

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) for the number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Approximate Center of Shortage Area (or Location of Position if Type III): Palmer or Wasilla

Overall Priority of Shortage: Moderate Priority High Priority Critical Priority

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (Choose only one Type)

Type I Shortage: Private Practice Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 80 percent time or 32 hr/week)

- 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

Type II Shortage: Private Practice - Rural Area Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30 percent time or 12 hr/week)

- Must cover (check at least one): Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Swine, Poultry, Small Ruminant, Other: Reindeer, bison
May cover: Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Swine, Poultry, Small Ruminant, Other: Musk ox, yak, elk, captive wildlife

Type III Shortage: Public Practice (awardee obligation: at least 49 percent time or 19.6 hr/week)

Employer: Position Title:
Please select one or more specialty/disciplinary areas: Food Safety, Public Health, Epidemiology, Other

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 200 words or less).

The objectives of this position are to support the livestock operations of the Matanuska-Susitna borough, which covers 25,260 square miles and supports a population of over 82,515. This is the largest concentration of food animal producers (NASS) in the State: 41 cattle operations, 19 hog producers, 49 poultry facilities (not including the multiple number of private back yard poultry flocks (backyard flocks to small commercial operations 800 – 1500 birds) , 2 musk-ox farms, 3 reindeer farms, 18 dairy goat, goat, sheep operations, 4 elk and 6 bison producers. One Grade A bovine dairy farm resides in this area. This position would also support emergency response to morbidity/mortality investigations and emergency response to any hazards (natural disasters) that would impact livestock operations and animal health. In the past producers in this area have had to respond to both earthquakes and wild fires.

There are currently 3 veterinarians providing service to this entire area, due to the large distance between farms veterinary coverage is lacking while expansion of farms and livestock numbers increase. The expansion of local farm markets in this area also would require the veterinarian to focus on bio-security and “One Health” issues, such as, wild life interactions and food safety concerns.

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 200 words or less).

This position would provide herd health support to the livestock and poultry producers and 4-H groups in this large area from operations in rural areas around Palmer and Wasilla possibly to remote locations north to Willow and northeast to Glennallen. In addition to the single Grade A cow dairy there are several family cow dairies, as well as, a significant number of small ruminant dairies within this area that provide dairy products to local communities through “cow or goat share” businesses that are outside the regulatory framework of the state. There is a large (for the state) pork producer in the Glennallen area and owns a second facility in Sutton (just outside Palmer) that is currently expanding his operation to include beef and reindeer herds. There is no veterinary support for 100 miles to this operation which imports several thousand swine annually and anticipates importing beef and reindeer from Canada. The area also supports a number of game operations (several game bird, elk, and bison farms\hunt operations).

There has been an increase in the number of homestead farms contributing meat, dairy and vegetable products to local farm markets, service to these homestead farms would be a primary activity. In addition, several hog producers have expanded their herds (400 feeders) to meet the local demand for pork products mostly through farm gate sales. Several of the livestock operations use horses to work the herds of elk and cattle so the practitioner would need to provide some equine services. It would be essential for the practice the practitioner to support the food animal practice by offering equine and small animal/pet services. Besides routine veterinary care the position would need to focus on herd health, Biosecurity and food safety issues.

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).

No previous efforts to recruit veterinary services have been made from this office other than the position nomination through this program. Over the last 10 years veterinarians offering farm animals services has drastically been reduced from over 12 to now only 3. Livestock producers as well as the Division of Agriculture have actively petitioned this office and Cooperative Extension to provide support to the food animal producers, there has been limited support that can be offered from this office and Cooperative Extension Service as there is only one livestock specialist to serve the entire state. The University of Fairbanks has developed a 2 +2 Veterinary Program with Colorado State and has hired a livestock extension veterinarian that will be of support for this position in serving the livestock producers in this area. There is currently an extension facility (including a farm with a beef herd) that the university extension veterinarian will be working from and providing outreach education for private practitioners and producers.

Local veterinary clinics have turned their focus on providing service to domestic pets as time and distance involved in providing services to the livestock producers has been challenging. A two of the veterinary clinics serving this region have also attempted to recruit an associate to work part time in the clinic and part time on farm calls to provide service to livestock producers in the immediate area surrounding the practice in attempt to expand the services offered.

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).

The risk involved with not filling this position could be significant for the survival of the dairy industry in the area. The closure of the Matanuska Creamery two years ago has resulted in the failure of three dairy farms; the remaining local creamery is planning to expand to meet the need for locally produced dairy products. So there is a market for milk production. There are numerous agricultural parcels open in the area and the Division of Agriculture is attempting to attract new dairies into this area as well as the Delta region. There has been one new dairy interested in setting up to begin operation in 2014 - 2015.

Warming temperatures in the state has increased the introduction of invasive species (insect vectors, parasites) as well as an increase in certain animal and food borne diseases. This area of the state has the largest concentration of people and livestock operations and without support from veterinary practitioners in the field the state and agricultural industry will be ill prepared to identify and diagnose morbidity and mortality events that impact both animal (wild and domestic) and public health. In addition, without this position the state may not be able to effectively manage emergency response to a hazard that impacts domestic animals and animal health.

(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 on Page 1, 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.

%

Minimum Service time required for each shortage type

Type I: 80 percent time or 32 hours/week

Type II: 30 percent time or 12 hours/week

Type III: 49 percent time or 19.6 hours/week

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:

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

Form NIFA 2009-0001
OMB Information Collection Approval No. 0524-0046
Expiration Date: 11/30/2016