live. But are families only made up of humans? According to the Humane Society of the United States, it seems there are many homes where a cat or dog also is an important part of the family. According to their statistics, there are 78.2 million dogs and 86.4 million cats owned by Americans.

According to the Humane Society, the average cost for annual veterinarian visits is \$248 for dogs and \$219 for cats. Who is it that takes care of all of our precious pets? And where are they located?

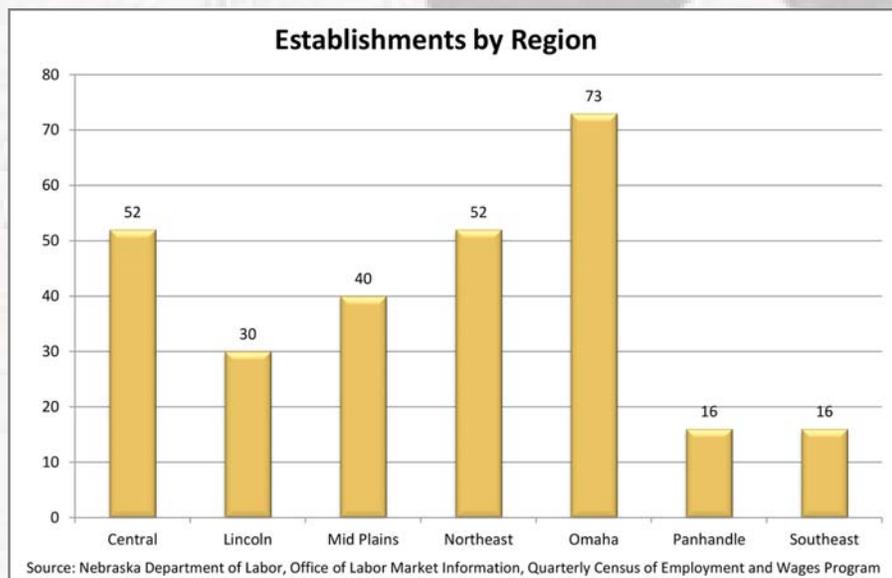
When looking at Nebraska, there are 284 establishments identified as providing Veterinary Services throughout the state. These are licensed veterinary practitioners primarily engaged in the practice of veterinary medicine, dentistry, or surgery for animals; and establishments primarily engaged in providing testing services for licensed veterinary practitioners.

The data shows that there are a total of 2,368 people employed at these establishments. This averages to 8.5 employees per establishment. This includes everyone from the person at the desk who checks you in, to the technicians who help get samples for tests on your animals, to the doctors of veterinary medicine who help our family members by finding out what's wrong even though the patients can't tell them anything.

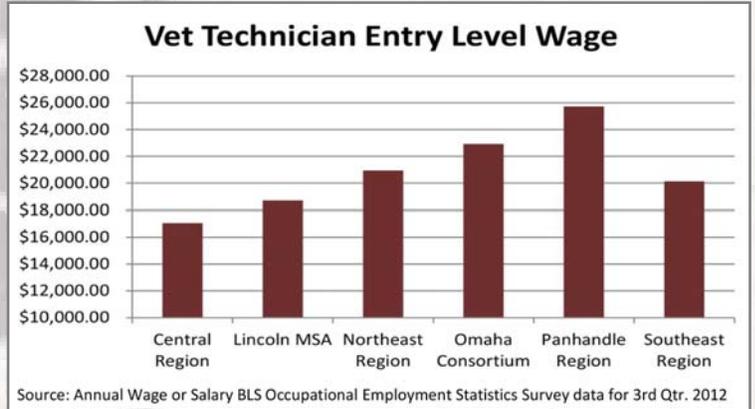
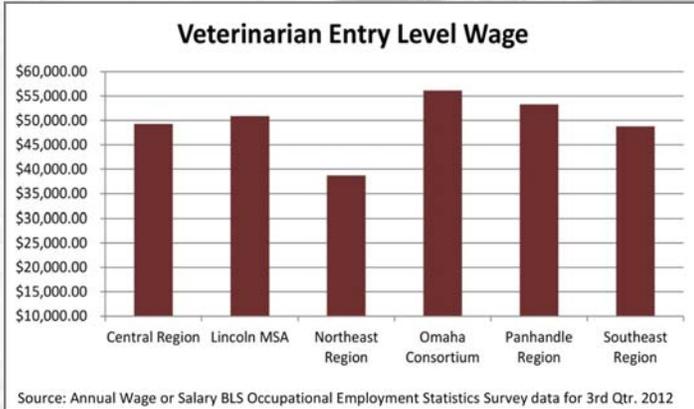


