

ALBERTA  
SOUTHWEST

HILL SPRING

# Industry Report

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## Executive Summary

Hill Spring is a small village economy with a business base that has fluctuated noticeably in recent years without moving far from its earlier level. The number of active establishments fell sharply in 2023, rebounded in 2024, and edged down to 66 in 2025, leaving the community close to where it stood in 2022. Beneath that headline stability, the local economy remains narrow in structure. Businesses are concentrated in a limited set of activities, led clearly by agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, while the resident labour force and employment base are also clustered in only a few sectors. The result is a place where short-term changes can look pronounced even when the broader scale of activity remains modest.

Agriculture is the central thread running through Hill Spring's business and employment profile. It accounts for by far the largest share of establishments and remains the village's strongest area of specialization, even though that concentration eased over the past year. Public administration also carries visible weight in both the labour force and employment base, while arts, entertainment and recreation remains present in the labour force despite the small scale of the market overall. Most other sectors are thinly represented, and several record little or no resident labour force at all. The structure by business size reinforces that picture: establishments are overwhelmingly micro in scale, and nearly all firms fall into the smallest size categories. The business mix therefore appears broad only in a formal sense, while in practice it is dominated by very small operations with uneven year-to-year movement across sectors.

Employment follows the same pattern of concentration. Agriculture, public administration, and a small health care presence account for most of the identified jobs, with only a handful of other sectors contributing at all. Recent change is mixed rather than expansive. Agriculture and public administration were largely steady, while health care and social assistance rose from a very small base, including a sharp increase in offices of dentists. At the same time, the village's specialized sectors generally became less concentrated over the year, suggesting some softening in the strength of its traditional anchors rather than a reshaping of the local economy. Hill Spring's overall profile is that of a small, highly concentrated local economy with a stable core, limited sector depth, and business activity that remains overwhelmingly small in scale.

# Business Establishments

Hill Spring had 66 business establishments in 2025, down 2.9% from 2024. The count was 68 in 2024 and 50 in 2023, after 67 in 2022, showing recent fluctuation.

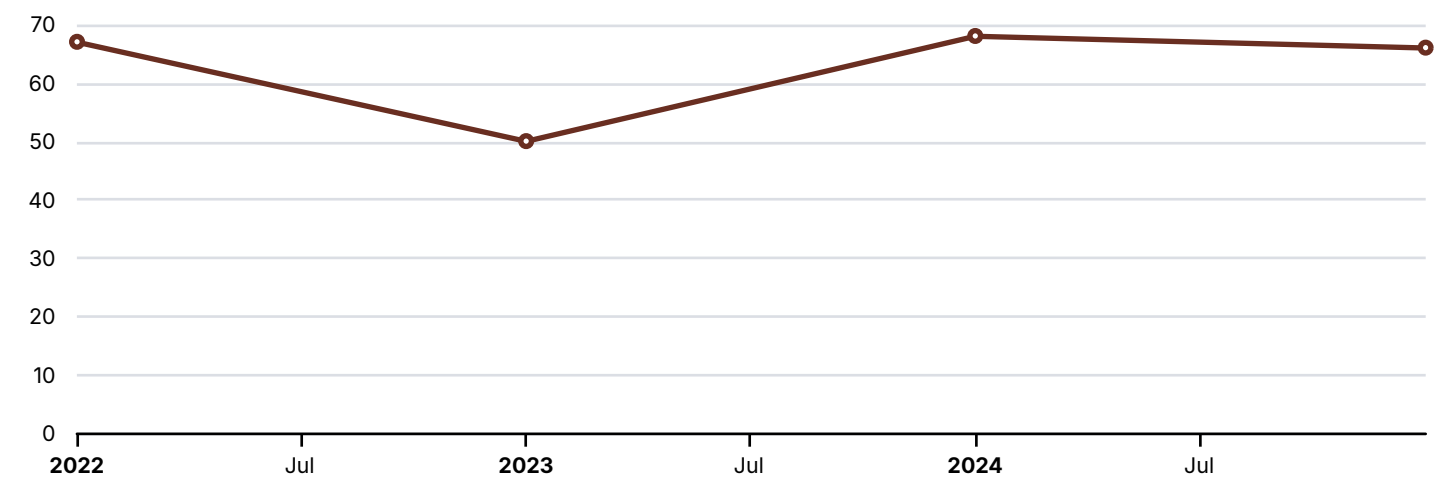
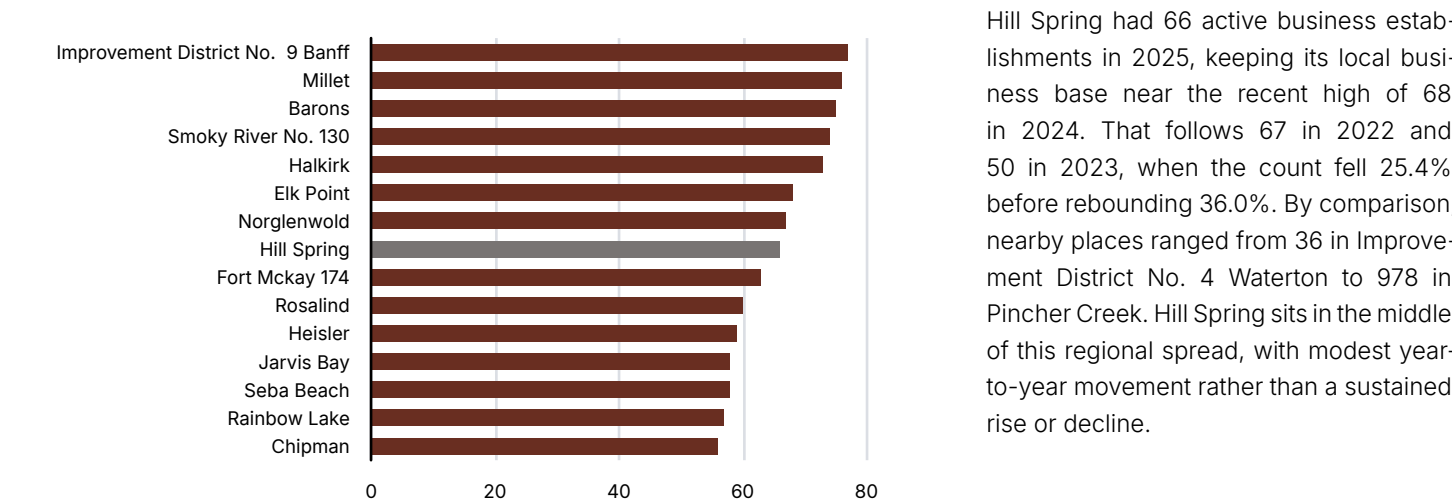


**Figure 1.1:** Shows the total number of active business establishments in the area, including those without employees. It helps indicate the scale and diversity of the local business base. (Hill Spring, 2022-2025)<sup>1</sup>

Hill Spring’s business base has been fairly stable, but with a clear dip and rebound over the last four years. The community had 67 active business establishments in 2022, fell to 50 in 2023, rose to 68 in 2024, and then eased to 66 in 2025. The sharpest movement was the 25.4% decline in 2023, followed by a 36% increase in 2024. The latest figure shows a small 2.9% decrease in 2025, leaving the total close to its 2022 level. That pattern suggests a local business count that can shift noticeably from year to year, while remaining within a narrow range overall.



