

November 20th, 2018. Early registration is encouraged because it will expedite entry into the building. The meeting will take place in a Federal building. Attendees should bring photo identification and plan for adequate time to pass through the security screening systems. Attendees who are not able to attend the meeting in person, but who wish to participate, may do so by phone, as discussed above.

For Further Information about the 4th Session of the CCSCH Contact: Dorian LaFond, International Standards Coordinator, Fruit and Vegetables Program, Specialty Crop Inspection Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mail Stop 0247, Washington DC 20250-0247. Phone: +1 (202) 690-4944. Email: Dorian.Lafond@ams.usda.gov.

For Further Information about the Public Meeting Contact: Marie Maratos, U.S. Codex Office, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4861, South Agriculture Building, Washington, DC 20250. Phone: (202) 690-4795, Fax: (202) 720-3157, Email: Marie.Maratos@osec.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Codex was established in 1963 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. Through adoption of food standards, codes of practice, and other guidelines developed by its committees, and by promoting their adoption and implementation by governments, Codex seeks to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade.

The CCSCH is responsible for elaborating worldwide standards for spices and culinary herbs in their dried and dehydrated state in whole, ground, and cracked or crushed form and consulting, as necessary, with other international organizations in the standards development process to avoid duplication.

The CCSCH is hosted by India. The U.S. attends CCSCH as a member country of Codex.

Issues To Be Discussed at the Public Meeting

The following items on the Agenda for the 4th Session of the CCSCH will be discussed during the public meeting:

- Matters referred by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies
- Oregano—Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Oregano

- Dried Roots, Rhizomes and Bulbs—Proposed draft Standard for Dried Dehydrated Ginger
- Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Garlic
- Dried Fruits and Berries—Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Chilli Peppers and Paprika
- Dried Herbs—Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Basil
- Dried Seeds—Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Nutmeg
- Dried Floral Parts—Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Cloves
- Proposed Draft Standard for Dried Saffron
- Proposals for new work
- Other business
- Date and place of the next session

Public Meeting

At the December 6, 2018, public meeting, draft U.S. positions on the agenda items will be described and discussed, and attendees will have the opportunity to pose questions and offer comments. Written comments may be offered at the meeting or sent to Dorian LaFond, U.S. Delegate for the 4th Session of the CCSCH (see **ADDRESSES**). Written comments should state that they relate to activities of the 4th Session of the CCSCH.

Additional Public Notification

Public awareness of all segments of rulemaking and policy development is important. Consequently, the U.S. Codex Office will announce this **Federal Register** publication on-line through the USDA web page located at: <http://www.usda.gov/codex/>, a link that also offers an email subscription service providing access to information related to Codex. Customers can add or delete their subscription themselves, and have the option to password protect their accounts.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

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How To File a Complaint of Discrimination

To file a complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which may be accessed online at http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf

, or write a letter signed by you or your authorized representative. Send your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by mail, fax, or email.

Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410.

Fax: (202) 690-7442, **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Done at Washington DC on October 16, 2018.

Mary Lowe,

U.S. Manager for Codex Alimentarius.

[FR Doc. 2018-22873 Filed 10-19-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Solicitation of Veterinary Shortage Situation Nominations for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

AGENCY: National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and solicitation for nominations.

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is soliciting nominations of veterinary service shortage situations for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) for fiscal year (FY) 2019, as authorized under the National Veterinary Medical Services Act (NVMSA). This notice initiates the nomination period and prescribes the procedures and criteria to be used by eligible nominating officials (State, Insular Area, DC and Federal Lands) to nominate veterinary shortage situations. Each year all eligible nominating officials may submit nominations, up to the maximum indicated for each entity in this notice. NIFA is conducting this solicitation of veterinary shortage situation nominations under an approved information collection (OMB Control Number 0524-0050).

DATES: Shortage situation nominations must be submitted not later than 30 days after the publication of this notice.

ADDRESSES: Submissions must be made by clicking the submit button on the Veterinarian Shortage Situation nomination form provided in the

VMLRP Shortage Situations section of the NIFA website at www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp.

This form is sent as a data file directly to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michelle Colby; National Program Leader; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2240 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-2220; Voice: 202-401-4202; Fax: 833-208-8205; Email: vmlrp@nifa.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Purpose

Food supply veterinary medicine embraces a broad array of veterinary professional activities, specialties and responsibilities, and is defined as all aspects of veterinary medicine's involvement in food supply systems, from traditional agricultural production to consumption. A series of studies and reports^{1 2 3 4 5 6} have drawn attention to maldistributions in the veterinary workforce leaving some communities, especially rural areas, with insufficient access to food supply veterinary services.

