

# 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: Nomination #5 – Claiborne, Jefferson, western Copiah and the southern portion of Warren counties  
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or  
 Location of Position: State Highway 61 in Port Gibson, MS in Claiborne County  
(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).

The primary objective of a veterinarian serving this area is to address a critical shortage of food animal veterinary services. There are over 20,000 cattle/calves in the area, 95,000 poultry layers (NASS 2011 estimates) and only 2 practicing large animal veterinarians to service approximately 500 livestock operations in the tri-county area. **This veterinarian would be expected to dedicate at least 50% of their time in food animal practice.** It is designated as Type II shortage area since the veterinarian will likely provide some equine and companion animal services. The veterinarian is expected to be based within 25 miles of Port Gibson, with accessibility to other larger communities (Vicksburg (25 mi) and Natchez (40 mi)).

Another objective of this position is for the veterinarian to become a long-term resident of the community and contribute to the local economy. The counties provide an economic base for many agriculture-related businesses. This area is the 6<sup>th</sup> highest poultry producer in the state and leads in the timber industry. The area is also home of Alcorn State University, one of only three land grant colleges in the state. A third objective would be for the veterinarian to serve as a community public health expert.

(199 words)

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).

Routine veterinary care would include herd health consultations (including vaccination and parasite control planning, pregnancy examinations and breeding soundness exams), regulatory services in accordance with state and federal health programs, issuance of interstate health papers and animal identification, and emergency veterinary services. They will also be expected to demonstrate and educate others on proper animal handling and promote animal welfare according to scientifically-based industry standards. This veterinarian will not only serve as a valuable animal health resource to the community, but will also serve as a front line of defense in the recognition of potential emerging and exotic animal diseases.

Public health resources are limited, and a veterinarian would be expected to serve the local communities through knowledge in areas of public health and preventive medicine. The Grand Gulf nuclear power plant is in this area, and the counties border the Mississippi River, therefore a veterinarian is important in providing guidance in areas of disaster preparedness and agrosecurity for both large and small animal veterinary clients. The veterinarian would be expected to work with Extension personnel and provide guidance and education in the areas of animal health and public health, and serve as a model for future food animal veterinarians.

(200 words)

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 two practicing mixed animal veterinarians in the tri-county area have had a difficult time recruiting and hiring associates. As a married couple, both are within a few years of retirement. CVM externship records show that their local practice has hosted many students on externships, and several recent graduates are considering the area for prospective employment. However, there are few incentives for graduates to join or establish practices in this rural area of the Mississippi Delta. County Extension livestock specialists have expressed concerns from producers that veterinary services will cease in the near future if both veterinarians retire.

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).

Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, with agricultural receipts close to \$4.9 bil. There are approximately 1.2 mil food animals in MS, with only 100 large animal veterinarians to service them (NASS, AVMA estimates).

This tri-county area has large cow-calf and stocker populations, and veterinary services are critical for the economic stability of the area. Few veterinary services are available from adjacent counties and expansion of their coverage areas is not practically or economically feasible.

Risks of a veterinarian not being secured or retained include: increased livestock morbidity and mortality, improper animal treatments, improper animal handling and increased threats to animal welfare, and failure to recognize foreign and emerging animal diseases, some of which may be zoonotic. Food safety concerns may also arise when drugs or chemicals are used improperly or when improper drug withdrawals are followed. Environmental health can also be threatened with the lack of product or waste disposal guidance. Therefore the lack of a food animal veterinary professional in this region may threaten the entire US and international communities by failure to detect and respond to potential animal and public health threats.

This area is in the Mississippi delta, a region traditionally looked upon as educationally and economically challenged. Rural health care for both animals and humans is limited. The current veterinary practice has provided mentorship for many prospective and current veterinary students, including students from Alcorn State, a historically black college. Lack of veterinary support therefore can also negatively impact student recruitment, mentoring and educational opportunities.

(250 words)

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.

NIFA is not requesting information in support of this type of agreements at this time.

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 9<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.