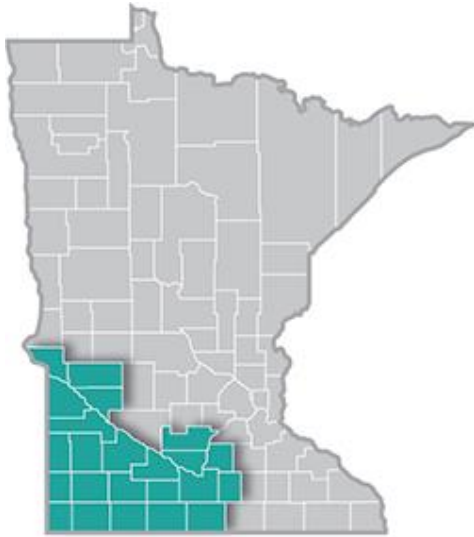


Southwest Minnesota – Manufacturing Overview



According to DEED’s [Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages](#) (QCEW) data, the 23-county Southwest Minnesota region was home to 623 manufacturing establishments employing 31,276 jobs in 2023. Manufacturing provided 18.1% of total employment in the region, making it the largest industry in the region just ahead of health care and social assistance (29,905 jobs) and well ahead of retail trade (19,151 jobs). Southwest is the only region in the state where manufacturing is still the largest employing industry. The region accounted for 11.2% of total manufacturing employment in the state.

These manufacturers provided about \$1.99 billion total payroll in 2023, making it the largest industry in terms of payroll as well. Average annual wages in manufacturing were \$63,492 in 2023, which was nearly \$10,975 and 20.9% higher than the total of all industries (see Table 1).

Table 1. Southwest Minnesota Manufacturing Industry Employment Statistics, 2023

NAICS Code	NAICS Industry Title	Number of Jobs	Number of Firms	Total Payroll	Avg. Annual Wages
0	Total, All Industries	172,921	12,929	\$9,090,562,731	\$52,520
31	Manufacturing	31,276	623	\$1,985,617,351	\$63,492
312	Food Manufacturing	11,331	117	\$733,508,994	\$64,792
333	Machinery Manufacturing	3,673	65	\$231,012,819	\$62,868
323	Printing & Related Support Activities	2,217	60	\$111,317,224	\$50,180
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,161	97	\$132,650,057	\$61,360
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, & Component Manufacturing	2,069	19	\$140,785,861	\$68,068
334	Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,705	15	\$108,881,731	\$63,908
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	1,561	45	\$121,579,957	\$77,896
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1,172	34	\$70,977,333	\$60,476
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	1,148	21	\$67,553,855	\$58,968
325	Chemical Manufacturing	1,005	29	\$93,086,788	\$92,560
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	975	39	\$53,481,399	\$54,860
326	Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing	771	19	\$44,782,656	\$58,084
312	Beverage & Tobacco Product Manufacturing	500	19	\$18,295,712	\$36,556
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	496	6	\$35,782,236	\$72,228
337	Furniture & Related Product Manufacturing	355	24	\$16,147,213	\$45,604

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Food Manufacturing was easily the largest sector, with 11,331 jobs at 117 establishments, and just over \$733.51 million in total payroll in 2023. Southwest Minnesota has 24% of statewide employment in Food Manufacturing, and had the largest number of food manufacturing jobs of the 6 planning regions in the state. The largest subsectors in Food Manufacturing include Animal Slaughtering and Processing (6,318 jobs), Fruit and Vegetable Preserving and Specialty Food Manufacturing (1,459 jobs), Dairy Product Manufacturing (1,449 jobs), Grain and Oilseed Milling (926 jobs), and Animal Food Manufacturing (595 jobs).

Machinery Manufacturing is the second largest sector, with 3,673 jobs at 65 establishments. That gave the region a location quotient of 1.7, exhibiting a much higher concentration than the state. With 2,891 jobs, the largest subsector in Southwest is Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing. The third largest manufacturing sector in the region is Printing and Related Support Activities, which had 2,217 jobs at 60 establishments in 2023, and was also much more strongly concentrated in Southwest Minnesota than the state, with a location quotient of 2.1. Combined, these three large sectors provided 55.1% of total manufacturing jobs in the region.

