

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.

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Crockett, Reagan, Upton & Terrell Counties, Texas
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or
 Location of Position: Intersection of I-10 and Hwy 163, Ozona, TX 76943
(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 : Ranch horses

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).

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 and being located 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.

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.

N/A

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Dee Ellis, DVM, MPA
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Organization: Texas Animal Health Commission

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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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