

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be completed by the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or his/her designee

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations for 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 position. See solicitation for number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Veterinary Shortage ID Code: RI111

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Note: If this nomination is for a public practice position, please provide the location of the home office or the center of service area.

Rhode Island

Location of Veterinary Shortage:

(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or

235 Promenade St, Providence, 02908

Location of Position:

(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty

Type I Shortage: Private Practice

Food Animal Medicine (at least 80 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

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

Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area

Food Animal Medicine (at least 30 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

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

Type III Shortage: Public Practice (at least 49 percent time*)

Employer: _____ Position Title: _____

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas.

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: _____

Please describe the objectives of a veterinarian meeting 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 a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation will be to provide routine and emergency services to underserved livestock producers in the state of RI. The RI Veterinary Medical Association estimates that there are only .05% of RIVMA members that service food animals. Most of the livestock producers that are able to secure veterinary services, secure those services from veterinarians based in CT or MA. Unfortunately, geographic constraints prohibit those practices from servicing many areas of the state; therefore many producers struggle to find veterinary services when they need them. Many small operations routinely accept losses rather than seek veterinary care due to the difficulty of accessing on-farm services and/or the time and expense involved in hauling animals to out-of-state facilities. An in-state food animal veterinarian would provide an accessible resource, increasing the number of owners engaging in routine herd/flock health, minimizing the number of emergency situations, and mitigating the results of those emergencies that do occur. Current estimates conclude that the expected number of producers requiring veterinary services would not support a full time veterinarian, but that it would be expected that the demand would support a veterinarian who could devote 30-50% of their time to food animal practice.

Please describe the activities of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation and being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

A veterinarian committed to meeting this shortage situation would be expected to provide routine and emergency veterinary services primarily to dairy cattle in the eastern half of the state and beef cattle throughout the state. There are currently 17 licensed dairies in RI with 4 being located in the most underserved part, eastern RI. The dairies in that area range from about 70 head to about 400 head. There are also several beef producers ranging from hobby farms with only a couple head up to several herds that are at or around 120 head. Primarily, services required would be routine health, nutritional consulting, reproductive services, regulatory testing for interstate movement, and emergency services. Throughout the state there are also hobby farms with small ruminants and several swine farms. The small ruminant farms are small goat dairies (one commercial one) and small sheep farms (up to 120 head). The swine operations generally range from small farrow-to-finish operations of as few as 10 sows to feeder operations with up to 600 feeder hogs. On the hobby farms there is potential for considerable client education and individual animal care. On the swine farms there is potential for herd health, nutritional consulting, reproductive consulting, and regulatory testing to meet interstate transportation requirements.

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).

Over the past year and a half the state has hosted a series of meetings between livestock producers, veterinarians (RIVMA members, small animal vets, and out-of-state large animal vets), university extension (URI), Tufts University Veterinary School faculty, and veterinary technicians to address the needs of the farmers. We have formed a working group to address the needs and are exploring various avenues such as continuing education for farmers, continuing education for small animal vets who may want to work with livestock, expanding the role of veterinary technicians, and securing funding to assist a new graduate to buy equipment to start a practice. Working group members have estimated that a veterinary candidate would be paid a salary of \$60K annually plus a benefit package for 45-50 hours of work weekly. Using a percentage of gross pay model, as opposed to a flat salary, a candidate would typically be paid 20-25% of gross revenues. At the 25% level, a candidate would need to generate \$300K of gross income to earn a salary of \$75K plus benefit package.

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).

Risk is high. Multiple factors contribute to that risk. One factor is that currently there are virtually zero RI based, federally accredited, food animal veterinarians working in the field on a daily basis. RI's current financial and fiscal situation is bleak so that state staffing of animal health personnel has been decreased to critically low levels. Currently, there are only 2 field personnel. Another risk is that RI has a very high ethnic population. As a result of this, many of the current livestock producers are recent immigrants who may not be aware of the degree of regulation and oversight that is present here as compared to their country of origin. Many producers are not aware of testing requirements and health certification for interstate shipment for instance. Couple this with the fact that Providence is a port city and we are nestled between two major metropolitan areas, Boston and New York City. Therefore there is a very high risk that animals or animal products may be knowingly or inadvertently imported illegally, and these imports can serve as a very high risk of contamination of our livestock with a potential foreign animal disease. This risk with the low number of state inspectors and federally accredited veterinarians to monitor animal health puts RI in a high risk category for introduction of disease that could threaten RI agriculture and potentially national agriculture. Other risk factors are that RI has a live bird poultry market, seven licensed garbage fed swine operations, and an approved auction. All of these represent significant risks in an area with a dearth of qualified accredited field veterinarians, our country's

first line of defense in protection from introduction of and control of FAD. On a local scale, the difficulty of farmers to access veterinary services means that individual animal health suffers as well as herd health. This translates into economic losses for farmers and threatens local agriculture as a result. Preservation of local agriculture is a priority of state government and the citizens of RI as we value open spaces and a source of safe, locally produced food.

Please indicate whether you consider this situation/position a candidate for a "service in emergency" agreement (limit your response to 100 words or less). Please see solicitations for additional information regarding the obligation of participants who enter into the "Service in Emergency" agreement.

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

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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, OEP, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

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