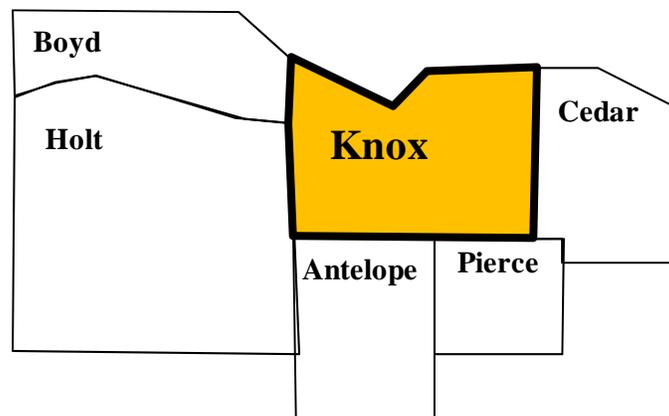


# Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Knox County Labor Area

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# **Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Knox County Labor Area**

## **Executive Summary**

The information provided in this report indicates that a prospective new employer providing job opportunities with competitive wages and benefits and offering career opportunities would be a welcome addition to the employment base in Knox County and the Knox County Labor Area. The response to such employment opportunities would be substantial, and as this report shows, there is a sizeable labor force and population base living within the Knox County Labor Area. Some of the pertinent findings of the report include:

- Population in the Knox County Labor Area (Knox County plus the five contiguous counties) totaled 44,629 people in 2008, with the Knox County population totaling 8,498. Population in Knox County declined by 9.3 percent during the 2000–2008 period, compared to a population decrease of 10.4 percent for the six-county Knox County Labor Area as a whole.
- The labor force for the Knox County Labor Area totaled 24,511 in 2008, with 23,790 local residents employed in jobs either within or outside the area. A total of 13,762 persons were employed in nonfarm wage and salary jobs located within the area. These data suggest that a substantial number of residents of the Knox County Labor Area were commuting out of the area for employment.
- The number of people who lived in Knox County that were employed totaled 4,624 in 2008; yet, there were 2,810 persons employed in nonfarm wage and salary jobs within the county. This indicates residents of Knox County are commuting to surrounding counties for employment opportunities.
- Average annual wages for all nonfarm wage and salary employees in the Knox County Labor Area were \$10,967 less than the Nebraska average. Within the labor area, Holt County had the highest average wage, \$26,759 or \$9,031 lower than the Nebraska average. In Knox County, average annual salaries were \$14,878 less than the state average.

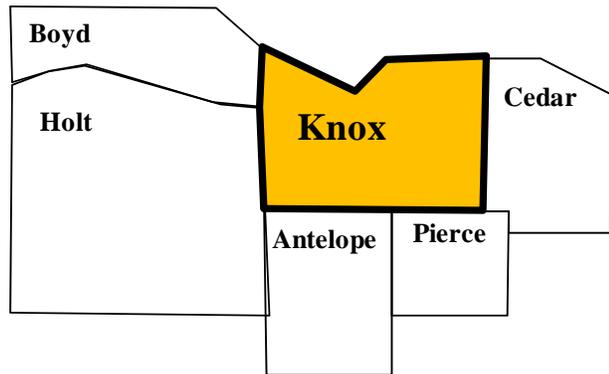
The basic conclusion of this report, which follows from the data and analysis presented, is that the Knox County Labor Area and Knox County would be able to provide a significant number of dedicated and skilled workers to meet the needs of additional employers in the area. While this report has not estimated a precise number of people that may be available for a prospective new employer in the Knox County area, it is anticipated that if attractive working conditions with competitive wages and employee benefits were offered, a prospective new employer would be able to select their workforce from a substantial pool of applicants.

## Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Knox County Labor Area

This report presents selected labor-related and demographic data that provide insights into the labor supply situation in Knox County and the surrounding area.

In reviewing the data presented in this report, it will be evident that the Knox County Labor Area has a sizeable pool of labor to provide for the labor requirements of additional employers in the area, both in the near term and over the long run. Data presented in this report includes tables on labor force, employment, and population for Knox County and for the surrounding counties that make up the potential laborshed area for Knox County. Figure One includes a map outlining the geographic area which has been defined as the Knox County Labor Area.