Many of these institutions not only work on our kittens and puppies, but also on much smaller and much larger animals. Especially in an agriculturally-based state such as Nebraska, livestock need to be kept healthy too. Farmers and ranchers across the state utilize the expertise of veterinary services to aid in keeping all animals healthy; whether it is the family pet or the cows, horses, pigs, llamas, or any other type of animal that may need the assistance of these talented professionals.

Anytime your kitty doesn't eat or your puppy acts like he doesn't want to play, just find a local veterinarian service establishment and they will help your family member get back to normal in no time. Then your family will be back to normal too.



Are you or someone you know considering a career caring for animals? Here are some wage statistics that show what you might earn in different areas of the state.



Feature Story

Margins of Error

Ed Jaros, Research Analyst

Here in the Office of Labor Market Information, analysts and staff strive to collect and report accurate Bureau of Labor Statistics program data describing Nebraska's labor economy. In some cases, one might have the intuition that this is a simple and straightforward task. Indeed, a few BLS data programs do have the incredible advantage of census inputs, which is to say that they take data on all people/employers/jobs in the country. In the simplest of these cases, aggregate totals don't need to be estimated, they can simply be reported. However, the programs which take census of their subjects are the minority.

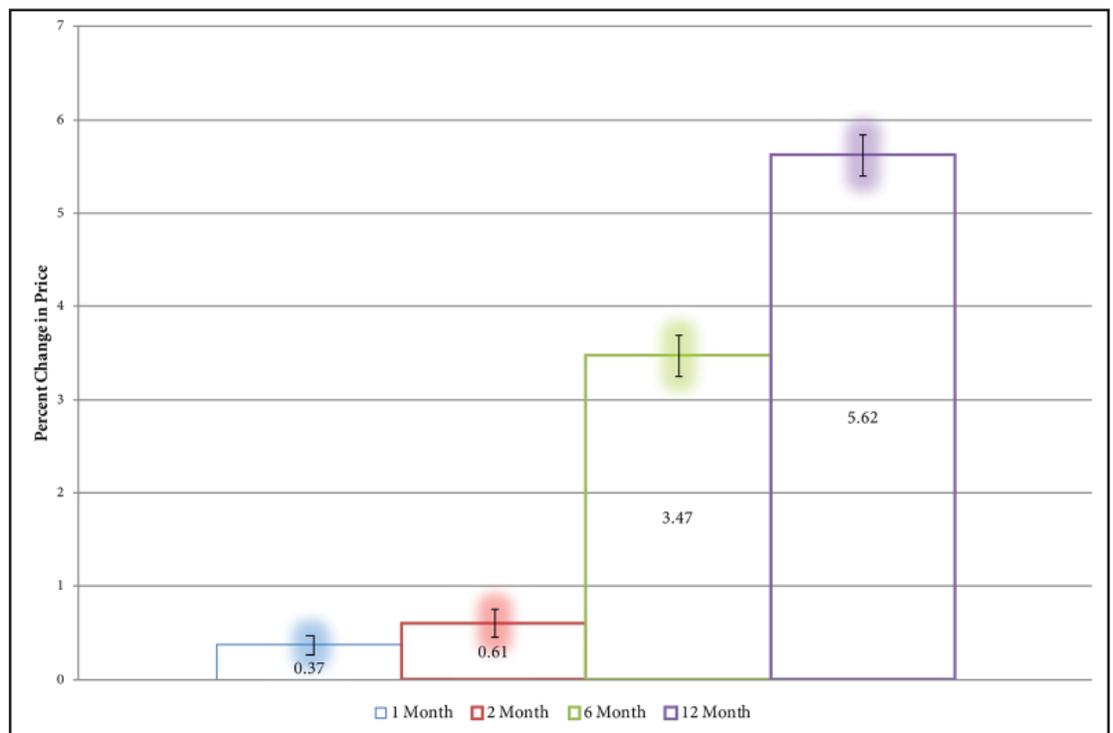
The majority of the data programs operated by BLS are surveys; they collect information about a sample of the population and employ statistical techniques to attempt to draw conclusions about the groups as a whole. The Occupational Employment Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Current Population Survey, Consumer Price Index, and Local Area Unemployment Statistics programs are all vitally important labor market metrics which rely at least in part on estimates from samples.

