

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: Boyd, Holt
(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): Atkinson, 68713
(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 I: Private practice, Food animal medicine (awardee obligation: 80% FTE or 32hr/wk)

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: _____

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 objectives of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation are 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 include fulfilling 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.

This two-county area is vast in size (12,483 sq. miles) with a very large number of food animals (275,100 cattle & calves, 192,232 swine, 4,755 poultry and 1,732 small ruminants, according to the latest Census figures). According to state of Nebraska public license records, there are 14 veterinarians licensed in Boyd and Holt counties, but according to discussions with experts in the area and anecdotal evidence, only six practice food animal medicine full-time, and two practice food animal medicine on a limited basis. Two of these area veterinarians have retired, one does consulting work only, two are no longer practicing in Boyd or Holt counties, and one services only his own ranch and a sale barn.

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).

With a very large number of cattle and calves in the area, a veterinarian filling the shortage needs in these counties could expect to spend up to 80 percent of his/her time providing medical services for these animals. Since the large swine operations in the counties primarily contract for their veterinarian services, there is a need by smaller farm operations for medical services for small ruminants such as sheep and goats.

Due to the ample amount of "windshield time" needed to cover this expansive area, a new veterinarian will need to use his or her time efficiently and careful planning can be expected.

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.

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).

Due to the wide-open spaces with a sparse population, it has been difficult at times recruiting new and young veterinarians to the area as they may not enjoy such a rural lifestyle. However, there has been some success in recent years in getting new veterinarians to the area, but it has been difficult to keep them there. One of the primary reasons is that the entry-level pay and enormous educational loan debt make it very difficult to consider buying into, or becoming a partner of, an established veterinary clinic. Having the possibility of receiving a VMLRP grant would give an incentive to new veterinarians to plan for long-term residency in this area.

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).

With more than a quarter of a million cattle/calves in this two-county area it is critical to have an adequate veterinarian-to-food animal ratio to assure the safety, health and overall well-being of the livestock herds in this vast region. Because of the expansive area outlined in this request, losing just one veterinarian could mean a cattle producer in this region may have to seek medical care for his livestock from a veterinarian who lives an extensive drive-time away.

There is also a relatively significant number of other food animals in this area (swine, poultry and small ruminants) that should not be overlooked when it comes to medical assistance and need. With a shortage of veterinarians, these animals can sometimes be placed as a low priority.

In addition, it is vital to maintain an appropriate number of animal health experts in the region to keep sharp vigilance over contagious diseases and assist in making sure regulations in the region are properly followed.

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)

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 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.