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## County Employment and Wages in Nebraska – Fourth Quarter 2013

The two largest counties in Nebraska reported employment gains from December 2012 to December 2013, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2012 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that employment rose 2.1 percent in Lancaster County and 1.9 percent in Douglas County, both above the national increase of 1.8 percent.

Nationally, 292 of the 334 largest U.S. counties registered employment increases from December 2012 to December 2013. Weld, Colo., recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 6.0 percent over the year. St. Clair, Ill., registered the largest percentage employment decline, down 3.1 percent.

Among the two largest counties in Nebraska, employment was higher in Douglas (326,700) in December 2013. Lancaster County recorded an employment level of 163,600. Collectively, Nebraska's two large counties accounted for 51.9 percent of the state's employment. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Douglas was \$890 in the fourth quarter of 2013, a decrease of 1.5 percent from the fourth quarter of 2012. Average weekly wages in Lancaster were \$790, down 0.3 percent over the year. (See [table 1.](#)) Nationally, the average weekly wage was unchanged, remaining at \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 91 counties in Nebraska with employment below 75,000. All 91 of the smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,000. (See [table 2.](#))

### Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages in Lancaster County declined 0.3 percent, ranking it 214th among the nation's 334 largest counties. Douglas ranked 280th nationwide with a 1.5-percent decrease in average weekly wages. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, 185 of the 334 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Santa Cruz, Calif., had the largest wage gain, up 6.5 percent from the fourth quarter of 2012. Ada, Idaho, was second with a wage increase of 6.4 percent, followed by the counties of Washington, Ore. (5.9 percent), and Union, N.J. (5.2 percent).

Among the large U.S. counties, 140 experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Douglas, Colo., had the largest wage decrease with a loss of 29.7 percent. San Mateo, Calif., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 15.8 percent from the fourth quarter 2012, followed by Virginia Beach City, Va. (-10.0 percent), McHenry, Ill. (-8.8 percent), and Shawnee, Kan. (-5.1 percent).

### **Large county average weekly wages**

Douglas County's \$890 average weekly wage placed near the middle of the national ranking at 186th in the fourth quarter of 2013. Lancaster County's average weekly wage of \$790 ranked 285th among the nation's largest counties.

Nationally, 98 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013. San Mateo, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,724. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,041, followed by Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,972).

Seventy percent of the largest U.S. counties (235) reported weekly wages below the national average. Horry, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$587), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$598) and Hidalgo (\$620). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than twenty-five percent of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, San Mateo, Calif.

### **Average weekly wages in Nebraska's smaller counties**

Among the counties with employment below 75,000, Washington (\$989), Stanton (\$988), Dundy (\$910), and Nemaha (\$910) had average weekly wages above those of the state's two largest counties. Loup County reported the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging \$402 in the fourth quarter of 2013. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 93 counties in the state were considered, 23 reported average weekly wages under \$600, 28 reported wages from \$600 to \$674, 25 reported wages from \$675 to \$749, and 17 had wages of \$750 or more. (See [chart 1.](#))

### **Additional statistics and other information**

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3.](#) For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit [www.bls.gov/cew/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/).

*Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2012 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2013 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn12.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn12.htm). The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in September 2014.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

## Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.3 million employer reports cover 136.1 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site [www.bls.gov/cew/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised (see Technical Note below) and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

**Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 2 largest counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2013**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	136,129.4	1.8	--	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Nebraska .....	944.3	1.4	--	796	43	-0.1	32
Douglas, Neb.....	326.7	1.9	130	890	186	-1.5	280
Lancaster, Neb.....	163.6	2.1	118	790	285	-0.3	214

<sup>(1)</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>(2)</sup> Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

<sup>(4)</sup> Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2013**

Area	Employment December 2013	Average weekly wage ( <sup>1</sup> )
United States ( <sup>2</sup> ) .....	136,129,407	\$1,000
Nebraska .....	944,268	796
Adams .....	15,090	708
Antelope .....	2,055	660
Arthur .....	78	475
Banner .....	159	675
Blaine .....	137	494
Boone .....	2,352	675
Box Butte .....	3,979	673
Boyd .....	588	493
Brown .....	1,234	599
Buffalo .....	26,506	690
Burt .....	1,827	675
Butler .....	2,642	712
Cass .....	5,448	692
Cedar .....	2,742	657
Chase .....	1,875	697
Cherry .....	2,206	524
Cheyenne .....	5,859	868
Clay .....	2,508	816
Colfax .....	4,834	722
Cuming .....	3,897	707
Custer .....	4,203	753
Dakota .....	11,947	746
Dawes .....	3,326	565
Dawson .....	11,602	656
Deuel .....	628	613
Dixon .....	1,783	629
Dodge .....	16,742	678
Douglas .....	326,676	890
Dundy .....	682	910
Fillmore .....	2,257	728
Franklin .....	786	639
Frontier .....	772	604
Furnas .....	1,978	613
Gage .....	8,749	661
Garden .....	553	549
Garfield .....	838	579
Gosper .....	467	667
Grant .....	278	562
Greeley .....	640	546
Hall .....	35,461	693
Hamilton .....	3,248	850
Harlan .....	845	554
Hayes .....	204	614
Hitchcock .....	705	661
Holt .....	4,521	647
Hooker .....	277	427
Howard .....	1,516	605
Jefferson .....	3,304	613
Johnson .....	1,673	645
Kearney .....	2,272	696
Keith .....	3,246	606
Keya Paha .....	155	530

