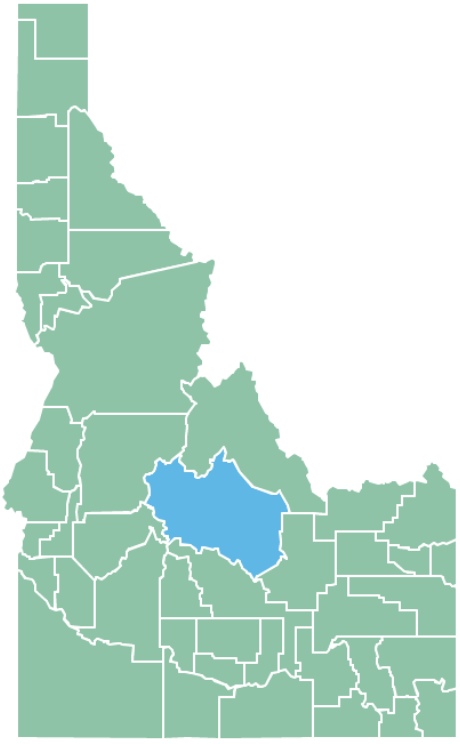
Custer County Labor Force And Economic Profile

Last Updated: October 2026

Custer County Economic Overview

Civilian Labor Force (Sep 2026)	1,864
Unemployment Rate (Sep 2026)	4.9%
Population (2025)	4,636
Median Household Income (2024)	$67,574
Per Capita Personal Income (2024)	$57,363
Poverty Rate (2024)	15.8%



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1. Custer County Demographic Characteristics, 2024 5-Year ACS

	Custer County	Custer County (%)	State of Idaho (%)	United States (%)
Total Population	4,470	100.0%	1,934,262	334,922,499
Race and Ethnicity				
White alone, not hispanic	3,985	89.1%	81.7%	61.0%
Black or African American alone, not hispanic	14	0.3%	0.8%	12.2%
Native American alone, not hispanic	17	0.4%	1.2%	0.9%
Asian alone, not hispanic	137	3.1%	1.4%	6.0%
Hispanic, or Latino (of any race)	201	4.5%	13.6%	19.3%
Gender				
Male	2,318	51.9%	50.3%	49.5%
Female	2,152	48.1%	49.7%	50.5%
Age				
Median age	60.0	-	37.3	38.9
Under 18 years	623	13.9%	24.1%	22.0%
Over 18 years	3,847	86.1%	75.9%	78.0%
21 years and over	3,678	82.3%	66.1%	68.9%
Over 65 years	1,634	36.6%	17.0%	17.2%
Educational Attainment (Population 25 years and Over)				
Less than 9th grade	12	0.3%	2.1%	3.2%
High school graduate (with equivalencies)	1,104	24.7%	17.3%	17.9%
Some college, no degree	851	19.0%	16.0%	13.1%
Associate's degree	423	9.5%	6.4%	6.1%
Bachelor's degree	823	18.4%	14.1%	14.9%
Graduate or professional degree	253	5.7%	7.0%	9.7%
Median Household Income	$67,574	-	$77,800	$80,734

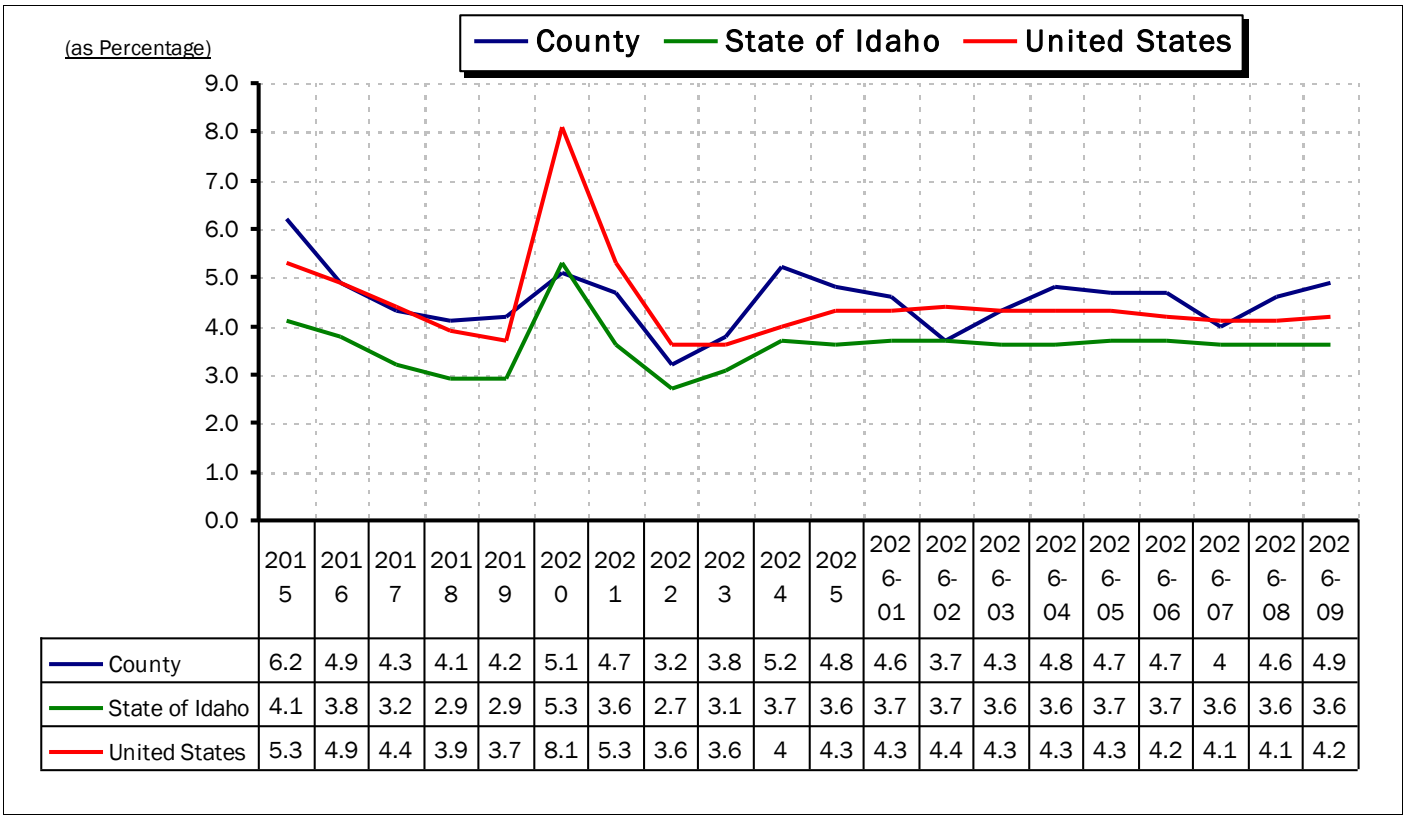
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

2. Labor Force Growth, September 2025 to September 2026

	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
September 2026	1,864	1,772	92	4.9%
September 2025	1,846	1,756	90	4.9%
YoY % Change	1.0%	0.9%	2.2%	0.0%

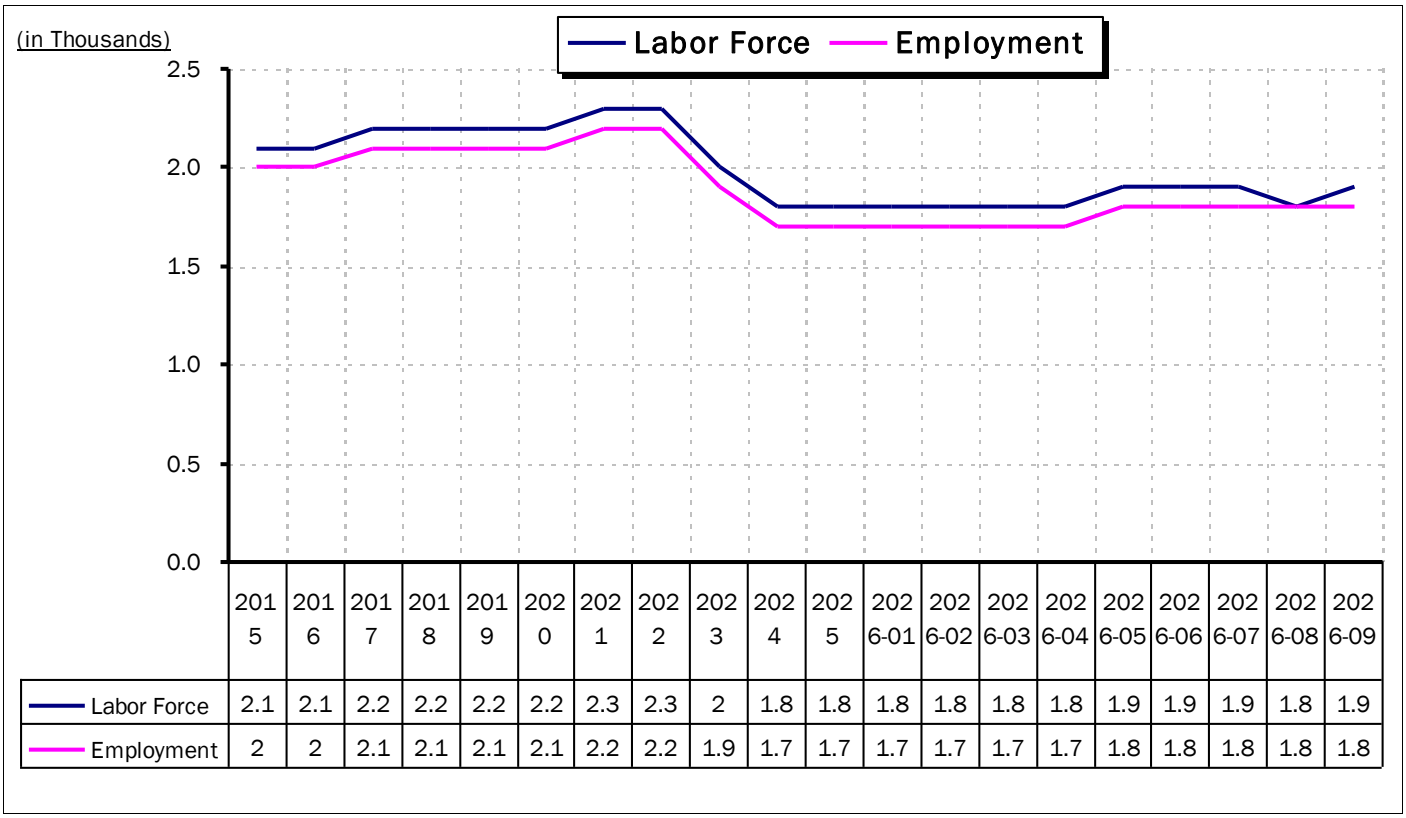
Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

