

Addressing Food Animal Veterinary Shortages in California



July 2024

Antimicrobial Use and Stewardship
California Department of Food and Agriculture

Current AUS vet shortage activities



• *Solicit Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) shortage designations*

- Initial community request for designation
- Strengthen nomination by identifying additional supporting information
- Validate shortage designation feasibility

• *Partnering with groups with similar goals*

- UC Davis: focusing on high school education and recruitment for food animal medicine career pathways
- LifeStock: provides applicant assistance and education, targeting senior year veterinary students and graduated veterinarians

• *Advocate to USDA NIFA (comment periods, panels, etc.)*

Type I

Applicant must commit their practice to a minimum of **80% food animal.**

- Average: 32-40 hours/week

Intended for “Full-Time” need for **food/large animal** shortages.

Type II

Applicant must commit their practice to a minimum of **30% food animal.**

- Average: 12-28 hours/week
- States may require higher percentage of time based on area needs.

Focused on rural areas where food animal practice will likely only be a portion of one’s practice.

Type III

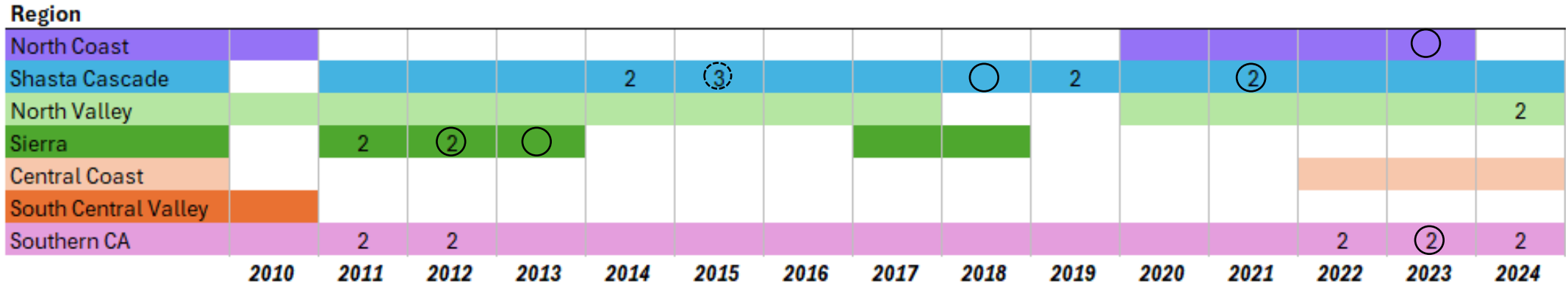
Applicant must commit to a minimum of **49% public practice.**

- Average: 19 hours/week

Intended for veterinarians in **public service.**

Types of VMLRP Shortages, adapted from: <https://nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp-shortage-situations>

Historical and Current Nomination Trends



○ 1 shortage designation awarded ○ 2 shortage designations awarded

Table A2. Number and percent of nominations, applications and awards per state, 2010-2022.

State/Area	Number of Nominations	Percent of Nominations (%)	Number of Applications	Percent of Applications (%)	Number of Awards	Percent of Awards (%)	Award Rate (%)
California (CA)	80	2.97	23	1.12	10	1.26	43.5

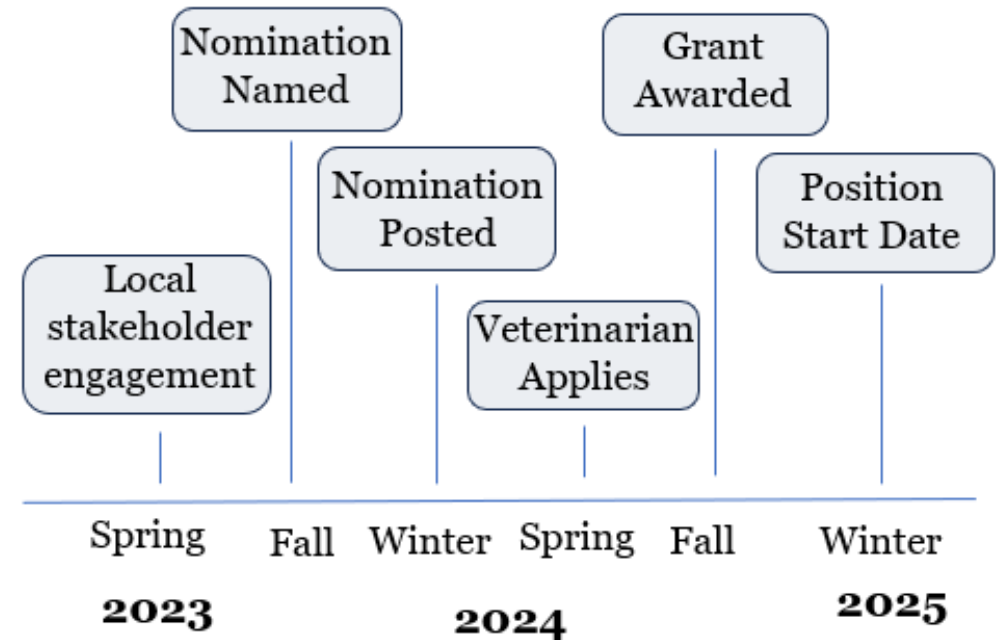
Getting applicants to be competitive & successful

Methods to promote successful recipients

- *Promote shortage designations*
 - In-person presentations
 - Email blasts, newsletters, and social media posts
 - Seek personal connections within the community
- *Help California applicants navigate administrative components of application*
- *Follow-up with VMLRP and VSGP recipients (if known)*

Challenges to attracting applicants

- *High cost of living, as compared to funding: \$25,000 per year, plus tax burden (anecdotal)*
- *Long lead-in time for recipient to receive funds (see figure)*
- *National review process: No CDFA input into candidates (independently reviewed)*
 - VMLRP does not notify states as to who receives this award
 - CDFA asks those who do receive the awards to let us know
 - Applicants may not be aware that we don't already know who they are



Source: CDFA AUS generated graphic based on published deadline information from USDA NIFA

Future Veterinary Shortage Opportunities

1. *Provide funding through State-based programs*

- Currently not permitted by USDA NIFA to allow additional funding from individual states to same recipients
- Useful tool for increasing incentive in high cost of living areas?

2. *Address the challenge of practice acquisition and ownership for large animal veterinarians.*

- Limited availability of low-interest business loans for large animal practice
- Some shortage areas lack existing practices, so also need to set up a business along with dealing with loan expenses
- Working with financial institutions and other federal agriculture funding mechanisms could help to bridge this gap.



3. *Mentorship*

- Areas with critical need may lack engaged mentors, which new graduates need to feel comfortable to settle in a difficult to serve area

Any questions?



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