FARM JOURNAL FOUNDATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

Maryland Rural & Food Systems Veterinary Shortage Solutions

State and Community Readiness Program



The Farm Journal Foundation (FJF) is honored to provide this report to Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

The State and Community Readiness Program is designed to take a comprehensive, fact-based approach to identify the root causes of the shortage of rural and food-systems veterinarians and to develop a range of possible solutions to address those causes. Simply put: understanding the cause of the shortage is essential before it can be effectively addressed.

This report summarizes data and insights provided by key stakeholders in Maryland and should be considered the starting point for the conversations and further work to identify the causes of the rural and food-systems veterinarian shortage. Contributing organizations include:

The data findings and assessment are reported in the following sections:

- Maryland farm and livestock data
- Available federal assistance programs
- Veterinary licensing and practice data
- Veterinary workforce and education data
- Closing and next steps

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Maryland Department of Agriculture

KEY DATA POINTS

Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine · Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners · University of Maryland Eastern Shore · Maryland FFA Foundation · University of Maryland Extension

POLICY & INSIGHTS

Delmarva Chicken Association · Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation · Maryland Dairy Industry Oversight and Advisory Council · Maryland Farm Bureau · Maryland Horse Industry Board · MDVMA · RMC Rural Maryland Council · Dr. John Brooks

SECTION 1: Maryland Farm and Livestock Data

USDA - NASS

Trends in Maryland's four major food-animal species, along with farm numbers over the past 20 years, are summarized in Table 1. Cattle numbers have declined across farms and animal inventory. The number of swine farms has increased, while the total number of animals has remained steady between 2012 and 2022. Poultry farms, in the context of layers, have increased while the total number of birds has declined. Broiler operations have consolidated, with fewer farms today but relatively stable bird numbers after a peak in 2012.

Table 1. 20-Year Comparison of Farm and Animal Numbers

		2022	2012	2002
Total Number of Farms		12,550	12,256	12,198
Farms by Size	1 to 49 Acres	6,832	6,035	5,830
	50 to 999 Acres	5,352	5,842	5,981
	1,000 and Over Acres	366	379	387
Cattle & Calves Inventory	Farms	2,926	3,499	3,990
	Animals	152,394	194,524	240,918
Hogs & Pigs Inventory	Farms	550	333	355
	Animals	20,219	19,869	(D)
Layers Inventory	Farms	2,292	1,544	810
	Animals	2,459,130	2,364,942	3,172,376
Broilers (Sold)	Farms	682	854	862
	Animals	277,949,940	304,729,435	287,106,225

*(D) Data withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms. Source: USDA - NASS

In line with the nationwide trends, Maryland is seeing a growth in small farms, 49 acres or less, while the categories of farm sizes between 50 and 999 acres have experienced declines. Breaking with national trends, Maryland has seen a modest decline in large farms over 1,000 acres.

SECTION 2: Available Federal Assistance Programs

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) is the primary federal program designed to address shortages of food-animal and rural veterinarians. The VMLRP assists qualified veterinarians in educational loan repayment in exchange for the individual's practice in a nominated shortage area. Maryland is allotted three shortage nominations annually based on state land area and total farm-gate value of animals and animal products. The Maryland State Veterinarian submits three allocations per year.

From 2010 to 2022, Maryland submitted 23 shortage nominations. USDA received eight applications and issued three awards (new and renewal), resulting in a 37.5% award rate – nearly identical to the national award rate average of 38.6%.

In a review of the more recent period 2021 through 2025, Maryland received three designations with one application and one award in 2021. There were no shortage areas nominated in 2022, 2023, and 2024, and therefore no applications or awards. With the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Trout as State Veterinarian on October 2, 2024, she nominated and received three allocations for 2025. However, since this action, USDA has placed a hold on the program, and it is expected that the 2025 allocations will be used for the 2026 applications.