There is nothing inherently flawed with the process of statistically estimating attributes of a population using the attributes of a sample of that population, but it is important to make a point of recognizing estimates as estimates. Estimates are not counts, they are statistical abstractions. When the background mathematics is preformed proficiently, estimates valid statistical abstractions. As abstractions, estimates come with caveats to

their interpretation. One important element of estimates which is crucial to accurately interpreting data from BLS programs is the margin of error. Following are a basic description of margins of error and some rudimentary guidelines for interpreting margins of error.

Very simply, a margin of error is a method for describing presumed (or possible) inaccuracy in estimates arising from sampling for a survey. This is inaccuracy that would not be present in a census because in a census the entire population is being measured. This presumed error arises from uncertainty. Having studied only a portion of a population, a surveyor is uncertain that her sample portion is alike to or representative of the population as a whole. A margin of error quantifies this uncertainty.

That quantification is possible because BLS understands the size of its samples, their relevant populations, and



This chart illustrates margins of error on 1, 2, 6, and 12 month price change estimates produced by BLS for calculating the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers for Commodities in the Midwest. Note that when the sample size is a small period of time like one or two months, the margin of error is nearly as large as the estimate, rendering clear conclusions and interpretation difficult. When more data is available, the margins of error are less impactful and the estimates are more likely to be accurate, as seen in the 6 and 12 month estimates⁵.

their sample selection mechanisms. Therefore, BLS knows the likelihood that any given member of the population is in the sample. It is this knowledge which enables the calculation of margin of error. A pamphlet from the American Statistical Association expounds this theme: “In a scientific survey every unit in the population has some known positive probability of being selected for the sample, and the probability of any particular sample being chosen can be calculated.

“The beauty of a probability sample is twofold. Not only does it avoid biases that might arise if samples were selected based on the whims of the interviewer, but it also provides a basis for estimating the extent of sampling error. This latter property is what enables investigators to calculate a ‘margin of error.’ To be precise, the laws of probability make it possible for us to calculate intervals of the form estimate +/- margin of error¹.”

The mathematical methods for measuring margin of error lie outside the scope of this article. Those wishing for a more in-depth examination of the statistical nuts and bolts of this procedure would do well to view the Kahn Academy videos on the subject, which are free and teach at a very accessible pace².

Understanding the source of a margin of error is helpful in interpreting estimates and their associated margins of error. Often, a margin of error is reported with two components; a number in the same unit as the estimate, or a percentage of the estimate, (say X) and a percentage representing confidence (say Y). This expresses that the surveyor is Y% confident that the real value in question for the population is within $\pm X$ of the estimate from the survey.

Consider the following example from a recent Gallup study which stated that 53% of U.S. small-business owners in January reported finding it difficult to find the qualified employees they need: “Results for the total dataset are based on telephone interviews with 601 small-business owners, conducted Jan. 7-11, 2013. For results based on



the total sample of small-business owners, one can say with 95% confidence that the margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points³.” One intuitive way to interpret this is that if the study were repeated 100 times, Gallup anticipates that at least 95 of the studies would report between 49%(53-4) and 57%(53+4) of small business owners finding it difficult to find qualified employees.

