

# 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: Greely-Sherman-Valley-Loup-Wheeler counties in Nebraska  
(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): Ord, NE 68862  
(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:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Must cover</b>(check at least one)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beef Cattle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dairy Cattle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Swine</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poultry</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Small Ruminant</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Equine</u></p> | <p><b>May cover</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Beef Cattle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dairy Cattle</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Swine</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poultry</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Ruminant</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> |
|---|--|

**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).

The objectives of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation are 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 include fulfilling 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.

Maintaining the appropriate veterinarian to animal ratio is especially important to this specific area since it is 2,860 square miles and only has a population of 11,128 people (2013 Census) while there are 323,724 cattle and calves (2012 Census of Agriculture). In addition there are 2,236 horses and ponies, most of which are working animals to assist in tending livestock. Meanwhile, the State Department of Health lists 8 veterinarians registered in those counties, but according to local experts and anecdotal evidence, only 4 of those vets regularly practice food animal medicine.

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).

With large populations of cattle and calves in the region, a new veterinarian beginning practice in the region can expect to spend at least 80 percent of his/her time attending to the veterinary needs of those livestock. This will be especially true in the spring (calving season) and fall (herding season) times of the year. Medical emergencies relating to injuries, the calving process and disease can occur quickly and frequently and require immediate attention. Travel time between medical calls also can be lengthy due to the distances involved in this region.

With a large number of working horses in this region, a new veterinarian also can expect calls to provide equine medical attention during the busy seasons.

The veterinarian also would be expected to become proficient in regulatory medicine in order to assist state and federal officials in protecting against domestic and foreign contagious animal diseases.

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).

It has been difficult at times to recruit new veterinarians to this area due to its vastness and long distance from any larger population centers. One veterinarian in this region made the comment that even when they have been successful in recruiting a new veterinarian, he or she may not stay due to the long hours he or she must endure because of the low numbers of veterinarians versus the large number of food animals in this region. There are also some senior veterinarians looking to retire in the next few years but have found it difficult to find a younger veterinarian able to buy into a practice because of the burden of a enormous student 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 2000 characters or less).

Nebraska is second in the nation in total number of cattle and calves so the beef industry is critical to the entire state. With over 300,000 cattle and calves in this five-county region it is vital to have an appropriate veterinarian to food animal ratio to maintain overall herd health and vigilance against the spread of diseases.

This region is also vast in size (2,860 square miles) with a small population (11,128 - 2013 Census) so response times to emergency calls can be very long when there are an inefficient number of food animal veterinarians practicing in the area. It also makes it difficult to have the appropriate amount of people with expertise who can detect dangerous diseases in time to prevent them from spreading rapidly throughout the area.

If the proper health care and prevention of disease is not maintained in this area, it not only threatens the prosperity of local farms, ranches and communities, but could affect the economy statewide.

In addition, there is a rather large number of working horses in the area that especially require health care during the busy season. If a farm or ranch were to lose the services of horses due to the lack of emergency care, it could put the entire operation in a stressful situation.

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 Dept. of Agriculture

Email: dennis.hughes@nebraska.gov

Telephone Number: (402) 471-2351 or 800-572-2437  
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0050 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.