Hill Spring had 66 active business establishments in 2025, keeping its local business base near the recent high of 68 in 2024. That follows 67 in 2022 and 50 in 2023, when the count fell 25.4% before rebounding 36.0%. By comparison, nearby places ranged from 36 in Improvement District No. 4 Waterton to 978 in Pincher Creek. Hill Spring sits in the middle of this regional spread, with modest year-to-year movement rather than a sustained rise or decline.

**Figure 1.2:** Comparison of Business Establishments with other locations (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>1</sup>

# Resident Labour Force

Hill Spring’s largest labour force group was public administration at 15 people in 2021, up 50% from 2016. Arts, entertainment and recreation held at 10 people, while health care and social assistance fell to zero.

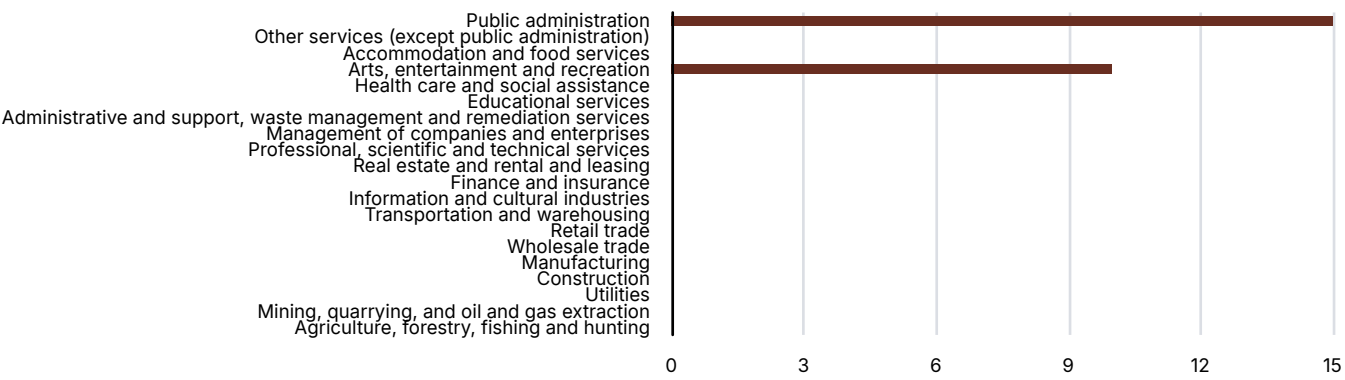


**Figure 2.1:** Shows the number of residents who are in the labour force. It helps indicate the size of the locally available workforce. (Hill Spring, 2021)<sup>2</sup>

Hill Spring’s resident labour force in 2021 was small and narrowly concentrated within the labour force aged 15 years and over. Public administration accounted for 15 people, up 50% over five years, while arts, entertainment and recreation held 10 people with no change. Several other industries registered no resident labour force, and a few small categories fell to zero after a five-year decline.

In 2021, Hill Spring’s resident labour force aged 15 and over was concentrated in just a few industries. Public administration had 15 workers, and arts, entertainment and recreation had 10, while most other sectors recorded zero. The only other positive counts shown were in the same two areas, with a clear gap to the rest of the labour force profile. Over five years, public administration increased by 50%, while wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and health care and social assistance fell to zero.

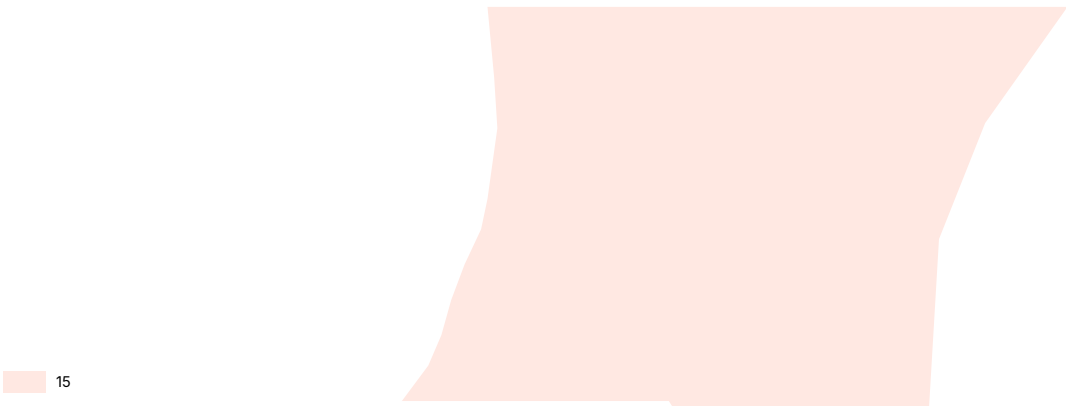


**Figure 2.2:** Distribution of Largest Group: Industry Sector - Public administration (Hill Spring)<sup>2</sup>

# Employment by Sector

Hill Spring’s employment remains concentrated in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting with 14 people in 2025. Public administration follows with 8, while health care and social assistance rose to 6 from 1 in 2024.