There is considerable academic controversy surrounding the interpretation of probability⁴, and that controversy spills into how to interpret margins of error. This article attempts only to provide some initial insight into the concept of a margin of error.

Some BLS data sources include margins of error in some of their publication formats. Others do not publish margins of error, simply stating that they are acceptably small. All BLS data programs have published information on their methodology, which will contain information about how margins of error are handled within that specific program.

In reading and interpreting data releases from the BLS or the Nebraska Department of Labor, it is important to be mindful of what is being described. Is the published data an estimate? If so, you can be sure that it has an associated margin of error. In some cases, obtaining that margin of error may require further searching, but at all times, including margin of error in your understanding of labor data is imperative for accurate and sound interpretation and decision making.

Sources:

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2. Khan Academy. Inferential Statistics | Probability and Statistics | Khan Academy. <https://www.khanacademy.org/math/probability/statistics-inferential>
3. Jacobe, Dennis. U.S. Small Businesses Struggle to Find Qualified Employees. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160532/small-businesses-struggle-find-qualified-employees.aspx>
4. Efron, Bradley. Modern Science and the Bayesian-Frequentist Controversy. <http://www.stat.stanford.edu/~ckirby/brad/papers/2005NEWModernScience.pdf>
5. Shoemaker, Owen J. Variance Estimates for Price Changes in the Consumer Price Index. <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpivar2011.pdf>

Map Facts

Nebraska Boomers

Kermit Spade, Research Analyst

Demographic Situation of Older Nebraskans:

In 2011, people aged 65 years or older made up 13.5% of the population of Nebraska. More than half (57.1%) of this population is female. The counties with the highest concentration of people age 65 and older were Keya Paha, Garden, Hooker, Valley, and Nuckolls. The counties with the lowest concentration of people 65 and older were Sarpy, Douglas, Lancaster, Dakota, and Thurston. The racial breakdown of Nebraskans 65 and over differed slightly from the Nebraska population as a whole. While 88.3% of all Nebraskans were white, 96.2% of Nebraskans 65 and over were white. The population as a whole was 4.3% Black or African American, just 2.2% of older Nebraskans were Black or African American. This trend continues with Asians (0.6% older vs. 1.6% total) and Hispanic or Latino. Just 1.7% of Nebraskans 65 and over are Hispanic or Latino, compared to 8.4% of the population as a whole.

Household Situation of Older Nebraskans:

Statewide in 2011, people 65 and over lived in households with two or more people 56.3% of the time. This varied by county, however, with 84.7% of seniors in Blaine County living in multiple resident households and only 37.4% of seniors in Banner County living in multiple resident households.

