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## Three Counties Saw the Majority of Nebraska's Housing Growth 2007 – 2008

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# CORNHUSKER ECONOMICS

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln

August 26, 2009

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension

Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
<http://www.agecon.unl.edu/Cornhuskereconomics.html>

## Three Counties Saw the Majority of Nebraska's Housing Growth 2007 – 2008

Market Report	Yr Ago	4 Wks Ago	8/21/09
<b><u>Livestock and Products,</u></b>			
<b><u>Weekly Average</u></b>			
Nebraska Slaughter Steers, 35-65% Choice, Live Weight.....	\$98.56	\$83.48	\$82.47
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame, 550-600 lb. ....	123.37	*	110.62
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame 750-800 lb. ....	117.72	104.65	100.39
Choice Boxed Beef, 600-750 lb. Carcass. ....	162.80	141.45	142.15
Western Corn Belt Base Hog Price Carcass, Negotiated. ....	81.69	57.51	46.80
Feeder Pigs, National Direct 50 lbs, FOB. ....	54.89	29.03	*
Pork Carcass Cutout, 185 lb. Carcass, 51-52% Lean. ....	91.15	65.69	52.31
Slaughter Lambs, Ch. & Pr., Heavy, Wooled, South Dakota, Direct. ....	99.00	103.25	91.25
National Carcass Lamb Cutout, FOB. ....	278.48	256.79	250.27
<b><u>Crops,</u></b>			
<b><u>Daily Spot Prices</u></b>			
Wheat, No. 1, H.W. Imperial, bu. ....	8.07	4.49	3.94
Corn, No. 2, Yellow Omaha, bu. ....	5.69	2.96	3.11
Soybeans, No. 1, Yellow Omaha, bu. ....	13.02	10.13	10.48
Grain Sorghum, No. 2, Yellow Dorchester, cwt. ....	8.73	5.02	5.12
Oats, No. 2, Heavy Minneapolis, MN, bu. ....	*	2.07	2.09
<b><u>Feed</u></b>			
Alfalfa, Large Square Bales, Good to Premium, RFV 160-185 Northeast Nebraska, ton. ....	190.00	*	*
Alfalfa, Large Rounds, Good Platte Valley, ton. ....	77.50	*	*
Grass Hay, Large Rounds, Premium Nebraska, ton. ....	88.75	*	*
Dried Distillers Grains, 10% Moisture, Nebraska Average. ....	175.00	80.00	81.00
Wet Distillers Grains, 65-70% Moisture, Nebraska Average. ....	59.50	37.00	32.50
<b>*No Market</b>			

According to estimates released by the Bureau of the Census in August, 2009, Nebraska's total housing stock increased by 5,529 units between July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2008, an increase of 0.7 percent for the year. This represented an estimated rate of growth in housing stock slightly below the state's estimated rate of population growth, which was 0.8 percent for the same time period.

As would be expected from trends in the Nebraska population growth in housing, it was heavily concentrated, with 90 percent of the increase occurring in metropolitan counties, and 86 percent occurring in the state's three largest counties: Douglas (+2,235 units), Lancaster (+1,031 units) and Sarpy (+2,235 units). However, where 27 counties experienced a growth in population, 35 experienced a growth in housing stock.

For most of the counties that are estimated to have seen their housing stock increase, the actual number of new units was quite small. Only 18 counties experienced an increase of 20 units or more, and beyond the three big metropolitan counties, only Hall County (+273 units) saw an increase greater than 100. Other than those four counties, only two saw their housing numbers increase at a rate faster than the state average: metropolitan Saunders County (+81 units) and the small trade center county of Merrick (+69 units).

Among Nebraska's 50 smallest counties (small town and frontier counties), ten added a total of 63 housing units, with the largest increase being 20 units in Antelope County. The remaining 40 small counties lost a collective total of 121 units.