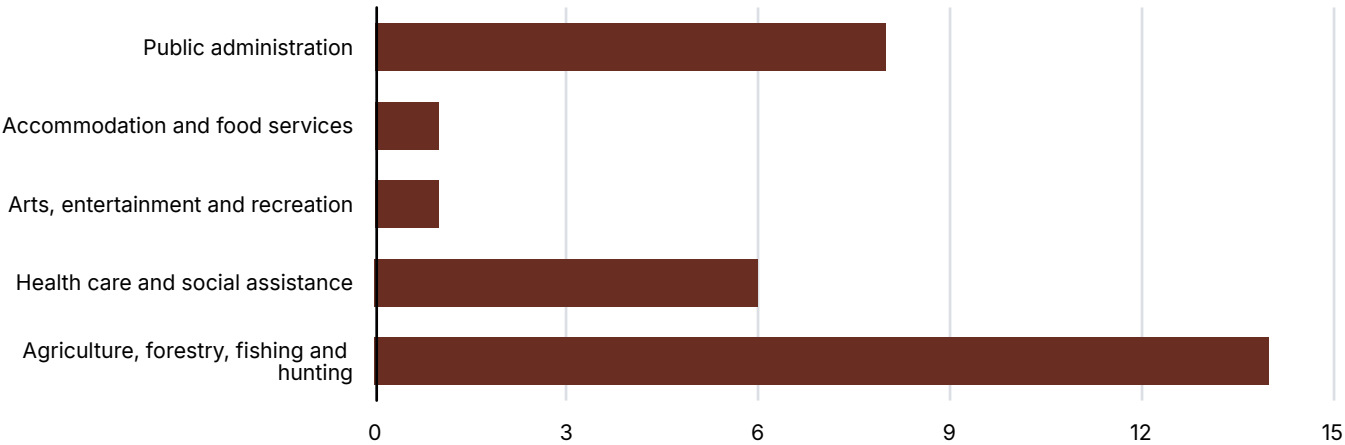


**Figure 3.1:** Shows how employment is distributed across industry sectors. It helps indicate which sectors account for the largest share of local jobs. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>3</sup>

In 2025, employment in Hill Spring was concentrated in a few sectors, with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting supplying the largest share of jobs at 14 people. Public administration followed with 8, while health care and social assistance accounted for 6. Arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services each had 1 job. These five sectors total 30 employees aged 15 and over. The year-over-year pattern was mostly stable. Agriculture, public administration, arts, and accommodation were unchanged from 2024, while health care and social assistance rose by 500 percent from a very small base.



In Hill Spring, employment in 2025 was concentrated in a small set of sectors, with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting the largest at 14 people. Public administration followed with 8, and health care and social assistance employed 6, while arts, entertainment and recreation and accommodation and food services each had 1 worker. The pattern suggests a narrow local job base, led by primary and public-service activities.

**Figure 3.2:** Distribution of Largest Group: Naics - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (Hill Spring)<sup>3</sup>

# Establishments by Sector

Hill Spring’s establishment mix remained led by agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting in 2025 with 31 businesses, down 8.8% from 2024. Real estate and rental and leasing rose to 9, while utilities held at 4.

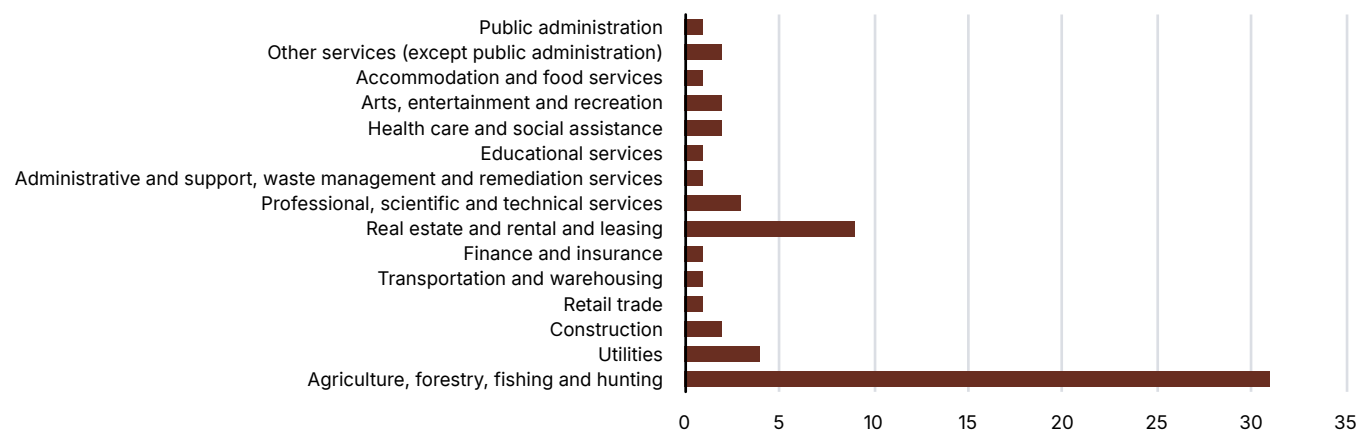


**Figure 4.1:** Shows how business establishments are distributed across sectors. It helps indicate the sector mix of the local business base. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>1</sup>

In 2025, Hill Spring’s business base was concentrated in a few sectors, with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting clearly the largest at 31 establishments. Real estate and rental and leasing was next with 9, while utilities had 4. Most other sectors were small, with several at just 1 or 2 establishments. Recent movement was mixed. Agriculture fell 8.8% over the year, construction and retail trade each declined 50%, and real estate and rental and leasing rose 28.6%. Health care and social assistance, and other services, both doubled from a small base. The pattern suggests a small, uneven mix rather than broad sector depth. Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register.



Hill Spring’s business base in 2025 is concentrated in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, with 31 establishments, far more than any other sector. Real estate and rental and leasing is the next largest group at 9, while utilities has 4 and professional, scientific and technical services has 3. Several sectors are small and stable, but construction and retail trade both fell by 50% over the year, pointing to uneven sector momentum.

**Figure 4.2:** Distribution of Largest Group: Naics - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (Hill Spring)<sup>1</sup>

# Establishments by Size

Hill Spring’s establishments are dominated by firms without employees, at 58 in 2025, down 3.3% from 2024. Smaller groups remained limited, with 4 firms each in the 1 to 4 and 5 to 9 employee categories.

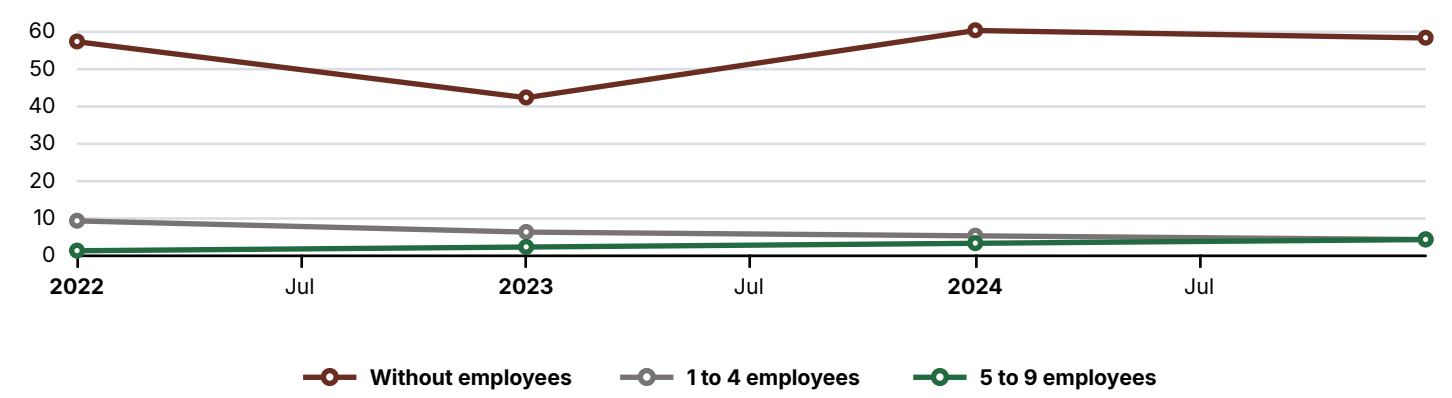


**Figure 5.1:** Shows how businesses are distributed by number of employees. It helps indicate whether the local economy is dominated by very small, small, or larger firms. (Hill Spring, 2022-2025)<sup>1</sup>

