

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: Grant, western Hooker, southwest Cherry, southern Sheridan and northern Garden
(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): Hyannis, Nebraska 69140
(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: Equine

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.

95 %

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.

The region presented in this request is vast. The full area of the counties specified covers over 11,700 square miles, with a cow/calf population approximately 240,000, according to latest Census figures. While there are a total of 25 veterinarians licensed in the five counties mentioned, there are only two practicing food animal veterinarians in the specific area outlined (Grant, southwest Cherry, western Hooker, southern Sheridan and northern Garden counties) based on anecdotal evidence collected from area industry experts. That same evidence indicates there are approximately 90,000 cattle /calves in the specified region. From the center of the specified region (Hyannis, Nebraska) serviced by two food-animal vets (one is age 58), it is 80 to 150 miles in any direction to reach other food-animal veterinarians.

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 large populations of cattle and calves in the region, a new veterinarian beginning practice in the region can expect to spend 95 percent of his/her time attending to the veterinary needs of those livestock. This will be especially true in the spring (calving season) and fall (herding season) times of the year. Medical emergencies relating to injuries, the calving process and disease can occur quickly and frequently and require immediate attention. Travel time between medical calls also can be lengthy due to the distances involved in this region.

With a large number of working horses in this region, a new veterinarian also can expect calls to provide equine medical attention during the busy seasons.

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).

Recently, a newly graduated veterinarian was recruited to the area but left after two years of practice to move to a more populated area at the request of the spouse. Recruiting efforts are on-going and a soon-to-graduate candidate has expressed interest in beginning practice in the region. However, due to low population and the vastness of the region, senior veterinarians feel it is imperative to have a proper incentive to retain newly acquired veterinarians. The VMLRP grant would be a highly useful tool to retain recent graduates who have the burden of \$100,000 to \$150,000 in student loan debt.

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 almost a quarter of a million cattle/calves in this five county area (compared to only 14,101 people according to latest Census figures) 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 depend on seeking medical care for his livestock from a veterinarian that lives a one-to two-hour drive away.

Latest Census figures also indicate there are 2,595 horses and ponies supported in this region, a large majority of which are working equine animals. Ranchers in this region are very dependent on horses to assist in the handling of their cattle herds. Therefore, the overall health and well-being of these working horses is critical to the success of the cattle ranch operations. Without adequate available veterinary equine care, the ranch operation could be hindered.

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.