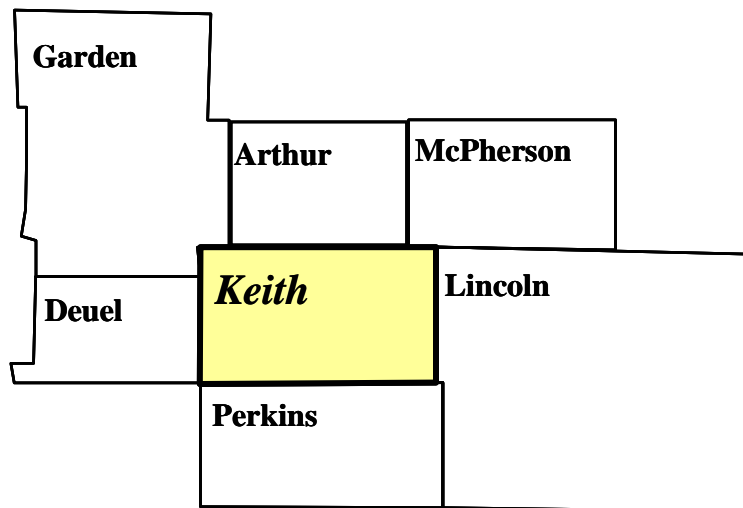


Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Keith County Labor Area



Prepared by:

Kenneth M. Lemke, Ph.D.
Economist
Nebraska Public Power District
1414 15th Street - P.O. Box 499
Columbus, Nebraska 68602-0499
(800) 282-6773, Ext. 5535
E-Mail: kmlemke@nppd.com
Web Site: sites.nppd.com

Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Keith 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 Keith County. 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 Keith County Labor Area. Some of the pertinent findings of the report include:

- Population in the Keith County Labor Area (Keith County plus the six contiguous Nebraska counties) totaled 51,037 people in 2007, with the Keith County population totaling 8,024. Population in Keith County declined by 9.6 percent during the 2000–2007 period, compared to a population decrease of 2.0 percent for the seven-county Keith County Labor Area as a whole.
- The labor force for the Keith County Labor Area totaled 30,430 in 2006, with 29,594 local residents employed in jobs either within or outside the area. A total of 22,479 persons were employed in non-farm wage and salary jobs located within the area. These data suggest that a substantial number of residents of the Keith County Labor Area were commuting out of the area for employment.
- The number of people who lived in Keith County that were employed totaled 4,602 in 2007; yet, there were 3,400 persons employed in non-farm wage and salary jobs within the county. This indicates residents are commuting out of Keith County for employment in surrounding counties.
- Average annual wages for all non-farm wage and salary employees in the Keith County Labor Area were \$8,943 below the Nebraska average. Within the labor area, Perkins had the highest average wage, \$27,919 or \$5,697 less than the Nebraska average. In Keith County, average annual salaries were \$10,922 below the state average.

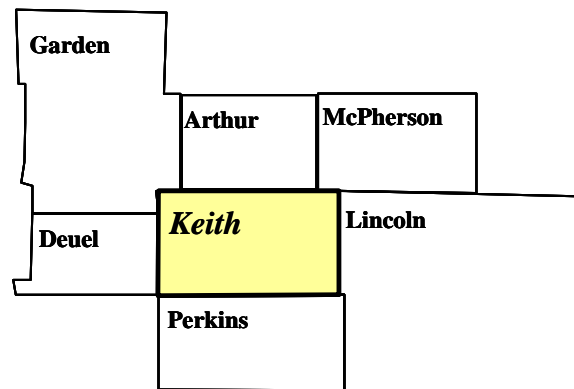
The basic conclusion of this report, which follows from the data and analysis presented, is that the Keith County Labor Area and Keith County would be able to provide a significant number of dedicated and skilled workers to meet the needs of additional employers in the area. While this report has not estimated a precise number of people that may be available for a prospective new employer in the Keith 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 Keith County Labor Area

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

In reviewing the data presented in this report, it will be evident that the Keith 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 Keith County and for the surrounding Nebraska counties that make up the potential laborshed area for Keith County. Figure One includes a map outlining the geographic area which has been defined as the Keith County Labor Area.

Figure One
Keith County Labor Area



An important resource for new or expanding businesses is a readily available supply of workers. Whether an employer requires 10 or 100 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 Keith 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 not 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 not 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 Keith County Labor Area and for Keith County for selected years from 2001 to 2007. 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 non-farm wage and salary employment data for the entire Keith County Labor Area (see Figure One). As these data indicate, both the total labor force and total employment for the laborshed area as a whole have increased, with the area labor force growing by 4.2 percent between 2001 and 2007 and total employment growing by 4.5 percent during the same period.