In Hill Spring, business establishments in 2025 were concentrated among firms without employees, with 58 such businesses. Smaller employer establishments were much fewer: 4 businesses with 1 to 4 employees and 4 with 5 to 9 employees. The recent trend was mixed. Nonemployer establishments edged down by 3.3% over the year, the 1 to 4 employee group fell 20%, while the 5 to 9 employee group rose 33.3%. That pattern points to a small local business base with uneven short-term movement.

Hill Spring’s business base in 2025 is heavily weighted toward very small establishments. There are 58 businesses without employees, compared with 4 businesses with 1 to 4 employees and 4 with 5 to 9 employees. That means non-employer firms make up the clear majority of establishments in the village. The 1-year change also points to a mixed shift: without-employee businesses edged down 3.3%, firms with 1 to 4 employees fell 20%, while the 5 to 9 employee group rose 33.3%. The pattern suggests a small and uneven size structure rather than broad-based expansion.

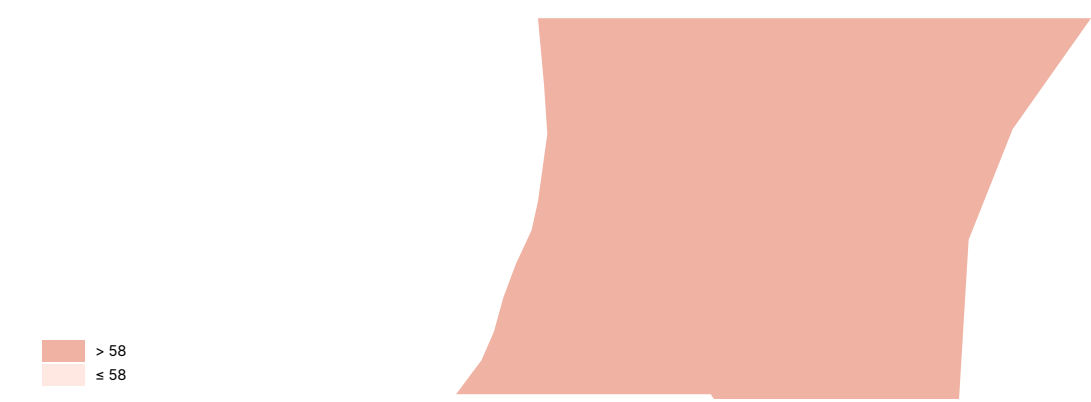


**Figure 5.2:** Distribution of Largest Group: Business Establishment Size - Without employees (Hill Spring)<sup>1</sup>

# Largest Sectors

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting employs the most people in Hill Spring at 14 in 2025, unchanged from a year earlier. Public administration follows with 8, while health care and social assistance rose to 6 from 1.

Hill Spring's employment base in 2025 is concentrated in a small set of sectors, with agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting forming the largest one among employees aged 15 years and over. The local pattern is defined more by a few visible employers than by a broad mix of industries. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting accounts for 14 people, followed by public administration with 8 and health care and social assistance with 6. Accommodation and food services is much smaller at

1 person. Those figures point to a narrow employment profile within the village. Recent change is mixed but limited in scale. Health care and social assistance added 500 over the year, while the other listed sectors were unchanged. That leaves the ranking intact, with agriculture still ahead of the other sectors. The data suggest a labour market with a few clear anchors and little movement at the lower end.