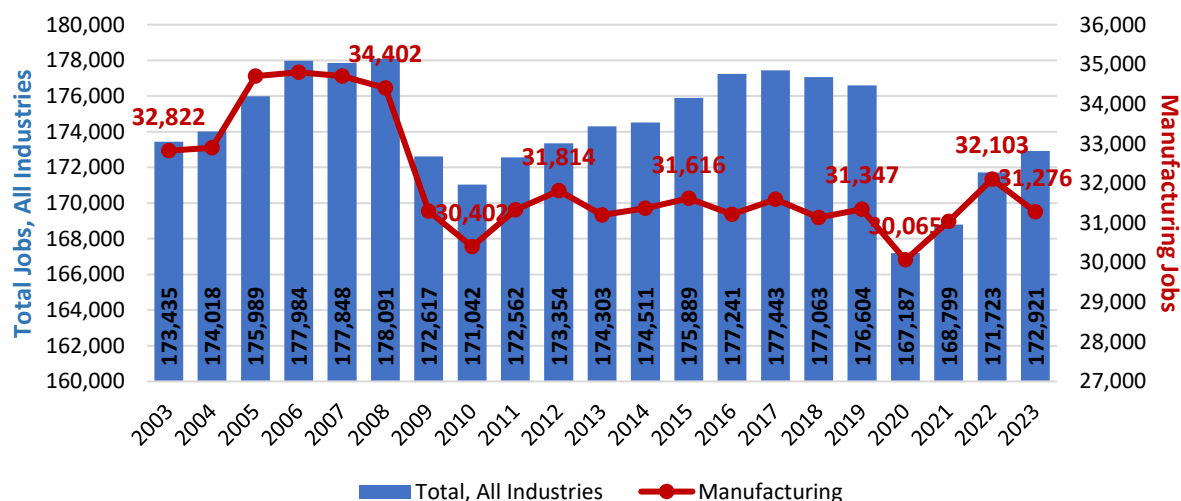
Southwest Minnesota also had large numbers of jobs in Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing (2,161 jobs), Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing (2,069 jobs), Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing (1,705 jobs), and Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing (1,561 jobs). The region also had smaller but notable employment in Wood Product Manufacturing (1,172 jobs), Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (1,148 jobs), Chemical Manufacturing (1,005 jobs), Miscellaneous Manufacturing (975 jobs), Plastics and Rubber Product Manufacturing (771 jobs), Beverage Product Manufacturing (500 jobs), Primary Metal Manufacturing (496 jobs), and Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing (355 jobs).

Average annual wages in manufacturing (\$63,492) were 20.9% higher than the total of all industries (\$52,520) led by high average wages in Chemical Manufacturing (\$92,560), Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing (\$77,896), Primary Metal Manufacturing (\$72,228), and Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing (\$68,068).

Industry Trends

Manufacturers in Southwest Minnesota cut 4,000 jobs during the Great Recession, then regained only 945 jobs from 2010 to 2019. The region’s manufacturers suffered more job losses during the pandemic from 2019 to 2020 dropping over 1,282 jobs in one year, to a low of 30,065 jobs in 2020. Since then, manufacturers in the region have again enjoyed a slow but steady growth in jobs, regaining over 1,200 net new jobs from 2020 to 2023 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Southwest Minnesota Employment Trends, 2003-2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Thanks to a slow ongoing recovery, manufacturers in Southwest Minnesota now have about 80 more jobs now than ten years ago, in 2013. Manufacturing employment was up 0.3% from 2013 to 2023, while the total of all industries declined 0.8% over the past 10 years, a loss of 1,382 jobs.

The biggest job declines in the past decade occurred in Printing and Related Support Activities, which stamped out 1,797 jobs, Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing, which sliced 320 jobs, and Plastic and Rubber Products Manufacturing which lost 183 jobs.

