

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: Crockett, Reagan, Upton & Terrell Counties, Texas
(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 I-10 and Hwy 163, Ozona, TX 76943
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority 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)

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _____

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).

A veterinarian in or near Ozona, Texas would need to serve as a true mixed animal practitioner. Historically, practice in the area has been as much as 50-65% food animal, predominantly serving producers with cattle and small ruminants. The recent drought has caused livestock numbers to drop considerably. This area of the state also saw wildfire damage as a result of conditions in 2011 so the percentage of food animal work is likely to be lower than in previous years. However, due to the retirement of the sole practitioner in this small town after 38 years of practice, clients will now be travelling further than ever for veterinary services. The retiring practitioner suffered a stroke and regrets having to leave his clients with no options except to drive 45-100 miles in any direction to reach a veterinarian. There are less than 4,000 people in Crockett County. A veterinarian in this area would be an integral part of the community and fill a gap in service, with at least 30% of his/her time spent on food animals. According to the USDA, the entire nominated area has only one veterinarian accredited to work on food animals (the one who retired this year).

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).

The veterinarian would serve a large practice area. Livestock producers in the area are accustomed to hauling animals in for most services, including C-sections, pulling calves, fertility testing of bulls, pregnancy palpation and other routine services for cattle. Vaccinations and other needed services would be provided, as well as veterinary care for working ranch horses. Based on the experience of an existing practice in the town for 38 years, it is possible that the right practitioner could establish a financially viable business in this area. However, prior facilities may no longer be available so the veterinarian would need to have a solid practice plan in place, including facilities unless a mobile practice was planned.

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 solo practitioner in Ozona has made multiple attempts to recruit and hire a veterinarian. He has hosted veterinary students and interns on numerous occasions over the years. Recently many the existing practitioner has spoken with have been discouraged by the drought conditions and drop in livestock numbers, considering it too risky to open a practice in the area at this time. This is particularly true of younger veterinarians with high levels of 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 250 words or less).

Without a veterinarian in the immediate area, livestock producers will travel farther for veterinary services and extend the time required to get a sick animal to a veterinarian. Producers are already self-sufficient in many ways due to the remoteness of the area and long distances between towns. Lack of veterinary presence may result in even fewer producers consulting with a professional for problems. Use of professional veterinary expertise in even the most remote areas is valuable to the financial viability of remaining livestock operations and to the quality of care and health of the animals. Only veterinarians are trained to notice subtle signs of disease, or in the worst case signs of a possible foreign or emerging animal disease. In addition to the recent drought and wildfires, lack of veterinary access could have negative consequences on the ability to maintain livestock production in the area. While a rural lifestyle appeals to some new veterinary graduates, a large amount of student loan debt may be the tipping point that makes a young veterinarian choose not to take the risk of establishing a rural practice such as this one.

(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.

%

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:

Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA
Name: (point of contact Holly Hughes-Garza, DVM)

Title: State Veterinarian/Executive Director

Organization: Texas Animal Health Commission

Email: comments@tahc.texas.gov

Telephone Number: 800-550-8242 x718
(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.

Form NIFA 2009-0001
OMB Information Collection Approval No. 0524-0046
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