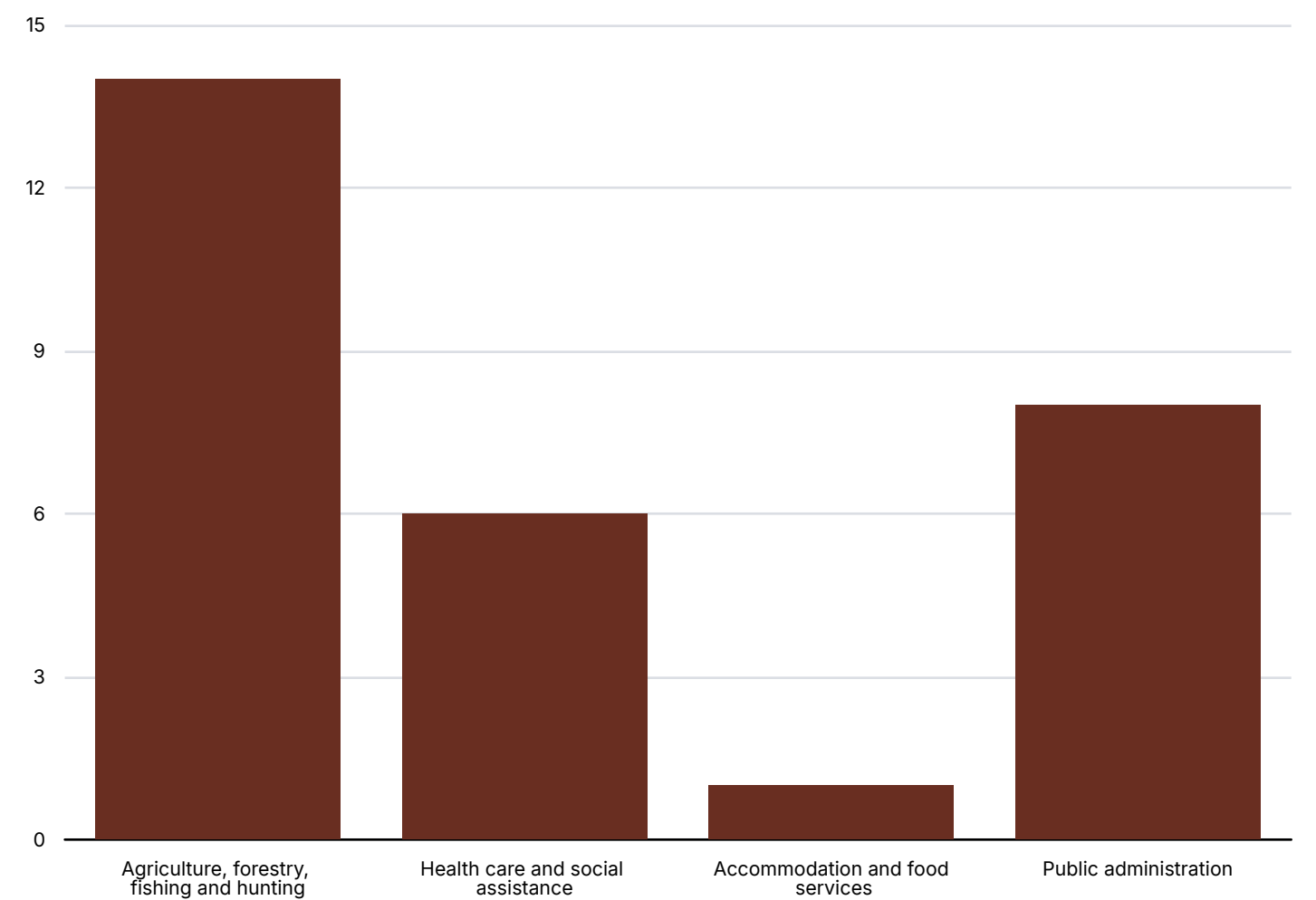


**Figure 6.1:** Shows the sectors employing the most people. It helps identify the largest pillars of the local economy. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>3</sup>

# Anchor Sectors

Hill Spring’s largest anchor sector in 2025 was agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting at 20.6293 lq, down 18.9% from a year earlier. Public administration followed at 5.5569 lq, while arts, entertainment and recreation was 1.6188 lq.

Hill Spring’s anchor sectors are defined by specialization that remains present, even as concentration has eased over the past year. In 2025, three industries stand out within the employed population age 15 and over: agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; public administration; and arts, entertainment and recreation. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting has the strongest specialization, with a location quotient of 20.6, but it also recorded a 18.9% one-year decline. Public administration follows at 5.6, after a 23.7% decrease. Arts, entertainment and

recreation is much smaller at 1.6 and fell 21.2%. The pattern is consistent across the list: each sector shows reduced concentration from the previous year. Agriculture remains the clear anchor by a wide margin, while the other two sectors are specialized to a lesser extent and have also weakened. For Hill Spring, the data points to a local economy where a few sectors still carry disproportionate weight, but their relative concentration has softened over the year.

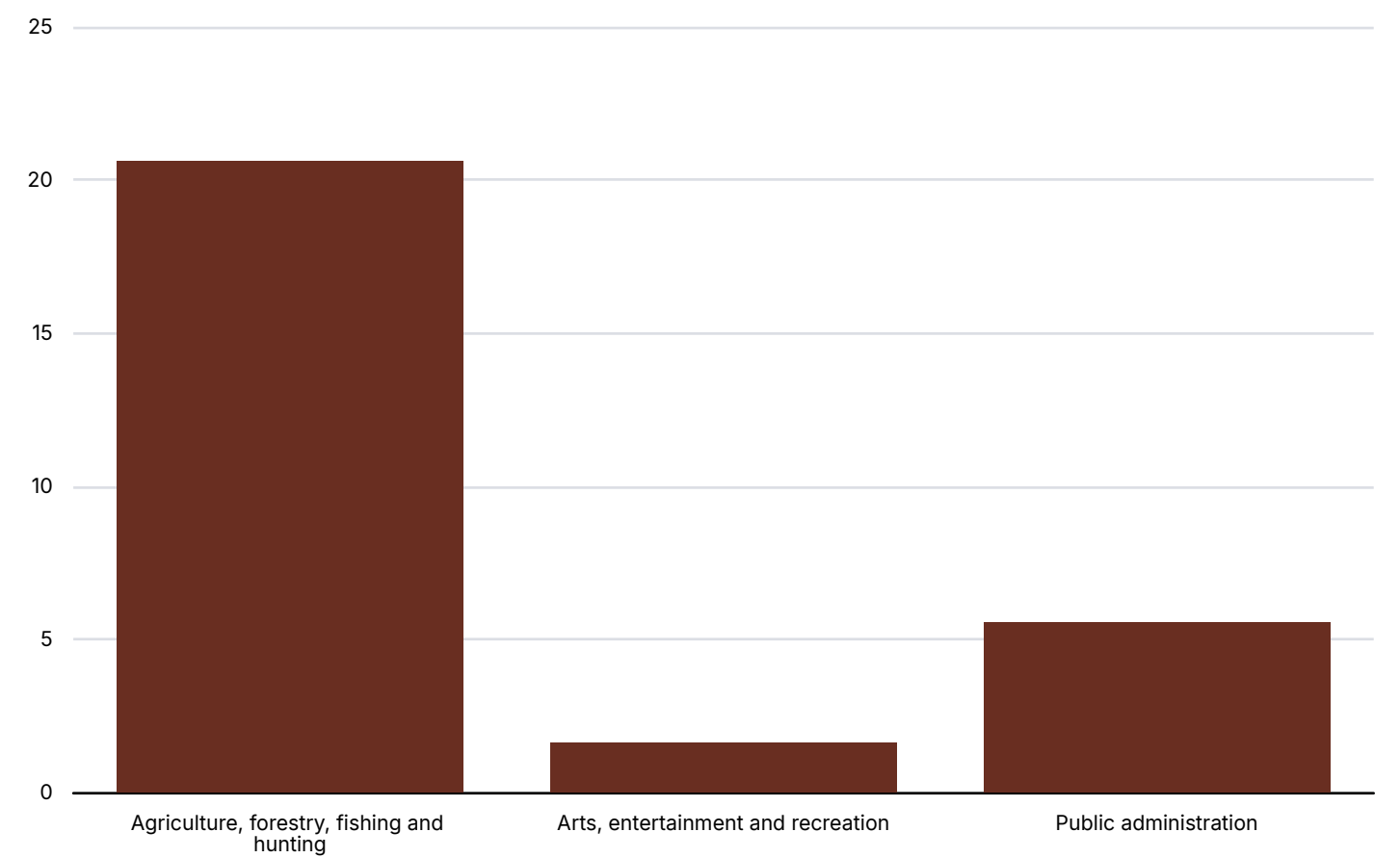


**Figure 7.1:** Shows major industry sectors where the local economy has strong specialization but relatively stable or declining concentration over time. Sectors are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>4</sup>

# Micro Establishments Share

Hill Spring’s micro establishments share was 100.0% in 2025. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting also stayed near full coverage at 96.8%, while health care and social assistance fell to 50.0%, down 50.0% from 2024.