Table One
Part A
Labor Force and Employment, Keith County Labor Area^(a), 2001–2007

(Place of Residence)	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	% Chg. 2001–2007
Labor Force^(b)	29,214	29,477	30,464	30,354	30,286	30,055	30,430	4.2
Unemployment (#)	897	963	1,058	1,038	1,024	817	836	-6.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.4	2.7	2.7	(N/A)
Employment	28,317	28,514	29,406	29,316	29,262	29,238	29,594	4.5
(Place of Work)								
Nonfarm Employment^(c)	21,085	21,334	21,474	21,584	21,853	21,957	22,479	6.6

^(a) The Keith County Labor Area includes Keith County and the contiguous counties (Arthur, Deuel, Garden, Lincoln, McPherson, and Perkins).

^(b) The labor force data are measured based on the county of residence, irrespective of the county of employment.

^(c) 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.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce_workforce.

Table One -- Continued
Part B
Labor Force and Employment by Industry, Keith County

(Place of Residence)	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	% Chg. 2001-2007
Labor Force^(b)	5,017	5,062	5,069	4,884	4,806	4,694	4,727	-5.8
Unemployment (#)	147	166	173	163	158	124	125	-15.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	2.9	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.6	(N/A)
Employment	4,870	4,896	4,896	4,721	4,648	4,570	4,602	-5.5
(Place of Work)								
Nonfarm Employment^(c)	3,607	3,635	3,525	3,401	3,387	3,340	3,400	-5.7
Goods Producing	557	491	448	459	467	411	402	-27.8
Manufacturing	404	349	322	322	334	280	272	-32.7
Mining & Construction	153	142	126	137	133	131	130	-15.0
Service Providing	3,050	3,144	3,077	2,943	2,920	2,928	2,998	-1.7
Total Trade	852	909	894	809	818	762	784	-8.0
Wholesale Trade	161	200	213	159	203	196	201	24.8
Retail Trade	691	709	681	650	615	566	583	-15.6
Trans., Warehousing & Utilities	84	80	75	78	91	100	106	26.2
Information	59	61	59	56	58	63	61	3.4
Financial Activities	175	189	196	198	209	194	196	12.0
Professional & Business Services	226	230	227	213	178	255	286	26.5
Education & Health Services	366	374	353	348	335	343	359	-1.9
Leisure and Hospitality	566	556	584	567	568	546	552	-2.5
Other Services, except Public	113	121	123	120	115	112	112	-0.9
Total Government	612	624	567	554	548	553	543	-11.3
Federal Government	39	41	42	40	41	44	44	12.8
State Government	77	74	59	66	61	62	60	-22.1
Local Government	496	509	465	448	446	447	440	-11.3

^(a) The Keith County Labor Area includes Keith County and the contiguous counties (Arthur, Deuel, Garden, Lincoln, McPherson, and Perkins).

^(b) The labor force data are measured based on the county of residence, irrespective of the county of employment.

^(c) 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 county of residence.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/laborforce_workforce.

The second employment measure presented for the Keith County Labor Area, non-farm wage and salary employment, increased from 21,085 in 2001 to 22,479 in 2007, an increase of 6.6 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 non-farm 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 Keith County (Part B of Table 1) indicate the total labor force in the county declined by 5.8 percent between 2001 and 2007, with total employment (of people residing in Keith County, irrespective of their county of employment) declining by 5.5 percent during this period. It is also of interest to note that unemployment decreased by 15.0 percent, from 147 in 2001 to 125 in 2007, recording an unemployment rate of 2.6 percent in 2007.

As previously noted, the second employment measure presented for Keith County, non-farm wage and salary employment, is based on the county where the person is employed irrespective of their county of residence. Non-farm wage and salary employment in

Keith County decreased by 5.7 percent between 2001 and 2007. Data presented in Part B of Table One show that the fastest growing employment sector in Keith County during the 2001–2007 review period was the Professional & Business Services sector, recording a 26.5 percent increase between 2001 and 2007. Other economic sectors experiencing significant growth in employment between 2001 and 2007 include the Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities sector (26.2 percent), Financial Activities (12.0 percent), and the Information sector (3.4 percent). In the case of the Total Government sector, employment in the State government sector declined by 22.1 percent and local government employment declined by 11.3 percent while Federal employment grew by 12.8 percent.