**Figure One**  
**Knox County Labor Area**



An important resource for new or expanding businesses is a readily available supply of workers. Whether an employer requires 5 or 500 workers, they need to have confidence there will be a sufficient number of workers available to meet their labor requirements. This report is provided as a key analytical tool to identify and quantify the number and selected characteristics of workers available in the Knox County Labor Area.

Available labor supply is defined as the number of persons who would potentially apply for employment when a job becomes available. Potential workers are categorized into two groups; those currently employed who would consider other employment opportunities and those who do not currently have a job.

One factor contributing to the available supply of workers is the willingness of workers already employed to change jobs. Factors influencing this decision are related to wages, fringe benefits, hours, and working conditions. Generally, workers are more inclined to change jobs when the wages and benefits for the potential new job are better and/or when they are optimistic about the economy.

Factors contributing to the available supply of people without jobs include the unemployment rate, labor force participation, and migration. To be classified as unemployed, an individual must have been actively looking for work in the last four weeks, unless they were expecting recall from a layoff or waiting to start a job within 30 days.

There are also potential workers that are classified as not presently in the labor force. These individuals may not be participating in the labor force as employed or unemployed workers for various reasons. They may be unable to work because of school or family responsibilities or they may have an illness that has prevented them from becoming part of the labor force. There may also be workers who have not been able to find employment in the past and have become discouraged or who are no longer actively seeking employment because they perceive there are no attractive job opportunities available in the area. Retired persons are also classified as not in the labor force, although this population group often can provide substantial labor resources for selected business operations. Within the group of persons not currently in the labor force, and therefore not actively seeking employment, are many individuals who would accept a job with attractive working conditions, competitive wages, and employee benefits if one became available.

Population migration is another factor that affects the available labor supply of potential workers who are not presently employed (and may not be seeking work within the local labor market). Persons without jobs and who perceive that there are no job opportunities available locally are the most likely to leave (migrate out) the area for employment opportunities elsewhere.

### Labor Force and Employment

Table One provides data showing labor force and employment trends for the Knox County Labor Area and for Knox County for selected years from 2003 to 2008. Data in Table One (Part A and Part B) provide two alternate measures of employment for two distinct areas. Data presented in Table One Part A include labor force, unemployment, employment, and nonfarm wage and salary employment data for the entire Knox County Labor Area (see Figure One). As these data indicate, both total labor force and total employment for the laborshed area as a whole fell, with the area labor force declining by 6.2 percent between 2003 and 2008 and total employment declining 5.8 percent during the same period.

**Table One**  
**Labor Force and Employment, Knox County Labor Area<sup>(a)</sup>, 2003–2008**

**Part A**  
**Labor Force and Employment**  
**Knox County Labor Area<sup>(a)</sup>, 2003–2008**

(Place of Residence)	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	% Chg. 2003–2008
<b>Labor Force<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>26,128</b>	<b>25,916</b>	<b>25,437</b>	<b>24,916</b>	<b>24,208</b>	<b>24,511</b>	<b>-6.2</b>
Unemployment (#)	861	840	831	679	686	722	-16.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.3	3.2	3.3	2.7	2.8	2.9	(N/A)
Employment	25,266	25,075	24,607	24,238	23,522	23,790	-5.8
<b>(Place of Work)</b>							
<b>Nonfarm Employment<sup>(c)</sup></b>	<b>13,522</b>	<b>13,518</b>	<b>13,494</b>	<b>13,492</b>	<b>13,551</b>	<b>13,762</b>	<b>1.8</b>

Table One continued on following page; notes and sources on following page.