In sum, 9 of the 15 manufacturing sectors had more jobs in 2023 than in 2013, with the largest job gains occurring in Food Manufacturing, which added 1,300 jobs, and Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, which gained more than 300 jobs. Southwest Minnesota also saw important job gains in Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing, Wood Product Manufacturing, Chemical Manufacturing, and Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing.

Conversely, 5 of the 15 subsectors added jobs in the past year. The biggest gains were in Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing adding 110 jobs. Machinery Manufacturing also experience an increase of jobs from 2022 to 2023, adding 99 jobs, a 2.8%. Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing also added 71 jobs in the past year. In contrast Food Manufacturing and Printing and Related Support Activities suffered the greatest loss of jobs. Overall, the Manufacturing industry had a loss of 827 jobs from 2022 to 2023.

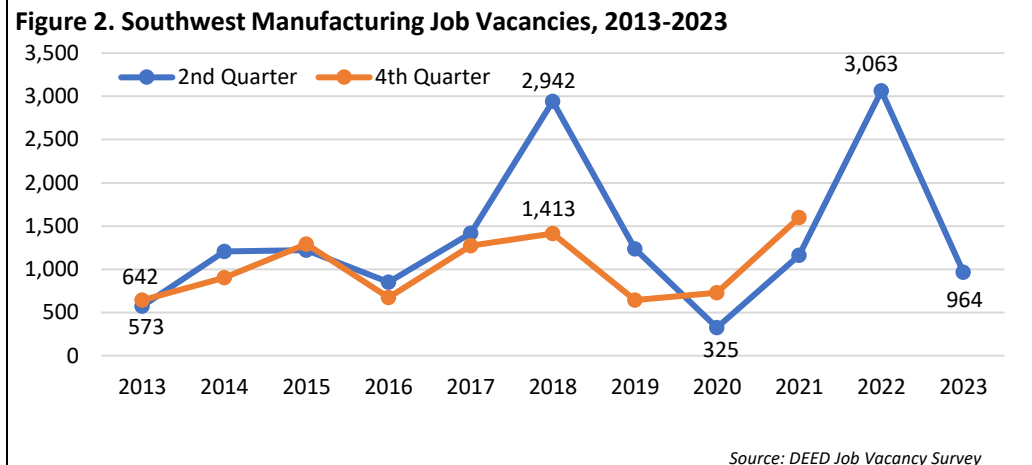
Table 2. Southwest Minnesota Manufacturing Industry Employment Statistics, 2023			1-Year Trend 2022-2023		5-Year Trend 2018-2023		10-Year Trend 2013-2023	
NAICS Code	NAICS Industry Title	Number of Jobs	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
0	Total, All Industries	172,921	1,198	0.7%	-4,142	-2.3%	-1,382	-0.8%
31	Manufacturing	31,276	-827	-2.6%	143	0.5%	80	0.3%
311	Food Manufacturing	11,331	-691	-5.7%	351	3.2%	1,300	13.0%
333	Machinery Manufacturing	3,673	99	2.8%	519	16.5%	-9	-0.2%
323	Printing & Related Support Activities	2,217	-164	-6.9%	-713	-24.3%	-1,797	-44.8%
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,161	37	1.7%	142	7.0%	144	7.1%
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, & Component Mfg.	2,069	110	5.6%	39	1.9%	60	3.0%
334	Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,705	71	4.3%	-81	-4.5%	-320	-15.8%
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	1,561	-27	-1.7%	2	0.1%	306	24.4%
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1,172	-149	-11.3%	112	10.6%	188	19.1%
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	1,148	-11	-0.9%	153	15.4%	103	9.9%
325	Chemical Manufacturing	1,005	-5	-0.5%	-39	-3.7%	175	21.1%
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	975	-2	-0.2%	161	19.8%	143	17.2%
326	Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing	771	-109	-12.4%	-316	-29.1%	-183	-19.2%
312	Beverage & Tobacco Product Manufacturing	500	17	3.5%	102	25.6%	237	90.1%
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	496	-3	-0.6%	-91	-15.5%	-69	-12.2%
337	Furniture & Related Product Manufacturing	355	-8	-2.2%	-192	-35.1%	-182	-33.9%

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Industry Demand

The steady recovery in manufacturing employment in recent years has led to a rising number of [job vacancies](#) across the Southwest Minnesota region. After setting a new record high of 3,063 job openings in the second quarter of 2022, manufacturers posted 964 vacancies in the second quarter of 2023, returning to pre-pandemic levels (see Figure 2).