Further review of the employment data reported for the Keith County Labor Area (Table One Part A) and for Keith County (Table One Part B) indicates that for both areas there were differences between the non-farm 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 Keith County Labor Area, non-farm wage and salary employment was reported to be 22,479 in 2007, which was significantly less (7,115 less) than the reported total employment of persons living within the seven-county Keith 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 persons living within the seven-county Keith County Labor Area work outside of the area and commute to other areas for employment.

In the case of Keith County, the same situation is evident. Total employment of persons living in Keith County (irrespective of their county of employment) was 4,602 in 2007, which was 1,202 more than the 3,400 non-farm wage and salary jobs within the county for the same year. These data suggest that a number of workers are commuting out of Keith County for employment on a regular basis. Also, the total number of reported employed people living in Keith County includes those who are self employed as well as those employed in agriculture. This means the difference between total employment and non-farm wage and salary jobs (1,202) likely overstates the number of workers commuting out of Keith County.

Included in Table Two are additional employment data for 2006, showing the deviations between total employment and non-farm wage and salary employment for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole and for each county within the area. For the Keith County Labor Area as a whole, the total employment of area residents (29,594), irrespective of their place of employment, is 7,115 greater than the non-farm 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 operators. Agricultural employment shown in the table shows that 3,224 people were employed in agriculture in 2005, 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 possible 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,
Keith County Labor Area, 2007

County	Labor Force (2007) ^(a)	Total Employment (2007) ^(a)	Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment (2007) ^(b)	Total Employment Minus NF W&S Employment	Agricultural Employment (2005) ^(c)
Keith	4,727	4,602	3,400	1,202	447
Arthur	255	245	90	155	100
Deuel	1,049	1,017	504	513	271
Garden	989	962	486	476	456
Lincoln	21,545	20,949	16,995	3,954	1,320
McPherson	299	293	82	211	134
Perkins	1,566	1,526	922	604	496
Labor Area	30,430	29,594	22,479	7,115	3,224

^(a) Labor force and employment data are measured based on the county of residence.

^(b) 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.

^(c) Agricultural employment data are for 2005.

Sources: Labor Data - Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, 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 Keith County Labor Area. It is evident that persons from other counties are commuting out of the counties for employment. In the case of Lincoln County, for example, the number of employed persons living in the county is 3,954 greater than total non-farm wage and salary employment within the county. Other counties where there are indications of significant commuting out of the county for employment include Arthur, Deuel, McPherson, and Perkins. The data presented in Table Two suggest that the creation of additional jobs within the Keith County Labor Area and Keith 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 non-farm wage and salary workers in the Keith County Labor Area is shown by major industry sector and by county in Table Three. The reader is reminded that non-farm 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
Keith County Labor Area, by County, 2007

County	Constr. & Trans.,		Trade	Financial Activities	Other Services	Govt.	Total NF W. & S. Emp	
	Manufact.	Mining						Whr. & Ut.
Keith	273*	130*	106*	784*	196	1368*	543	3,400
Arthur	2*	6*	8*	17*	5*	3*	49	90
Deue	2*	5*	18*	97*	29*	157*	196	504
Garden	1*	6*	33*	94*	31	42*	279	486
Lincol	376	750	3,295	3,278	737	5,702	2,857	16,995
McPherson	0*	5*	6*	16*	5*	11*	39	82
Perkins	16	82*	84*	178*	48	156	358	922
Total Labor Area	670*	984*	3550*	4464*	1051*	7439*	4,321	22,479
Nebraska	101,184	49,583	54,927	149,384	66,311	378,670	162,334	962,393

	Percent of Total NonFarm Wage & Salary Employment							Total NF W. & S. Emp
	Manufact.	Constr. & Mining	Trans., Whr. & Ut.	Trade	Financial Activities	Other Services	Govt.	
Total Labor	3.0	4.4	15.8	19.9	4.7	33.1	19.2	100.0
Nebraska	10.5	5.2	5.7	15.5	6.9	39.3	16.9	100.0

* Employment estimated for county sectors where data have been withheld; values estimated by Ken Lemke, NPPD.
Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, 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 Keith County Labor Area with the distribution for the State of Nebraska. As these data show, the industry distribution of employment for the Keith County Labor Area is significantly different than that for Nebraska as a whole.