**Table One -- Continued**  
**Part B**  
**Labor Force and Employment by Industry**  
**Knox, NE**

(Place of Residence)	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	% Chg. 2003-2008
<b>Labor Force <sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>5,006</b>	<b>4,982</b>	<b>4,903</b>	<b>4,826</b>	<b>4,705</b>	<b>4,777</b>	<b>-4.6</b>
Unemployment (#)	175	178	171	142	141	153	-12.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.5	3.6	3.5	2.9	3.0	3.2	(N/A)
Employment	4,831	4,804	4,733	4,684	4,564	4,624	-4.3
<b>(Place of Work)</b>							
<b>Nonfarm Employment <sup>(c)</sup></b>	<b>2,759</b>	<b>2,761</b>	<b>2,772</b>	<b>2,761</b>	<b>2,762</b>	<b>2,810</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Goods Producing	251	265	283	302	284	283	12.7
Manufacturing	156*	162*	186*	199*	194*	193*	23.7*
Mining & Construction	95	103	97	103	90	90	-5.3
Service Providing	2,508	2,496	2,489	2,459	2,478	2,527	0.8
Total Trade	581	558	546	541	558	574	-1.2
Wholesale Trade	183	179	157	172	180	185	1.1
Retail Trade	398	379	389	369	378	390	-2.0
Trans., Warehousing & Utilities	56	53	47	54	58	59	5.4
Information	27	21	23	23	27	26	-3.7
Financial Activities	132	133	140	105	105	108	-18.2
Professional & Business Services	63	65	64	77	94	107	69.8
Education & Health Services	281	276	291	270	255	260	-7.5
Leisure and Hospitality	151	170	154	150	128	131	-13.2
Other Services, except Public	47	47	55	52	44	44	-6.4
Total Government	1,172	1,172	1,170	1,188	1,209	1,219	4.0
Federal Government	55	55	56	55	55	54	-1.8
State Government	50	52	50	49	41	40	-20.0
Local Government	1,066	1,065	1,063	1,084	1,113	1,125	5.5

<sup>(a)</sup> The Knox County Labor Area includes Knox and the contiguous Nebraska counties (Antelope, Boyd, Cedar, Holt, and Pierce).

<sup>(b)</sup> The labor force data are measured based on the county of residence, irrespective of the county of employment.

<sup>(c)</sup> The Nonfarm Employment data are for wage and salary employment and are based on the place (county) where the individual is employed, irrespective of the the county of residence.

\* Estimated values provided by Ken Lemke, Nebraska Public Power District.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, [ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce\\_workforce](http://ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce_workforce).

The second employment measure presented for the Knox County Labor Area, nonfarm wage and salary employment, grew from 13,522 in 2003 to 13,762 in 2008, an increase of 1.8 percent. In the case of the labor force data (labor force, unemployment, and employment), the respective measures are based on the county of residence. The

nonfarm wage and salary employment data are measured based on the county of employment, irrespective of the place of residence of the workers.

The labor force and employment measures presented for Knox County (Table One, Part B) indicate that the total labor force in the county declined by 4.6 percent between 2003 and 2008, with total employment (of people residing in Knox County, irrespective of their county of employment) declining by 4.3 percent during this period. It is also of interest to note that unemployment decreased by 12.6 percent, from 175 in 2003 to 153 in 2008, recording an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent in 2008.

As previously noted, the second employment measure presented for Knox County, nonfarm wage and salary employment, is based on the county where the person is employed irrespective of their county of residence. Nonfarm wage and salary employment in Knox County grew by 1.8 percent between 2003 and 2008. Data presented in Part B of Table One show that the fastest growing employment sector in Knox County during the 2003–2008 review period was the Professional & Business Services sector, recording a 69.8 percent increase between 2003 and 2008. Other economic sectors experiencing significant growth in employment between 2003 and 2008 include the Manufacturing sector (23.7 percent), the Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities Sector (5.4 percent), and the Total Government Sector (4.0 percent). In the case of the Total Government sector, employment in the State government sector declined by 20.0 percent and Federal employment declined by 1.8 percent while local government employment grew by 5.5 percent.

Further review of the employment data reported for the Knox County Labor Area (Table One, Part A) and for Knox County (Table One Part B) indicates that for both areas there were differences between the nonfarm wage and salary employment reported in the areas and the total employment of persons living in the respective areas. In the case of the entire Knox County Labor Area, nonfarm wage and salary employment was reported to be 13,762 in 2008, which was significantly less (10,028) than the reported total employment of persons living within the five-county Knox County Labor Area. Recalling that nonfarm wage and salary employment is based on the county of employment while the total employment data is based on the county of residence helps explain how this can occur. It is obvious that a number of persons living within the five-county Knox County Labor Area work outside of the area and commute to other areas for employment.

