



AAVMC Statement on USDA Plan to Strengthen Rural Food Animal Veterinary Workforce

On August 28, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a new initiative to increase the number of rural food animal veterinarians across the United States, and to recruit new veterinarians to join USDA.

AAVMC looks forward to working with USDA in these efforts. Specifically, the announcement stated the department's intention to increase funding for programs such as the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program and Veterinary Services Grant program. This increased funding has long been a legislative priority for AAVMC, and we look forward to helping streamline the application process for these programs.

We also applaud the department's initiative to make federal service more attractive to veterinary graduates. AAVMC agrees that our graduates are the best and brightest and are a critical part of the federal workforce.

The department also has announced that it will "catalog relevant USDA programs including Rural Development programs such as Business and Industry Loan Guarantees and the Community Facilities Program" to better educate veterinary graduates about programs available to help finance clinics in rural areas. AAVMC has advocated for this type of "one stop shopping" and included similar ideas in comments to USDA's listening session held in January of last year.

AAVMC looks forward to partnering with USDA, including providing additional input and information as this plan moves forward.