

Facts & Figures

Employment of male and female graduates of US veterinary medical colleges, 2001

- ▶ Among graduates who received employment offers, 89.5% of males and 84.1% of females accepted an offer.
- ▶ Mean starting salary was \$39,120 for females and \$40,052 for males.

Results of the 2001 AVMA survey of graduating veterinary medical students were analyzed to determine employment, starting salaries, benefits, and educational indebtedness of male and female graduates. Responses were received from 1,610 of 2,254 (71.4%) graduates; 69.8% of the respondents were female, and 30.2% were male.

Employment Preferences, Offers, and Acceptances

At the time of the survey, all but 1.0% of graduating veterinarians were seeking employment in veterinary medicine. Graduates were asked to indicate the top 3 employment types they were seeking. Employment in the private sector was the first choice of 74.7% of the graduates. A position in an advanced study program was sought by 21.7% of the graduates, whereas only 2.6% were seeking employment in the public or corporate sector.

Overall, 91.8% of the graduates who were seeking employment received at least 1 offer of employment. Mean number of offers among those who received offers was 2.7. Offers were accepted by 85.8% of graduates who received them. All but 13.0% of those who accepted an offer matched their first choice for employment type, and only 3.1% had to settle for an employment type that was not among their top 3 choices. Equine practice appeared to be the most competitive employment choice. Less than two thirds (62.9%) of graduates who sought employment in an equine practice found such employment. Among graduates who had not receive an employment offer at the time of the survey, 46.9% were seeking employment in small animal exclusive practices, 12.3% in mixed animal practices, 12.3% in small animal predominant practices, and 8.5% in equine practices.

A higher percentage of male graduates (94.2%) received at least 1 offer of employment than did female graduates (90.8%). Male graduates also received more offers than female graduates. Among those who received offers, the mean number of offers per graduate was 3.0 for males and 2.6 for females. Among male graduates with employment offers, 63.2% had more than 1 offer, and 30.3% had 4 offers or more (Table 1). Among female graduates with employment offers, 64.8% had more than 1 offer, and 20.5% had 4 offers or more.

Table 1—Employment offers received by female and male veterinary medical college graduates in 2001

No. of offers	Female (%)	Male (%)
1	35.2	36.8
2	24.6	17.2
3	19.7	15.7
≥ 4	20.5	30.3

Among graduates who received offers of employment, 89.5% of males and 84.1% of females accepted an offer. Among these graduates, 3.7% of males indicated they would be self-employed, compared with 1.4% of females. Almost all graduates (97.0%) who accepted employment expected to work full-time. An equal percentage of male and female graduates expected to work full-time.

The distribution of graduates by the type of employment they accepted was determined (Table 2). Among female graduates, 42.5% accepted an offer from a small animal exclusive practice, 23.7% accepted a position in an advanced study program, and 13.3% accepted an offer from a small animal predominant practice. Among male graduates, 28.9% found employment in a small animal exclusive practice, 22.4% were accepted into an advanced study program, and 14.2% accepted an offer from a mixed animal practice. Equine practice was only a small source of employment for new graduates. Among all graduates who accepted an offer, 3.3% of females and 4.0% of males found employment in an equine practice.

Base Starting Salaries and Additional Compensation

Graduates who accepted an offer of employment were asked to indicate the base starting salary they expected to receive. The mean starting salary in 2001 was \$39,120 for females and \$40,052 for males. The mean salary for graduates who accepted an offer in private practice was \$44,112 for females and \$45,469 for males (Fig 1). Among female graduates, salaries ranged from \$32,577 for equine practice to \$45,409 for small animal exclusive practice. Among male graduates, salaries ranged from \$36,427 for equine practice to \$47,124 for small animal exclusive practice.

Among graduates who accepted an offer of employment, 55.4% of female graduates and 62.8% of male

Table 2—Employment of female and male veterinary medical college graduates in 2001

Employment type	Female (%)	Male (%)
Large animal exclusive	2.0	6.7
Large animal predominant	2.4	6.7
Mixed animal	8.6	14.2
Small animal exclusive	42.5	28.9
Small animal predominant	13.3	11.2
Equine	3.3	4.0
University	0.6	1.7
Uniformed services	1.1	2.0
State/local government	0.1	0.0
Federal government	0.0	0.0
Industry/commercial	0.0	0.5
Not-for-profit	0.3	0.0
Advanced study	23.7	22.4
Unknown	0.6	0.7
Other	1.5	1.0

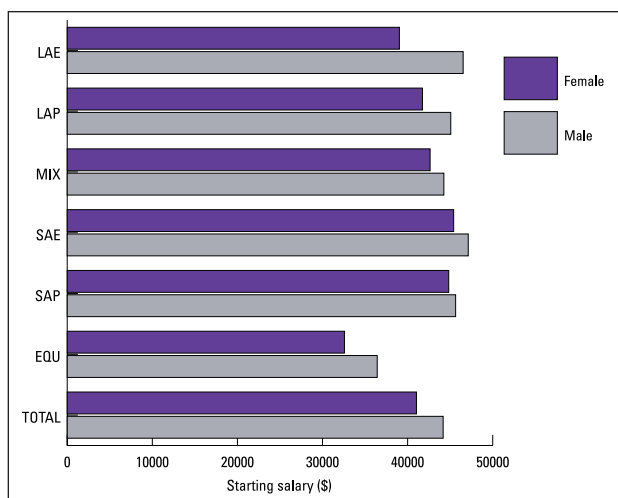


Figure 1—Annual starting salary of male and female veterinary medical college graduates who entered private practice, 2001. LAE = Large animal exclusive. LAP = Large animal predominant. MIX = Mixed animal. SAE = Small animal exclusive. SAP = Small animal predominant. EQU=Equine.

