

Dear Industry Partners:

The SVMA is the licensor and regulator for the veterinary profession in Saskatchewan. The SVMA is also the professional association for SK veterinarians, and as such provides economic guidance services and advocacy for its members.

The SVMA believes good animal health means good business. We know that livestock producers count on large animal veterinarians to care for their herds and provide expert guidance to achieve the best quality, health and reproductive outcomes.

Rural large animal and mixed animal veterinary practices face challenges hiring and retaining qualified veterinarians, resulting in an ongoing deficit of veterinarians in outlying areas where large animal care is needed. In addition, many retiring veterinarians are unable to find a successor, forcing practices to close.

In 2003, as an effort to increase the supply of large and mixed animal veterinarians in rural Saskatchewan, SVMA and the Ministry of Agriculture established an annual fund to subsidize the wages of first and second year veterinary students from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine who undergo summer mentorships with rural practices, thereby exposing and attracting new veterinarians to rural practice here in Saskatchewan. With an 80% success rate, the program has shown a proven return on investment.

The SVMA sees great potential in expanding this work placement concept to offer third year WCVM students opportunities to intern and to plant roots in rural Saskatchewan through a new Preceptorship Program that will partner with the livestock industry. We feel that having enough large and mixed animal veterinarians in Saskatchewan is needed for the livestock industry.

The summer of 2018 will be the pilot year for the Preceptorship Program. The program will provide \$10,000 to each of five (5) Saskatchewan veterinary students who have finished their third of four years at WCVM as a means of further enticing them to practise large or mixed animal veterinary medicine in Saskatchewan after they graduate. The formula for wage subsidies will be 35% from SVMA, 35% from the hiring clinic and 30% from a Preceptorship Fund raised from livestock industry contributors. We expect interest from rural veterinary practices and veterinary students to be high, but are limiting the 2018 participant numbers in order to evaluate the program.

The SVMA is seeking contributors who would like an opportunity to invest in the future of young veterinarians in rural Saskatchewan. We plan to publicize the list of contributors as a group, regardless of the amount of money given by each. Contributors will be publicized on the SVMA website and through social media messaging. In future years, we hope to see the Preceptorship Fund become an endowment for long-term continuation of the program.

If you or your farm, business, or corporation are interested in contributing to the 2018 Preceptorship Fund, please contact the SVMA office anytime.