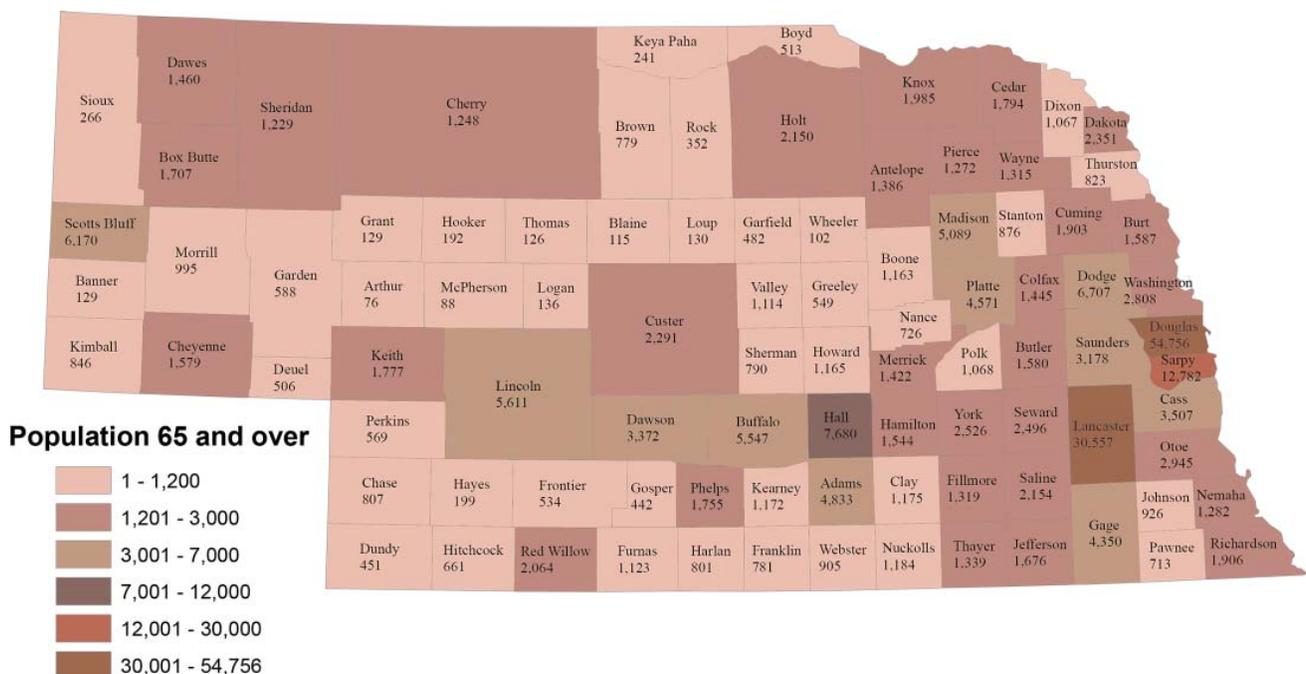
Employment Situation of Older Nebraskans:

On the whole, older Nebraskans are not as well educated as their younger counterparts. Only 10.3% of older Nebraskans held bachelor's degrees, compared to 19.2% of Nebraskans age 18 to 64. Additionally, 15.9% of older Nebraskans did not graduate

high school, while only 8.9% of Nebraskans age 18 to 64 did not graduate from high school. Most Nebraskans age 65 or older (74.7%) had not worked in the past 12 months. Of those who had not worked, 99.7% of this population was not in the labor force. Only about a quarter (25.3%) of Nebraskans 65 or older worked in the past 12 months. Most of the population that worked was between the ages of 65 and 74 (78.5%). In this group, 82.2% were in the labor force, and of those, 98.1% were currently employed. Of the population 75 years and older who worked in the past 12 months, 72.1% were in the labor force. Of those in the labor force, 98.7% were employed. More than a third of Nebraskans age 65 or older (35.0%) had a disability, compared with just 8.9% of Nebraskans 18 to 64 years of age.

Income and Poverty Situation of Older Nebraskans:

Every person or family is assigned a poverty threshold by the US Census Bureau. The ratio of the person or family's income to that poverty threshold is then expressed by a decimal number. Numbers above 1.0 are considered not in poverty, while numbers 0.99 and below are considered in poverty. In 2011, 7.7% of Nebraskans over the age of 65 had incomes below the poverty threshold. Of those Nebraskans age 65 and over who were below the poverty threshold, 98.5% of them had some form of health insurance, while only 1.5% did not have any type of coverage. Of those with health insurance, 98.7% had Medicare, 30.8% had Medicaid, 48.7% had direct purchase health insurance, and 13.3% had employer-based health insurance.



Fast Facts

Women's History Month

Jodie Meyer, Research Analyst

March 8, 1857 The origin of National Women's History Month when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions.

