

# 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: Natrona County, Wyoming  
(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): Casper, WY 82604  
(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).

According to the AVMA website (Dec. 2008), Natrona County, WY contains 94,225 food animals and 5 practicing food animal veterinarian (average of 18,845 food animals/veterinarian). However, both producers and veterinarians indicate that this estimate is grossly in error. In reality, only one veterinarian who offers food animal services resides in Natrona County. Occasionally, a veterinarian from a neighboring county may offer some food animal services, but this is rare and undependable.

Dr. Don Cobb is the sole food animal practitioner in Natrona and he has been practicing for 45 years and wishes to retire. He is desperately trying to find a younger veterinarian to take over his practice. While several young veterinarians are interested, they are unable to do so without student loan assistance.

We hope that a new veterinarian will assist producers in the area meet their regulatory requirements, preventative medicine needs and help them when disease outbreaks occur. Many producers complain that they cannot find a veterinarian to carry out regulatory veterinary requirements or other routine veterinary needs.

There are several small animal clinics in the area. Thus, we expect someone can come into Natrona County and conduct 80% food animal practice (they may need to do some equine work).

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).

Casper, the county seat of Natrona County, is Wyoming's second-largest city with a population of about 54,000 (<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/bplive/2010/snapshots/PL5613150.html>). There are at least 8 small animal clinics in the county, but food animal producers are under served. Due to the impending retirement of Dr. Cobb, the only food animal veterinarian in the county, and the high number of food animals, there is a great need for additional food animal services. He confirmed that when he retires, no one will offer food animal services in the area for much of the year. Based on that discussion and discussion with producers in the area we believe a veterinarian should offer pregnancy diagnoses and other reproductive services and consultation. Additionally, there is a need for diagnostic services and infectious disease and nutrition/toxicology management and consultation in addition to regulatory services.

Any large animal producer coming into Natrona County will have to understand large cow-calf operations, but will also need to be able to serve "back-yard" livestock and horse producers. He/she will need to be able to offer biosecurity advice to rodeo and other livestock event organizers. He/she must also be prepared to assist in the event of a large-scale disease outbreak.

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).

The state of Wyoming instituted a student loan repayment program to recruit new food animal veterinarians moving into under-served areas in 2008. We were successful in recruiting two veterinarians into an adjacent county (Fremont) in 2009/10. However, we have not been able to attract anyone into Natrona County to date.

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).

The current food animal veterinary workforce is unable to meet the demand in Natrona County Wyoming, and the problem will get much worse when Dr. Cobb retires. The producers in the area are unable to deal with livestock disease issues; ultimately this may force them out of business. This would not only reduce the nation's supply of beef and lamb, but many of these existing ranches would subsequently be sold and subdivided. This would impact the region, state, and nation as the area is considered a national treasure for its abundance of wildlife and western heritage. Such development would have a great and irreversible impact on the wildlife and other natural resources of the area.

The area does have rodeos, bull sales, other livestock events and a fair amount of tourism. The College National Final Rodeo is held in Casper and attracts people from across the country. Additionally, the Natrona County Fair is held in Casper, and the Wyoming State Fair is in the nearby town of Douglas. The state veterinarian is concerned about animal rights or other groups undermining these events by introducing an infectious disease into these livestock. With no food animal veterinarians in Natrona County, it would be impossible to manage such an outbreak. There may also be public health implications if the agent were zoonotic.

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. Jim Logan

Title: Wyoming State Veterinarian

Organization: Wyoming Livestock Board

Email: jim.logan@wyo.gov

Telephone Number: (307)777-7515  
(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.