In the case of Knox County, the same situation is evident. Total employment of persons living in Knox County (irrespective of their county of employment) was 4,624 in 2008, which was 1,814 more than the 2,810 nonfarm wage and salary jobs within the county for the same year. These data suggest that a number of workers are commuting out of Knox County for employment on a regular basis. The total number of reported employed people living in Knox County includes those who are self employed as well as those employed in agriculture. This means the difference between total employment and nonfarm wage and salary jobs (1,814) likely overstates the number of workers commuting out of Knox County.

Included in Table Two are additional employment data for 2008, showing the deviations between total employment and nonfarm wage and salary employment for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole and for each county within the area. For the Knox County Labor Area as a whole, the total employment of area residents (23,790), irrespective of their place of employment, is 10,028 greater than the nonfarm wage and salary employment working within the area. It appears that much of this difference could be accounted for by agricultural employment, which includes farm proprietors. Agricultural employment shown in the table shows that 5,965 people were employed in agriculture in 2007 the last year that agricultural employment data were available. It is important to note, however, that for Nebraska as a whole, approximately 32 percent of farm operators also have a full-time job off the farm and 49 percent work off the farm, either in full or part-time employment. Therefore, it is likely that a significant number of people are commuting out of the area for employment.

**Table Two**  
**Labor Force, Employment, and Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment,**  
**Knox County Labor Area, 2008**

County	Labor Force (2008) <sup>(a)</sup>	Total Employment (2008) <sup>(a)</sup>	Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment (2008) <sup>(b)</sup>	Total Employment Minus NF W&S Employment	Agricultural Employment (2007) <sup>(c)</sup>
<b>Knox</b>	<b>4,777</b>	<b>4,624</b>	<b>2,810</b>	<b>1,814</b>	<b>1,128</b>
Antelope	3,636	3,524	1,862	1,662	866
Boyd	1,083	1,046	546	500	393
Cedar	4,815	4,689	2,475	2,214	1,082
Holt	6,143	5,972	3,969	2,003	1,690
Pierce	4,057	3,935	2,100	1,835	806
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>24,511</b>	<b>23,790</b>	<b>13,762</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>5,965</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> Labor force and employment data are measured based on the county of residence.

<sup>(b)</sup> Nonfarm Employment data are for wage and salary employment and are based on the place (county) where the individual is employed, irrespective of the the county of residence.

<sup>(c)</sup> Agricultural employment data are for 2007.

Sources: Labor Data - Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information,

[ftp://dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce\\_workforce](ftp://dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce_workforce). Farm Employment Data - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data website: <http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/>.

Further review of the data presented in Table Two provides an indication of the commuting patterns for the counties within the Knox County Labor Area. It appears that a significant numbers of persons from each of the other counties in the labor area are commuting to surrounding counties for employment. In the case of Cedar County, for example, the number of employed persons living in the county is 2,214 greater than total nonfarm wage and salary employment within the county. In the case of Cedar County, a significant number of the people commuting out of the county for employment are most likely commuting to Yankton, South Dakota to work. Other counties where there are indications of significant commuting out of the county for employment include Antelope, Cedar, Holt, and Pierce. Data presented in Table Two suggest that the creation of

additional jobs within the Knox County Labor Area and Knox County would provide opportunities for area residents to work closer to their places of residences instead of having to commute to other areas for employment.

The number of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Knox County Labor Area is shown by major industry sector and by county in Table Three. The reader is reminded that nonfarm wage and salary workers are counted in the county where they are employed. Individuals with more than one job are counted at each establishment (and in each county) where they work. Table Three provides information about the number of workers in the labor area by county and major industry category.

