

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: PA113

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: Butler, Beaver and Lawrence counties
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or
Location of Position: Intersection of Routes 8 and 422, Butler, Pennsylvania 16001
(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).

NASS data (2007) show 372 farms reporting \$40,000 or more of annual sales and 1,111 farms with farming as a primary source of income in the three county 1602 square mile area. AVMA data indicate Butler and Lawrence counties are currently serviced by nine veterinarians who devote more than 30% of practice time to food supply veterinary medicine. Feedback from local veterinarians reveals two of those practitioners are in advanced in age and have suspended food animal practice. The region (with the exclusion of an extension of metropolitan Pittsburgh in Central Beaver County) encompasses an extensive rural landscape with multiple food animal species including an expanding and widely dispersed small ruminant population. Of the 1111 farms deriving primary income from agriculture only 372 report income indicative of large-scale commercial activity. Smaller niche market and "hobby" herds and flocks tend to demand more non-routine/emergency veterinary service better suited to rural mixed animal practices with income support from companion animal practice. This market profile is best addressed by the 30% minimum food animal practice category. Dispersed niche market/non commercial food animal populations outside the purview of experienced food supply practitioners present a risk to animal health in commercial operations.

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).

This region is best suited to a veterinarian with skills and interests applicable to food animal medicine and surgery, willing to provide equine and/or companion animal veterinary care as well. The presence of rural mixed animal practices strengthens community animal health infrastructure as well as providing employment opportunities to support and technical staff. The role of rural practitioners as community public health/animal health/food safety educators has become more important as this area experiences growth in locally produced and marketed food animal products. The insight of veterinarians in matters of animal welfare, best production practices, pre-harvest food safety and foreign and zoonotic animal disease risks provides critical support to smaller scale sustainable agricultural production. Rural practitioners support community youth activities through mentorship and providing animal health testing for a variety of 4-H and FFA events. Generally speaking, rural veterinary practitioners promote public understanding of agriculture as well as performing food animal disease surveillance through daily practice activities in communities with a majority of inhabitants removed from agriculture and limited in their understanding of livestock production. The rural veterinarian dedicated to this community becomes a role model to guide promising students into careers in animal health, food safety, and public health.

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).

For years Apple Grove Veterinary Clinic in Lawrence County tried unsuccessfully to hire an associate. The older partner in the mixed practice retired suddenly due to health issues. The remaining partner, unsuccessful in his attempts to attract an associate, maintained the business alone until his son graduated from veterinary school. Because of personal preference and economic considerations the son elected not to pursue large animal practice. When his father retires there will be little incentive to seek a replacement and large animal service will probably cease. Dr. Hufnagel in Butler County has discontinued large animal practice for similar reasons.

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).

This is an area with a large number of "hobby", "farmette", and small scale niche market agricultural operations. Sustainable farming is the fastest growing producer base in Pennsylvania agriculture. This producer population tends to be less familiar with best practices in animal disease control, surveillance, bio-security and husbandry. Economic limitations and unfamiliarity with best practices on smaller operations often result in serious lapses that place other animal populations, including commercial production operations, at risk of exposure to infectious diseases. Restructuring veterinary service to improve small producer outreach in such an area increases the likelihood that dangerous transmissible and foreign animal diseases will be detected in a timely manner. This surveillance enhancement protects all populations of livestock with added benefits to food safety and public health. Improved knowledge of best practices in hygiene, sanitation, air quality, nutrition, therapeutics, bio-

security, and animal handling as they apply to organic and other non-conventional forms of food animal production will improve the overall viability of small scale animal operations. As profitability improves there will be additional benefits to other local businesses and the overall local economy. This grass roots benefit to local economic stability is essential to regional and state recovery from the financial crisis and sustainable growth.

Butler County has also experienced feral swine activity in recent years with several pseudorabies positive captured feral swine. The presence of these animals places small transitional swine herds at risk. These producers also suffer from limited availability of veterinary services.

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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