



June 18, 2022

Honourable Derek Johnson  
Minister of Agriculture  
Room 165 Legislative Building - 450 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

**RE: Shortage of Veterinarians in Manitoba**

Dear Minister Johnson,

Manitoba is currently facing a vast shortfall of veterinarians in the province. According to a Spring 2022 sector scan conducted by the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA), there are 425 veterinarians currently practicing in Manitoba. Based on a recent workforce survey, there are at least 68 full time equivalent veterinarian positions that remain unfilled and are needed to meet current demand in the private clinical practice sector alone.

**The MVMA asserts that the shortage of veterinarians is at crisis levels and that immediate action is required to ensure that Manitobans and their animals have reasonable access to veterinary care.**

Manitoba Chicken Producers (MCP) concurs with the analysis and sentiments expressed by the MVMA.

MCP represents 150 regulated broiler and broiler breeder farmers in Manitoba. Our farmers are the primary caregivers for approximately 35 million chicken per year, and approximately 255,000 broiler breeder hens per year, that produce approximately 42 million hatching eggs in Manitoba each year.

The commercial broiler and broiler breeder industry is currently serviced by one well-experienced veterinarian who also works with stakeholders in the table egg and turkey sector. The poultry sector is currently dealing with the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) which has stretched professional veterinarian resources even further. Should the latest strain of HPAI re-surface in the Fall and/or become endemic, the shortage of qualified vets will become even more acute.

MCP requests that the Government of Manitoba increase the number of subsidized Manitoba seats at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine on an ongoing basis from 15 seats to 25 seats

*To advocate for the sustainability of our farmers so  
that we can continue to provide a healthy, safe  
and nutritious supply of chicken to our communities*

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starting for the 2023/2024 academic year. Manitoba must drastically increase the number of veterinarians in the province to meet the current demand for veterinary services and ensure that livestock producers and their animals have timely access to veterinary care.

MCP is willing to collaborate with the MVMA, the Government of Manitoba, and industry stakeholders to address this shortage of qualified personnel. MCP requests that the Government of Manitoba work with the MVMA and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine to explore and implement approaches that will encourage more current and future Manitoba veterinary graduates to apply their skills in Manitoba.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Hiltz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Wayne Hiltz, P.Ag  
Executive Director