FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF KANSAS CITY
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Data Documentation for the Kansas City Fed's Rural Labor Indicators (RLI)

The Rural Labor Indicators (RLI) are tabulations of publicly available county-level data provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (USDA-ERS) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The USDA-ERS publishes county typology codes, which categorize non-metro counties that have high concentrations of activity by sector. We use this information to classify each county in the United States as either farming-concentrated non-metro, other non-metro, or metro.

We merge this classification scheme by county FIPS code to county-level BLS data Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) and the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). We then compute averages across the three county classifications within a given month (LAUS) and quarter (QCEW). We provide a time series of these tabulations for unemployment rates, year-over-year employment growth, average weekly wages, and year-over-year quarterly wage growth.