The median wage offer for these vacancies climbed to \$21.87 per hour in the second quarter of 2023, about \$4.40 more than openings reported in the second quarter of 2022, about a 25% increase. About 22% of the manufacturing vacancies required postsecondary education and nearly



60% required at least a year of prior work experience, which was up in the past year. About 2% percent of the posted manufacturing openings were part-time, as compared to 26% of vacancies across all industries (Table 3).

Table 3. Southwest Minnesota Manufacturing Job Vacancy Survey, 2nd Quarter 2023

NAICS Industry Title	Number of Job Vacancies	Median Wage Offer	Percent Part-time	Percent Requiring Postsecondary Education	Percent Requiring 1+ Years Work Experience
Total, All Industries	9,546	\$19.74	26%	31%	33%
Manufacturing	964	\$21.87	2%	22%	59%

Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey

The largest number of manufacturing vacancies were production occupations, including Metal Workers and Plastic Workers, Other Production Occupations, and Supervisors of Production Workers. The median wage offer for these positions was \$18.93, but ranged between \$12.99 and \$28.11 per hour depending on the occupations. Manufacturers in Southwest Minnesota were also looking to hire sales, office, transportation and material moving, management, and installation, maintenance, and repair workers (Table 4).

Table 4. Southwest Minnesota Production Occupations Job Vacancy Survey (2nd Qtr. 2023)

SOC Occupational Title	Number of Job Vacancies	Median Wage Offer	Percent Part-Time	Percent Requiring Post-Secondary Education	Percent Requiring 1+ Years Work Experience
Total, All Industries	9,546	\$19.74	26%	31%	33%
Production Occupations	540	\$18.93	18%	12%	37%
Supervisors of Production Workers	65	\$24.27	0%	28%	90%
Assemblers and Fabricators	55	\$18.64	0%	0%	5%
Food Processing Workers	38	\$18.45	3%	0%	45%
Metal Workers and Plastic Workers	157	\$20.11	0%	20%	62%
Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers	29	\$14.81	70%	0%	0%
Plant and System Operators	19	\$25.42	26%	9%	11%
Other Production Occupations	153	\$15.72	45%	7%	9%
Office & Administrative Support	563	\$19.27	25%	9%	44%
Transportation & Material Moving	773	\$21.15	36%	3%	24%
Architecture & Engineering	96	\$28.56	0%	74%	86%

Management	202	\$32.04	0%	66%	87%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	653	\$22.92	6%	33%	60%
Sales & Related	1,164	\$15.93	22%	5%	20%

Source: Job Vacancy Survey

Industry Occupational Employment

DEED’s Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program provides detailed employment and wage data for a wide range of occupations involved in manufacturing. In sum, there were an estimated 19,500 people working in production occupations in Southwest Minnesota, accounting for about 11.5% of total employment in the region. Median hourly wages for production occupations were \$22.27 in 2024, but ranged from \$16.37 at the low end (10th percentile) to \$30.60 at the high end (90th percentile).

As noted above, in addition to production occupations, manufacturers also require the services of workers in several other occupational groups, such as office and administrative support, transportation and material moving, architecture and engineering, management, and installation, maintenance and repair. Not surprisingly, wages were higher for the higher level positions (see Table 5).