The most significant deviations between Nebraska and the Keith County Labor Area occur in the Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities sector employment, with 15.8 percent of non-farm wage and salary workers in the Keith County area employed in that sector, compared to 5.7 percent for Nebraska. In the case of the Manufacturing sector, in which only 3.0 percent of non-farm wage and salary workers in the Keith County Labor Area are employed, compared to 10.5 percent for Nebraska as a whole.

Table Four provides data showing labor cost comparisons, by county, for all private wage and salary workers for the Keith 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 number of employees.

A review of the data in Part A of Table Four indicates that average annual salaries in Keith County (\$22,694 for all wage and salary employees for all private industries) are slightly lower than for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole and are significantly below the state average. Average annual salaries for the Keith County Labor Area

(\$24,673) were \$8,943 (26.6 percent) less than the Nebraska average, with Keith County average annual salaries were \$10,922 (32.5 percent) less. These data suggest, of course, there would be a positive labor supply response in Keith County to the creation of additional employment opportunities with competitive wages and benefits.

Table Four
Part A
Average Annual Pay and Average Weekly Wages of Wage and Salary Workers
All Covered^(a) Workers and All Industries, by County, and Nebraska
2nd Quarter, 2007

County	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Average Annual Wages
Keith	2,870	\$436	\$22,694
Arthur	73	\$287	\$14,946
Deuel	351	\$394	\$20,497
Garden	246	\$333	\$17,291
Lincoln	12,045	\$487	\$25,328
McPherson	19	\$234	\$12,181
Perkins	622	\$537	\$27,919
Labor Area	16,226	\$473	\$24,673
Nebraska	762,700	\$646	\$33,616

Part B
Average Annual Pay of Wage and Salary Workers, Covered^(a) Employers, by Industry Group
Keith County Labor Area, by County, and Nebraska, 2nd Quarter, 2007

County	All Goods	Manf.	Other Good-Prd	All Service	Trade		
	Producing			Providing	Trans & Util	Financ Acts	Oth Svc-Prv
Keith	\$25,440	\$24,862	\$26,134	\$22,044	\$22,247	\$30,199	\$20,841
Arthur	-D-	-D-	-D-	-D-	\$18,986	-D-	-D-
Deuel	\$26,371	-D-	-D-	\$19,490	\$19,391	\$29,291	\$18,068
Garden	\$22,909	-D-	-D-	\$14,747	\$12,627	\$34,089	\$7,248
Lincoln	\$27,910	\$29,115	\$27,403	\$24,962	\$24,427 ^(b)	\$30,402	\$24,705
McPherson	-D-	-D-	-D-	-D-	\$15,879	-D-	-D-
Perkins	\$29,067	\$23,901	\$29,845	\$27,476	\$31,934	\$25,287	\$18,193
Nebraska	\$37,327	\$38,440	\$35,482	\$32,615	\$30,245	\$43,882	\$31,825

^(a) Includes employers that are subject to Nebraska Employment Security Laws.

^(b) Does not include wage and salary data for workers at Union Pacific's Bailey Yard facility in North Platte.

-D-: Data withheld by U.S. Department of Labor.

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>.

Part B of Table Four provides average annual wages, by county and by major industry sector, for the counties that make up the Keith County Labor Area. As the data in Part A indicate, the highest average annual wages in the area are for wage and salary workers employed in Perkins County. The average annual wage for all wage and salary workers (working) in Perkins County was \$27,919 in 2007, which was \$3,246 (13.2 percent) higher than the average for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole, but \$5,697 (16.9 percent) less than the Nebraska average. A review of the industry specific data for

average annual wages for Perkins County indicates that the high average annual wage results from the high average wage in the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities Sector.

Commuting Patterns

Table Five provides data from the 2000 Census of Population showing commuting patterns for workers living in the Keith County Labor Area. As the 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 for Keith County indicate that 591, or 13.5 percent of the employed workers, commuted to other counties for employment. For four of the other counties in the Keith County Labor Area, the percentage of commuters was greater than for Keith County, and in most cases substantially greater. In the case of Deuel, 331, or 31.6 percent of employed workers commuted out of their county of residence for employment. Other counties with a high percentage of employed workers commuting to other counties for employment include McPherson (30.5 percent), Arthur (30.3 percent), and Perkins with 17.1 percent of employed workers commuting out of their county of residence for employment.