Two programs, born out of this concern, aim to mitigate the maldistribution of the veterinary workforce: The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) and Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP), both administered by USDA-NIFA. VMLRP addresses increasing veterinary school debt by offering veterinary school debt payments in exchange for service in shortage situations, while VSGP addresses other factors contributing to the

¹ Government Accountability Office, Veterinary Workforce: Actions Are Needed to Ensure Sufficient Capacity for Protecting Public and Animal Health, GAO-09-178: Feb. 18, 2009;

² National Academies of Science, Workforce Needs in Veterinary Medicine, 2013.

³ Andrus DM, Gwinner KP, Prince, JB. Food Supply Veterinary Medicine Coalition Report: Estimating FSM Demand and Maintaining the Availability of Veterinarians in Food Supply Related Disciplines in the United States and Canada, 2016. <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/References/Pages/Food-Supply-Veterinary-Medicine-Coalition-Report.aspx>.

⁴ Andrus DM, Gwinner KP, Prince, JB. Future demand, probable shortages and strategies for creating a better future in food supply veterinary medicine, 2006, JAVMA 229(1):57-69.

⁵ Andrus DM, Gwinner KP, Prince, JB. Attracting students to careers in food supply veterinary medicine. 2006, JAVMA 228(1):16931704.

⁶ Andrus DM, Gwinner KP, Prince, JB. Job satisfaction, changes in occupational area and commitment to a career in food supply veterinary medicine. 2006, JAVMA 228(12):1884-1893.

maldistribution of veterinarians serving the agricultural sector.

Specifically, the VSGP promotes availability and access to (1) specialized education and training which will enable veterinarians and veterinary technicians to provide services in designated veterinarian shortage situations, and (2) practice-enhancing equipment and personnel resources to enable veterinary practices to expand or improve access to veterinary services.

Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations (5 CFR part 1320) that implement the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the information collection and recordkeeping requirements imposed by the implementation of these guidelines have been approved by OMB Control Number 0524-0050.

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Guidelines for Veterinary Shortage Situation Nominations

I. Preface and Authority

In January 2003, the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA) was passed into law adding section 1415A to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1997 (NARETPA). This law established a new Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (7 U.S.C. 3151a) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a program of entering into agreements with veterinarians under which they agree to provide veterinary services in veterinarian shortage situations in return for repayment of qualified educational loans. In FY 2010, NIFA announced the first funding opportunity for the VMLRP.

Section 7104 of the 2014 Farm Bill (Pub. L. 113-79) added section 1415B to

NARETPA, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 3151b) to establish the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP). This amendment authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to make competitive grants to qualified entities and individual veterinarians that carry out programs in veterinarian shortage situations and for the purpose of developing, implementing, and sustaining veterinary services. Funding for the VSGP was first appropriated in FY 2016 through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Pub. L. 114-113).

Pursuant to the requirements enacted in the NVMSA of 2004 (as revised), and the implementing regulation for this Act, Part 3431 Subpart A of the VMLRP Final Rule [75 FR 20239-20248], NIFA hereby implements guidelines for eligible nominating officials to nominate veterinary shortage situations for the FY 2018 program cycle.

II. Nomination of Veterinary Shortage Situations

A. General

1. Eligible Shortage Situations

Section 1415A of NARETPA, as amended and revised by Section 7105 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act, directs determination of veterinarian shortage situations for the VMLRP to consider (1) geographical areas that the Secretary determines have a shortage of veterinarians; and (2) areas of veterinary practice that the Secretary determines have a shortage of veterinarians, such as food animal medicine, public health, epidemiology, and food safety. This section also added that priority should be given to agreements with veterinarians for the practice of food animal medicine in veterinarian shortage situations.

While the NVMSA (as amended) specifies priority be given to food animal medicine shortage situations, and that consideration also be given to specialty areas such as public health, epidemiology and food safety, the Act does not identify any areas of veterinary practice as ineligible. Accordingly, all nominated veterinary shortage situations will be considered eligible for submission.

A subset of the shortages designated for VMLRP applicants is also available to satisfy requirements, as applicable, for VSGP applicants. In addition, a shortage situation under the VSGP must also be designated rural as defined in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)).

Nominations describing either public or private practice veterinary shortage situations are eligible for submission.

2. Authorized Respondents and Use of Consultation

The only authorized respondent on behalf of each State is the chief State Animal Health Official (SAHO), as duly authorized by the Governor or the Governor's designee in each State. The only authorized respondent on behalf of the Federal Government is the Chief Federal Animal Health Officer (Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service or designee), as duly authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture. The eligible nominating official must submit nominations using the instructions provided in section A.4, FY 2018 Shortage Situation Nomination Process. NIFA strongly encourages the nominating officials to involve leading health animal experts in the State in the identification and prioritization of shortage situation nominations.