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2013  
- Continued**

Area	Employment December 2013	Average weekly wage ( <sup>1</sup> )
Kimball.....	1,508	788
Knox.....	2,873	565
Lancaster.....	163,566	790
Lincoln.....	14,893	682
Logan.....	195	564
Loup.....	110	402
Madison.....	21,591	704
McPherson.....	65	515
Merrick.....	2,322	741
Morrill.....	1,573	725
Nance.....	1,089	635
Nemaha.....	3,095	910
Nuckolls.....	1,430	565
Otoe.....	6,200	643
Pawnee.....	1,061	605
Perkins.....	1,135	774
Phelps.....	4,725	768
Pierce.....	1,987	667
Platte.....	18,894	744
Polk.....	1,485	696
Red Willow.....	5,497	632
Richardson.....	2,416	577
Rock.....	450	622
Saline.....	6,980	728
Sarpy.....	65,436	795
Saunders.....	4,919	644
Scotts Bluff.....	17,056	690
Seward.....	6,153	774
Sheridan.....	1,789	513
Sherman.....	813	515
Sioux.....	166	583
Stanton.....	1,500	988
Thayer.....	2,528	837
Thomas.....	258	687
Thurston.....	2,867	779
Valley.....	1,754	618
Washington.....	8,179	989
Wayne.....	4,045	643
Webster.....	1,032	584
Wheeler.....	315	628
York.....	7,530	741

(<sup>1</sup>) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(<sup>2</sup>) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.  
Data are preliminary.

**Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2013**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	136,129.4	1.8	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Alabama	1,866.5	1.0	851	34	-0.5	39
Alaska	315.1	0.0	1,022	14	1.6	7
Arizona	2,571.0	2.4	906	23	-0.5	39
Arkansas	1,154.3	-0.5	771	47	0.4	22
California	15,650.3	2.8	1,175	6	-0.9	43
Colorado	2,383.9	3.1	1,023	13	-0.9	43
Connecticut	1,661.2	0.3	1,238	4	-1.3	49
Delaware	419.6	1.8	1,035	9	-0.6	41
District of Columbia	727.3	0.6	1,638	1	-3.9	51
Florida	7,739.5	2.7	883	29	0.2	27
Georgia	3,986.9	2.5	924	21	-0.1	32
Hawaii	632.9	1.7	871	30	0.3	25
Idaho	634.5	2.6	754	50	3.0	2
Illinois	5,758.9	1.0	1,060	8	0.2	27
Indiana	2,896.9	1.6	814	40	-0.2	35
Iowa	1,510.9	1.4	834	38	1.6	7
Kansas	1,359.5	1.6	832	39	-0.4	38
Kentucky	1,818.0	1.2	804	42	0.2	27
Louisiana	1,911.6	0.9	889	26	0.5	20
Maine	586.8	0.8	786	46	1.7	5
Maryland	2,555.1	0.4	1,076	7	-0.9	43
Massachusetts	3,332.9	1.5	1,258	3	0.8	17
Michigan	4,072.4	2.0	952	20	-0.2	35
Minnesota	2,720.6	1.7	988	16	0.3	25
Mississippi	1,108.1	1.1	729	51	1.3	11
Missouri	2,670.4	1.1	861	32	-0.2	35
Montana	440.0	1.3	760	48	0.4	22
Nebraska	944.3	1.4	796	43	-0.1	32
Nevada	1,180.5	3.0	884	28	0.7	18
New Hampshire	629.3	1.4	1,017	15	-0.8	42
New Jersey	3,887.5	1.2	1,186	5	1.1	14
New Mexico	796.2	-0.1	814	40	1.4	10
New York	8,888.6	1.7	1,266	2	-1.1	48
North Carolina	4,045.5	1.9	860	33	0.7	18
North Dakota	435.0	3.3	980	17	3.8	1
Ohio	5,175.4	1.4	887	27	0.0	30
Oklahoma	1,581.3	0.6	851	34	-0.1	32
Oregon	1,699.6	2.5	894	25	2.6	3
Pennsylvania	5,650.3	0.4	976	18	0.4	22
Rhode Island	462.7	1.4	960	19	1.5	9
South Carolina	1,875.8	2.3	793	44	1.0	15
South Dakota	407.1	1.3	759	49	1.3	11
Tennessee	2,758.3	1.8	895	24	-0.9	43
Texas	11,246.3	2.6	1,027	12	0.0	30
Utah	1,284.7	3.1	836	37	-0.9	43
Vermont	308.5	0.6	848	36	2.3	4
Virginia	3,670.0	0.1	1,028	11	-1.3	49
Washington	2,976.0	2.5	1,034	10	1.7	5
West Virginia	710.1	-0.6	792	45	0.5	20
Wisconsin	2,751.8	1.0	865	31	1.2	13

**Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2013 - Continued**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
Wyoming.....	279.2	0.6	917	22	1.0	15
Puerto Rico.....	958.3	-2.3	551	(3)	0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	-3.6	754	(3)	2.4	(3)

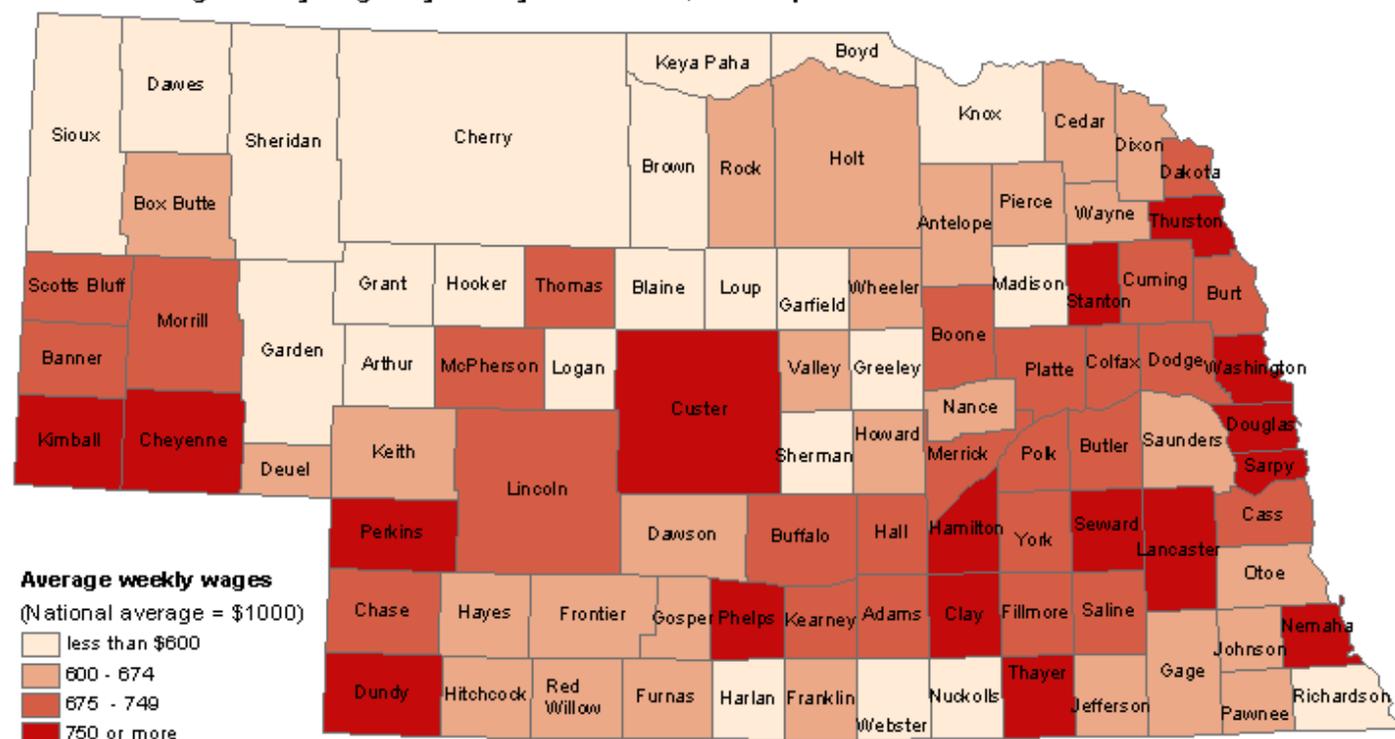
<sup>(1)</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>(2)</sup> Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

<sup>(3)</sup> Data not included in the national ranking.

NOTE: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

**Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2013**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics