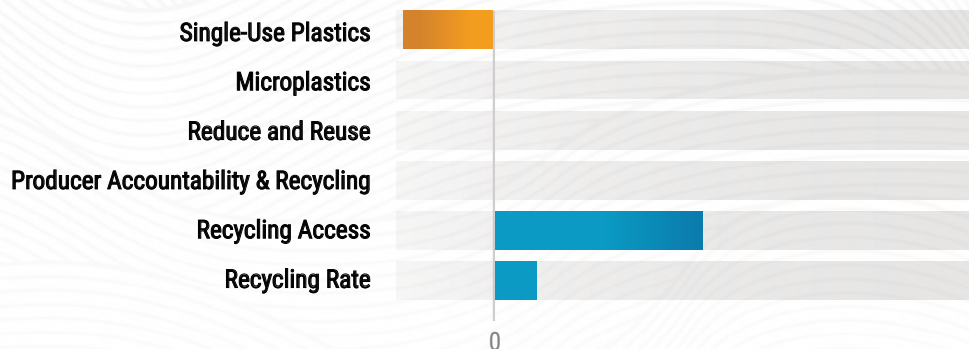


# United States OF PLASTICS

## Nebraska

MISSOURI-MISSISSIPPI DRAINAGE

Located in the heart of the U.S., Nebraska is connected to the health of the ocean through its extensive river network including the Niobrara, Platte and Missouri Rivers. All the rivers in Nebraska drain into the Missouri River, which eventually flows into the Gulf. Many communities in Nebraska are dependent on the health of the state's many rivers, using them for recreational and fishing purposes. These rivers are also essential for Nebraska's agricultural economy, providing water for irrigation and supporting livestock. Nebraska has yet to pass legislation to address plastic pollution and has enacted laws that could hinder further progress.



### FINAL SCORE



*Needs Improvement*



### Single-Use Plastics

Nebraska limits local governments' ability to regulate single-use plastics and has not passed any laws phasing out the single-use plastics covered in our study.<sup>1</sup>



### Microplastics

The state has not passed any laws to address microplastic pollution.



### Reduce and Reuse

The state has not enacted any laws relating to plastic reduction or reuse.



### Producer Accountability and Recycling

The state does not have extended producer responsibility (EPR) or deposit return programs for packaging or beverage containers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Nebraska should remove restrictions on local governments and allow them to regulate single-use plastics in their communities.
- As microplastics have been shown to affect soil health and crop productivity,<sup>2</sup> the state should consider policies to address microplastic pollution such as requiring filters for new washing machines to reduce microfiber pollution.
- Nebraska has both a low recycling access rate and a low recycling rate. Policies like comprehensive EPR with a deposit return system could increase the amount of material that is recycled and kept out of the environment without increasing costs for local governments.

## Top 10 Items Collected by ICC Volunteers

- 1 Cigarette Butts
- 2 Food Wrappers (Candy, chips, etc.)
- 3 Beverage Cans
- 4 Beverage Bottles (Plastic)
- 5 Beverage Bottles (Glass)
- 6 Straws, Stirrers
- 7 Bottle Caps (Metal)
- 8 Bottle Caps (Plastic)
- 9 Grocery Bags (Plastic)
- 10 Take Out/Away Containers (Plastic)

<sup>1</sup> LB 632, 106th Leg., 2nd Sess (Neb. 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Hoang, V.-H., et al. (2024). *Science of the Total Environment*.