If the 2008 estimates are correct, the period 2007 to 2008 saw a decrease in the rate of housing growth statewide, and a reversal of direction from growth to decline among the most rural counties in Nebraska. Housing in general tends to grow faster than the population, as young people leave their parents' home and establish their own residence, often singly. However, in areas of significant population loss and especially where the population includes large numbers of elderly residents, the general pattern can be partially offset by the



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**Table 1. Total Housing Units and Change: 2000, 2007, 2008**

Nebraska Counties by Type							
County Type* (# of Counties)	Total Housing Units			Change 2000 - 2008		Change 2007 - 2008	
	July 1, 2008	July 1, 2007	April 1, 2000 (Census)	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Nebraska (93)</b>	786,334	780,805	722,670	63,664	8.8	5,529	0.7
<b>Metropolitan (9)</b>	436,854	431,895	384,352	52,502	13.7	4,959	1.1
<b>Non-Metropolitan (84)</b>	349,480	348,910	338,318	11,162	3.3	570	0.2
<b>Micropolitan Core (10)</b>	152,961	152,429	145,514	7,447	5.1	532	0.3
<b>Small Trade (24)</b>	106,117	106,021	103,724	2,393	2.3	96	0.1
<b>Small Town (22)</b>	61,008	61,011	59,957	1,051	1.8	-3	0.0
<b>Frontier (28)</b>	29,394	29,449	29,123	271	0.9	-55	-0.2

\* Bureau of the Census

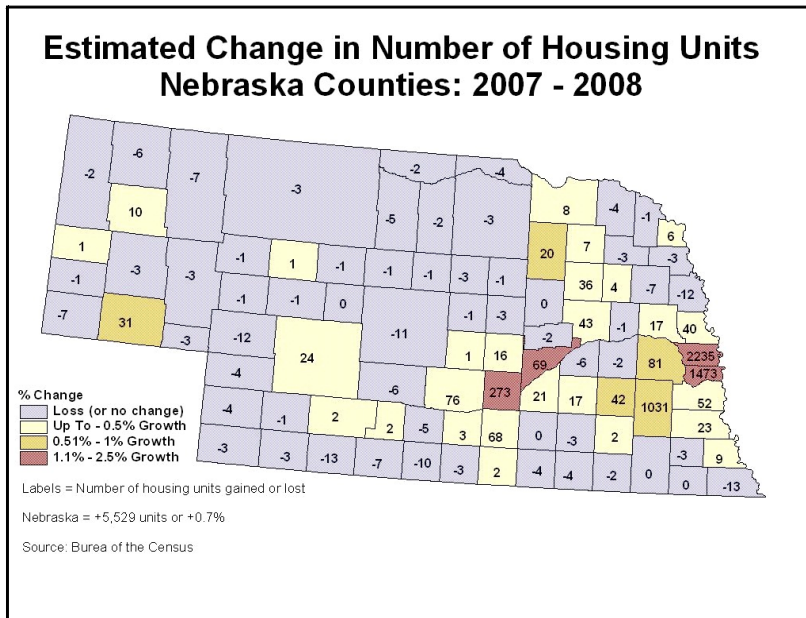
availability of housing created by the exodus of previous occupants.

The methodology employed in calculating these estimates is quite complex, and therefore subject to errors. As a result, the estimates should be read with caution. The estimates are constructed from the aggregation of several variables. Permitted construction (estimated to account for about 98 percent of new construction annually) with a six-month lag-time built into the model, is added to an estimate of non-permitted construction (where such permits are not required) derived from survey data. New mobile home placements are estimated from the number of mobile homes shipped to the state and distributed across counties, based on the pattern of placements

known from the most recent Census of Housing. Housing losses are estimated from the rate of loss among various types of construction as understood from the American Housing Survey (1997 – 2003).

Even with the likelihood of error introduced by the estimation procedures, the general pattern of housing growth being heavily concentrated in a very small number of counties can be assumed to be reliable. Moreover, since rural Nebraska is home to some of the oldest housing stock in the nation, the likelihood that some units will deteriorate to an uninhabitable condition and will thus be demolished is quite high, and it is not unreasonable to expect that areas experiencing declines in population will also experience declines in housing.

For rural communities seeking to support economic development through the attraction of new residents, the pattern of housing decline found in these estimates may indeed be problematic, and seems to support the efforts that some communities are making to encourage new residential construction.



Census housing estimates for states and counties can be found on-line at:

<http://www.census.gov/popest/housing/housing.html>

**\*County types are:**

Metropolitan – As defined by the Office of Management and Budget.

Micropolitan Core – Having a population center of 10,000 to 49,999.

Small Trade Center – Having a population center of 2,500 to 9,999.

Small Town – Having no population center of 2,500 or larger.

Frontier – Having no population center of 2,500 and a population density of less than six per square mile.

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