3. Seasonally-Adjusted Unemployment Rate, 2015 to September 2026



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026-01	2026-02	2026-03	2026-04	2026-05	2026-06	2026-07	2026-08	2026-09
County	6.2	4.9	4.3	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.7	3.2	3.8	5.2	4.8	4.6	3.7	4.3	4.8	4.7	4.7	4	4.6	4.9
State of Idaho	4.1	3.8	3.2	2.9	2.9	5.3	3.6	2.7	3.1	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6
United States	5.3	4.9	4.4	3.9	3.7	8.1	5.3	3.6	3.6	4	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026-01	2026-02	2026-03	2026-04	2026-05	2026-06	2026-07	2026-08	2026-09
Labor Force	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9
Employment	2	2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

5. Industry Employment and Wages, 2015, 2024, and 2025

Supersector	2015 Average Employment	2015 Average Wages	2024 Average Employment	2024 Average Wages	2025 Average Employment	2025 Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	1,418	$31,633	275	$45,621	1,595	$49,663
Natural Resources and Mining	123	$72,046				
Construction	51	$36,308	38	$40,374	62	$42,284
Manufacturing	11	$36,721	9	$30,665	12	$34,437
Trade,Transportation, and Utilities	260	$25,745	45	$39,656	267	$40,471
Information	42	$41,015	7	$61,687	33	$65,192
Financial Activities	32	$25,660	13	$62,391	28	$51,165
Professional and Business Services	66	$37,517	30	$73,300	55	$55,414
Education and Health Services	223	$21,217	22	$36,782	179	$41,869
Leisure and Hospitality	332	$18,280	60	$32,178	410	$32,676
Other Services	40	$13,233	20	$19,965	85	$23,871
Public Administration	238	$44,939	13	$61,459	216	$68,518