3. State Allocation of Nominations

NIFA will accept the number of nominations equivalent to the maximum number of designated shortage areas for each State. For historical background and more information on the rationale for capping nominations and State allocation method, visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp-nomination-and-designation-veterinary-shortage-situations>.

The maximum number of nominations (and potential designations) is based on data from the 2012 Agricultural Census conducted by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Awards from previous years have no bearing on a State's maximum number of allowable shortage nomination submissions or designations in any given year, or number of nominations or designations allowed for subsequent years. NIFA reserves the right in the future to proportionally adjust the maximum number of designated shortage situations per State to ensure a balance between available funds and the requirement to ensure that priority is given to mitigating veterinary shortages corresponding to situations of greatest need. Nomination Allocation tables for FY 2019 are available under the VMLRP Shortage Situations section of the VMLRP website at <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/vmlrp-shortage-allocations>.

Table I lists the maximum nomination allocations by State. Table II lists "Special Consideration Areas" which include any State or Insular Area not reporting data to NASS, reporting less than \$1,000,000 in annual Livestock and Livestock Products Total Sales (\$), and/or possessing less than 500,000 acres.

One nomination is allocated to any State or Insular Area classified as a Special Consideration Area.

Table III shows the values and quartile ranks of States for two variables broadly correlated with demand for food supply veterinary services: "Livestock and Livestock Products Total Sales (\$)" (LPTS) and "Land Area (acres)" (LA). The maximum number of NIFA-designated shortage situations per State is based on the sum of quartile rankings for LPTS and LA for each State and can be found in Table IV.

While Federal Lands are widely dispersed within States and Insular Areas across the country, they constitute a composite total land area over twice the size of Alaska. If the 200-mile limit for U.S. coastal waters and associated fishery areas are included, Federal Land total acreage would exceed 1 billion. Both State and Federal Animal Health officials have responsibilities for matters relating to terrestrial and aquatic food animal health on Federal Lands. Interaction between wildlife and domestic livestock, such as sheep and cattle, is particularly common in the plains States where significant portions of Federal lands are leased for grazing. Therefore, both SAHOs and the Chief Federal Animal Health Officer (Deputy Administrator of Veterinary Services, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service or designee) may submit nominations to address shortage situations on or related to Federal Lands. Nominations related to Federal Lands submitted by SAHOs will count towards the maximum number of nominations for that individual state.

NIFA emphasizes that the shortage nomination allocation is set to broadly balance the number of designated shortage situations across States prior to the nomination and award phases of the VMLRP and VSGP. Awards will be made based strictly on the peer review panel's assessment according to each program's review criteria; thus no State will be given a preference for placement of awardees. Additionally, each designated shortage situation will be limited to one award per program.

4. FY 2019 Shortage Situation Nomination Process

For the FY 2019 program cycle, all eligible nominating officials submitting may: (1) Request to retain designated status for any shortage situation successfully designated in FY 2018 and/or (2) submit new nominations. Any shortage from FY 2018 not retained or submitted as a new nomination will not be considered a shortage situation in FY 2019. The total number of new nominations plus designated

nominations retained (carried over) may not exceed the maximum number of nominations each eligible nominating official is permitted.

The following process is the mechanism for retaining a designated nomination: Each nominating official should review the map of VMLRP designated shortage situations for FY 2018 (<https://go.usa.gov/xUhqW>) and download a PDF copy of the nomination form for each designated area that remains open (not awarded) in FY 2018. If the nominating official wishes to retain (carry over) one or more designated nomination(s), the nominating official shall copy and paste the prior year information into the current year's nomination form and select "SUBMIT".

Both new and retained nominations must be submitted on the Veterinary Shortage Situation Nomination form provided in the VMLRP Shortage Situations section at <https://nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp-shortage-situations>.

Nominations retained (carried over) will be designated without review unless major changes in content are identified during administrative processing or the shortage has been retained for three years. Major changes in content or shortages already retained for three consecutive years will be treated as new submissions and undergo merit review.

5. Submission and Due Date

Submissions must be made by clicking the submit button on the Veterinarian Shortage Situation nomination form provided in the VMLRP Shortage Situations section at <https://nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp-shortage-situations>. This form is sent as a data file directly to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program; National Institute of Food and Agriculture; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Shortage situation nominations. Both new and retained (carry-over) nominations must be submitted not later than 30 days after the publication of this notice.

7. Period Covered

Each shortage situation is approved for one program year cycle only. However, any previously approved shortage situation not filled in a given program year may be resubmitted as a retained (carry-over) nomination. Retained (carry-over) shortage nominations (without any revisions) will be automatically approved for up to three years before requiring another merit review. By resubmitting a carry-over nomination, the nominating official is affirming that in his or her professional judgment the original case

made for shortage status, and the original description of needs, remain current and accurate.