Table 2. VMLRP applications and awards for the four most recent years available (2021-2024)

	Maryland				Total USDA			
	2024	2023	2022	2021	2024	2023	2022	2021
Allocations	3	3	3	3	257	250	257	252
Designations	0	0	0	3	240	237	226	221
Applications	0	0	0	1	166	136	130	144
New Awards	0	0	0	1	80	68	73	67
Renewals	0	0	0	0	34	20	16	11
Award Rate %	0	0	0	100%	66.7%	64.7%	68.4%	54.1%

Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP)

Authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill, the Veterinary Services Grant Program (VSGP) is designed to address veterinarian shortage situations and support veterinary services. The program provides two types of grants 1) Rural Practice Enhancement (RPE) and 2) Education, Extension, and Training (EET). The RPE grants support establishing or expanding veterinary practices in rural areas. The EET grants are available to develop, implement, and sustain veterinary services through education, training, recruitment, placement, and retention of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, students, and technology.

During the past five years, Maryland received no VSGP awards.

SECTION 3: Veterinary Licensing and Practice Data

Demographics of Maryland's Licensed Veterinarians

One of the key factors in evaluating the current situation is the demographics of licensed veterinarians in Maryland. The following charts provide demographic statistics.

The Maryland State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (MD SBVME) reports:

3,346

Total number of active licensed veterinarians in Maryland

2,326 or 69.52%

Number of active licensed veterinarians residing in Maryland
(based on home address)

Two significant pieces of data that FJF relies on, which influence the shortage and are essential for assessing future needs, are the demographics regarding the age and gender of licensed veterinarians. MD SBVME began collecting date of birth in 2004. Therefore, the age demographics reported below are an estimate as license applications prior to 2004 do not have a date of birth associated with them. Gender of applicant is currently not collected by MD SBVME and therefore unavailable. The 2025 American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) *Economic State of the Veterinary Profession* reports that females make up 63% of AVMA members.

Table 3. Estimated Age Demographics for Maryland Licensed Veterinarians

Approximate Age	Number	Percentage of total licensees
80+	17	0.51%
70-79	111	3.32%
60-69	407	12.16%
50-59	639	19.10%
40-49	1,069	31.95%
30-39	875	26.15%
20-29	216	6.45%
Unknown	12	0.36%

Interesting observations from Maryland's estimated age of veterinarians:

- 535 or 16% of practitioners are approximately age 60 or older
- 639 or 19% of practitioners are approximately age 50 to 59
- In total 1,174 or 35% of practitioners are at or will be at retirement age within 15 years

A review of new and expired/non-renewed licenses over the past seven years shows that the number of licensed veterinarians in Maryland has been rising. Maryland licenses expire annually on June 30, which anchors the year-to-year comparison reflected in the following table.

Table 4. The Number of New and Expired/Non-Renewed Licensed Maryland Veterinarians

Fiscal year ending	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
New Licenses	275	299	196	173	192	158	173
Expired or non-renewals	167	144	142	137	148	163	130
Gain or (loss) in the # of licensees	108	155	54	36	44	(5)	43

FJF requests data on practice type, business structure, and practice location (rural vs. urban). Often, this information is not collected or is limited due to incomplete surveys. MD SBVME was able to provide some information based on surveys, but response rates were low, however, limiting the ability to draw firm conclusions. Key highlights include:

Primary Practice Type: Less than 30% of licensed veterinarians responded. Among surveyed veterinarians, 42 or 1.3% identified as Farm Animal, and 265, or 7.9% identified as Equine.

Hospital Practice Type: Responses included 11 Equine/Large Animal hospitals, while more than 500 identified as Small Animal.

Business Structure: More than half of the respondents did not answer; among practices surveyed, an LLC was the most common structure, representing over 28% of responses.

SECTION 4: Veterinary Workforce and Education Data

Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine

Just as the need for the veterinary sector to meet consumer demands is much different today than it was a few decades ago, so is today's veterinary student. Their backgrounds, interests, and career plans often do not align with the reality of rural or food-animal practices. In short, few students enter veterinary school intending to practice in any part of production agriculture.