Table 5. Southwest Minnesota Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024

SOC Occupational Title	Estimated Regional Employment	Regional Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Statewide Employment	Statewide Median Hourly Wage
Total, All Occupations	169,300	\$22.98	2,881,100	\$25.22
Production Occupations	19,500	\$22.27	203,810	\$23.05
Office & Administrative Support	19,330	\$22.56	352,250	\$23.86
Transportation & Material Moving	16,250	\$22.25	225,820	\$22.86
Architecture & Engineering	2,550	\$38.29	58,320	\$42.97
Management	9,230	\$46.97	201,710	\$57.75
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	7,870	\$27.56	104,530	\$29.54
Sales & Related	14,430	\$17.35	242,440	\$18.82
Business & Financial Operations	6,800	\$33.80	202,700	\$39.26
Computer & Mathematical	1,750	\$39.00	98,240	\$50.83

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics

Team assemblers, first-line supervisors, machinists, slaughterers and meat packers, and more are the most common jobs found at manufacturing firms in Minnesota, according to DEED’s Occupational Employment and Wage data. Median hourly wages for these manufacturing positions ranged from a low of \$15.53 per hour for Tailors, Dressmakers, and Custom Sewers to a high of nearly \$42 per hour for Power Plant Operators. Almost all of the production-related manufacturing occupations can be gained with a high school diploma and learned through on-the-job training, though some also benefit from vocational training or associate degrees (Table 6).

Table 6. Southwest Minnesota Top 30 Production-related Manufacturing Occupations, 2024 Wage Data

SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Estimated Regional Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Minnesota Educational Requirements for Occupations
533032	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	4,000	\$26.20	High School or equiv.
537062	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	3,580	\$20.67	High School or equiv.
512090	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	3,520	\$19.56	High School or equiv.
499071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	2,140	\$24.91	High School or equiv.

513023	Slaughterers & Meat Packers	1,560	\$19.70	High School or equiv.
519111	Packaging & Filling Machine Operators & Tenders	1,260	\$21.44	High School or equiv.
511011	First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	1,180	\$35.20	High School or equiv.
513092	Food Batchmakers	1,140	\$17.43	High School or equiv.
514121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	980	\$25.93	High School or equiv.
519061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	930	\$22.79	High School or equiv.
515112	Printing Press Operators	690	\$21.47	High School or equiv.
513099	Food Processing Workers, All Other	640	\$18.11	High School or equiv.
537051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	600	\$24.96	High School or equiv.
537064	Packers & Packers, Hand	590	\$15.94	High School or equiv.
499041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	580	29.18	Vocational training
514041	Machinists	570	\$26.48	Vocational training
519199	Production Workers, All Other	560	\$23.62	High School or equiv.
519198	Helpers--Production Workers	310	\$19.58	High School or equiv.
512028	Electromechanical Equipment Assemblers	300	\$19.91	High School or equiv.
519121	Coating, Painting, & Spraying Machine Setters & Operators	240	\$23.56	High School or equiv.
519161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	170	\$23.29	High School or equiv.
519032	Cutting & Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	160	\$24.84	High School or equiv.
517011	Cabinetmakers & Bench Carpenters	130	\$17.93	High School or equiv.
514072	Molding, Coremaking & Casting Machine Setters & Operators	120	\$23.37	High School or equiv.
514111	Tool & Die Makers	40	\$31.06	Vocational training

Source: DEED Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, Minnesota Educational Requirements for Occupations

In addition to the production-related occupations, manufacturers also rely heavily on sales and office workers including manufacturing sales representatives, customer service representatives, and production, planning, shipping, and traffic clerks; transportation and material moving workers such as truck drivers and packers and packagers; engineering occupations like industrial, mechanical, and electrical engineers; management positions such as industrial production and general managers; and business and financial operations occupations like accountants and auditors.

Many of these occupations require higher education, but also offer higher wages. For example, all of the engineering positions have median wages above \$30 per hour in Southwest Minnesota, with median wages topping \$50 per hour for engineering managers, but also require bachelor’s degrees at the minimum. Likewise, software developers, industrial production managers, and general and operations managers all earn well over \$30 per hour, and all require bachelor’s degrees. In contrast, sales representatives required just a high school diploma, but also offered relatively high wages (see Table 7).