Table Five
Commuting Data for Workers in the Keith County Labor Area

Part A
Commuting Outside County, 2000

County	Working Outside County	
	Number	Percent
Keith	591	13.5
Arthur	76	30.3
Deuel	331	31.6
Garden	152	13.5
Lincoln	800	4.8
McPherson	78	30.5
Perkins	261	17.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 2000*.

Table Five -- Continued
Commuting Data for Workers in the Keith County Labor Area, 2000

Part B
Commuting Times of Workers

County	Less Than <u>10 Minutes</u>		10 - 19 <u>Minutes</u>		20 - 29 <u>Minutes</u>		30 - 44 <u>Minutes</u>		45 + <u>Minutes</u>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Keith	1,749	42.2	1,330	32.1	500	12.1	285	6.9	280	6.8
Arthur	98	50.3	15	7.7	24	12.3	32	16.4	26	13.3
Deuel	467	47.3	204	20.6	98	9.9	134	13.6	85	8.6
Garden	558	55.0	213	21.0	102	10.0	63	6.2	79	7.8
Lincoln	5,062	31.6	7,094	44.3	1,907	11.9	1,180	7.4	754	4.7
McPherson	45	30.6	16	10.9	17	11.6	14	9.5	55	37.4
Perkins	625	46.4	344	25.5	173	12.8	105	7.8	100	7.4
Labor Area	8,604	36.1	9,216	38.7	2,821	11.8	1,813	7.6	1,379	5.8
Nebraska	214,676	25.8	318,145	38.2	161,468	19.4	88,452	10.6	49,940	6.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 2000*.

Table Five (B) provides further data illustrating the willingness of workers in the area to travel for employment. For the Keith County Labor Area as a whole, there were 3,192 workers in 2000, or 13.4 percent of residents employed outside of their home, which traveled 30 minutes or more commuting to their place of employment. In the case of McPherson, 46.9 percent traveled 30 minutes or more to their place of employment, while for Arthur the workers traveling 30 minutes or more accounted for 29.7 percent. For Nebraska as a whole, the comparable percentage (traveling 30 minutes or more for employment) was 16.6 percent.

Population Trends

The data provided in Table Six show population trends for the Keith County Labor Area, by county, and for Nebraska for the 1950–2007 period. As these data indicate, the population of the Keith County Labor Area was 52,074 in 2000. The Keith County Labor Area population grew by 6.9 percent from 1950 to 2000 and declined 2.0 percent from 2000 to 2007. Population in Keith County totaled 8,875 in 2000 and had grown by 19.1 percent from 1950 to 2000. During the latest Census decade, 1990–1999, Keith County population increased by 3.4 percent, compared to the increase for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole of 3.8 percent, and to the State rate of growth of 8.4 percent.

Table Six
Population in the Keith County Labor Area, by County, and Nebraska
Selected Years, 1950 - 2007

COUNTY	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007	% Chg.	% Chg.
								1950-2000	2000-07
Keith	7,449	7,958	8,487	9,364	8,584	8,875	8,024	19.1	-9.6
Arthur	803	680	606	513	462	444	356	-44.7	-19.8
Deuel	3,330	3,125	2,717	2,462	2,237	2,098	1,893	-37.0	-9.8
Garden	4,114	3,472	2,929	2,802	2,460	2,292	1,834	-44.3	-20.0
Lincoln	27,380	28,491	29,538	36,455	32,508	34,632	35,500	26.5	2.5
McPherson	825	735	623	593	546	533	502	-35.4	-5.8
Perkins	4,809	4,189	3,423	3,637	3,367	3,200	2,928	-33.5	-8.5
Labor Area	48,710	48,650	48,323	55,826	50,164	52,074	51,037	6.9	-2.0
Nebraska	1,325,510	1,411,330	1,485,333	1,569,825	1,578,385	1,711,263	1,768,331	29.1	3.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1950–2000* and Annual Population Estimates, 2007.

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 Keith County Labor Area. In 2007, there were 4,100 people in Keith County between the ages of 25 and 64, which represented 49.7 percent of the total population, compared to 50.9 percent of the population for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole and 50.8 percent of the Nebraska population in this age range.

