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**Markets Overview****World Markets****Market News**

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**Greeley, Weld County ranked in top 10 nationally for jobs, economic growth [Greeley Tribune, Colo.]**

Dec. 06--In addition to increased tax revenue and jobs, a robust local oil and gas industry has helped bring national recognition to the area.

The Greeley Metropolitan Statistical Area, which encompasses all of Weld County, cracked the top 10 for large cities in the recent Best-Performing Cities index, released annually by the Milken Institute, ranking cities on how they're creating and sustaining jobs and economic growth. The components include job, wage and salary and technology growth.

Overall, the Greeley MSA came in at No. 10 -- just one spot behind the Boulder MSA.

Among those in the top 200 nationally, Greeley saw one of the biggest jumps in its overall ranking, going up 32 spots from its No. 42 ranking last year.

Much of local economic growth, officials said, can be attributed to Weld's oil and gas industry, where production was valued at a Colorado-leading \$4 billion in 2012, according to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.

They also attributed economic success to Weld's \$1.5 billion agriculture industry, which, in addition to seeing some farmers bring in record incomes in recent years, has a new Leprino Foods cheese-processing plant in Greeley, where hundreds of jobs have been added.

"And then you have all of the supporting businesses that move here because of the growth we have in oil and gas and agriculture," said Greeley Mayor Tom Norton. "We're in a good position."

Of the nine categories in the index, the Greeley MSA received its highest national ranking for growth in one-year wages, based on growth between 2010 and 2011, in which they ranked No. 3.

"That's really the great thing about what's going on in Weld right now. Not only do we have more jobs and falling unemployment, but we're seeing the addition of good-paying jobs," said Weld County Commissioner Sean Conway. "That means more people buying houses, cars, appliances. It truly is the gift that keeps on giving."

The Greeley MSA was also No. 8 in one-year job growth, based on increases from 2011 to 2012.

Greeley's lowest placing, though, came in the High-Tech GDP Location Quotient category, which was based on 2012 numbers. A combined metropolitan area high-tech location quotient is a measure of high-tech concentration.

Colorado had four communities on the index's top 200 list, all of which made the top 20 -- Boulder at No. 9, Greeley at No. 10, Denver-Aurora-Broomfield MSA at No. 15 and the Fort Collins-Loveland MSA at No. 20.

Austin, Texas, claimed the No. 1 spot based on its booming technology sector. Texas had seven cities in the top 25.

To view the full report, go to [www.best-cities.org/](http://www.best-cities.org/).

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