In Hill Spring, micro establishments make up the full business base in nearly every sector shown for 2025. The pattern is highly concentrated: most sectors report a 100% share of businesses with 0 to 4 employees, suggesting that very small firms dominate the local establishment profile. The main exceptions are Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting at 96.8%, down 0.3 percentage points from a year earlier, and Health care and social assistance at 50%, down 50 points. All of the other listed sectors, including Utilities, Construction, Retail trade, Finance

and insurance, and Accommodation and food services, are at 100% with no year-over-year change. Compared with that broad pattern, the 50% reading in health care stands out as the only clear break from near-universal micro-business concentration. Transportation and warehousing and Educational services do not show a change figure, but their current share is also 100%. Taken together, the 2025 data show a local business structure built overwhelmingly around very small establishments, with only limited variation across sectors.

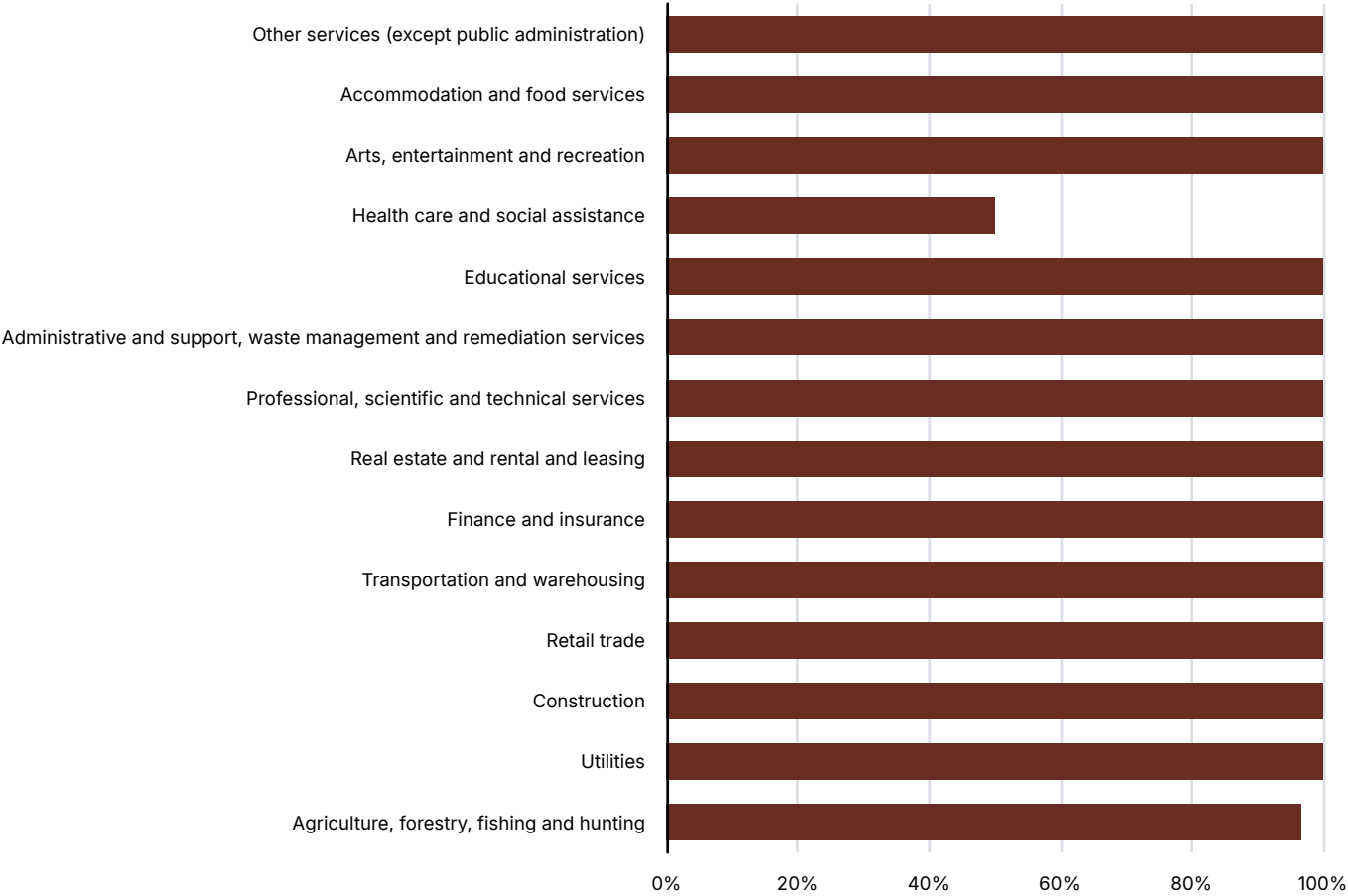


**Figure 8.1:** Shows the share of businesses with 0 to 4 employees. It helps indicate how much the local business base is made up of very small firms. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>5</sup>

# Specialist Sectors (LQ)

Hill Spring’s most specialized sector is agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting at 20.6 LQ, though it fell 18.9% from a year earlier. Public administration ranked second at 5.6 LQ, while health care and social assistance rose 361.6% to 1.5 LQ.

In Hill Spring, the specialist sectors profile for employees aged 15 years and over is dominated by agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, which has a location quotient of 20.6 in 2025. That is far above the other highlighted sectors and points to a very concentrated employment mix in this field. Public administration is the next most specialized sector at 5.6, while arts, entertainment and recreation sits at 1.6 and health care and social assistance at 1.5. The recent movement is mixed. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting fell by 18.9% over the

past year, public administration declined by 23.7%, and arts, entertainment and recreation dropped by 21.2%. Health care and social assistance moved in the opposite direction, rising by 361.6%, though from a low specialization level. The pattern suggests a small local economy with one clearly dominant specialized sector and several much smaller ones. The recent changes show that concentration can shift quickly even when the overall ranking remains unchanged.

