

A variety of flowers, such as goldenrod, larkspur, columbine, wild roses and sunflowers, thrive throughout the state.

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.²³

ECONOMY²⁴

Agriculture

Nebraska's economy revolves around its agriculture industry. In 2014, 93 percent of the state's land — 45.6 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 2012, gross cash receipts from farm marketing totaled over \$24 billion, and Nebraska had 49,696 farms.

Crop Production²⁵

Nebraska is a national leader in crop production. In 2015, 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 and pinto and light red kidney bean production; third in corn for grain production; fourth in all dry edible bean, grain sorghum, alfalfa hay and soybean production; fifth in navy and black bean production; sixth in sugar beet production; seventh in sunflower production; and eighth in oat and winter wheat production. Potatoes also play a significant role in the state's agricultural economy.

²³ For more information about the Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District and national wildlife refuges in Nebraska, see Pages 147-149.

²⁴ 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.

²⁵ See Page 466 for a complete set of Nebraska's rankings in agriculture production.

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.

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 2012, Nebraska was fourth in cash receipts from all livestock and livestock products. In 2013, Nebraska ranked first nationally in commercial red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter; sixth in all hogs and pigs on farms; and seventh in commercial hog slaughter. In 2014 and 2015, Nebraska was first in all cattle on feed and second in 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.

Manufacturing, which employed approximately 97,000 workers in 2015, is a major employer among nonfarm industries, with most manufacturing sites located in the state's large urban areas. Food processing is the leading type of manufacturing, followed by the manufacturing of machinery and fabricated metal products.

The service sector, which includes health services and business services, generates the most earnings in Nebraska. Government ranks second in earnings generated, while manufacturing is third.

The service sector also employs more workers than any other industry. Government jobs, many of which are in Lincoln, employ the second-highest number of workers. Wholesale and retail trades, taken together, employ the third-highest number of workers, with general merchandise stores being the largest employer among retail

establishments in the state.

Lincoln is a major employer in education, led by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and other institutions of higher education. Omaha is a major center for food processing, healthcare, insurance, trade, transportation and telecommunications. Livestock and grain exchanges also are in Nebraska’s largest city.

Four Nebraska-based businesses 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
- Kiewit Corporation, an engineering and construction firm
- Mutual of Omaha, an insurance and financial services company

These corporations have their headquarters in Omaha.

Fortune 500 Companies Based in Nebraska, 2016²⁶

Company	Headquarters	Fortune 500 Rank	Revenues
Berkshire Hathaway	Omaha	4	\$210,821,000,000
Union Pacific	Omaha	129	21,813,000,000
Kiewit Corporation	Omaha	314	8,992,000,000
Mutual of Omaha	Omaha	367	7,236,000,000

²⁶ Source: fortune.com, 2016

Employment by Major Occupation in Nebraska, 2015²⁷

Occupation	Number of Employees
Office and Administrative Support	155,620
Sales	103,240
Transportation and Material Moving	80,770
Food Preparation and Serving	79,520
Production	77,710
Education, Training and Library	58,300
Healthcare Practitioners	57,130
Business and Finance	46,350
Construction and Extraction	41,490
Management	40,290
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	39,010
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	28,160
Computer and Mathematical	26,770
Personal Care and Service	25,340
Healthcare Support	24,790
Community and Social Service	15,620
Protective Service	14,960
Architecture and Engineering	11,580
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media	11,440
Life, Physical and Social Science	7,200
Legal	4,820
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	3,600
TOTAL	953,710

²⁷Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, State Occupational Employment Statistics, May 2015.

Income and Earnings in Nebraska²⁸

	2015
INCOME²⁹	
Total Personal Income.....	92,048
Nonfarm earnings.....	65,245
Farm earnings.....	4,893
EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY³⁰	
Forestry, Fishing, and other.....	333
Mining.....	118
Utilities.....	461
Construction.....	4,448
Manufacturing.....	6,904
Durable.....	2,964
Nondurable.....	3,939
Wholesale Trade.....	4,106
Retail Trade.....	3,750
Transportation and Warehousing.....	5,894
Information.....	1,335
Finance and Insurance.....	4,621
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services.....	4,006
Management of Companies and Enterprises.....	2,577
Administrative and Waste Management Services.....	2,320
Health Care and Social Assistance.....	7,259
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation.....	386
Accommodation and Food Services.....	1,662
Government and Government Enterprises.....	11,003
Federal, Civilian.....	1,570
Military.....	795
State and Local.....	8,637

²⁸ Figures are in millions of dollars. Source: BEA Personal Income and Earnings by Industry, Sept. 2016.

²⁹ Farm earnings consist of proprietors' net farm income, wages of hired farm labor, pay-in-kind and officers' salaries of corporate farms.

³⁰ Earnings are the sum of wages and salaries, other labor income and sole proprietors' income.



Union Pacific Railroad Cars in North Platte's Bailey Yard