graduates indicated they would be eligible to earn compensation in addition to their base salary. Eligible female graduates expected to earn mean additional income of \$5,161. Eligible male graduates expected to earn mean additional income of \$5,182. In the private sector, mean additional income was \$4,882 for females and \$5,154 for males.

Fringe Benefits

Graduates who accepted employment were asked to indicate the fringe benefits they received as part of their compensation package. All but 7.9% received at least 1 of 15 benefits (Fig 2). In 2001, medical/hospital insurance was provided to 69.7% of graduates, and liability insurance was paid by the employer for 70.0%. Annual vacation leave was received by 74.2% of graduates, paid legal holidays were received by 41.9%, and sick leave benefits were provided to 52.2%; however, just 28.7% received all 3 of these benefits. A continuing education expense benefit was received by 75.9% of graduates, continuing education leave by 62.9%, and both by 59.0%. Life insurance was provided to 27.7% of graduates, and a pension benefit was provided to

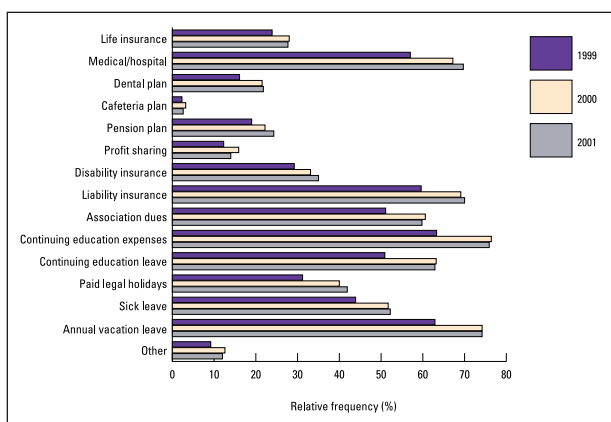


Figure 2—Comparison of benefits offered by employers to 1999, 2000, and 2001 graduates of US veterinary colleges.

Table 3—Fringe benefits received by female and male veterinary medical college graduates who accepted employment, 2001

Benefit	Female (%)	Male (%)
Life insurance	26.1	31.1
Medical/hospital insurance	71.0	67.2
Dental plan	22.2	21.1
Cafeteria plan	2.8	2.2
Pension plan	25.0	22.9
Profit-sharing	14.4	13.8
Disability insurance	32.7	40.1
Liability insurance	69.6	71.1
Association dues	60.4	59.0
Continuing education expenses	76.8	74.1
Continuing education leave	63.1	62.9
Paid legal holidays	42.3	40.8
Sick leave	51.5	53.7
Annual vacation leave	75.8	71.4
Other	13.2	9.5

24.3%. The percentages of graduates who received benefits in 2001 were generally similar to values for 2000 graduates and greater than values for 1999 graduates.¹

The percentages of male and female graduates who received each of the benefits were comparable (Table 3). Disability insurance was the lone exception; 40.1% of male graduates received this benefit, compared with 32.7% of female graduates. The most commonly received benefit was continuing education expenses; 76.8% of females and 74.1% of males received this benefit. Annual vacation leave was provided to 75.8% of female graduates and 71.4% of male graduates. Medical/hospital insurance benefits were provided to 71.0% of female graduates and 67.2% of male graduates. Liability insurance was provided to 69.6% of female graduates and 71.1% of male graduates.

Educational Indebtedness

Most veterinary students compiled some debt by the time they graduated. Among 2001 graduates, only 14.3% of females and 15.4% of males did not incur any educational debt. Mean debt among those with debt was \$67,565 for males and \$67,929 for females. Among male graduates, 63.4% had debt of \$50,000 or more. Among female graduates, 64.6% had debt of \$50,000 or more.

Table 4—Personal characteristics of female and male veterinary medical college graduates in 2001

Characteristic	Female	Male	All
Mean age (y)	27.8	28.0	27.9
Marital status			
Single (%)	60.3	57.1	59.4
Married (%)	33.4	39.8	35.3
Divorced (%)	6.3	3.1	5.3
Widow/widower (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Graduates with children (%)	7.8	21.0	11.8

Graduate Characteristics

Male and female veterinary students were approximately the same age at graduation (Table 4). Most grad-

uates were single and had never married. A higher percentage of males were married, compared with females. A higher percentage of females were divorced, compared with males. One characteristic that distinguished graduates by gender was the percentage with children; more males had 1 or more children, compared with females.

References

1. Wise JK. Employment of male and female graduates of US veterinary colleges, 2000. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2001;218:867-869.

From the AVMA Membership and Field Services Division: J. Karl Wise, PhD, Director; Martin L. Gonzalez, MS, Research Analyst.

