

REGIONAL Profile



High Plains



High Plains Counties

Armstrong	Bailey	Briscoe	Carson	Castro	Childress	Cochran	Collingsworth
Cottle	Crosby	Dallam	Deaf Smith	Dickens	Donley	Floyd	Garza
Gray	Hale	Hall	Hansford	Hartley	Hemphill	Hockley	Hutchinson
Kent	King	Lamb	Lipscomb	Lubbock	Lynn	Moore	Motley
Ochiltree	Oldham	Parmer	Potter	Randall	Roberts	Sherman	Stonewall
Swisher	Terry	Wheeler	Yoakum				



About the High Plains Region

Linking New Mexico in the west and Oklahoma in the east, the High Plains region spans roughly 42,100 square miles and covers the Texas Panhandle, which includes the Lubbock and Amarillo metropolitan areas. The High Plains region lays claim to some of the state's most striking natural attractions, including Palo Duro Canyon in the south and the scenic Prairie Dog Town Fork Red River, which cuts through the central portion of the panhandle.

The High Plains region is home to multiple higher education institutions, including Texas Tech University and West Texas A&M University. The region boasts a notable pioneering spirit, reflected in innovation and entrepreneurship programs such as the TTU Innovation Hub and the WT Enterprise Center. The region also sources livestock and other agricultural products for not only Texas, but the entire U.S. A growing transportation and material moving workforce supports the region's many exports. The windswept plains of the region also provide a valuable source of energy for the state — the High Plains has seen the construction of over 2,000 wind turbines in the past 25 years, contributing to Texas' claim to more wind energy production than any other state.

Areas in the High Plains region are undergoing efforts to diversify both the economy and workforce. Bolstering infrastructure is also a focus in the region, which relies on the Ogallala Aquifer for its water.



High Plains Fast Facts

	Population	Industry	Exports	Workforce
Magnitude	0.9M <i>Population (2021)</i>	\$50B <i>Contribution to GDP (2021)</i>	\$8B <i>Foreign Exports (2021)</i>	0.5M <i>Total Employment (2021)</i>
Share	3% <i>Share of Texas Population (2021)</i>	2% <i>Share of Texas GDP (2021)</i>	3% <i>Share of Texas Foreign Exports (2021)</i>	3% <i>Share of Texas Employment (2021)</i>
Growth	2% <i>Total Population Growth (2011–21)</i>	7% <i>Total GDP Growth (2011–21)</i>	14% <i>Total Foreign Export Growth (2011–21)</i>	6% <i>Total Employment Growth (2011–21)</i>

Quantitative and qualitative research was performed May 2023 through May 2024; data cited reflects the then-most current and/or granular information for the time periods noted.

Data Sources: IMPLAN, Data Library, Texas, (2011–21); Guidehouse Analysis.

REGIONAL Detail



High Plains



Business and Industry

Top Industry Clusters by LQ (2021)	LQ (2021)	Emp. (2021)	GDP (2021)	Top Industry Clusters by Emp. Growth (2015-21)	Emp. Growth (2015-21)	Emp. (2021)	GDP (2021)
Livestock Processing	9.90	12,760	\$1,048M	Trailers, Motor Homes, and Appliances	106%	360	\$32M
Footwear	6.99	330	\$11M	Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence	84%	5,090	\$453M
Agricultural Inputs and Services	5.27	8,730	\$423M	Furniture	76%	500	\$29M
Forestry	4.61	8,820	\$392M	Lighting and Electrical Equipment	59%	310	\$40M
Metal Mining	3.80	780	\$311M	Environmental Services	36%	1,190	\$162M

Note: Industry clusters consisting of less than 0.1% of total regional employment are not shown in tables.



Workforce

Top Occupations by LQ (2021)	LQ (2021)	Emp. (2021)	Top Occupations by Emp. Growth (2018-21)	Emp. Growth (2018-21)	Emp. (2021)
Agricultural Workers	4.92	13,980	Material Moving Workers	43%	20,800
Extraction Workers	4.54	2,200	Top Executives	32%	8,370
Food Processing Workers	2.79	6,380	Business Operations Specialists	22%	12,650
Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	1.42	14,480	Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	14%	5,840
Other Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	1.39	5,840	Other Management Occupations	12%	7,470

Note: Occupations that predominately serve the local community and occupations consisting of less than 0.5% of total regional employment not shown in tables.



Regional Opportunities

Strengths

Productivity Growth

The High Plains region GDP and employment growth (7% and 6%) outpaced population growth (2%) from 2011 to 2021, indicating an increase in labor force participation and productivity.

Natural Resources

The High Plains regional economy has strength in industries that draw on natural resources, including livestock processing, agriculture, forestry, and mining.

Tailored Workforce

The regional workforce has strengths in agriculture and food processing, resource extraction, and transportation, which support industries that fuel both the statewide and national economy.

Opportunities

The High Plains region can continue expanding its contribution to statewide GDP by targeting growth in higher value-add industries, such as advanced manufacturing.

The region can continue to grow its strength in livestock and agriculture, while diversifying its economic base by capitalizing on growth areas such as manufacturing and IT-related industries.

The High Plains region is also experiencing growth in management, operations, and logistics occupations, indicating that this region is well-positioned to support the growth of business operations for a variety of industries.

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