At this moment, Maryland does not have a veterinary college. Since 1989, an agreement between the University of Maryland-College Park and Virginia Polytechnic & State University has established the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM). Per this agreement, 50 seats are reserved for Virginia residents, and 30 are reserved for Maryland residents. There is a separate application process for Virginia and Maryland residents. Their applications are reviewed by a joint board of faculty from both schools. Accepted Maryland residents pay in-state tuition.

Since 2020, VMCVM has received a steady increase in applications from Virginia, Maryland, and out-of-state applicants, however the total number accepted has remained the same. The following table provides data on the total applicants and acceptance rates annually, and the same information for Maryland applicants.

Table 5. VMCVM Total and Maryland Applications and Acceptance Rate for the Past Six Years

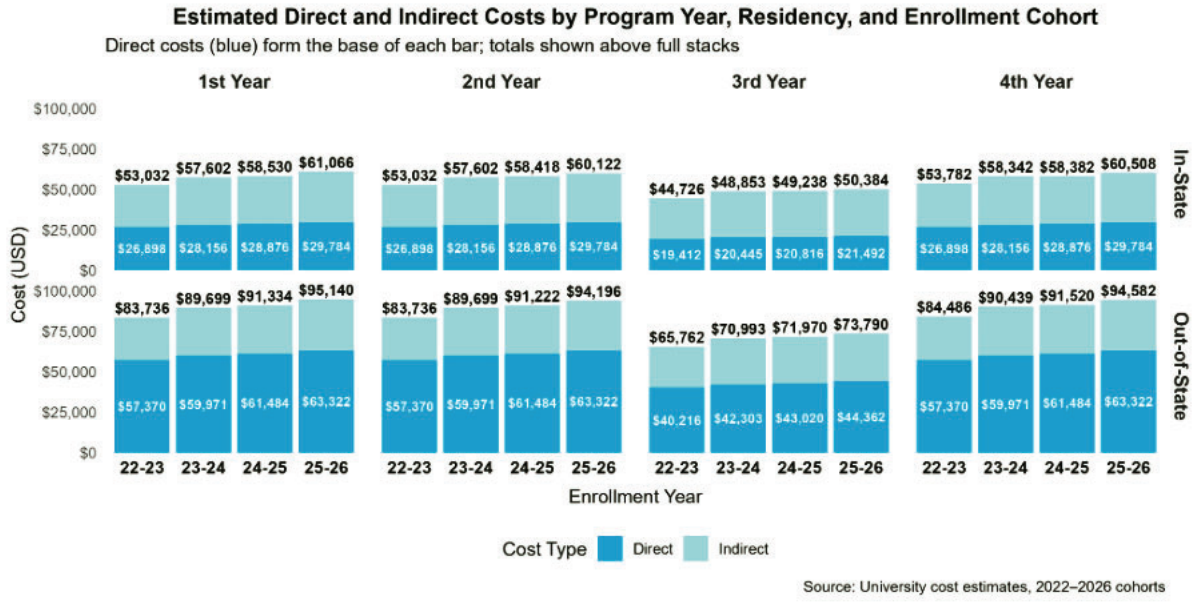
Graduation/Entry Year	2029 / 2025	2028 / 2024	2027 / 2023	2026 / 2022	2025 / 2021	2024 / 2020
Total Applicants to VMCVM	2,270	2,127	1,708	1,911	1,891	1,470
Total Number Accepted to VMCVM	126	128	127	128	128	127
Percentage of Total Applicants Accepted	5.55%	6.01%	7.43%	6.69%	6.76%	8.63%
Maryland Applicants	185	175	161	183	179	142
Maryland Applicants Accepted	30	30	30	30	33	30
Percentage of Maryland Applicants Accepted	16.21%	17.14%	18.63%	16.39%	18.43%	21.12%

Across all applicants to VMCVM over the six-year period, there were 11,377 total applicants, of whom 764 were accepted, resulting in an overall rate of 6.71%. Out-of-state applicants comprised the largest group with 8,103 applicants, followed by 2,177 Virginia applicants, 1,025 Maryland applicants, and 72 international applicants.

