

## Sunflower State Summary

Kansas, known as the Sunflower State, was the 34<sup>th</sup> state to enter the Union on January 29, 1861. Kansas is 417 miles long by 211 miles wide, encompassing 82,277 square miles. The geographical center of the contiguous United States is located near Lebanon, Kansas. “*Ad Astra per Aspera*” – “To the Stars through Difficulties” is the state motto. Famous Kansans include George Washington Carver, Walter P. Chrysler, John Steuart Curry, Robert Dole, Amelia Earhart, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ron Evans, Jean Harlow, Steven Hawley, James Langston Hughes, William Inge, Buster Keaton, Karl Menninger, Gordon Parks, Kathleen Sebelius, William Allen White, and Laura Ingalls Wilder.

### Population

With a population estimate of 2,802,134 in 2008, Kansas ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of the 50 states. As of the 2000 Census, Kansas had a population density of 32.9 people per square mile, which ranked 41<sup>st</sup> of the 50 states. With a growth rate of 4.2 percent from 2000-2008, Kansas is below the U.S. growth rate of 8.0 percent. Kansas has 627 cities, 37 with populations over 10,000. In 2008, around 63 percent of the Kansas population lived in the four Metropolitan Areas of Kansas City (Kans.), Lawrence, Topeka, and Wichita. Not included is Manhattan which was designated as a metro area in November 2008. The largest city is Wichita with a 2008 population of 366,046.

### Government

Kansas has 105 counties, with four U.S. House Districts, 40 Kansas Senate Districts, and 125 Kansas House Districts. Kansas State General Fund expenditures in FY2008 were \$6.102 billion. The majority of the state's expenditures go to Education at \$3.934 billion, or 64.5 percent of the state's expenditures in FY2008.

### Employment

An estimated 1,431,340 people were employed in Kansas in 2008, making up 0.98 percent of the U.S. workforce. The unemployment rate in Kansas was 4.4 for 2008, below the U.S. unemployment rate of 5.8. Kansas' unemployment rate was the 13<sup>th</sup> lowest out of the 50 states.

### Agriculture, Energy, Aircraft

Kansas is also sometimes called “The Wheat State,” and it certainly lives up to that name, ranking second in wheat produced (283.8 million bushels in 2007) and first in wheat flour milled. The major Kansas exports in 2008 were, in order of value from greatest to least: airplanes and other aircraft; wheat (except durum) and meslin; meat of bovines, boneless, fresh, or chilled; and dog and cat food put up for retail sale. While oil production in Kansas is at an 11-year high of 39,526,240 barrels in 2008, this is a 53.5 percent decrease since 1970.

### Income

In 2008, Kansas ranked 24<sup>th</sup> in the nation for per capita personal income at \$37,798. The average annual wage for Kansas was \$37,044 in 2007, below the U.S. average of \$44,458. Poverty rate estimates for Kansas in 2007 had 11.7 percent of the population living in poverty and 16.7 percent below 125 percent of the poverty threshold. The national average was 12.5 percent in poverty and 17.0 percent below 125 percent of the poverty threshold.

### Education

Kansas has 296 school districts which served 446,874 FTE students during the 2007-08 school year. The largest school district is Wichita, which has 45,182 students. Kansas ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for percent of adults 25 or older with a high school diploma or higher, and 16<sup>th</sup> for percent that have completed a Bachelor's degree. Kansas has 54 institutions of higher education – 29 universities and colleges, 19 community colleges, and 6 technical schools. The largest university in Kansas is the University of Kansas, with a Fall Semester 2008 enrollment of 26,999 for Lawrence and 3,103 for the KU Medical Center in Kansas City, Kans.