



FOR RELEASE  
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## **New Veterinary Services Program to help farmers**

WHITEHORSE—A new pilot program to improve access to veterinary care will benefit Yukon farmers who raise animals for food.

"Veterinarians are specialists in disease diagnosis and health monitoring and can help farmers take measures to improve the health of Yukon livestock," Minister of Environment Wade Istchenko said.

The Veterinary Services Program reimburses participating veterinarians up to \$1,000 per farm to cover costs associated with their travel and professional service fees.

Because many farmers live far from veterinary clinics, travel costs can be a barrier to obtaining veterinary services. The program will cover:

- Veterinarian travel costs to and from the farm.
- Professional service and farm call fees.
- Fees for up to three phone consultations.

The pilot program will also help Yukon veterinarians build their capacity for treating livestock because it covers the cost of consulting with experts.

"This government is committed to producing safe, wholesome food in order to contribute to food security in Yukon," Minister of Energy Mines and Resources Minister Scott Kent said. "Supporting healthy livestock populations in local farms helps us get closer to that goal."

A maximum of 30 farmers can enroll in the Veterinary Services Program. Qualifying species are: beef cattle, dairy cattle, goats, sheep, poultry, swine, alpacas, llamas, yaks, elk, bison, muskox and fish raised for human consumption. People with six or fewer poultry will be eligible for \$250 per premises per year. Livestock owners are still responsible for paying fees for testing samples and for drugs, vaccines or treatments required for the animals.

The pilot program will run until March 31, 2016. It may be renewed if an evaluation shows it is successful and financial support continues to be available from the Growing Forward 2 fund.

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### **Learn more:**

Veterinary Services Program

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**Backgrounder:**

- The Animal Health unit (AHU) was created in 2010 to help support livestock health and food safety.
- The Animal Health Program makes policy and management recommendations to protect animal health and support public health. It provides animal health laboratory services, maintains a database and supports health surveillance to national standards.
- Previously there existed a program to help offset costs for veterinary visits to farms in the past, and there has been an interest from several parties to re-establish this.
- The Yukon government is launching this program as part of the national Growing Forward initiative. Both the AHU and the Agriculture Branch are investing in the administration and delivery of this service.
- The AHU and the Agriculture Branch have collaborated on the Livestock Health Program which has delivered workshops for veterinarians and livestock producers in Yukon over the past several years.
- Farmers may contact the Animal Health unit at 867-667-5600, 1-800-661-0408, extension 5600 or at [animalhealth@gov.yk.ca](mailto:animalhealth@gov.yk.ca).

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