Table 7. Southwest Minnesota Top 20 Office-related Manufacturing Occupations, 2024 Wage Data

SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Estimated Regional Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Minnesota Educational Requirements for Occupations
414012	Sales Representatives, Manufacturing, exc. Technical Products	1,650	\$32.11	High School or equiv.
434051	Customer Service Representatives	2,520	\$21.60	High School or equiv.
172112	Industrial Engineers	720	\$43.48	Bachelor's degree
111021	General & Operations Managers	4,090	\$39.65	Bachelor's degree
435071	Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks	800	\$20.82	High School or equiv.
113051	Industrial Production Managers	430	\$48.62	Bachelor's degree
172141	Mechanical Engineers	330	\$39.51	Bachelor's degree
433031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	1,840	\$23.06	High School or equiv.
173026	Industrial Engineering Technicians	250	\$28.87	Associate degree

131020	Purchasing Agents, exc. Wholesale, Retail & Farm Products	480	\$31.11	Bachelor's degree
439061	Office Clerks, General	3,200	\$20.98	High School or equiv.
414011	Sales Representatives, Manufacturing, Technical Products	60	\$43.21	Bachelor's degree
435061	Production, Planning, & Expediting Clerks	450	\$29.40	High School or equiv.
132011	Accountants & Auditors	1,320	\$33.29	Bachelor's degree
537065	Stockers, Clerks & Order Fillers	2,560	\$18.13	High School or equiv.
119041	Engineering Managers	140	\$71.42	Bachelor's degree
172071	Electrical Engineers	170	\$46.39	Bachelor's degree
151252	Software Developers	460	\$47.44	Bachelor's degree
173023	Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technicians	110	\$33.68	Associate degree

Source: DEED Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, Minnesota Educational Requirements for Occupations

Industry Outlook

According to DEED’s 2020 to 2030 Employment Outlook data, the Southwest Minnesota manufacturing industry is projected to gain about 610 jobs over the next decade, a 2% increase. The state of Minnesota as a whole is projected to gain about 3,990 manufacturing jobs from 2020 to 2030, a 1.3% increase, which a bit less than Southwest Minnesota’s projected increase.

Twelve of the 18 manufacturing sectors are expected to add jobs, led by continued growth in Food Manufacturing, which is projected to gain 361 net new jobs, a 3% expansion, and Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, which may add 147 jobs, a 10% jump. The region may also see modest job growth in Electrical Equipment and Appliances Manufacturing, Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing, and Chemical Manufacturing.

In contrast, 6 of the 18 sectors are expected to see job declines in the next decade, with the most severe losses projected in Printing and Related Support Activities, Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing, Transportation Equipment Manufacturing, and Textile Product Mills (see Table 8).

NAICS Code	Industry	Estimated Employment 2020	Projected Employment 2030	Percent Change 2020-2030	Numeric Change 2020-2030
0	Total, All Industries	195,812	203,504	3.9%	7,692
31	Manufacturing	30,107	30,719	2.0%	612
311	Food Manufacturing	11,262	11,623	3.2%	361
312	Beverage & Tobacco Product Manufacturing	428	491	14.7%	63
314	Textile Product Mills	76	66	-13.2%	-10
315	Apparel Manufacturing	26	22	-15.4%	-4
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1,026	1,063	3.6%	37
322	Paper Manufacturing	28	25	-10.7%	-3
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	2,454	2,088	-14.9%	-366
325	Chemical Manufacturing	957	1,049	9.6%	92
326	Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing	895	819	-8.5%	-76
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Mfg	1,475	1,622	10.0%	147
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	517	522	1.0%	5
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,085	2,186	4.8%	101
333	Machinery Manufacturing	3,151	3,238	2.8%	87
334	Computer and Electronic Product Mfg	1,653	1,682	1.8%	29
335	Electrical Equipment and Appliances	1,992	2,095	5.2%	103

336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	951	925	-2.7%	-26
337	Furniture and Related Product Mfg	288	302	4.9%	14
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	836	900	7.7%	64

Source: Employment Outlook

Occupational Outlook

The decline in Southwest Minnesota manufacturing employment is expected to carry over into production occupations as well, leading to a projected -0.2% job decline from 2020 to 2030. However, the region is still expected to have significant demand for production workers over the next ten years due to a large number of labor market exit openings – jobs that become available because the existing worker retires out of the labor force or changes careers. There may be as many as 21,450 total openings for production occupations in the region, primarily from replacement openings.

