

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be submitted under the authority of the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

This form must be used for Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP), Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each shortage situation. See the State Animal Health Official (SAHO) section of the VMLRP web site (www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp) for the number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Gage, Jefferson, Pawnee and Southern Lancaster Counties
Approximate Center of Shortage Area (or Location of Position if Type III): Beatrice, NE 68310

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority High Priority Critical Priority

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (Choose only one Type)

Type I Shortage: Private Practice Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 80 percent time or 32 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one) May cover
Beef Cattle Dairy Cattle Swine Poultry Small Ruminant Other

Type II Shortage: Private Practice - Rural Area Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30 percent time or 12 hr/week)

Must cover (check at least one) May cover
Beef Cattle Dairy Cattle Swine Poultry Small Ruminant Other

Type III Shortage: Public Practice (awardee obligation: at least 49 percent time or 19.6 hr/week)
Employer: Position Title:
Please select one or more specialty/disciplinary areas: Food Safety Public Health Epidemiology Other

Please describe the **importance and objectives** of a veterinarian filling this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The objectives of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation would be to assist in maintaining and improving overall animal welfare; maintaining the health of animals that contribute to an abundant, wholesome food supply; and maintaining and improving the veterinarian to food animal ratio. Further objectives would be to fulfill the obligations of regulatory medicine for state and federal governments. The state hopes to mitigate vulnerability to emerging animal diseases by maintaining an appropriate veterinarian to animal ratio.

According to NASS, there are approximately 150,000 beef cattle, 6,000 dairy cows, 220,000 swine, 9,500 small ruminants, and 4,000 equines in these counties, representing 3,669 square miles. According to State of Nebraska licensure records, there are 11 licensed veterinarians in Gage County, the main county of need as the underserved epicenter and largest county of this shortage area. However, 5 of these veterinarians are semi-retired or fully retired, another veterinarian left for academia, and there is only one clinic in Gage County providing comprehensive food animal services.

Please describe the **activities** of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The activities of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation in this area would be those of a skilled veterinary practitioner who could assist in maintaining and improving the overall health of the food animal population in these counties. The veterinarian in this position would improve the overall veterinarian to food animal ratio, thereby allowing for more time with clients for routine animal care, as well as allowing for improved response time to animal emergencies in this veterinary-deficient practice area. In addition to routine and animal emergency care, a veterinarian is needed for continued service at livestock auction markets in the area.

The veterinarian also would be expected to become proficient in regulatory medicine in order to assist state and federal officials in protecting against domestic and foreign contagious animal diseases.

The activities of this veterinarian will assist in developing and maintaining a community of sustainable food animal producers by delivering preventative medicine and conducting activities with clients that lead to an overall healthy and productive livestock herd.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).

In Gage County there is only one veterinary clinic that provides food animal care. The long-time owner left in 2013 and the new owner is a recent graduate who is struggling to keep the practice financially viable, provide cost effective ambulatory services, and satisfy educational debt obligations. It is a small-animal-veterinarian-saturated community with 4 companion animal services clinics in Beatrice (the county seat of Gage County) alone and another 8 miles away. Two of these clinics used to be mixed animal, but the doctors gave up large animal practice after bouts of cancer and strokes, respectively.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).

There is concern that the recent graduate/new owner of the only food animal clinic in Gage County may not be successful and the clinic may be forced to close due to pressures of maintaining the business while supporting educational debt as well. If this veterinarian cannot be retained, the area will continue to be underserved. A decrease in veterinary services could affect the area through 1) increased disease or reproductive losses resulting in decreased viability for producers; 2) delays in the recognition of disease, allowing spread with greater impact; and 3) deteriorating standards of animal health in the area. The importance of this point is bolstered by the fact that Nebraska is a regular national contender in highest annual red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter. Our state is a major exporter of live animals and meats, so quality veterinary care that translates into healthy livestock is not just important for veterinarians and producers, but also for consumers in the state, nation, and world who enjoy the end product. It is critical to continue to support veterinary medicine in this area to ensure the health and vitality of food animals, the agricultural economy, and local community.

(Optional) If the nominator wishes to specify a service time for this shortage situation that is higher than the minimum required for the shortage type checked on Page 1, please specify the percent time in the box below (based on a 40-hour

work week). Leave the box blank if the service time for this shortage situation is for the minimum percent time of the shortage type indicated.

30%

Minimum Service time required for each shortage type

Type I: 80 percent time or 32 hours/week

Type II: 30 percent time or 12 hours/week

Type III: 49 percent time or 19.6 hours/week

SAHO nominator must check both boxes below in order for NIFA to consider this nomination for official designation

- By checking this box, I affirm that this form represents a nomination and is subject to NIFA review and approval.

- By checking this box, I affirm that it is my professional opinion that this is a bona fide food supply or public health-related veterinary shortage situation. I affirm due diligence has been invested to identify this area as a shortage situation of at least moderate priority (severity).

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Dr. Dennis Hughes

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Email: Dennis.hughes@nebraska.gov

Telephone Number: 402-471-2351 or 800-572-2437
(Area code required)

Expiration Date: 11/30/2016