

# 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: Saline and Fillmore counties in Nebraska  
(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): Crete, 68333  
(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: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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.

**75** %

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.

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, there are approximately 59,058 beef cattle, 61,627 swine and 2,725 small ruminants in these counties, representing 1,153 sq. miles. According to Dept. of Health public license records, there are 6 licensed veterinarians in these counties, however, only 2 are practicing food animal medicine. The others are either retired, semi-retired due to health or personal reasons, or practice companion animal medicine only.

Due to the the small number of food animals veterinarians in a relatively large area, it is important to increase the number of food animal veterinarians to keep emergency response time to an appropriate length and maintain vigilance to the overall health of the food animal population.

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 activities of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation in this area would be those of a skilled veterinary practitioner who could assist in maintaining and improving the overall health of the food animal population in these counties. The veterinarian in this position would improve the overall veterinarian to food animal ratio, thereby allowing for more time with clients for routine animal care, as well as allowing for improved response time to animal emergencies in this veterinary-deficient practice area. In addition to routine and animal emergency care, a veterinarian is needed for continued service at livestock auction markets in the area.

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.

The activities of this veterinarian will assist in developing and maintaining a community of sustainable food animal producers by delivering preventative medicine and conducting activities with clients that lead to an overall healthy and productive livestock herd.

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).

Recruitment of new veterinarians to the area has not been as big an issue as retaining them or keeping them engaged in practicing food animal medicine. Because of the proximity to some larger population communities, many of the younger veterinarians find it less economically feasible to work for a lower salary in the food animal industry compared to the higher income potential in caring for companion animals. This is especially true due to the fact many of these young veterinarians have incurred enormous student loan debt. However, the VMLRP would provide incentive for many veterinarians, especially those who grew up in rural areas, to enter into, or remain in, a food animal practice.

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 still has several medium to small cattle operations where the loss of livestock would have a significant impact on their economic viability. With some emergency response times currently up to an hour or more, many injured or sick cattle are put at dire risk. The economic impact also goes beyond the farm gate because the economies of rural communities located near these operations are also dependent on the success of surrounding farms and ranches.

There are also enough hog numbers in the area, that it is important to have an appropriate number of veterinarians to animal ratio to maintain vigilance to detect any swine diseases that can spread quickly and cause great damage to these operations.

There is also a large hog processing plant in one of the counties where thousands of swine are transported to each day.

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 Dept. 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 0524-0050 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 9<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.