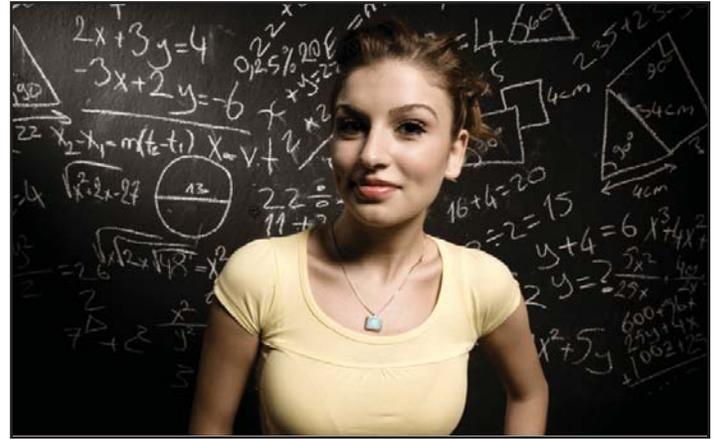
1909 The first observation of International Women's Day.

1981 When Congress established National Women's History Week and in 1987 this was expanded to a month.

158.3 million Number of females in the United States in 2011. The number of males was **153.3 million**. In Nebraska, according to population estimates, there were 927,392 females and 915,249 males in 2011.

13.3 Percentage by which women age 65 and older in the U.S. outnumbered men in 2011.

\$37,118 The median annual earnings of women 15 or older in the U.S. who worked year-round, full time, in 2011.



0.77 The female-to-male earnings ratio in 2011.

41.7 Percent of employed females 16 and older who worked in management, professional and related occupations in December 2012 compared with **35.1%** of employed males.

30.1 Percentage of women 25 and older in the U.S. who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher as of 2011.

31.4 million Women in the U.S. 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or more education in 2011, higher than the corresponding number for men at **30 million**. Women also had a larger share of high school diplomas (including equivalents), associate, bachelor's and master's degrees. More men had a professional or doctoral degree.

7.8 million Number of U.S. women who owned businesses in 2007. These businesses made **\$1.2 trillion** nationally.

7.5 million Number of people employed nationally in women-owned businesses in 2007.

23 Percentage of married couples nationally who reported the wife having more education than the husband in 2007.

5.1 million Number of stay-at-home mothers reported nationwide in 2012.



Source: United States Census Bureau. Newsroom.
http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/pdf/cb13-ff04_womens.pdf

Occupational Profile

Forest and Conservation Technicians

Ed Jaros, Research Analyst

The perception that Nebraska is a geographically homogenous state is not an uncommon one. Some people envision the Cornhusker state as a boring place where rows of corn come to their end only at the state's border, with endless swaths of brown ranchland. People who have explored Nebraska know that this is not entirely true. From Lake McConaughy to Indian Cave State Park, Nebraska has a diverse and beautiful landscape. While anyone can enjoy these publicly-protected resources, some people find lifelong careers in their upkeep and preservation. One such career is that of the Forest and Conservation Technician.

Conservation is the operative word in describing the content and aim of this line of work. Measuring and recording natural resources and tracking changes over time in their health and composition are the primary charges of a Forest and Conservation Technician. The opportunity to work outdoors in truly scenic settings and engage in pragmatic and impactful environmental protection makes this an attractive career for many.

O*Net Paints the following picture of a Forest and Conservation Technician's typical tasks¹:

- Keep records of the amount and condition of logs taken to mills.
- Manage forest protection activities, including fire control, fire crew training, and coordination of fire detection and public education programs.
- Train and lead forest and conservation workers in seasonal activities, such as planting tree seedlings, putting out forest fires and maintaining recreational facilities.
- Survey, measure, and map access roads and forest areas such as burns, cut-over areas, experimental plots, and timber sales sections.



- Select and mark trees for thinning or logging, drawing detailed plans that include access roads.
- Provide information about, and enforce, regulations such as those concerning environmental protection, resource utilization, fire safety and accident prevention.
- Supervise forest nursery operations, timber harvesting, land use activities such as livestock grazing, and disease or insect control programs.
- Monitor activities of logging companies and contractors.
- Patrol park or forest areas to protect resources and prevent damage.
- Thin and space trees and control weeds and undergrowth, using manual tools and chemicals, or supervise workers performing these tasks.

As evidenced by the job duties, people working in this occupation often do so outdoors. While some Forest and Conservation technicians have major duties requiring public interface and others live and work many miles from any urban center, exposure to the weather is a constant. Forest and Conservation Technicians are generally employed by the government, but some work for privately managed forests as well².