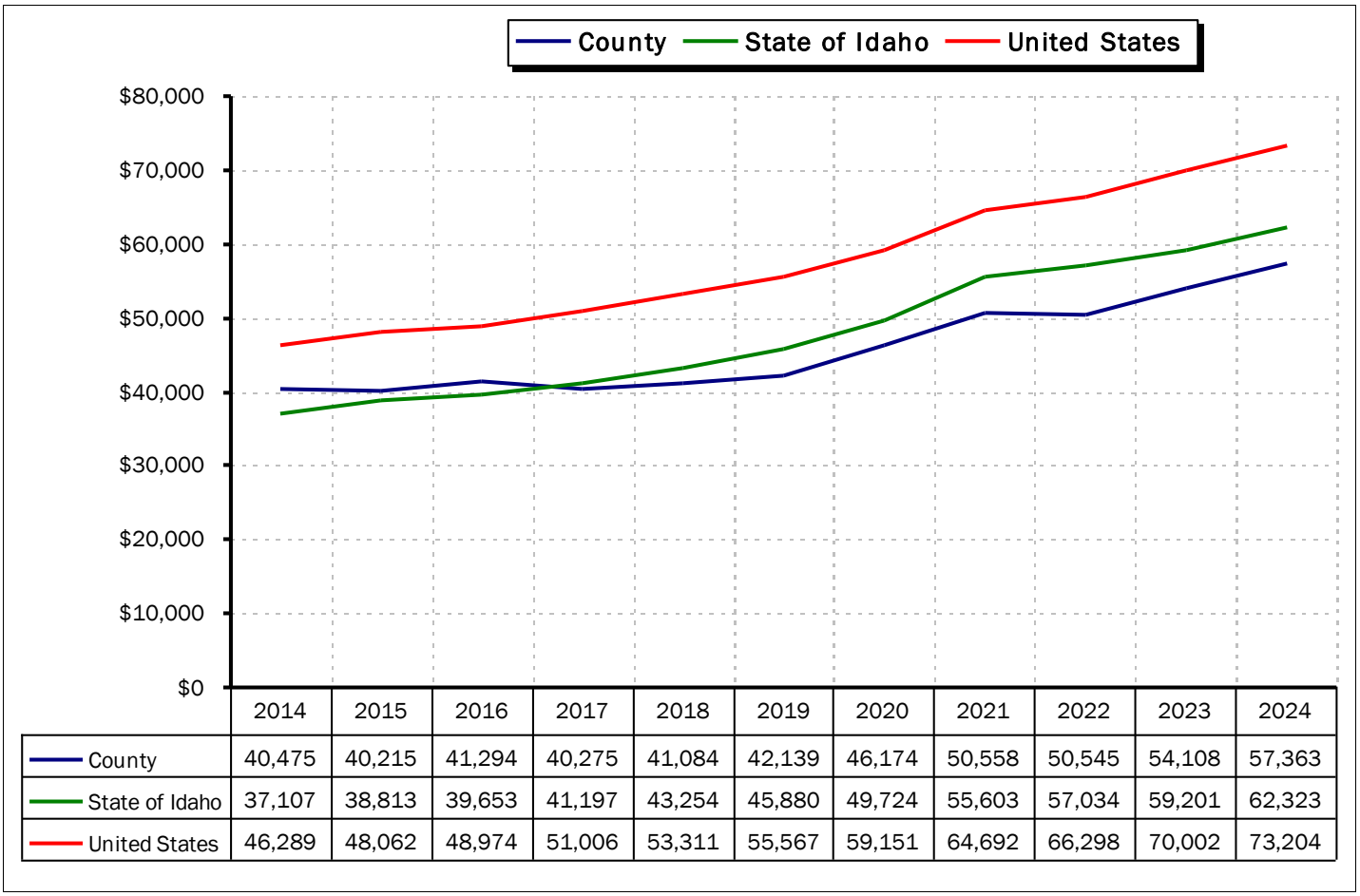
Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

6. Top Employers, 2025

Employer	Ownership	Employment Range
Thompson Creek Metals Co	Private	100 - 249
Us Department Of Agriculture	Federal Government	100 - 249
Challis Joint School District	Local Government	050 - 099
Custer County	Local Government	050 - 099
Personal Home Care Llc	Private	050 - 099
Redfish Lake Lodge	Private	010 - 049
Mackay Joint School District	Local Government	010 - 049
Mountain Village Resort	Private	010 - 049
Lambs Foodtown	Private	010 - 049
Mountain Village Resort	Private	010 - 049

NOTE: Only employers that have given the Department permission to release employment range data are listed.
Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