Table Seven
Age Characteristics of the Population, Keith County Labor Area,
by County, and Nebraska, 2006

COUNTY	0 - 14		15 - 24		25 - 44		45 - 64		65 - Older		Median
	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Age
Keith	1,464	17.7	1,060	12.8	1,668	20.2	2,432	29.5	1,626	19.7	44.5
Arthur	74	19.9	47	12.6	80	21.5	110	29.6	61	16.4	43.3
Deuel	282	14.4	244	12.5	392	20.0	594	30.3	446	22.8	46.7
Garden	253	12.7	230	11.5	345	17.3	633	31.7	534	26.8	49.5
Lincoln	7,170	20.0	4,898	13.7	9,158	25.5	9,374	26.1	5,265	14.7	37.7
McPherson	89	17.9	65	13.1	106	21.3	147	29.6	90	18.1	43.3
Perkins	542	18.1	415	13.9	580	19.4	839	28.0	616	20.6	44.2
Labor Area	9,874	19.0	6,959	13.4	12,329	23.7	14,129	27.2	8,638	16.6	40.0
Nebraska	367,141	20.8	264,120	15.0	458,669	26.0	437,021	24.8	234,655	13.3	36.0

^(a) Percent of total population for each respective area.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates, by Age, 2006*.

Table Eight provides information showing population, natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration for the 1990–2000 period for Nebraska, Keith County and the Keith County Labor Area. As these data show, the Keith County Labor Area as a whole had a small rate of net in-migration during the Census decade of the 1990s, while Arthur, Deuel, McPherson, and Perkins Counties experienced net out-migration. As indicated in the table, net in-migration for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole accounted for population growth of 1,167 people during the decade, contributing to a population

increase equal to 2.3 percent of the 1990 population. In the case of Keith County, net in-migration during the 1990s totaled 284 people, or 3.3 percent of the 1990 population.

Table Eight
Population, Births, Deaths, and Migration, Keith County Labor Area,
by County, 1990–2000

County	Population		1990–1999			Net Migration, 1990–2000	
	1990	2000	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 1990 Pop.
Keith	8,584	8,875	964	957	7	284	3.31
Arthur	462	444	49	41	8	-26	-5.63
Deuel	2,237	2,098	187	291	-104	-35	-1.56
Garden	2,460	2,292	198	412	-214	46	1.87
Lincoln	32,508	34,632	4,468	3,321	1,147	977	3.01
McPherson	546	533	49	40	9	-22	-4.03
Perkins	3,367	3,200	299	409	-110	-57	-1.69
Labor Area	50,164	52,074	6,214	5,471	743	1,167	2.33
Nebraska	1,578,385	1,711,263	235,210	150,599	84,611	48,267	3.06

Sources: Population (1990, 2000) - U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1990, 2000;
Births, Deaths, Natural Increase - Nebraska Department of Health; Migration - computed using
population and vital statistics data.

Table Nine provides information showing population, the natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration for the 2000–2007 period. As these data show, the Keith County Labor Area experienced significant net out-migration during this more recent seven-year period. As indicated in the table, out-migration for the Keith County Labor Area as a whole accounted for population decline of 1,876 during the 2000–2007 period, contributing to a population decrease equal to 3.6 percent of the 2000 population. In the case of Keith County, net out-migration during this seven-year period was 811, or 9.1 percent of the 2000 population. These data suggest that a new or expanding firm offering competitive wages and a comprehensive benefits package would help to reduce out-migration in the Keith County Labor Area.

Table Nine
Population, Births, Deaths, and Migration, Keith County Labor area,
by County, 2000–2007

County	Population		2000–2007			Net Migration, 2000–2007*	
	2000	2006	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 2000 Pop.
Keith	8,875	8,024	663	703	-40	-811	-9.10
Arthur	444	356	41	24	17	-105	-23.60
Deuel	2098	1893	144	221	-77	-128	-6.10
Garden	2292	1834	117	246	-129	-329	-14.40
Lincoln	34632	35500	3573	2495	1078	-210	-0.60
McPherson	533	502	32	18	14	-45	-8.40
Perkins	3200	2928	253	277	-24	-248	-7.80
Labor Area	52,074	51,037	4,823	3,984	839	-1,876	-3.60
Nebraska	1,711,263	1,768,331	187,564	109,569	77,995	-20,927	-1.20

* Net Migration from the Bureau of the Census estimates, includes residual component not shown separately.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates, 2007, and Components of Population Change, 2000–2006*.

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 Keith County Labor Area and in Keith 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 Keith 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 Keith 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 Keith County Labor Area and Keith 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 Keith 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.

Questions concerning this report and the supporting data should be addressed to:

Kenneth M. Lemke, Ph.D.
Economist
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 499
Columbus, Nebraska 68602-0499
(402) 563-5535 or (800) 282-6773, Ext. 5535
E-Mail: klemke@nppd.com