

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

KNOX/WALDO/HANCOCK/WASHINGTON COUNTIES

Location of Veterinary Shortage:

(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):

Approx. geographic center = Ellsworth, ME 04605

(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage:

- Moderate Priority X 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)

- X Beef Cattle X Dairy Cattle X Swine X Poultry X Small Ruminant X Other: Camelids, cervids

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 veterinarian will serve rural clientele, caring for a diverse population of cattle, sheep, goat, poultry, swine, camelids and cervids, balanced with financially supportive companion animal practice. This veterinarian will service a four-county+ area, with many small farms widely dispersed, and logistical challenges associated with long travel times and increasing fuel costs, similar to other rural practice areas in Maine. At present, this area hosts few veterinarians able to provide food animal veterinary services (*See Current Veterinary Services Map, attached.*) This area lost at least two food animal practitioners to retirement in late 2013; 2015 interviews with established practices which absorbed this large animal clientele have had to expand service areas greatly, taxing staff and increasing travel time. Additionally, University of Maine's animal health laboratory reports 5-6 times more direct-from-producer submissions from the easternmost county (Washington) in this cluster than other counties in the state, suggesting that veterinary support is particularly lacking in this area. This is particularly concerning since the area is considered the hub of Maine's "food sovereignty" movement, where sufficient professional veterinary "eyes and ears" are important to offer technical and educational support to protect agricultural animal health, safety of the food supply, and public health.

This veterinarian would be expected to join regional practices providing farm services to these counties or prevent the impending loss of veterinary coverage via practice buy-in or, experience permitting, establishment of independent practice.

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 veterinarian would provide medical, surgical, dispensing, and consultation services to diverse food-animal farms, large and small. The diversity of species and production includes: cattle, small ruminants, camelids (milk, meat, fiber); swine, poultry (meat, egg); and cervids (meat, nutraceuticals).

30%+ of practice time will be hands-on veterinary services related to food animal health and production, food safety and regulatory compliance. Veterinary services will include preventative medicine, reproductive and nutritional services, disease prevention and control, sick animal exams and treatments, dispensing/sale/advice on appropriate use of medications and guidance on animal welfare to include pain management. This person will also provide services and duties of an accredited veterinarian (CVIs, TB and Brucellosis testing).

Farm visits in the area have increased due to the 2011 adoption of Maine's requirement for licensing of raw milk sellers, along with the Dec. 2012 revised Animal Disease Traceability rule requiring all interstate movement of animals to be accompanied by a CVI. This veterinarian will also assist the State Veterinarian in meeting the educational needs of the individual farmer and the early detection of zoonotic or exotic disease(s) to avoid potential spread to the livestock auctions, farmer's markets and state agricultural fairs.

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).

The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) offers loan forgiveness to 1-2 veterinary students from Maine/year who focus on food animal practice and intend to return and practice in underserved areas (all of Maine.) Large animal veterinarians offer externship/mentorship opportunities for students and new vets. Community is fostered among large animal vets through biannual veterinary food animal continuing education seminars. Recent outreach efforts (2013 survey of 200+ Maine producers, 2015 personal communication with most practices in both proposed nomination areas) have improved communication and understanding of existing and potential service gaps among our food animal veterinarians. The VMLRP awardee (2010) currently practicing near this area is a welcome addition and intends to stay. Still, need for care persists despite the prior award in a neighboring county.

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).

If this Type 2 shortage is not filled, the state is at risk of being unprepared for food animal emergencies in the shortage areas. The extensive interstate and international borders of Maine, as well as livestock/wildlife interface throughout the Maine woods, create potential for introduction of foreign animal disease. This veterinarian will extend the effectiveness of Maine's agriculture and public health veterinarian in handling an outbreak of such diseases. National and international food supply issues are affected as any loss/lack of availability of Category 2 federally accredited veterinarians will reduce the capacity for trade and commerce. With Maine's increasingly diverse small farm economy, the lack of available veterinary care may cause economic losses and animal suffering, increased risk for livestock disease, and potential zoonotic risks to public health.

The economic value of Maine's milk, eggs, livestock and poultry products has held steady since our previous nominations (\$289 million in 2012); they are now approximately 50% of annual agricultural cash receipts. The number of dairy animals is stable (approx. 32,500 vs. 32,000 Ag Census 2007) and the numbers of hogs, small ruminants and poultry on small farms has increased, with consequent increase in cash receipts for all animal agricultural products (please see *NASS 2012 Ag Census County Summary Highlights*, attached). Small farms in *this* area have increased by up to 36%, and the region boasts some of the highest production of goats (meat & milk), pullets, pheasants and sheep in Maine ([www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov)).

Lack of this veterinary position also impacts the environment, as veterinary knowledge of carcass disposal and anthelmintic/antibiotic use is critical to environmental and human safety.

(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: MICHELE WALSH, DVM

Title: STATE VETERINARIAN

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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.