From 2020 to 2025, VMCVM data shows that 97 admitted students attended a Maryland-based school for their undergraduate studies. Of these, 63 attended the University of Maryland-College Park, and the remaining 34 attended eight other Maryland colleges or universities.

Both direct (tuition and fees) and indirect costs (course materials, medical insurance, living expenses, transportation, etc.) have steadily increased for in-state and out-of-state students at the VMCVM. For 2025–2026 academic year, the estimated total cost of attendance (including tuition, fees, and living expenses) is approximately $61,000 for in-state and $95,000 for out-of-state students during the nine-month academic year. Between the second and third year, students must enroll in summer coursework, which adds an estimated $18,000 for in-state and $29,000 for out-of-state students.

Figure 1. Estimated Direct and Indirect Costs by Program Year, Residency, and Enrollment Cohort (2022–2026).



Direct costs (blue) form the base of each bar, while indirect costs (light blue) include housing, transportation, and other personal expenses. Totals are shown above each stack. Summer estimates are discussed in the text and not displayed in the figure.

Consistent with industry trends, the majority of graduates from VMCVM are female.

Table 6. Gender of VMCVM Graduates 2021 – 2025 (Five DVM Classes)

Number of Graduates	Male	Female	Male Percentage	Female Percentage
614	165	449	26.9%	73.1%

VMCVM tracks its graduating seniors and records the number of graduates from each curricular track. VMCVM offers small animal, food-animal, equine, mixed-animal species, and public/corporate tracks. Across the past five graduating classes (2021–2025), 614 students completed the DVM program. Of these, 54 students (8.8%) graduated from the food-animal track, 29 (4.7%) from the equine track, 182 (29.6%) from the mixed-animal track, and 79 (12.9%) from the public/
corporate track.

VMCVM is an on-site model with a full teaching hospital. Large animal ambulatory services are offered at the Blacksburg Teaching Hospital.

Table 7. VMCVM Food-animal, Equine, and Public/Corporate Track Graduates, 2021-2025

Graduation/Entry Year	2025 / 2021	2024 / 2020	2023 / 2019	2022 / 2018	2021 / 2017	TOTALS
Equine	6	8	3	6	6	
Mixed-Animal	26	44	37	29	46	
Small Animal	62	56	52	54	46	
Number of Graduates	121	125	120	120	128	614

In addition to tracking program data, VMCVM conducts an internal survey to track graduates' career intentions. The survey captures students' intended practice areas post graduation. Intention of interest includes: food-animal government/corporate intention, academia intention, food-animal private practice intention, equine private practice intention, and rural community career intention.

Table 8. VMCVM Graduate Intentions, 2021-2025

Graduation/Entry Year	2025 / 2021	2024 / 2020	2023 / 2019	2022 / 2018	2021 / 2017	TOTALS
Food-Animal Government/ Corporate Intention	11	6	12	8	8	45
						6
Food-Animal Private Practice Intention	3	3	3	6	4	19
						18
						126

Note: This data includes only students with post-graduate intentions in food-animal government/corporate, academia, food-animal private practice, equine, or rural community. VMCVM also collects data on other tracks, which were not provided.

Across the five most recent graduating classes (2021-2025), a total of 614 veterinary students reported their intended career paths. Of these, 19 students (3.1%) indicated plans to enter food-animal private practice, while 18 (2.9%) planned to pursue equine private practice. Interest in food-animal roles within government or corporate settings was higher, with 45 (7.3%) students selecting that path, and six students (1.0%) expressed interest in academia.

By contrast, intentions to work in rural communities were substantially more common: 126 students (20.5%) — over one in five graduates during this period — reported a rural career interest. While relatively few graduates commit directly to food-animal or equine practice, the much larger number expressing rural intentions suggests that many may be targeting mixed-animal or community-focused practice models rather than strictly species-specific tracks. This distinction is important for workforce planning, as rural demand often spans multiple practice types.