**Table Three**  
**Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment, by Industry Sector**  
**Knox County Labor Area, by County, 2008**

County	Manuf.	Constr. Mining	Trade	Finc. Activ.	Prof. & Bus. Svc.	Ed. & Health Svc.	All Other Services	Govt.	Tot NF W. & S. Emp.
<b>Knox</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>1,219</b>	<b>2,810</b>
Antelope	87	95	507	97	83	130	307	556	1,862
Boyd	22	2	123	38	24	20	80	237	546
Cedar	176	194	606	141	123	124	390	721	2,475
Holt	209	108	1,134	198	161	373	933	853	3,969
Pierce	105	199	516	86	103	152	385	554	2,100
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>3,520</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>2,423</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>13,762</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>100,485</b>	<b>51,270</b>	<b>150,230</b>	<b>70,305</b>	<b>107,906</b>	<b>135,034</b>	<b>193,508</b>	<b>163,874</b>	<b>972,612</b>

Percent of Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment									
	Manuf.	Constr. Mining	Trade	Finc. Activ.	Prof. & Bus. Svc.	Ed. & Health Svc.	All Other Services	Govt.	Tot NF W. & S. Emp.
Labor Area	5.8	5.0	25.6	4.9	4.4	6.8	17.6	30.1	100.0
Nebraska	10.3	5.3	21.2	7.2	11.1	8.6	19.4	16.8	100.0

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, [ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce\\_workforce](http://ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce_workforce).

In addition to displaying the number of workers by major industry sector, Table Three also compares the percentage distribution of workers by industry in the Knox County Labor Area with the distribution for the State of Nebraska. As these data show, the industry distribution of employment for the Knox County Labor Area is significantly different than that for Nebraska as a whole.

The most significant deviations between Nebraska and the Knox County Labor Area occur in the Government Sector employment, with 30.1 percent of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Knox County Labor Area employed in that sector, compared to 16.8 percent for Nebraska. Conversely, only 4.4 percent of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Knox County Labor Area are employed in the Professional & Business Services Sector, compared to 11.1 percent for Nebraska as a whole.

Table Four, Part A provides data showing labor cost comparisons, by county, for all private wage and salary workers for the Knox County Labor Area. It is important to remember that the wage and salary employment is reported by county of employment,

and does not provide an indication of the average weekly and annual wage for residents of the respective counties. Obviously, labor cost is an important consideration in any analysis of the labor availability in an area. Pay data for workers covered by unemployment insurance laws in Nebraska are the source of the labor cost information. Average annual pay is calculated by dividing the total payroll for wage and salary workers by the average annual number of employees.

A review of the data in Part A of Table Four indicates that average annual salaries in Knox County (\$20,912 for all wage and salary employees for all private industries) are slightly lower than for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole and all but one of the other counties that make up the area. Also, Knox County average annual salaries are \$14,878 (41.6 percent) less than the state average. Average annual salaries for the Knox County Labor Area (\$24,823) were \$10,967 (30.6 percent) less than the Nebraska average. These data suggest, of course, there would be a positive labor supply response in Knox County to the creation of additional employment opportunities with competitive wages and benefits.

**Table Four**  
**Average Pay, Knox County Labor Area & Nebraska, 2008**

**Part A**  
**Average Annual Pay and Average Weekly Wages**  
**All Covered<sup>(a)</sup> Wage and Salary Workers, All Industries**

County	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Average Annual Wages
<b>Knox</b>	<b>1,554</b>	<b>\$402</b>	<b>\$20,912</b>
Antelope	1,429	\$466	\$24,254
Boyd	313	\$388	\$20,166
Cedar	1,868	\$492	\$25,606
Holt	3,471	\$515	\$26,759
Pierce	1,503	\$479	\$24,933
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>10,138</b>	<b>\$476</b>	<b>\$24,823</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>766,883</b>	<b>\$688</b>	<b>\$35,790</b>

Table Four continued on following page; notes and sources on following page.

