

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 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: Holt, Rock and Loup counties Nebraska
Approximate Center of Shortage Area (or Location of Position if Type III): O'Neill, Nebraska 68763

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) May cover
Beef Cattle Dairy Cattle Swine Poultry Small Ruminant Other:
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) May cover
Beef Cattle Dairy Cattle Swine Poultry Small Ruminant Other: equine
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).

The objectives of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation would be 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 would be to fulfill 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 2007 census, there are about 490,000 head of swine and cattle in these counties, but this number is believed to be higher currently as a new feedlot has been established and other feedlots have expanded. According to the State of Nebraska licensure records and anecdotal evidence collected from individuals familiar with livestock production in the area, there are only 7 veterinarians practicing food animal care in these counties, which total over 4,000 square miles.

An awardee could expect 50 percent of his/her time to be spent on food animals on an annual basis, with some seasons being busier with food animal work than others.

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 be responsible for providing general food animal health care; for providing food animal health emergency care, particularly to help aid response time during periods of high volume needs such as calving season; for providing needed services related to governmental regulatory programs; and for providing assistance related to improving animal welfare and food safety through education and consulting with clients on programs like BQA/PQA, safe handling and withdrawal guidelines for prescription drugs and other appropriate advisory roles. It is expected this position could have some companion animal responsibility as well.

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).

Recruiting and retaining veterinarians for this area has been extremely difficult because starting salaries for food animal practitioners in this area generally are not competitive with other professional endeavors, particularly when the amount of educational debt for food animal practitioners can exceed \$140,000.

After the retirement of one practitioner in a clinic of three, it reportedly took the clinic five years to recruit a new veterinarian to the spot. There is genuine concern the new veterinarian may be lost in the coming year as it has been difficult to fund the position at a level to meet educational debt needs.

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).

The volume of food animals and the geographic expanse of the area create a significant risk to the health and welfare of animals and could negatively impact our safe, abundant food supply if an appropriate animal to veterinarian ratio is not attained and maintained. It creates the potential for long wait times to receive livestock care, putting animals at risk and forcing livestock owners to make medical judgment calls which can be harmful to both livestock and the individual livestock owner.

In addition to adequate regular and emergency food animal care, clients need access to sound veterinary advice and service related to practices that can improve the quality and integrity of their animals that ultimately end up as food. The importance of this point is bolstered by the fact that Nebraska regularly ranks at the top in annual red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter. Our state also is a major exporter of live animals and meat, so quality veterinary care that translates into healthy livestock is not just important for veterinary clients, but important for consumers in the state, nation and world who receive the end food product.

(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.

50%

**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:

Name: Dr. Dennis Hughes

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Email: [Dennis.hughes@nebraska.gov](mailto: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 9<sup>th</sup> 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  
Expiration Date: 8/31/2013