



National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
 US Department of Agriculture  
 OMB Information Collection  
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# 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.**

#### 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.

Upson, Crawford, Peach, Meriwether, Pike Counties Georgia

Location of Veterinary Shortage:

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

Center of Service Area or  
 Location of Position:

Thomaston, Georgia 30286

(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).

According to the AVMA FSVM website there are presently 74 counties in Georgia that do not have a veterinary practice devoted to food supply Veterinary Medicine and all but 9 of these counties are located adjacent to each other, increasing the distance that existing veterinarians must travel to support food animal producers. There are approximately 10 more counties that have food supply veterinarians that are near or past retirement age but are continuing to practice until they can recruit their replacement. According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture there are approximately 7,119 cattle/calves, 1,351,060 broilers/layers and 2,104 goats (#2 in state) in Upson County with the surrounding counties within 50 miles (Crawford, Peach, Meriwether, and Pike) having 19,585 cattle/calves, 2,149 goats, and 1,949,894 broilers/layers and no food animal veterinarians.

The objective would be for a veterinarian to establish a clinic (mobile or permanent building) in one of the underserved counties and provide disease diagnosis, treatment, and surveillance, consultations on disease prevention and control, and herd health work. While some of the counties in this designated area could not economically support an 80% Food Animal Medicine practice they could support a 30 to 50% practice. The veterinarian in this area could provide routine and emergency service to the surrounding counties for a 50 mile radius. According to Tong Wang et.al (“Where Are The Veterinarian Shortage Areas Anyway”) the shortage in Georgia is worse than the national average. Placing a food supply veterinarian in this area of Georgia would help to improve this situation.

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 in this shortage area would be expected to provide veterinary service to most species of animals including beef and dairy cattle, swine, small ruminants, horses, dogs, and cats on a routine and emergency basis. The veterinarian would provide advice on preventative medicine and reproductive management issues including appropriate and timely vaccinations, prudent antimicrobial use, general animal husbandry and welfare, and designing biosecurity procedures for their operations. These mixed practice veterinarians will help to improve animal health, enhance the economic sustainability of local producers, and provide management advice to help protect the public from the threat of zoonotic disease transmission. These practitioners also will serve as the first line of defense against the possible introduction or spread of contagious foreign animal diseases as the rapid detection of these diseases, should an outbreak occur, is the first and perhaps the most important step toward preventing a massive loss to the livestock industry and economy should an agent be introduced into their region. The veterinarian could also consult with the livestock sale barn in Upson county.

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 University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine began a Food Animal Veterinary Incentive Program in 2007. This early admission program is designed to attract high school students interested in food supply medicine. The students enroll in the College of Agriculture, with guaranteed admission to the College of Veterinary Medicine after completion of their degrees in Animal and Dairy Science. This program mentors these students and should lead to a greater retention of them in Georgia. Each year the College holds a career day for mixed animal practitioners and students interested in employment in Georgia.

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).

One of the greatest risks associated with a lack of food supply veterinarians in these underserved counties in Georgia is the length of time a zoonotic or foreign animal disease would be present before it was detected and reported thus increasing the potential spread of disease to other animals or the public during this time. In addition, there is substantial risk of producers or lay people making treatment recommendations that might lead to an adulteration of either meat or milk as well as subpar animal health and thus animal suffering. Throughout many of the counties currently without food animal veterinarians, there are many small beef cattle operations that often do not receive appropriate veterinary input into medical treatment decisions due to the expense involved with bringing a licensed veterinarian in from another county or region of the state. Through improved animal husbandry and management advice, veterinarians in these counties would promote better management and treatment decisions and lead to a safer food supply locally, statewide, nationally and internationally. By providing improved preventative medicine to the herds and flocks in these areas the veterinarians would be helping to ensure that affordable high quality protein continues to be available for consumers, lessen animal suffering due to lack of proper veterinary care, and reduce inappropriate antimicrobial or anthelmintic use in many local herds and flocks to prevent drug residue violations. Surveillance and emergency preparedness in this part of the state are key to protecting Georgia's poultry industry (our largest agricultural industry).

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:

Name: Dr. Robert M. Cobb Jr.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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