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Handbook describes the common educational path to becoming a Forest and Conservation Technician: “Forestry and conservation technicians typically need an associate’s degree in a forestry technology or technician program or in a related field. Most forestry and conservation technology programs are accredited by the Society for American Forests, and every state has accredited programs.

Many technical and community colleges offer programs in forestry technology or a related field. Associate’s degree programs at community colleges are designed to provide easy transfer to bachelor’s degree programs at colleges and universities. Training at technical institutes usually includes less theory and education than that in community colleges. Coursework for an associate’s degree in forestry technology or a related field includes ecology, biology, and forest resource measurement. Some technicians also have a background in a Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and other forms of computer modeling².”

SAF does not currently list any accredited Forestry,

Urban Forestry, or Forestry Technology programs in Nebraska, but there are several options in bordering states³. The Nebraska Department of Labor lists the 2012 Employment Wage Statistics for Forest and Conservation Technicians here in Nebraska. The latest figures indicate that entry level workers in this occupation earn about \$10.80 per hour and experienced workers earn about \$18.09 hourly, with a mean wage at \$15.66. These data come from an estimated 230 people working in this occupation in the State of Nebraska.



Both Nebraska and nationwide employment levels in this occupation are expected to remain nearly constant over the next decade, meaning that opportunity for new Forest and Conservation Technicians will most often come from replacement^{4,2}.

To learn more about this occupation and related fields of work, examine the data at networks.nebraska.gov or at bls.gov/ooh. The Standard Occupational Classification for this occupation is 19-4093.00 - Forest and Conservation Technicians.

Sources:

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2. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Occupational Outlook Handbook. <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/forest-and-conservation-technicians.htm>
3. Society of American Foresters. Information about SAF accreditation. <http://www.eforester.org/education/accreditation.cfm>
4. Nebraska Department of Labor. Occupation Summary Forest and Conservation Technicians in Nebraska. <https://networks.nebraska.gov/vosnet/lmi/occ/occsunmary.aspx>

Openings & Expansions

Kermit Spade, Research Analyst

Note: The following information is obtained through a monthly survey of Nebraska's Career Centers. Openings and expansions that were not publicly reported or reported to Career Center Managers in confidence are not listed. If you know of a business that is opening or expanding, please email Kermit.Spade@Nebraska.gov with your information.

Lincoln

- Suji's – Indian grocery store (3140 O Street)
- Lason Spa – relocation/new facility (2300 Winthrop Road)
- SwingScapes – build lawn gliders, etc. (online presence-located at Rathbone Village)
- H&R Block – new location (6450 O Street)
- The Cask - new business (728 Q Street)
- Destination XL – formerly Casual Male (101 S. 48th Street)
- Firespring and Cornerstone Printing – new facility (1201 Infinity Court)
- 501 Bar and Grill – restaurant (West A Street)
- Frank and Simon's Sandwich Shop (West O Street)

Omaha

- Lotus House of Yoga - yoga exercise (opening)
- Sports Clips - men's hair care (opening)
- Infusion Brewing Co - brewery (expansion)
- Franklin Am. Mortgage - mortgage office (expansion)
- State Farm Insurance - insurance agency (expansion)
- Hair Oasis - hair salon (expansion)
- Foster Group - financial planning (expansion)
- Little Waves Family Swim - swim lessons (expansion)
- Egan Supply Co - financial planning (expansion)
- Montag Supply Co - janitorial supply (expansion)
- Cherry Hill Event Center - event center (expansion)
- Peak Performance - fitness apparel (expansion)
- Black Oak Grill - restaurant (expansion)
- DSS Coin & Bullion - coin, jewelry store (expansion)
- Game Truck - video game party truck (expansion)
- Airlite Plastic Co. - manuf. plastic containers (expansion)
- N'finity Athletics - cheerleading, gymnastics classes (expansion)
- Mervin Reese Photography - photography (expansion)
- Access Bank - bank branch (expansion)
- Ballantyne Strong - digital cinema equipment (expansion)