7. Per Capita Income, 2014 to 2024

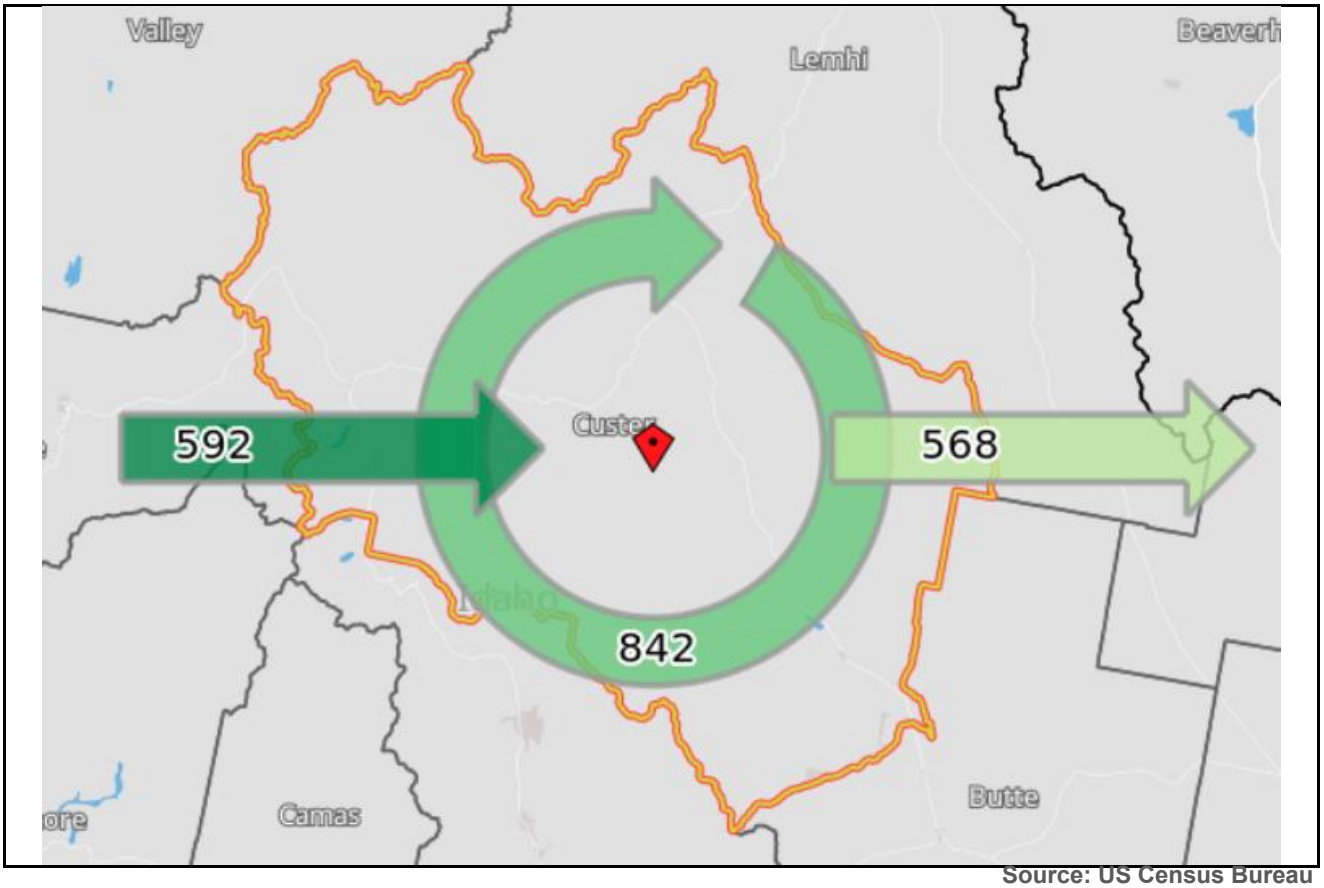


	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
County	40,475	40,215	41,294	40,275	41,084	42,139	46,174	50,558	50,545	54,108	57,363
State of Idaho	37,107	38,813	39,653	41,197	43,254	45,880	49,724	55,603	57,034	59,201	62,323
United States	46,289	48,062	48,974	51,006	53,311	55,567	59,151	64,692	66,298	70,002	73,204

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

8. Labor Force Commuting Patterns, 2023

It is estimated that 842 workers lived and worked in Custer County in 2023. Another 592 workers were employed in Custer County but lived outside, while 568 workers commuted to other counties for work.



Source: US Census Bureau

9. Top 10 Cities Where People Who Work in Custer County Live, 2023

City of Residence	Count of All Jobs	Percentage of Total Jobs
Challis	169	11.8%
Mackay	76	5.3%
Idaho Falls	30	2.1%
Stanley	28	2.0%
Salmon	27	1.9%
Arco	26	1.8%
Twin Falls	22	1.5%
Boise	19	1.3%
Hailey	18	1.3%
Ammon	9	0.6%

Note: "All Jobs" includes private and public sector jobs. It also includes a count of workers with multiple jobs. Source: US Census Bureau- Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

10. Top 10 Cities Where People Who Live in Custer County Work, 2023

City of Employment	Count of All Jobs	Percentage of Total Jobs
Challis	279	19.8%
Mackay	200	14.2%
Idaho Falls	122	8.7%
Boise	58	4.1%
Stanley	52	3.7%
Clayton	31	2.2%
Arco	24	1.7%
Salmon	21	1.5%
Pocatello	19	1.3%
Ketchum	16	1.1%

Note: "All Jobs" includes private and public sector jobs. It also includes a count of workers with multiple jobs. Source: US Census Bureau- Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

For more Information, Contact:

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