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Mid-America Manufacturing Sector Improves Despite Manufacturing Job Losses and High Inflation

June 2026 Survey Highlights

- The overall index moved above growth neutral for a fifth straight month.
- The nine-state region lost manufacturing jobs for the 13th time in the past 15 months.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that over the past 12 months, the region lost 15,000 (-1.0%) manufacturing jobs while the nation has shed 47,000 (-0.4%) manufacturing jobs.
- Regional food processing firms shed 8,000 jobs, approximately 3.4% of the industry's employment base over the past 12 months. Nebraska accounted for 48.9% of regional food processing job losses over the period.
- Due to significant food processing job losses, Missouri and Nebraska accounted for almost 68% of regional manufacturing job losses.
- The June price gauge climbed to a level indicating significant wholesale inflationary pressures, further undermining any chance of a rate cut by the Federal Reserve at its July meeting.
- More than one-third of supply managers indicated that their firm was passing along 100% of costs hikes from tariffs and the Iranian War to their customers.

OMAHA, Neb. (July 1, 2026) — The Creighton University Mid-America Business Conditions Index, a leading economic indicator for the nine-state region stretching from Minnesota to Arkansas, moved above growth neutral for the fifth straight month, pointing to solid economic growth in regional manufacturing. This manufacturing expansion is likely to positively impact the broader economy in the months ahead.

Overall Index: The Business Conditions Index, which uses the identical methodology as the national Institute for Supply Management (ISM) and ranges between 0 and 100 with 50.0 representing growth neutral, climbed to a solid 56.0 from 54.4 in May.

“Creighton’s latest survey indicates that the regional manufacturing sector continues to improve, albeit slowly, with manufacturing job losses for the month and escalating wholesale inflation,” said Ernie Goss, PhD, Director of Creighton University’s Economic Forecasting Group and the Jack A. MacAllister Chair in Regional Economics in the [Heider College of Business](#).

The Mid-America report is produced independently of the national ISM.

Employment: The June employment index increased to a weak 49.8 from 47.0 in May. “Much like the national ISM manufacturing job index, the regional manufacturing job market remains weak. “However, only one in 13 firms reported layoffs during the month,” reported Goss.

The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the region’s manufacturing sector shed approximately 15,000 jobs while the nation lost roughly 47,000 manufacturing jobs during the same time period. Iowa, Missouri and Nebraska accounted for approximately 68% of the manufacturing jobs lost in the past 12 months.

Regional food processing firms shed 8,000 jobs, approximately 3.4% of the industry’s employment base over the past 12 months. Nebraska accounted for 48.9% of regional food processing job losses over the period.

Other comments from supply managers in June:

- “It is difficult to find people that are both qualified and will show up every day and on time.”
- “Business conditions are already improving with the pending end to the Iran War.”

Wholesale Prices: The June price gauge declined to 78.3 from 81.7 in May. “The Creighton regional price gauge and the national ISM wholesale price index are elevated and undermine any chance of rate cuts at the Federal Reserve’s rate-setting committee’s next meetings on July 28-29,” said Goss.

In the June survey, supply managers were asked the share of rising input costs from tariffs and the War in Iran. Approximately, 36% reported that their firm passed along 100% of the cost increase; 50% indicated that their firm passed along less than half of the rising input costs; and the remaining 14% reported that their firm had not experienced upturns in costs from tariffs and the Iran War.

Confidence: Looking ahead six months, economic optimism, as captured by the June Business Confidence Index, increased to 50.0, up from 42.3 in May. “I expect falling energy prices, along with fewer supply chain disruptions, to push the confidence index even higher in the coming months,” said Goss.

Inventories: The June regional inventory index, reflecting levels of raw materials and supplies, rose to 53.3 from May’s 52.0.