Overall, 25 of the 42 production occupations in the region are expected to see new job growth from 2020 to 2030, led by Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers, Slaughterers and Meat Packers, Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers, Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastics, and Production Workers, All Other, which are all projected to add more than 43 net new jobs.

In contrast, the biggest declines are projected for Printing Press Operators, Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers, Print Binding and Finishing Workers, Sewing Machine Operators, and Helpers-- Production Workers. Just six of the 42 production occupations are expected to lose more than 10% of their jobs, with Prepress Technicians and Workers, Print Binding and Finishing Workers, and Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters seeing the most rapid drop-offs.

Regardless of growth or decline, every occupation is expected to at least have some replacement openings from 2020 to 2030. The largest number of labor market exit openings are projected for Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers, Slaughterers and Meat Packers, and Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tender, which are all expected to have at least 445 labor market exit openings in the region (see Table 9).

Table 9. Top 25 Southwest Minnesota Production Occupation Projections, 2016-2026

SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Estimated Employment 2020	Projected Employment 2030	Percent Change 2020-2030	Numeric Change 2020-2030	Labor Market Exit Openings 2020-2030
0	Total, All Occupations	195,812	203,504	3.9%	7,692	89,195
510000	Production Occupations	19,608	19,559	-0.2%	-49	7,349
511011	First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	1,055	1,094	3.7%	39	323
512028	Electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers	380	412	8.4%	32	159
512041	Structural Metal Fabricators & Fitters	72	62	-13.9%	-10	15
513011	Bakers	85	91	7.1%	6	49
513022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters & Trimmers	1,610	1,667	3.5%	57	667
513023	Slaughterers & Meat Packers	1,603	1,662	3.7%	59	664
513091	Food & Tobacco Roasting, Baking, & Drying Operators	111	114	2.7%	3	44
513092	Food Batchmakers	741	750	1.2%	9	346
513099	Food Processing Workers, All Other	128	131	2.3%	3	46
514031	Cutting, Punching, & Press Machine Setters, Operators	171	171	0.0%	0	54
514033	Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, & Buffing Machine Operators	52	48	-7.7%	-4	23
514041	Machinists	412	447	8.5%	35	144
514072	Molding, Coremaking, & Casting Machine Setters	109	103	-5.5%	-6	34

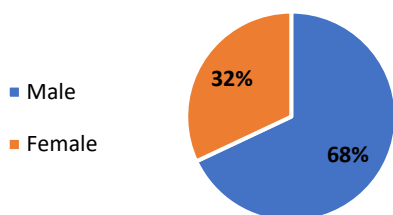
514121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	836	917	9.7%	81	231
514122	Welding, Soldering, & Brazing Machine Setters, Operators	73	73	0.0%	0	19
514193	Plating Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders,	28	26	-7.1%	-2	9
515111	Prepress Technicians & Workers	84	68	-19.0%	-16	29
515112	Printing Press Operators	634	566	-10.7%	-68	218
515113	Print Binding & Finishing Workers	226	187	-17.3%	-39	102
516011	Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers	230	235	2.2%	5	150
516031	Sewing Machine Operators	123	106	-13.8%	-17	69
517011	Cabinetmakers & Bench Carpenters	68	78	14.7%	10	27
517041	Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	30	32	6.7%	2	11
518013	Power Plant Operators	127	114	-10.2%	-13	31
518021	Stationary Engineers & Boiler Operators	187	196	4.8%	9	92
518031	Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant & System Operators	288	273	-5.2%	-15	79
518099	Plant & System Operators, All Other	34	36	5.9%	2	8
519011	Chemical Equipment Operators & Tenders	154	160	3.9%	6	34
519012	Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating Operators	409	408	-0.2%	-1	90
519021	Crushing, Grinding, & Polishing Machine Setters	322	327	1.6%	5	110
519023	Mixing & Blending Machine Setters, Operators	190	199	4.7%	9	66
519032	Cutting & Slicing Machine Setters, Operators	207	208	0.5%	1	93
519041	Extruding, Forming, Press, & Compact Machine Operators	125	124	-0.8%	-1	34
519061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	749	691	-7.7%	-58	277
519071	Jewelers & Precious Stone & Metal Workers	19	18	-5.3%	-1	10
519111	Packaging & Filling Machine Operators & Tenders	1,070	1,097	2.5%	27	447
519124	Coating, Painting, & Spraying Machine Setters	277	292	5.4%	15	79
519161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	515	513	-0.4%	-2	176
519162	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	60	75	25.0%	15	23
519193	Cooling & Freezing Equipment Operators and Tenders	48	52	8.3%	4	17
519195	Molders, Shapers, & Casters, Except Metal and Plastics	112	159	42.0%	47	49
519198	Helpers--Production Workers	428	411	-4.0%	-17	197
519199	Production Workers, All Other	811	854	5.3%	43	285