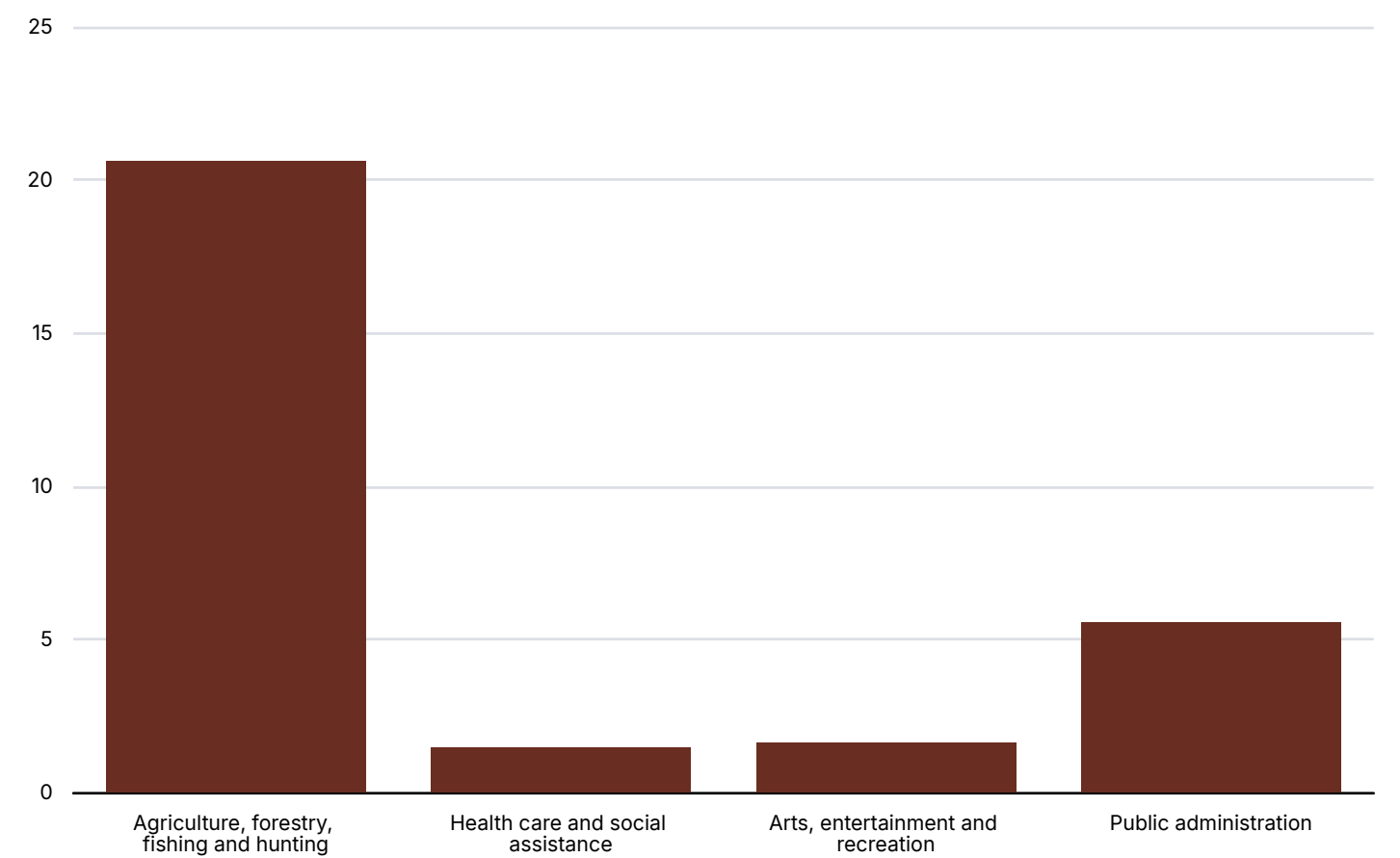


**Figure 9.1:** Shows sectors where the local economy has the highest level of specialization based on employment concentration compared with the national average. Sectors are categorized based on specialization (location quotient) and recent employment growth or change in concentration. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>4</sup>

# Declining Industries

Hill Spring’s largest declining industry employed 11 people in cattle ranching and farming in 2025, unchanged from a year earlier. Offices of dentists had 6 employees, up 500%, while public administration employed 8.

For Hill Spring in 2025, the provided employment-by-industry data does not show any industries with job losses. Instead, the listed industries are either unchanged over the year or show growth. Cattle ranching and farming employed 11 people, with no change from the previous year. Offices of dentists had 6 employees and increased by 500 percent. Other amusement and recreation industries had 1 employee and no change, while recreational vehicle parks and recreational camps also had 1

employee and no change. Other local, municipal and regional public administration employed 8 people, also unchanged. Because the dataset only includes industries with flat or positive year-over-year movement, it does not support a narrative about declining industries in Hill Spring. The available figures point to a small employment base with limited year-to-year movement in most sectors. On this evidence, there are no declining industries to report from the data provided.

