

# 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: Sussex, Kent, part of Newcastle  
(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): Harrington, DE (19952), Milford, DE (19963), or Dover, DE (19901)  
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority

**Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (select one) :**

Type II: Private Practice - Rural Area, Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30% FTE or 12hr/week)

**For Type I or II Private Practice:**

**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: bison, camelid, ratite

**For Type III Public Practice:**

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas:

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

(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 above, 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.

%

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 1500 characters).

Retaining or bringing in a food animal veterinarian to Delaware (DE) will provide animal producers a local source of expertise for help with diseases and management of food animal species. Many DE animal producers in the part of the state described in this shortage have been living without a local food animal veterinarian for many years. In addition to providing routine preventive medicine visits, tending to sick animals, and responding to emergency calls, a veterinarian with food animal expertise can serve producers by acting as a consultant with regards to tough issues such as animal welfare, public perception of routine agricultural practices, the relationship between food animals and public health, and responsible use of antibiotics. There are currently 3 veterinarians who practice with food animals in DE. Because these 3 veterinarians do <100% food animal practice, DE proposes to run our calculations based on 2 food animal veterinarians, even though we suspect the combination is still less than 2 full time equivalents. The objective is to cover an area centered in Harrington or Milford, DE with a 30 to 40 mile radius. The veterinarian could live in Dover and still be near the center of this general practice area. Dover may be attractive because it is the State Capitol and the second largest city in Delaware.

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 1500 characters or less).

The minimum time commitment for food animal work is 30%. The veterinarian will spend at least 12 hours a week engaged in food animal practice. Dairy work, with an emphasis on population medicine and preventive health, may be one aspect of the practice. Advice is routinely sought by Delaware producers in the areas of nutrition, mastitis, and reproductive programs. Another area of time commitment will be for routine and non-routine visits to small ruminant, beef cattle, swine, and backyard poultry operations.

According to NASS data (2012 Census and 2014 estimates), Delaware's most updated breakdown of premises can be found in Table 1 below. There are 974 backyard flocks in Delaware with many poultry species: chickens, geese, ducks, guinea fowl. The overall ratio is (2 veterinarians/713 premises = 0.28 veterinarians/100 premises for all of Delaware, excluding backyard flocks and premises with minor species (bison, water buffalo, captive cervid, ratite, and camelid). Delaware has 500,000 acres of land in farm (40% of the State's land) and the estimated annual cash revenue for species in Table 1 is approximately \$10.5 million.

**Table 1. Delaware: number of food animal premises and inventory.** <sup>a</sup>NASS Census, 2012; <sup>b</sup>NASS survey estimate January 1, 2015; <sup>c</sup>NASS survey estimate December 1, 2015; <sup>d</sup>Economic Research Service, 2013 farm income data.

Livestock Type	Number of farms	Number of animals (Inventory)	Number of animals sold	Cash revenue, animals sold
All cattle & Calves	431 <sup>a</sup>	17,000 <sup>b</sup>	10,481 <sup>d</sup>	\$7,547,000 <sup>d</sup>
Hogs & Pigs	59 <sup>a</sup>	3,000 <sup>c</sup>	23,422 <sup>d</sup>	\$2,820,000 <sup>d</sup>
Sheep & Lambs	69 <sup>a</sup>	1,040 <sup>a</sup>	548 <sup>a</sup>	\$91,000 <sup>a</sup>
Goats	154 <sup>a</sup>	2,008 <sup>a</sup>	872 <sup>a</sup>	\$125,000 <sup>a</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>23,048</b>		<b>\$10,583,000</b>

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 750 characters or less).

The Delaware office of the SAHO sent notification to all the veterinarians in Delaware for whom she has emails to let them know about the "retention" aspect of applying for loan repayment. The SAHO also asked DE veterinarians to spread the news to new graduates who might be interested in food animal practice in DE. We will continue to use the DE veterinary medical association as a great resource for assisting with broadcasting the news to the veterinary industry both locally and in other regions of the US. This year the SAHO will reach out to the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) to investigate whether they have a mechanism for publicizing the shortage situations available in Delaware.

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 2000 characters or less).

The greatest risk is that a foreign animal disease will enter the State and go undetected or unreported because of the fact that many producers do not have easy access to a local veterinarian. Delaware has one State Veterinarian and one Assistant State Veterinarian. Because we do not have any designated "field veterinarians" employed with our state, it is not possible to maintain strong connections with any significant percentage of Delaware's animal producers. We must rely heavily on practicing veterinarians to act as our eyes and ears, informing us of unusual disease events or unhealthy management practices.

As described in the previous section, there are only 0.28 food animal veterinarians per 100 premises in Delaware (2007 Census data), excluding backyard flocks. Our neighbors (Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey) have significant food animal populations that would be in grave danger if a foreign animal disease were to go unnoticed for more than a day or two in Delaware. The presence of food animal veterinarians in Delaware will have many benefits to the health of the environment and the public. A few examples of how veterinarians can positively influence these areas:

- reduce the number of drug residues in milk and meat by routinely discussing record keeping, sick animal management, and proper dosing and administration of pharmaceuticals
- increase awareness of zoonotic diseases and how to best prevent their transmission on farms.

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: Heather L. Hirst, DVM MS

Title: State animal health official

Organization: Delaware Dept. of Agriculture

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(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, OGF, 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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