Source: Employment Outlook

Workforce Demographics

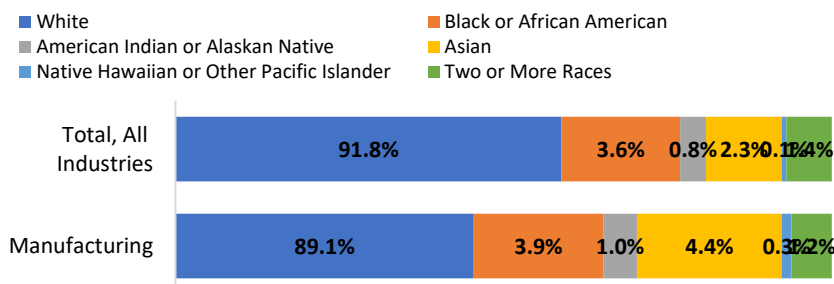
Data from DEED’s Quarterly Employment Demographics (QED) program shows that the manufacturing workforce in the Southwest region is relatively non-diverse. Through the first quarter of 2023, more than two-thirds

Figure 3. Southwest Minnesota Manufacturing Industry Workforce Demographics, Q1 2023



Source: Quarterly Employment Demographics

Figure 4. Southwest Minnesota Industry Workforce Demographics by Race & Hispanic Origin, Q1 2023



Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators

(68%) of manufacturing workers are male, compared to one-third that are female (see Figure 3). In comparison, the workforce is much more evenly split between genders across the total of all industries, with about 52% of workers in the region being female.

Additional demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) program show that the manufacturing workforce is also not very racially diverse. About 89% of manufacturing workers in the region were white alone, while just under 4% were Black or African American. In addition, 21.4% were Hispanic or Latino origin, making it the largest minority group of workers in the industry.

Despite the low numbers, the manufacturing workforce is becoming more diverse. The number of workers of other races more than doubled from 1,762 workers in 2003 to 3,527 workers in 2023. Likewise, the number of Hispanic or Latino workers in manufacturing grew more than 89.5% from 2003 to 2023.

As the workforce in Southwest Minnesota ages, new graduates and other jobseekers will become increasingly important sources of workers, particularly for the manufacturing industry. The Manufacturing workforce is relatively old and continued to age over the past twenty years. In the first quarter of 2003, 12.7% of the

manufacturing workforce comprised individuals aged 55 years or older. By 2023, this demographic accounted for nearly a quarter of the total workforce. Conversely, in the manufacturing sector, individuals under the age of 25 constituted 14.5% of the workforce, a figure that declined to 10.3% by 2023.

In the face of tight labor markets, manufacturers may need to tap into new labor pools in order to attract the talent they need to grow and replace existing workers in the future.

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 published: June 2024

Figure 5. Southwest Minnesota Manufacturing Workforce Demographics, Q1 2003 - Q1 2023

Source: Quarterly Employment Demographics