Southeast

Falls City

- Breezy Hill restaurant (opening)

Nebraska City

- PP's Sports Bar (opening)
- Midwest Transmission Project, a partnership between OPPD

and KC Power & Light, is planning to provide a 345 kilovolt electric power transmission line from Sibley, Mo. to south of Nebraska City, Neb. The project is a regional reliability project supporting the growth and use of electricity in the Midwest. It will reduce congestion on the region's transmission system and provide additional transmission capacity needed for the long-term, efficient delivery of energy to the utilities' customers and the region. The project is also an alternate route for electricity during emergencies. It provides greater service reliability for all electric utility customers across eastern Nebraska, northwest Missouri and throughout the surrounding region. The project may also provide future access to affordable renewable power for all electric utility customers across the region and to the national system.

Northeast

Norfolk

- Complete Nutrition
- Avenue Bridal

Fremont

- Butler Ag Equipment is erecting a 27,000 sq. foot facility that will hire 20 people.
- Providence Memory Care, a 16 individual apartment facility, is under construction and will hire local direct medical staff and medical support workers to care for residents with symptoms of Alzheimer's and dementia.

Panhandle

Scottsbluff/Sidney

- Scottsbluff Nationstar Mortgage recently bought mortgage servicing rights from Bank of America, which will likely result in more hiring at the Scottsbluff branch. Nationstar currently employs an estimated 325-350 people in Scottsbluff (KNEB radio). Ground was broken in Gering for a new Platte Valley Bank branch location to open by summer 2013 (KNEB radio).
- Angela's Bridal shop opened in downtown Scottsbluff (Chamber of Commerce email).
- The former Aurora Loan Services original headquarters building was recently purchased by 21st Century Equipment with the intent of bringing in 24 personnel from surrounding 21st Century locations in Bridgeport, Ogallala, and Fort Morgan, Colo. (Star Herald newspaper).

Economic Indicators

Fact Sheet

Note: Retail Sales figures are in billions of dollars. Median Employment Wages are OES 50th percentile Annual Wage for All Occupations. ECI is Employment Cost Index. PPI is Producer Price Index. CPI is Consumer Price Index.

National Indicators	Date	Value
GDP Growth	Q4-12	-0.1%
Unemployment Rate	Jan-13	7.9%
Federal Funds Target Range - Upper Limit	Feb-13	0.25%
Current Account Balance	Q3-12	-\$107.5 Billion

Nebraska Indicators	Date	Value
Unemployment Rate	Dec-12	3.7%
House Value Appreciation	Q2-12 - Q3-12	0.21%
Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours	Dec-12	41
Net Taxable Retail Sales	Jan-13	\$1.861 Billion
Median Employment Wages	Q4-12	\$31,311

Pricing Indicators	Date	Value
Barrel of Crude Oil-WTI	Nov-12	\$94.76
ECI Change	Q4-12	0.5%
PPI Change	Jan-13	0.2%

	Indexes		% Change From		
	Jan-13	Dec-12	Jan-12	Dec-12	Jan-12
CPI: U.S. All Items	230.280	229.601	226.665	0.3%	1.6%
CPI: Midwest Urban All Items	219.282	219.033	216.368	0.1%	1.3%
CPI: Northeast Urban All Items	247.277	246.456	242.879	0.3%	1.8%
CPI: South Urban All Items	223.933	223.109	220.497	0.4%	1.6%
CPI: West Urban All Items	232.759	232.029	228.980	0.3%	1.7%
University of Michigan: Consumer Sentiment	73.8	72.9	75.0	1.2%	-1.6%

Sources: DOL: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Energy Information Administration, Federal Housing Finance Agency, Nebraska Department of Revenue, DOL: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System

Resources

Feature 2 - Margins of Error

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Occupational Profile - Forest and Conservation Technicians

1. US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration. Forest and Conservation Technicians. onetonline.org. [Online] 2012. [Cited: February 20, 2013.] <http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/19-4093.00>.
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