**Table Four – Continued**

**Part B**

**Average Annual Pay All Covered<sup>(a)</sup> Wage and Salary Workers  
By Selected Industry Groups**

County	All Goods Producing	Manuf.	Construction	All Service Providing	Trade Trans & Util	Financial Services	Bus & Prof Services	Leisure & Hospitality
<b>Knox</b>	<b>\$21,824</b>	<b>\$19,166</b>	<b>\$24,519</b>	<b>\$20,604</b>	<b>\$19,263</b>	<b>\$33,335</b>	<b>\$24,420</b>	<b>\$10,406</b>
Antelope	\$28,726	\$30,965	\$28,915	\$22,895	\$24,498	\$29,803	\$19,006	\$7,620
Boyd	\$23,058	\$16,961	\$24,270	\$19,681	\$16,930	\$29,369	N/A	\$5,098
Cedar	\$30,999	\$33,924	\$31,955	\$23,401	\$24,982	\$33,839	\$18,099	\$7,779
Holt	\$30,115	\$39,219	\$31,070	\$25,743	\$22,660	\$37,202	\$43,072	\$8,071
Pierce	\$30,486	\$33,053	\$28,640	\$23,280	\$22,132	\$33,056	\$43,801	\$6,974
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>\$39,685</b>	<b>\$40,534</b>	<b>\$40,253</b>	<b>\$34,742</b>	<b>\$31,653</b>	<b>\$47,475</b>	<b>\$46,295</b>	<b>\$12,259</b>

N/A: Not available.

<sup>(a)</sup> Includes employers that are subject to Nebraska Employment Security Laws.

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/> and  
Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, <http://www.dol.state.ne.us/lmiindustry/index.asp>.

Table Four, Part B provides average annual wages, by county and by major industry sector, for the counties that make up the Knox County Labor Area. As the data in Table Four, Part A indicate, the highest overall average annual wages in the area are for wage and salary workers employed in Holt County. The average annual wage for all wage and salary workers (working) in Holt County was \$26,759 in 2008 which was \$1,936 (7.8 percent) more than the average for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole, and -\$9,031 (-25.2 percent) less than the Nebraska average. A review of the industry specific data for average annual wages for Holt indicates that the high average annual wage results from the high average wage in the Manufacturing and Business & Professional Services sectors.

**Commuting Patterns**

Table Five provides 2006 estimates from the Bureau of the Census Local Employment Dynamics program showing commuting patterns for workers living in the Knox County Labor Area. Data in Table Five Part A indicate a significant number (and percentage) of workers in the area commuted outside of their county of residence for employment. Data in Part A indicate that 1,444 jobs or 43.0 percent of all jobs held by Knox County residents are located in other counties. For three of the five other counties in the labor area, the percentage of commuters was larger than for Knox County. In the case of Pierce County, 2,034 or 61.2 percent of jobs held by county residents were in other counties. Other counties with a high percentage of employed workers commuting to other counties for employment include Antelope (54.2 percent) and Cedar (51.7 percent).

**Table Five**  
**Commuting Patterns, Knox County Labor Area, 2006**

**Part A**  
**Jobs Outside County of Residence, 2006**

<b>County</b>	<b>Working Outside County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Knox</b>	1,444	43.0%
Antelope	1,403	54.2%
Boyd	205	34.4%
Cedar	1,921	51.7%
Holt	428	22.8%
Pierce	2,034	61.2%

**Part B**  
**Knox County Residents**  
**Employment by County, 2006**

<b>County Where Jobs are Located</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Knox</b>	<b>1,916</b>	<b>57.0%</b>
Yankton Co., South Dakota	263	7.8%
Madison	179	5.3%
Douglas	139	4.1%
Lancaster	122	3.6%
Pierce	97	2.9%
All Other Counties	644	19.3%
<b>Total Resident Jobs</b>	<b>3,360</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Local Employment Dynamics*.

Table Five, Part B provides further detail illustrating the willingness of workers in Knox County to travel for employment. In 2006, residents of Knox County worked at a total of 3,360 jobs; a resident could work at more than one job. Of these 3,360 jobs, the largest number, 1,916 or 57.0 percent, were located in Knox County, while 1,444 or 43.0 percent were located in other counties. Counties with high numbers of workers from Knox County were Yankton County, South Dakota (263 jobs), Madison County (179 jobs), Douglas County (139 jobs), and Lancaster County (122 jobs).