8. Definitions

For the purpose of implementing the solicitation for veterinary shortage situations, the definitions provided in 7 CFR part 3431 are applicable.

B. Nomination Form

The VMLRP Shortage Nomination Form must be used to nominate veterinarian shortage situations. Once designated as a shortage situation, VMLRP applicants will use the information to select shortage situations they are willing and qualified to fill, and to guide the preparation of their applications. NIFA will use the information to assess contractual compliance of awardees. The form is available in the VMLRP Shortage Situations section at <https://nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp-shortage-situations>. See Part II A. 5. for submission information. Detailed directions for each field can be found at <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/vmlrp-veterinarian-shortage-situation-nomination-form-form-nifa-2009-0001>.

C. NIFA Review of Shortage Situation Nominations

1. Review Panel Composition and Process

NIFA will convene a panel of food supply veterinary medicine experts from Federal and/or State agencies, and an institution receiving Animal Health and Disease Research Program funds under section 1433 of NARETPA, to review the nominations and make recommendations to the NIFA Program Manager. NIFA will review the panel's recommendations and designate the VMLRP shortage situations. The list of approved shortage situations will be made available on the VMLRP website at www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp.

2. Review Criteria

Criteria used by the shortage situation nomination review panel and NIFA for certifying a veterinary shortage situation will be consistent with the information requested in the shortage situations nomination form. NIFA understands the process for defining the risk landscape associated veterinary service shortages within a State may require consideration of many qualitative and quantitative factors. In addition, each shortage situation will be characterized by a different array of subjective and objective supportive information that must be developed into a cogent case identifying, characterizing, and justifying a given geographic or

disciplinary area as deficient in certain types of veterinary capacity or service. To accommodate the uniqueness of each shortage situation, the nomination form provides opportunities to present a case using both supportive metrics and narrative explanations to define and explain the proposed need.

While NIFA anticipates some arguments made in support of a given shortage situation will be qualitative, respondents are encouraged to present verifiable quantitative and qualitative evidentiary information wherever possible. Absence of quantitative data such as animal and veterinarian census data for the proposed shortage area(s) may lead the panel to recommend disapproval of the shortage nomination.

The maximum point value that panelists may award for each element is as follows:

20 points: Describe the objectives of a veterinarian to meet the needs of the shortage situation in the community, area, State/insular area, or position requested above.

20 points: Describe the activities required of a veterinarian to meet the needs of the shortage situation located in the community, area, State/insular area, or position requested above.

5 points: Describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian to achieve the objectives and activities in the shortage situation identified above.

35 points: Describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being filled or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and/or to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, State/insular area, nation, and/or international community. Type III shortages should comment on the need for and indicators of retention for individual shortage situations, as Type III shortages are unique and traditional retention indicators do not necessarily apply.

An additional 20 points will be used to evaluate overall merit/quality of the case made for each nomination.

Robert Holland,

Associate Director for Operations, National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

[FR Doc. 2018-22951 Filed 10-19-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

ACTION: Announcement of meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Commission) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act that the Michigan Advisory Committee (Committee) will hold a meeting on Wednesday November 14, 2018, at 12 p.m. EST for the purpose discussing next steps in their study of voting rights in the state.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday November 14, 2018, at 12 p.m. EST

PUBLIC CALL INFORMATION: Dial: 877-260-1479, Conference ID: 2679533.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Melissa Wojnaroski, DFO, at mwojnaroski@usccr.gov or 312-353-8311.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Members of the public can listen to the discussion. This meeting is available to the public through the above toll-free call-in number. Any interested member of the public may call this number and listen to the meeting. An open comment period will be provided to allow members of the public to make a statement as time allows. The conference call operator will ask callers to identify themselves, the organization they are affiliated with (if any), and an email address prior to placing callers into the conference room. Callers can expect to incur regular charges for calls they initiate over wireless lines, according to their wireless plan. The Commission will not refund any incurred charges. Callers will incur no charge for calls they initiate over land-line connections to the toll-free telephone number. Persons with hearing impairments may also follow the proceedings by first calling the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 and providing the Service with the conference call number and conference ID number.

Members of the public are also entitled to submit written comments; the comments must be received in the regional office within 30 days following the meeting. Written comments may be mailed to the Regional Programs Unit Office, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 230 S. Dearborn St., Suite 2120, Chicago, IL 60604. They may also be faxed to the Commission at (312) 353-8324, or emailed to Carolyn Allen at allen@usccr.gov. Persons who desire additional information may contact the Regional Programs Office at (312) 353-8311.

Records generated from this meeting may be inspected and reproduced at the

COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

Notice of Public Meeting of the Michigan Advisory Committee

AGENCY: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.