VMCVM also tracks the number of graduates passing the North American Veterinary Licensing Exam (NAVLE) from 2020-2024. During this time period, a total of 603 VMCVM took the exam. For the past five years, VMCVM graduates have consistently scored higher on their NAVLEs than the national average.

Table 9. North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) Performance, VMCVM Graduates, 2020–2025

Year of Exam	2024 - 2025	2023 - 2024	2022 - 2023	2021 - 2022	2020 - 2021	TOTALS
Students Taking Exam	121	124	120	118	120	603
Students Passing Exam	113	113	115	107	114	562
VMCVM Percent Passing	93%	91%	96%	91%	95%	93%
National Percent Passing	89%	88%	86%	90%	92%	89%

Veterinarian student debt remains a major factor influencing career choices, often steering graduates toward private and small or mixed-animal practice. Nationwide, the typical cost of veterinary school exceeds $200,000. The following tables present data on debt levels and starting salaries of graduating students.

The debt reported by VMCVM reflects only the educational debt accumulated during the DVM program and does not include any prior undergraduate or graduate debt. Average starting salaries are self-reported by graduates and exclude salaries of those pursuing advanced education.

Table 10. Student Debt and Starting Salaries Nationally (2023 AVMA)

	Nationally
Educational debt of indebted graduates	$185,486
Educational debt of all graduates (including those with no debt)	$154,451
Starting salaries	$124,295
Debt-to-Income ratio of all graduates	1.24

Table 11. VMCVM Students' Debt and Starting Salaries

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Total Graduates	121	125	121	120	128
Education debt of students with debt (only includes debt incurred while attending VMCVM)	$181,049	$188,160	$162,692	$170,703	$180,394
Number of students with no debt at graduation	31	22	21	18	25
Average annual starting salaries of those with a position on June 1 after graduation	$125,452	$133,305	$122,339	$115,948	$98,661

Source: AVMA Economic State of Profession

According to data provided by the Maryland Board of Veterinary Examiners, between 15 and 33 VMCVM graduates applied for a Maryland veterinary license in each graduating year from 2020 through 2025. These figures represent all applicants at any point in their careers and are not limited to individuals who ultimately received or currently hold active licenses. Additionally, the data include applicants from all states, not just Maryland contract students. Because the total number of Maryland residents graduating from VMCVM and applying for a Maryland license each year is unknown, it is not possible to determine the percentage of Maryland resident graduates who pursue Maryland licensure. Nevertheless, the data provide a useful proxy for understanding VMCVM's contribution to the state's veterinary workforce pipeline.

Table 12. Number of VMCVM Graduates Applying for a Maryland Veterinary License, 2020-2025

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Graduates Applying for Maryland License	20	22	15	19	27	33

New Veterinary School: University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Maryland has a significant opportunity to help address the rural and food-animal veterinarian shortage by establishing a new veterinary school at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). The school plans to enroll its first class in Summer 2027. The accreditation process for UMES School of Veterinary Medicine is progressing well, with the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education scheduled to conduct a comprehensive site visit in June 2026. This is the essential step towards obtaining a Letter of Reasonable Assurance, which is required to admit the first class of students.

Current plans call for a class size of 100 students, with half from Maryland and the other half from out of state. A holistic admissions process will be implemented, where grades are important but students' experience, communication and reasoning skills, leadership, and several other factors will be a part of the application and selection process. UMES expects to draw students interested in rural veterinary practice based on their location in the state. Therefore, a key goal is to develop a program that allows students to pursue an area of interest without being forced into a higher-paying job because of student debt. Long-term, the school believes this will ultimately provide significant economic and professional benefits, addressing critical needs in veterinary care and supporting the vitality and resilience of Maryland's rural communities.

The school's curriculum and academic philosophy outline a three-year DVM program with year-round attendance, providing the same number of semesters and course hours as a typical four-year program. Clinical training will use a semi-distributed model, with rotations overseen by faculty and clinical partners. Described as a workplace-based clinical training program, students will be trained in hospitals and practices similar to those where they may be working. All students will take the same core clinical rotations, with electives making up about half of their clinical year, allowing them to focus on the area of veterinary medicine they plan to pursue. The hands-on training students receive can better prepare them to be day-one-ready, confident, competent veterinarians.