**Population Trends**

The data provided in Table Six show population trends for the Knox County Labor Area, by county, and for Nebraska for the 1950–2008 period. As these data indicate, the population of the Knox County Labor Area was 49,835 in 2000. The Knox County Labor Area population declined by 27.3 percent from 1950 to 2000 and declined 10.4 percent from 2000 to 2008. Population in Knox County totaled 9,374 in 2000 and had declined by 36.7 percent from 1950 to 2000. During the latest Census decade of the 1990's, the Knox County population decreased by 1.7 percent, compared to the decrease

for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole of 6.5 percent, and to the State rate of growth of 8.4 percent.

**Table Six**  
**Population in the Knox County Labor Area, by County, and Nebraska**  
**Selected Years, 1950–2008**

COUNTY	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008	% Chg.	% Chg.
								1950–2000	2000–08
<b>Knox</b>	<b>14,820</b>	<b>13,300</b>	<b>11,723</b>	<b>11,457</b>	<b>9,534</b>	<b>9,374</b>	<b>8,498</b>	<b>-36.7</b>	<b>-9.3</b>
Antelope	11,624	10,176	9,047	8,675	7,965	7,452	6,679	-35.9	-10.4
Boyd	4,911	4,513	3,752	3,331	2,835	2,438	2,090	-50.4	-14.3
Cedar	13,843	13,368	12,192	11,375	10,131	9,615	8,407	-30.5	-12.6
Holt	14,859	13,722	12,933	13,552	12,599	11,551	10,233	-22.3	-11.4
Pierce	8,445	10,122	10,681	11,080	10,211	9,405	8,722	11.4	-7.3
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>68,502</b>	<b>65,201</b>	<b>60,328</b>	<b>59,470</b>	<b>53,275</b>	<b>49,835</b>	<b>44,629</b>	<b>-27.3</b>	<b>-10.4</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>1,325,510</b>	<b>1,411,330</b>	<b>1,483,493</b>	<b>1,569,825</b>	<b>1,578,385</b>	<b>1,711,263</b>	<b>1,783,432</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1950-2000* and Annual Population Estimates, 2008.

Table Seven shows the age distribution of the resident population. Obviously, the age distribution of the population is important when evaluating the potential labor supply in an area. A key variable is the number of people in the working age populations of the counties making up the Knox County Labor Area. In 2008, there were 3,933 people in Knox County between the ages of 25 and 64, which represented 46.3 percent of the total population, compared to 48.0 percent of the population for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole and 51.0 percent of the Nebraska population in this age range.

**Table Seven**  
**Age Characteristics of the Population, Knox County Labor Area,**  
**by County, and Nebraska, 2008**

COUNTY	0-14		15-24		25-44		45-64		65-Older		Median Age
	Number	% <sup>(a)</sup>									
<b>Knox</b>	<b>1,512</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>1,504</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>2,429</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>1,937</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>46.0</b>
Antelope	1,107	16.6	871	13.0	1,247	18.7	2,031	30.4	1,423	21.3	46.1
Boyd	301	14.4	266	12.7	363	17.4	656	31.4	504	24.1	48.5
Cedar	1,553	18.5	1,227	14.6	1,499	17.8	2,398	28.5	1,730	20.6	44.3
Holt	1,757	17.2	1,313	12.8	1,787	17.5	3,122	30.5	2,254	22.0	46.5
Pierce	1,319	18.2	1,112	15.4	1,590	22.0	2,075	28.7	1,135	15.7	40.7
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>7,549</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>5,905</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>7,990</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>12,711</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>8,983</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>45.0</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>371,462</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>262,190</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>457,177</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>451,756</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>240,847</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>36.2</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> Percent of total population for each respective area.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates, by Age, 2008*.

Table Eight provides information showing population, the natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration for the 1990–1999 period for Nebraska, Knox County and the Knox County Labor Area. As these data show, the Knox County Labor Area as a whole experienced net out-migration during the Census decade of the 1990s, with only Pierce County experiencing net in-migration. As indicated in the table, net out-migration for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole accounted for a population decline of 2,726 people during the decade, contributing to a population decrease equal of 5.4 percent of the population. In the case of Knox County, net out-migration during the 1990’s totaled 213 people, or 2.2 percent of the 1990 population.