Trade: Retaliation from higher U.S. tariffs and trade restrictions pushed the new export orders below growth neutral for the last 10 months. The new export orders index decreased to 47.3 from 47.4 in May. As a result of supply bottlenecks and higher input prices, supply managers have pulled back on purchasing from abroad in the last 12 months. The May import index fell to 44.1 from 45.9 in May.

The index for the speed of deliveries of raw materials and supplies declined to a still strong 62.5 from 63.9 in May. High readings indicate slowing delivery speed and/or rising supply chain disruptions/delays.

Other survey components of the June Business Conditions Index were: new orders rose to 58.7 from 55.5 in May; and the production index climbed to 55.9 from May’s 53.8.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group has conducted the monthly survey of supply managers in nine states since 1994 to produce leading economic indicators of the Mid-America economy. States included in the survey are Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

Below are the state reports:

Arkansas: The state's June Business Conditions Index climbed to 56.2 from May's 53.9. Components from the June survey of supply managers were: new orders at 58.8; production at 56.0; delivery lead time at 62.7; inventories at 53.5; and employment at 50.0. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector shed 400 jobs for a loss of 0.3% of its manufacturing base.

Iowa: The state's Business Conditions Index for June increased to 55.3 from 51.8 in May. Components of the overall June index were: new orders at 55.2; production at 56.0; delivery lead time at 62.7; employment at 49.2; and inventories at 53.5. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector shed 3,200 jobs for a loss of 1.5% of its manufacturing base.

Kansas: The Kansas Business Conditions Index for June rose to 55.7 from 53.3 in May. Components of the leading economic indicators from the monthly survey of supply managers for June were: new orders at 58.4; production at 55.7; delivery lead time at 62.0; employment at 49.3; and inventories at 53.0. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector dropped 1,500 jobs for a loss of 0.9% of its manufacturing base.

Minnesota: The June Business Conditions Index for Minnesota expanded to a regional high of 57.1 from 56.4 in May. Components of the overall June index were: new orders at 59.4; production or sales at 56.5; delivery lead time at 64.0; inventories at 54.3; and employment at 51.2. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector **added** 4,200 jobs for a gain of 1.3% of its manufacturing base.

Missouri: The state's June Business Conditions Index climbed to 55.3 from 50.0 in May. Components of the overall index from the survey of supply managers for June were: new orders at 58.2; production at 55.5; delivery lead time at 61.5; inventories at 52.6; and employment at 48.7. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector shed 5,800 jobs for a loss of 2.1% of its manufacturing base.

Nebraska: The state's June Business Conditions Index increased to a regional low of 52.5 from May's 50.5. Components of the index from the monthly survey of supply managers for June were: new orders at 56.2; production at 53.9; delivery lead time at 58.0; inventories at 49.3; and employment at 43.7. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector dropped 4,800 jobs for a loss of 4.7% of its manufacturing base. Nebraska accounted for 48.9% of 8,000 regional food processing job losses over the period.

North Dakota: The state's Business Conditions Index for June climbed to 55.1 from 54.4 in May. Components of the overall index for June were: new orders at 58.0; production at 55.4; delivery lead time at 61.2; employment at 48.5; and inventories at 52.5. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector lost 100 jobs for a 0.4% decline in the state's manufacturing base.

Oklahoma: The state's Business Conditions Index for June increased to 55.5 from 52.5 in May. Components of the overall June index were: new orders at 58.3; production at 55.6; delivery lead time at 61.7; inventories at 52.8; and employment at 49.0. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector shed 2,200 jobs for a loss of 1.6% of its manufacturing base.

South Dakota: The June Business Conditions Index for South Dakota climbed to 56.2 from 53.9 in May. Components of the overall June index were: new orders at 58.8; production at 56.0; delivery lead time at 62.8; inventories at 53.5; and employment at 50.0. The latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that over the past 12 months, the state's manufacturing sector shed 800 jobs for a loss of 1.8% of its manufacturing base.

Survey results for the month of July will be released on the first business day of August.

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