SECTION 5: Youth, Extension, and Veterinary Programming

FFA

Maryland FFA primarily utilizes the Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) to teach agriculture education. Twenty-three schools offer the CASE Principles of Agricultural Science-Animal Systems course as well as the CASE Animal Health/Veterinary Science course. Most of these schools also offer the CASE Animal/Plant Biotechnology course. Fourteen schools offer additional courses or programs in animal science. These schools use the iCEV (internet creative educational video) curriculum or a curriculum that was written by the teachers in the local school system. These courses address Large (Production) Animal Science, Small (Companion) Animal Science, Equine Science, Veterinary Terminology, Animal Nutrition, and Reproduction.

FFA members also participate in supervised agricultural experiences (SAE) that develop individual skills and career-based competencies. Proficiency awards are awarded to those FFA members for their SAE projects who display advancement and expertise. Over the past four years, three students were recognized in the area of Veterinary Science, and 25 other students were recognized in other Animal Science-related areas. These areas include diversified livestock, poultry, equine, sheep production, swine production, beef production, dairy production, small animal, and specialty animals.

Maryland FFA has a state Veterinary Science Career Development Event (CDE). This event is part of a case-based education that allows FFA members to apply their knowledge and critical thinking skills. Questions are asked of members in a clinical setting and cover topics such as parasites, disease, clinical proceedings, and other topics. The state competition is one of the most popular CDEs, with an average of 73 students from 18 chapters participating over the past four years.

4-H

Maryland 4-H offers a wide range of programs in the agriculture and animal areas that develop life skills, leadership, and opportunities for career exploration. These include:

- **Animal science projects:** Approximately 6,500 members compete in animal-focused projects that include, but are not limited to, cattle, goats, equine, poultry, sheep, swine, and veterinary science.
- **Statewide competitions:** An estimated 600 to 1,000 members participate annually in 15 statewide youth animal science competitive events.

- **Animal Husbandry and Quality Assurance Program (AH&QA):** This online program teaches 4-H and FFA youth best practices in animal care to assure product quality and increase animal welfare. The importance of the veterinary-patient-client relationship (VCPR) is emphasized.
- **Healthy Animals | Healthy YOUth:** An award-winning program that develops zoonosis education resources and programming for youth in agriculture. This program takes a multifaceted approach to providing education about zoonosis to youth and the public.
- **Veterinary Science Experience:** Hosted by University of Maryland Extension, this program introduces youth to veterinary careers. It includes a full-day workshop at the campus farm and a virtual seven-session course covering topics such as biosecurity, caring for large livestock, and other topics.
- **Career AGsperience:** Designed to increase youth knowledge of and interest in agriculture careers, including animal and veterinary sciences. This program strives to improve workplace skills and prepare youth for entry into careers in the agricultural sector.

University of Maryland Extension

In addition to youth programs, University of Maryland Extension provides a variety of animal health and management workshops throughout the year. In 2025, four one-hour Zoom sessions covering topics such as common poultry diseases, parasites, and general poultry practices were presented. Other poultry outreach pertaining to small flock production, biosecurity, and multilingual, multiplatform infographics was shared.

Large and small ruminant workshops are also held throughout the year by the University of Maryland Extension. These trainings include short courses on beef cattle and sheep, as well as several courses on goats. Other topics covered include parasite management, biosecurity, and backyard farming.

Maryland Veterinary Medical Association (MDVMA)

The Maryland Veterinary Medical Association (MDVMA) supports students and early career veterinarians by offering free and reduced-rate memberships, respectively. MDVMA provides support to all veterinarians by hosting multiple opportunities for continuing education (CE).

In the spring, the MDVMA hosts the Mid-Atlantic States Conference for Bovine Practitioners, offering programming for veterinarians serving beef and dairy and providing up to 18 CE credit hours. In the summer, MDVMA hosts its summer conference, which includes an equine track along with sessions in veterinary technology and public health and policy. This conference provides attendees with an opportunity to earn 18 CE credit hours. In addition, MDVMA regularly hosts CE dinners and seminars.

