

Before white settlers arrived in Nebraska, buffalo and beaver populations were significant. Today, buffalo are never seen outside game preserves. The beaver population, after being diminished by trappers, has become more plentiful in recent years. Other animals in Nebraska include white-tail and mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, antelope, bobcats, foxes, coyotes, badgers, squirrels, prairie dogs, muskrats, skunks, raccoons, rabbits and opossums.

Game birds, especially pheasants, grouse, ducks, geese and quail, are plentiful in Nebraska. The state's waters yield a variety of fish, including bass, carp, catfish, crappie, perch, pike, trout and walleye. The Platte River and lakes in the Sandhills serve as "rest stops" for many migratory birds, including the famous Sandhill cranes (see previous page).

Another migration rest stop of international significance is the Rainwater Basin district in south-central Nebraska. Within this district, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages more than 23,000 acres of wetlands and adjacent tall-grass prairie to provide habitat for migratory birds and resident wildlife.<sup>22</sup>

## ECONOMY<sup>23</sup>

### Agriculture

Nebraska's economy revolves around its agriculture industry. In 2017, 92 percent of the state's land — 45.2 million acres — was farm and ranch land.

Producers have utilized the state's fertile soil, abundant water and technological advances to produce record-high crop yields in recent years. In 2016, gross cash receipts from farm marketing totaled over \$22 billion, and Nebraska had 48,400 farms.

### Crop Production<sup>24</sup>

Nebraska is a national leader in crop production. In 2017, Nebraska led the nation in production of Great Northern beans, grown in the western one-third of the state, and in popcorn production. The state ranked second in proso millet, all hay and pinto and light red kidney bean production; third in corn for grain production and all dry bean production; fourth in alfalfa hay and soybean production; fifth in sorghum for grain and all sunflower and sugar beet production; seventh in other hay production; and eighth in winter wheat production. Potatoes also play a significant role in the state's agricultural economy.

Nebraska's top cash crop is corn. Each year, more than 8 million acres of the state's land is planted in corn. The state's livestock, poultry and ethanol industries are the largest corn consumers.

<sup>22</sup> For more information about the Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District and national wildlife refuges in Nebraska, see Pages 144-146.

<sup>23</sup> Information for this section compiled from the following sources: Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Nebraska Department of Labor; Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of Business Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; *Fortune* magazine.

<sup>24</sup> See Page 458 for a complete set of Nebraska's rankings in agriculture production.

Products relating to agriculture, such as irrigation systems and farm equipment, are manufactured in the state. Agricultural businesses are an important part of Nebraska's economy, with one in three jobs in the state relating to the agricultural industry.

## Livestock Production

Nebraska also is a leader in livestock production and livestock and poultry can be found on half of the state's farms. In 2016, Nebraska was second in cash receipts from all livestock and livestock products. In 2016, Nebraska ranked first nationally in commercial red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter and sixth in all hogs and pigs on farms and commercial hog slaughter. In 2017, Nebraska was first in all cattle on feed and all cattle and calves.

Turkey, poultry, dairy, sheep and goat production add diversity and play an important role in the state's economy as well.



**Cattle Ranching in Nebraska**

## Other Industries

Although agriculture dominates Nebraska's economy, more of Nebraska's income has come from other industries in recent years.

In 2017, the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program reported 972,763 jobs in Nebraska. Health care and social assistance, retail trade and manufacturing are the private industry sectors that employ the greatest number of Nebraskans. More than 143,000 individuals work in the health care and social assistance industry, which is the state's largest employer. Manufacturing, which paid the highest average weekly wage in the state in 2017, is concentrated in the state's large urban areas.

Lincoln is a major employer in education, led by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and other institutions of higher education. The city has a higher proportion of educational services and public administration employees than the state as a whole. Omaha is a major center for the finance and insurance industries. Nebraska's largest city also is home to livestock and grain exchanges.

Four Nebraska-based businesses, all of which are headquartered in Omaha, are in the Fortune 500, *Fortune* magazine's annual list of the largest industrial and service

corporations in the United States based on revenue. These four are:

- Berkshire Hathaway, a diversified holding and investment firm
- Union Pacific, a railway network operating in the western two-thirds of the United States
- Mutual of Omaha, an insurance and financial services company
- Peter Kiewit Sons', an engineering and construction firm

### Fortune 500 Companies Based in Nebraska, 2018<sup>25</sup>

Company	Headquarters	Fortune 500 Rank	Revenues
Berkshire Hathaway	Omaha	3	\$242,137,000,000
Union Pacific	Omaha	141	21,240,000,000
Mutual of Omaha	Omaha	337	8,731,900,000
Peter Kiewit Sons'	Omaha	339	8,678,000,000

<sup>25</sup> Source: fortune.com, 2018

### Income in Nebraska, 2017<sup>26</sup>

Income <sup>27</sup>	2017
Total Personal Income	92,048
Nonfarm earnings	65,245
Farm earnings	4,893

<sup>26</sup> Figures are in millions of dollars. Source: BEA Personal Income and Earnings by Industry, Sept. 2016.

<sup>27</sup> Farm earnings consist of proprietors' net farm income, wages of hired farm labor, pay-in-kind and officers' salaries of corporate farms.

### Employment by Major Occupation in Nebraska, 2017<sup>28</sup>

Occupation	Number of Employees
Office and Administrative Support	152,640
Sales	98,000
Food Preparation and Serving	82,020
Transportation and Material Moving	77,720
Production	75,820
Healthcare Practitioners	62,310
Education, Training and Library	59,040
Business and Finance	49,040
Management	47,320
Construction and Extraction	43,320
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	39,910
Computer and Mathematical	30,240
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	28,050
Healthcare Support	27,940
Personal Care and Service	27,600
Protective Service	15,440
Community and Social Service	14,640
Architecture and Engineering	12,370
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	10,980
Life, Physical and Social Science	7,240
Legal	5,110
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	3,470
TOTAL	970,230

<sup>28</sup> Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, State Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2017.