

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: Winston and Noxubee, Mississippi
(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): Intersection of state routes 14 and 145 in Macon, Mississippi 39341
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: High 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: aquaculture

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).

The main objective of a veterinarian serving this area would be to address a critical shortage of food animal veterinary services by providing veterinary care for livestock operations in an approximate 40-mile radius from Macon, MS in Winston and Noxubee counties. Both of these counties are designated critical need areas by the AVMA Food Supply Veterinary Medicine estimates where over 107,000 total food animals are present with no veterinarians to service them. This area of the state has a large stocker cattle population, as well as a moderate number of backyard poultry, swine and small ruminant populations.

Another important objective of this position is for the veterinarian to become a long-term resident of the community and contribute to the local economy. They would be expected to develop working relationships with producers and allied businesses, including the local sale barn. This veterinarian would be expected to dedicate at least 30% of their time in food animal practice. While rural in nature (Noxubee county pop'n - 11,600, Winston county pop'n - 19,000, US Census), the location of this position will provide the veterinarian with accessibility to larger cities such as Starkville and Jackson, Mississippi. Its proximity to Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine (MSU-CVM) (approximately 45 miles northwest), will allow for ample mentorship, continuing education, and referral opportunities.

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).

Routine veterinary care would include herd health services (including vaccine selection and parasite control, pregnancy and breeding soundness exams), regulatory services in accordance with state and federal health programs, issuance of interstate health papers and animal identification, disease diagnostics, and emergency veterinary services. Consultation on judicious antimicrobial use and the new VFD regulations will also be a part of the veterinarian's responsibilities. It is anticipated that the veterinarian will also work with the local sale barn in some capacity. They will also be expected to demonstrate and educate others on proper animal handling and animal welfare according to scientifically-based industry standards. The veterinarian will likely need to provide some equine and companion animal services to ensure business viability.

The veterinarian would be expected to work with Extension and 4-H livestock personnel and provide guidance and education in the areas of animal health and public health, and serve as a model for future food animal veterinarians. This veterinarian will not only serve as a valuable animal health resource to the community, but will also serve as a front line of defense in the recognition of potential emerging and exotic animal diseases. Furthermore, a veterinarian in this area would be able to provide guidance in areas of disaster preparedness and agrosecurity for both large and small animal veterinary clients.

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).

This is a crucial area of need according to many sources, and it has been a VMLRP designated shortage area since 2011. Livestock producers and representatives of the state Cattlemen's Association have expressed a need for veterinarians to provide routine and emergency veterinary services in the area. The MS Farm Bureau recently initiated a scholarship program to recruit food animal veterinarians within the state. The MSU CVM has provided large animal ambulatory services here and can attest to this need. The only large animal veterinarian covering these counties is over 70 years old and has reduced his service area and activities. He has expressed an interest in retiring soon and has made multiple attempts to hire an associate.

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).

This area of the state contains large cow-calf and stocker cattle populations in addition to smaller dairy, swine and poultry populations, and veterinary services are crucial for the area's agricultural economic stability. Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, with agricultural receipts close to \$4.9 bil. Poultry and eggs lead in total agricultural sales, with cattle and calves being the 4th leading commodity. This area of the state has also experienced growth in small ruminant populations and aquaculture farms, largely due to the establishment of several Mennonite communities. Veterinary services available from adjacent counties are limited. To the northwest, the CVM can provide large animal veterinary services, however, it is not practically or economically feasible for the college to expand its large animal coverage area. Furthermore, the retirement of the current practitioner covering the area will leave a major void in veterinary care.

The risks of a veterinarian not being secured or retained are many, including: increased livestock morbidity and mortality due to lack of available veterinary care, improper animal treatments, improper animal handling and increased threats to animal welfare, and the failure to recognize emerging and foreign animal diseases, some of which may be zoonotic. Poor production and the loss of economic opportunities will likely result from inadequate veterinary services. The lack of an accredited veterinarian could also impede livestock movement. Food safety concerns may also arise when drugs or other chemicals are used improperly or when improper drug withdrawals are followed. Environmental health can also be threatened with the lack of guidance for certain products and waste disposal. Therefore the lack of a food animal veterinary professional in this region may threaten the entire US and international communities by failure to detect and respond quickly to potential animal and public health concerns.

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: James A. Watson

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: MS Board of Animal Health

Email: jimw@mdac.ms.gov

Telephone Number: 601-359-1170
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0050 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 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.