Current State Programs to Address the Veterinary Shortage

While several organizational programs support individuals pursuing rural and food-animal veterinary careers, we did not identify coordinated, interlinked programs or funding in Maryland.

In 2023, House Bill 1133, the Veterinary Practitioner Student Loan Forgiveness Program (VPSLFP), was introduced. HB 1133 would have created a Maryland Department of Agriculture program providing up to $20,000 per year (or the borrower's remaining balance, whichever was less) in loan forgiveness in exchange for a two-year in-state service commitment, prioritizing placements in high-need settings (e.g., rural/low-income areas, emergency practices, municipal/nonprofit shelters). The bill received a hearing but did not advance out of committee and was not enacted.

In 2025, Maryland expanded the Janet L. Hoffman Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP) to include veterinarians and veterinary technicians, rather than creating a separate MDA-administered program. The program with similar loan forgiveness to HB 1133 requires veterinary practitioners and veterinary technicians to either (a) work in Maryland for ≥ 5 years, or (b) volunteer ≥100 hours/year for three years at qualifying animal shelters. The law was approved on May 6, 2025, and took effect on July 1, 2025.

The Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) Large Animal Veterinarian Assistance Loan program provides a targeted financing mechanism to encourage large-animal veterinary practice in Maryland by reducing the capital burden associated with trucks and specialized equipment. Eligible veterinarians must be Maryland-licensed, reside in the state, and commit to predominantly large-animal service in Maryland. Loan awards

range from $25,000 to $100,000 at 4% interest, with terms from 3.5 to 5 years depending on the amount, and a minimum borrower contribution of 10%. Because equipment and mobility are major logistical barriers for rural large-animal practice, this program helps address retention and expansion of large-animal veterinary capacity in underserved areas.

Agriculture & Stakeholder Organization Input & Perspective

During data collection, FJF contacted 14 organizations identified by the Maryland Department of Agriculture as key stakeholders not previously included in this report to gather their input and perspectives, receiving 7 responses.

Stakeholders were asked to rank on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the highest concern) how their organization viewed the veterinary shortage issue currently, and their expectations over the next 10 years. The current average ranking was 7.4, but that ranking increased to 8.5 when asked about the next 10 years.

Two organizations reported policies addressing the shortage of veterinarians, supporting more education opportunities, and additional VMCVM seats for Maryland students. Most organizations indicated they had recently been engaged on the topic either in discussions (internal and external) or by supporting legislative actions.

FJF received additional comments including:

- Excitement about a new Veterinary School at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- Concerns about the financial sustainability of rural veterinary business models
- Some respondents suggested that more support should be provided to Registered Veterinary Technicians
- Support to increase seats for Maryland students at VMCVM

Support among these organizations is strong, demonstrating a willingness to advance the conversation and work toward solutions.

SECTION 6: Closing and Next Steps

The efforts across the country, and within Maryland, have clearly demonstrated that there is not one or two simple answers to address the veterinarian shortage. It will take several approaches, programs, and organizations, along with time, to address a problem that has been developing for more than a decade. Without question, there is a role for state and federal governments to assist in solving this issue. However, other solutions can be termed as self-help, with the veterinary and agriculture communities working together, in some cases on a case-by-case basis or in local efforts.

The State and Community Readiness Program is designed to take a comprehensive approach. Next steps will include the public dissemination and promotion of this information, followed by a deeper dive into the key issues and development of solutions. Based on this assessment report, the FJF looks forward to working with Secretary Atticks, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and stakeholders to:

- Advance the knowledge of the key statistics and factors impacting the veterinarian shortage,
- Identify gaps in programs and resources,
- Identify technical assistance opportunities,
- Build on the great work that has already been accomplished and develop a long-lasting plan of action to resolve the shortage.

Scan to learn more about our work, partners, education resource hub, ambassadors, and state partners.

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