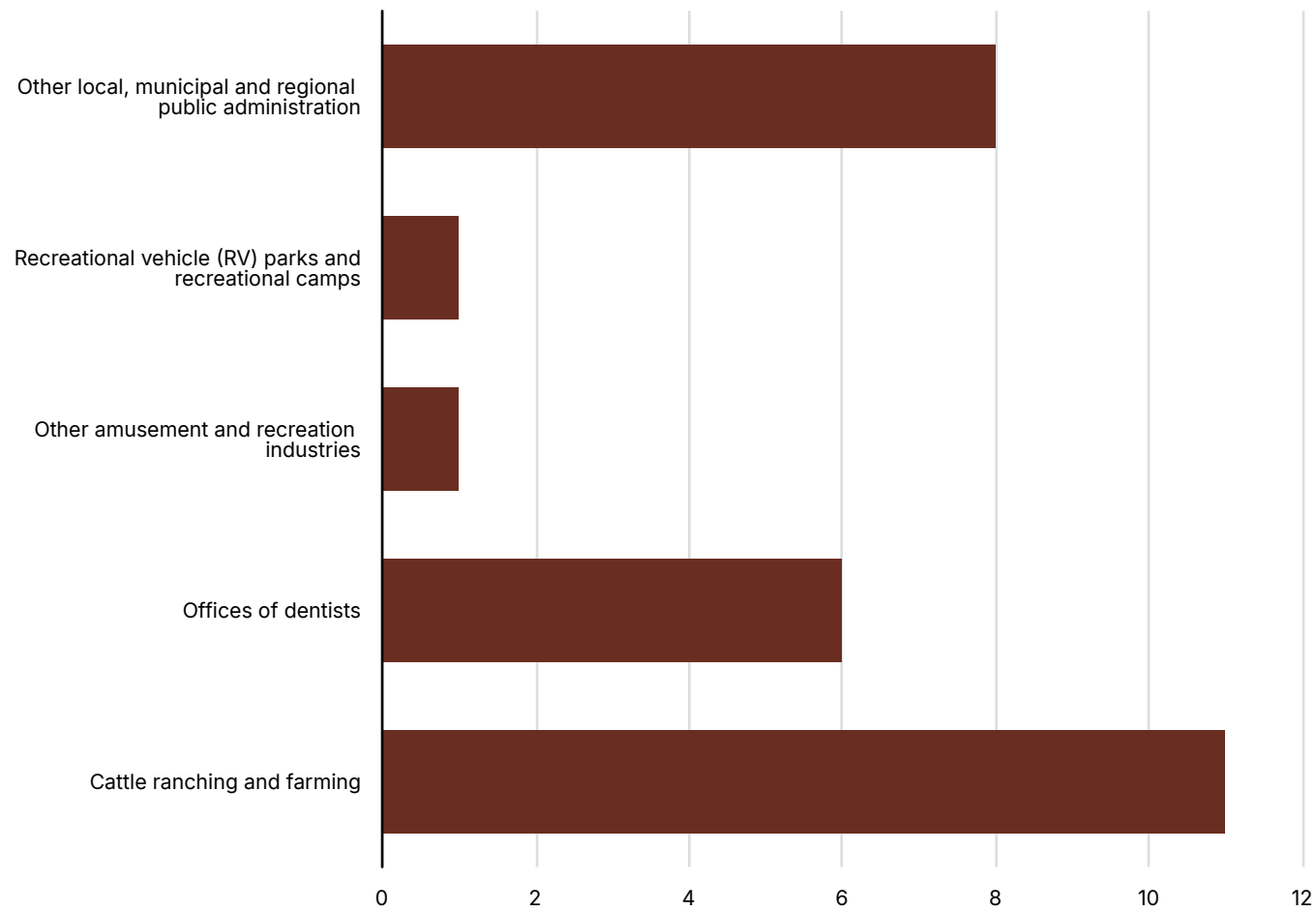


**Figure 10.1:** Shows industries where employment has decreased the most over the selected time period. It helps identify parts of the local economy that are losing jobs. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>3</sup>

# Largest Industries

Cattle ranching and farming was the largest employer in Hill Spring in 2025, with 11 people. Other local, municipal and regional public administration followed with 8, while offices of dentists rose to 6, up 500% from 1 in 2024.

Hill Spring's employment picture in 2025 is concentrated in a few small industries, with livestock and public services at the top. The largest employer in the dataset is cattle ranching and farming, followed by other local, municipal and regional public administration. The numbers are modest in scale: cattle ranching and farming employs 11 people, public administration 8, and offices of dentists 6. Oilseed and grain farming accounts for 3 jobs, while other amusement and recreation industries

and recreational vehicle parks and camps each have 1. Recent change is limited in most of the larger industries. Cattle ranching and farming, public administration, and the two recreation-related industries all show no change from a year earlier. Offices of dentists stands out with a 500% increase, while oilseed and grain farming has no reported change. The pattern suggests a small local job base with a stable core and one sharply growing service segment.

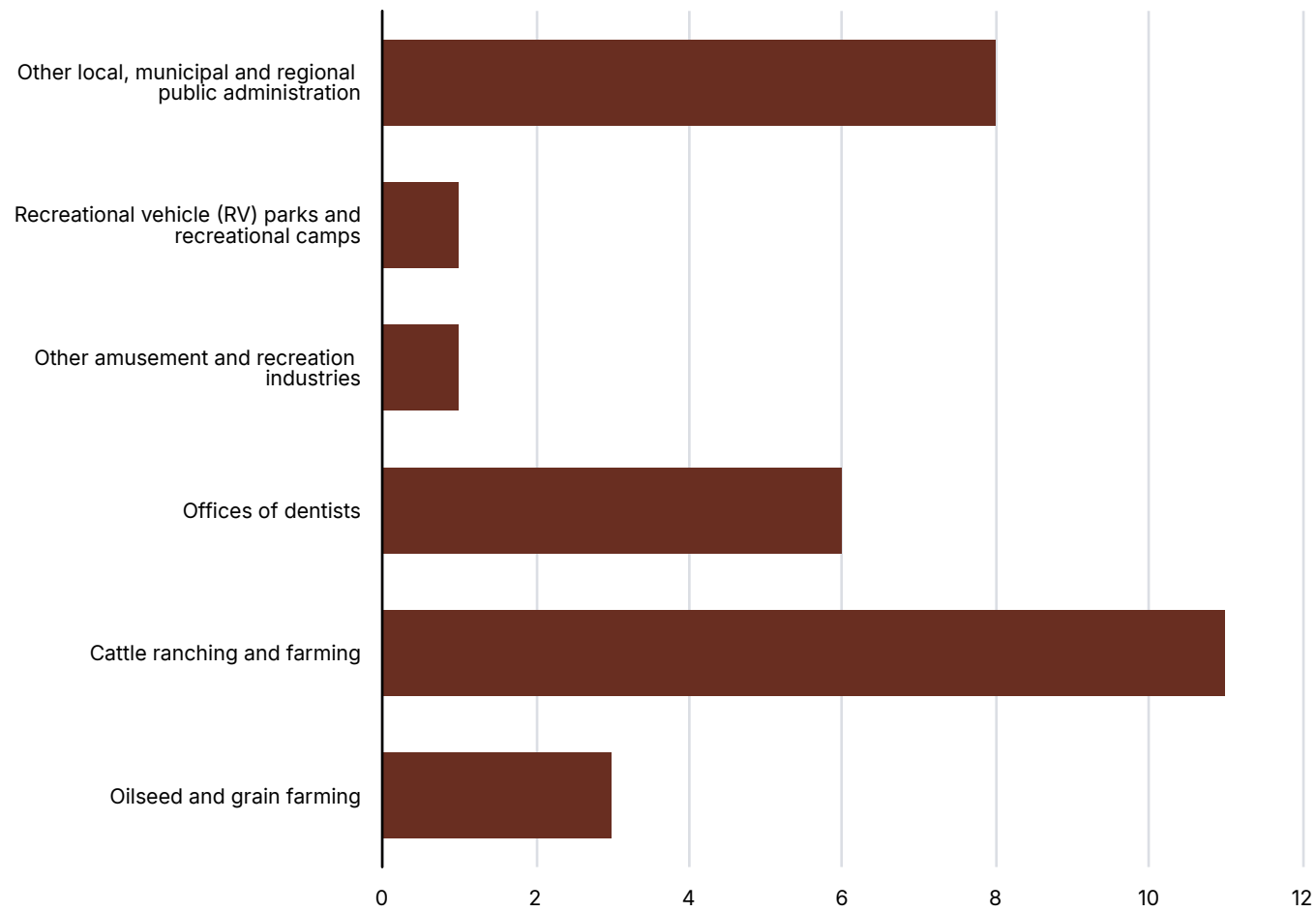


**Figure 11.1:** Shows the industries with the highest employment. It helps identify the biggest sources of jobs in the local economy. (Hill Spring, 2025)<sup>3</sup>

## Data Sources

1. Statistics Canada, Business Register. Published in Jun 1, 2025.
2. Statistics Canada, Census Profile. Published in Dec 15, 2022.
3. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Employment by Industry Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.
4. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Employment Location Quotient by Industry Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.
5. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Micro Establishments Share of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.

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