

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

October 25, 2023 - 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)

RFP TITLE: MARKET RESEARCH AND TRADE ANALYSIS CONTRACTOR (S.E. ASIA REGION)

RFP CONTACT:

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INTRODUCTION:

U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. formally requests proposals for the costs of engaging a Market Research And Trade Analysis Contractor to provide professional services for the Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand market (collectively referred to as 'region' in this document). This RFP involves contracting a specialist in market research and trade analysis to manage all the trade data and information from both private and open sources in the region and other services as detailed in this RFP.

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., USSEC helps build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy in feed, aquaculture, and human consumption, promote the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC aims to contract a well-qualified and experienced Consultant to gather industry statistics, market data and other current and actionable information on USSEC's target markets and key customers in this region. This information, collected and compiled on a regular basis i.e., weekly, monthly, or quarterly etc., will enable USSEC to look for and act on opportunities or stay ahead of challenges for U.S. Soy in our strategic planning. This initiative will also enable USSEC to better identify and analyze the needs of our target customers and develop incisive programs to meet those needs.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

With the data, information and analyses gathered, USSEC will liaise closely with the Contractor to reconcile the strategies and objectives set out under the Unified Export Strategy against the latest and changing market and industry information and conditions to ensure that USSEC's

program is where it needs to be or do more of, at any particular time, to achieve the greatest impact for U.S. Soy in terms of developing preference and increasing exports.

Finally, through the market research, trade information and event customer opinions gathered, we will also be able to craft a clear and incisive set of messages when promoting U.S. Soy to specific groups of customers in different destination markets. Funding would cover the cost of professional fees as well as travel expenses to visit various markets in the region if necessary.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

- Collect trade information from destination markets, i.e., prices, ocean freight (bulk and containers), currency exchange rates, and other information that is usually considered when a Buyer decides what, where, and how much to purchase etc.
- With the data and information collected, produce a comprehensive 'S.E. Asia and Oceania Animal Feed and Livestock Production, Supply, and Consumption' monthly and annual report at the end of each season or marketing year.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

Additional Considerations to include any specific information regarding the proposal that could affect the Prospective Contractors ability to submit a proposal.

Additional considerations for the video creation and development include:

- *Video should be between 15-20 minutes long*
- *Videotaping with farmers must occur in St. Louis during the week of December 7th*

- *We will try to schedule the videotaping of the Economist on the same date with the farmers if their schedules permit or on a different date*
- *If your company also provides live streaming services please provide your fee schedule under ancillary services in the Detailed Budget section of your proposal.*

DELIVERABLES:

Monthly Reporting

- Strategic Market Report

S.E. Asia and Oceania Animal Feed Stuffs and Livestock Production, Supply, and Protein Consumption Report

- End of Marketing Year

Examples of industry data collection includes:

(Minimum 10-year data, including current year and forward year projection)

- Soybeans
 - Total soybean imports into the country by origination
 - Percentage and volume of total soybean imports, U.S. and other origination soybean imports into the country shipped in bulk and in containers
 - Total demand for soybeans in the country
 - If applicable – total volume of soybeans produced locally (same periods) etc.
- Soybean meal
 - Total soybean meal imports into the country by origination
 - Percentage and volume of total soybean meal imports, U.S. and other origination soybean meal imports into the country shipped in bulk and in containers
 - Total demand for soybean meal in the country
 - If applicable – total volume of soybean meal produced locally (same periods) etc.
- Soybean Oil – same info required as above
- Collate and provide graphical representation of FAS USDA reports as it relates to U.S. Soy performance in the region, e.g. FAS Export Sales, World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates etc.
- Dataset for other major feed stuffs/ingredients
- Crushing plants and crush capacities for some countries
- Meat protein produced and imports into the region etc.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

*For this contract, our expectation is for the 'Market Research and Trade Analysis Contractor (S.E. Asia Region)' contract could start as early as **November 15, 2023** if all goes well, but will end on **September 30, 2024 (MY 2024)**. After which this contract may be renewable subject to the term of each marketing season, availability, and tenure of the funding source.*