**Table Eight**  
**Population, Births, Deaths and Migration**  
**Nebraska and Knox County Labor Area by County, 1990–1999**

County	Population		1990–1999			Net Migration*, 1990–1999	
	1990	2000	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 1990 Pop.
<b>Knox</b>	<b>9,564</b>	<b>9,048</b>	<b>1,037</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>-303</b>	<b>-213</b>	<b>-2.2</b>
Antelope	7,965	7,243	888	850	38	-760	-9.5
Boyd	2,835	2,520	296	372	-76	-239	-8.4
Cedar	10,131	9,612	1,255	1,102	153	-672	-6.6
Holt	12,599	11,884	1,416	1,221	195	-910	-7.2
Pierce	7,827	7,945	912	862	50	68	0.9
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>50,921</b>	<b>48,252</b>	<b>5,804</b>	<b>5,747</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>-2,726</b>	<b>-5.4</b>
Nebraska	1,578,417	1,666,028	217,510	139,754	77,756	9,855	0.6

\* Net Migration from the Bureau of the Census estimates, includes residual component not shown separately.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *County Population Estimates for July 1, 1999 and Population Change for April 1, 1990 to July 1, 1999.*

Table Nine provides information showing population, the natural increase (births minus deaths), and net migration for the 2000–2008 period. As these data show, the Knox County Labor Area experienced significant net out-migration during this more recent eight-year period. As indicated in the table, out-migration for the Knox County Labor Area as a whole accounted for population decline of 4,686 during the 2000–2008 period, contributing to a population decrease equal to 9.7 percent of the 2000 population. In the case of Knox County, net out-migration during this eight-year period was 651, or 6.9 percent of the 2000 population. These data suggest that as jobs have declined, people have moved out of Knox County, as well as most of the other counties that comprise the Knox County Labor Area.

**Table Nine**  
**Population, Births, Deaths, and Migration**  
**Nebraska and Knox County Labor area, by County, 2000-2008**

County	Population		2000-2008			Net Migration, 2000-2008*	
	2000	2008	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 2000 Pop.
<b>Knox</b>	<b>9,374</b>	<b>8,498</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>-225</b>	<b>-651</b>	<b>-6.9</b>
Antelope	7,452	6,679	598	630	-32	-741	-9.9
Boyd	2,438	2,090	136	278	-142	-206	-8.4
Cedar	9,615	8,407	870	893	-23	-1,185	-12.3
Holt	11,551	10,233	993	1,066	-73	-1,245	-10.8
Pierce	7,857	7,231	719	687	32	-658	-8.4
<b>Labor Area</b>	<b>48,287</b>	<b>43,138</b>	<b>4,152</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>-463</b>	<b>-4,686</b>	<b>-9.7</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	1,711,263	1,783,432	214,642	124,319	90,323	-18,154	-1.1

\* Net Migration from the Bureau of the Census estimates, includes residual component not shown separately.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates, 2008, and Components of Population Change, 2000-2008*.

### **Competitive Employment and Career Opportunities**

An employer providing jobs with competitive wages and benefits and offering career opportunities would be a welcome addition to the employment base in the Knox County Labor Area and in Knox County. The expected response to such employment opportunities would be significant, and it is anticipated that there would be an adequate labor supply response for a prospective new employer offering competitive wages and benefits in the Knox County area. The labor force, employment, and demographic data presented in this report illustrate quite clearly that there is a sufficiently large labor force and population base living within the Knox County Labor Area, and that significant numbers of persons living in the area are commuting to other areas for employment.

In conclusion, the data and analysis presented in this report indicate that the Knox County Labor Area and Knox County would be able to provide a significant number of dedicated and skilled workers to meet the needs of additional employers in the area. While this report has not estimated a precise number of people that might be available to a prospective new employer in the Knox County area, it is anticipated that if attractive working conditions with competitive wages and employee benefits were offered, a prospective new employer would be able to select their workforce from a substantial pool of applicants.

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