



1931 N. Meacham Rd.
Suite 100
Schaumburg, IL
60173-4360
phone 847.925.8070
800.248.2862
fax 847.925.1329
www.avma.org/press

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Tom McPheron

Phone: 847-285-6781

Cell: 773-494-5419

e-mail: tmcpheon@avma.org

AVMA, AVMF announce \$500,000 in incentives to attract veterinarians into food animal veterinary medicine

(SCHAUMBURG, Illinois) October 5, 2010 – The American Veterinary

Medical Association (AVMA) and American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) announced \$500,000 in veterinary school loan repayments as part of a program to combat a growing shortage of food animal veterinarians.

The five recipients of the \$100,000 incentives—spread over four years of service in areas of need—are Dr. Shaw Perrin (The Ohio State University) practicing in Goshen, Ind.; Dr. Austin Ayars (The Ohio State University) practicing in Phoenix, Ariz.; Dr. Conrad Spangler (University of Minnesota) practicing in Dalhart, Texas; Dr. Kay Russo (Cornell University) practicing in Stephenville, Texas; and Dr. Scott Morey (Kansas State University) practicing in Concordia, Kan.

“This year, the average debt for new graduates from veterinary school was over \$130,000. This school loan forgiveness program will help support veterinarians who want to pursue a career in food animal medicine that might otherwise not be able to afford to work in underserved areas,” explains Dr. Larry Kornegay, president of the AVMA.

Each recipient of the Food Animal Veterinarian Recruitment and Retention Pilot Program has made a commitment to working in food animal medicine for four years in an area that is experiencing a shortage of veterinary care. The pilot program

is sponsored by Boehringer-Ingelheim Vetmedica, Elanco Animal Health, Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, Pfizer Animal Health, and Phibro Animal Health.

“We received well over 100 applications from interested veterinarians, who underscore the need for this program,” said Michael Cathey, head of the AVMF. “It was encouraging to see so many veterinarians interested in food animal medicine, but more has to be done. Many of our applicants told us they were forced to turn down job offers in rural areas because of their student debt.

“We were able to make a small but significant impact on the food animal veterinarian shortage because of the pilot program funders. The need for this program is clear, and we need for more organizations and individuals to join us in this important effort,” Cathey added.

For more information about this issue please visit www.avma.org, or for information about the Food Animal Veterinarian Recruitment and Retention Pilot Program visit www.avmf.org.

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The AVMA and its more than 80,000 member veterinarians are engaged in a wide variety of activities dedicated to advancing the science and art of animal, human and public health. Visit the AVMA Web site at www.avma.org to learn more about veterinary medicine and animal care.

The American Veterinary Medical Foundation is the charitable arm of the AVMA. For nearly 50 years AVMF has been dedicated to embracing and advancing the well-being and medical care of animals. Charitable contributions and support to the Foundation help veterinarians help animals. Initiatives include: Humane Outreach-Animal Welfare, Education and Public Awareness, Research Support, Student Enhancement and Support of American Veterinary Medical Association and Its Initiatives. In the last decade, AVMF has awarded grants totaling over \$9,000,000. To learn more about the AVMF please go to www.avmf.org