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** September 8, 2023
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** September 27, 2023 by 5:00PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Project Proposals Due:** October 25, 2023 by 12:00 PM SGT (GMT +8)
- **Selections Made By:** October 30, 2023
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** October 30, 2023

INSTRUCTIONS:

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria listed below:

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **12:00PM SGT (GMT +8)** on **October 25, 2023**.
2. A description of Prospective Contractor's capabilities, resources and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
3. A thorough proposal outlining Prospective Contractors planned work, deliverables and timeline to complete the work.
3. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor's personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
4. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
5. Detailed Budget
 - All bids for services must provide a breakout of how the fee was derived including but not limited to a breakdown of hourly rate and the amount of effort they anticipate to do the work.
6. Proposals should be no longer than **10 pages** (8 ½" x 11").

NOTES:

- Prospective Contractors are hereby notified that proposals will be duplicated for internal review only. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of all information

presented. The appropriate representatives from staff and legal counsel will review proposals. Proposals will not be returned.

- USSEC reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the submitter of the conditions contained in the request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between USSEC and the contractor selected.
- Confidentiality - Without USSEC's prior written consent, Prospective Contractors and its officers, employees, agents, representatives, affiliates, and subcontractors shall not disclose to any third party any documents, materials or information that the Prospective Contractors learns from or is provided in relation to the RFP request.
- During the evaluation process, USSEC reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors and omissions.
- USSEC reserves the right to reject any proposal that is in any way inconsistent or irregular. USSEC also reserves the right to waive proposal defects or deficiencies, to request additional information, and/or to negotiate with the Prospective Contractor regarding the proposal.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that Fees are in lieu of any and all other benefits, including, but not limited to, repayment of any and all taxes related to contractor service fees, health and life insurance, administrative costs and vacation.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that any income taxes, value added taxes or any other form of direct or indirect taxes on compensation paid under the contract shall be paid by Contractor and not by USSEC or Funding Sources.
 - Prior to any payment to a Contractor, a contractor must provide a W-9, W-8, or W-8BEN upon agreement signature
- Non-Competition. Contractor shall not act as agent or representative for any product or service directly or indirectly competitive with U.S. soybeans or soybean products for the length of the contract.
- USSEC and Prospective Contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). USSEC provides EEO to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND

BUILDING A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. SOY

USSEC's strategy can be found here: <http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/>

USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here: <http://unitedsoybean.org/about-usb/strategic-planning/>

We are a dynamic partnership of key stakeholders representing soybean producers, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusiness and agricultural organizations.

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., we help build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy in feed, aquaculture and human consumption, promote the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program.

Our 15-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and seven members representing trade, allied industry, and state organizations.

New board members are seated annually. We are receiving funding from a variety of sources including soy producer checkoff dollars invested by the USB and various state soybean councils; cooperating industry; and the American Soybean Association's investment of cost-share funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service.

The United Soybean Board, created by the 1990 Farm Bill to manage and direct the National Soybean Checkoff, is dedicated to marketing and research for the soybean industry. USB is comprised of 73 volunteer soybean farmers representing the interests of fellow growers nationwide. Each board member is nominated by Qualified State Soybean Boards (QSSBs) and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Because of the limitations on administrative and salary costs established in the Act, USB outsources the majority of its program management responsibilities to USB's three primary contractors:

- SmithBucklin-St. Louis for domestic marketing, new uses, production research and Board initiative activities;
- Osborn & Barr Communications for communications/public relations activities and;
- U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. for international marketing and global opportunities activities.

As one of these three primary contractors USSEC may also undertake initiative activities on behalf of USB. USB considers primary contractor staff (approximately 60 people) as core USB staff. These three primary contractors use a number of subcontractors and, together, these entities carry out approximately 450 projects each year for USB. USB also manages approximately 10 subcontractors.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 {voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Civil Rights Clause

Contractor agrees that during the performance of this Agreement it will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, parental status or protected genetic information. Contractor further agrees that it will fully comply with any and all applicable Federal, State and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, without limitation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require Contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinance, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to Contractor.