Leisure & Hospitality Industry Profile in WDB 17 – Stearns and Benton

There were 525 leisure and hospitality establishments providing 8,213 jobs in Stearns and Benton Counties through the 3rd quarter of 2019, according to data from DEED’s Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages program. That is 7.8% of total employment in the region. The largest employing sectors include accommodation and food services, and more specifically food services and drinking places, which accounted for 366 firms and 6,467 jobs (see Table 1).

As the largest population and regional employment center, Stearns County had the largest number of jobs in leisure and hospitality industries and a significantly higher concentration of employment compared to Benton County, however the concentration of employment is well below the statewide rate of 10.1%. The vast majority of jobs are in the accommodation and food service sector which has been declining since 2016, and remains well below the employment peak in 2007 (see Table 2).

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