



**NIFA Veterinary Medicine  
Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
US Department of Agriculture  
Form NIFA 2009-0001  
OMB Control No. 0524-0046  
Expiration Date: 11/30/2016

## 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](http://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: Delta Junction to Fairbanks  
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area; must be a logistically feasible veterinary practice service area)

Approximate Center of Shortage Area  
(or Location of Position if Type III): Either Fairbanks or Delta Junction  
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

**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)**

- ☐ Beef Cattle  
☐ Dairy Cattle  
☐ Swine  
☐ Poultry  
☐ Small Ruminant  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**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)**

- ☒ Beef Cattle  
☒ Dairy Cattle  
☒ Swine  
☒ Poultry  
☒ Small Ruminant  
☐ Other: reindeer, yak, bison

**May cover**

- ☐ Beef Cattle  
☐ Dairy Cattle  
☐ Swine  
☐ Poultry  
☐ Small Ruminant  
☒ Other: musk ox, elk

☐ **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 this position will be to develop herd health management to an expanding number of beef cattle and small ruminant operations as well as 4-H groups located across a large geographic area in the interior portion of the state. This is the second largest concentration of food animal operations in the Alaska (NASS): 45 cattle operations, one dairy farm, 13 hog producers, 29 poultry facilities, 4 reindeer farms, 18 small ruminant operations (dairy goat, goat, and sheep), 4 elk and 7 bison producers. This position would also support emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and emergency response to all hazards that would impact animal health. There are several farms that have begun to set up in the area this last year: small dairy farm designed specifically for artisanal cheese production, dairy goat farm, two reindeer facilities and a small beef operation. There are currently only 2 veterinarians providing service to livestock over this entire area, one practice limits their service to the immediate area in and around Fairbanks but provides emergency support to this area as needed. Due to the large distance between farms veterinary coverage is lacking while expansion of family farms and livestock numbers gradually increase

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).

This position would provide herd health support to the livestock and poultry producers and 4-H groups in this large area from operations in rural areas around Fairbanks to remote locations southeast to Delta Junction. There are a number of backyard dairy cow and small ruminant dairies within this area that provide dairy products to local communities through "cow or goat share operations" that are outside the regulatory framework of the state. There are a half dozen small commercial poultry operations (flocks of 400 to 1,000 birds, combination of layer, broilers) operating in this area.

There has been an increase in the number of homestead farms contributing meat, poultry, eggs, dairy and vegetable products to local farm markets, service to these homestead farms would be a primary activity. This position would also support emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and be a point of contact for emergency response to any hazards that would impact animal health. (Example, forest fires and spring flooding are not uncommon in the interior or the state.) Several of the livestock operations use horses to work the herds of elk and cattle. In order to sustain an economically viable practice the practitioner will need to provide equine and small animal services.

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).

Veterinarians offering farm animals services have declined through this area as older practitioners are reducing farm call services. Producers have actively petitioned this office and Cooperative Extension to provide support to the food animal producers, there is limited support that can be offered from this office and Cooperative Extension Service. The University of Fairbanks has developed a 2 +2 Veterinary Program with Colorado State and has hired a livestock extension veterinarian that will be of support for a practitioner serving the livestock producers in this area. No active recruiting has been done by this office other than nominating the position through this program. Opening a practice in this area would require significant outreach to both producers and 4-H participants to promote a food animal practice with focus on herd health, food safety and Biosecurity.

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).

The risk involved with not filling this position could be significant for the success of the local dairy industry and beef operations in the area. The Northern Lights Creamery is in need of more local milk production as one dairy farmer has closed their operation. There are two producers that have plans to set up dairy operations, one goat dairy and the other dairy cattle. The dairy cattle operator is setting up a facility in Delta Junction and plans on producing grade A milk and cheese products. In addition, with the development of local farm markets, increased farm gate sales of livestock, custom slaughter and processing without the support of a food animal veterinarian there could be a greater public health risk for food borne and zoonotic disease outbreaks. There are numerous agricultural parcels open in the area and the Division of Agriculture is attempting to attract new livestock producers into the Delta region.

(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.

%
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**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: Robert F. Gerlach, VMD

Title: Alaska State Veterinarian

Organization: Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Email: Bob.gerlach@alaska.gov

Telephone Number: (907) 375-8214  
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information,

including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OGFM, 800 9<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

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