

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
**5:00 PM CST, FEBRUARY 2, 2024**

**RFP TITLE:** Technical Bulletins on the Description, Availability, Production, Use, and Utility of Valued Added Soy Products

**RFP CONTACT:**

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**INTRODUCTION:**

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, advocates for the use of soy in livestock and aquaculture feed and human consumption, promotes the benefits of soy use through education, and connects industry leaders through a robust membership program.

The global market of value-added soy ingredients is currently estimated at \$590 million, with an annual estimated average growth rate of 5% due to growth in demand from markets like China, Southeast Asia, and Europe. A large range of these value-added soy products are being used in high value specialty diets to support aquaculture species, early rearing and young animal feed production and nutrition. The enhanced quality of these products is driven by the new genetic and processing technologies of U.S. Soybean processors, which convert the abundantly available beans into highly digestible proteins for aqua and livestock nutrition. Considering the U.S. processors' advanced technology, there is an impetus to strengthen the position of U.S. soy products as top-quality soy ingredients on the global market. Thus, USSEC would like to better understand and communicate considerations surrounding value-added soy products.

**PURPOSE OF RFP:**

USSEC's standard practice is to RFP in an open and competitive manner. This type of cost analysis will assist in determining the fair market value for the work to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate various proposals and select the best contractor for the job based on experience, availability, expertise, approach, and cost.

**BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

Historically the USSEC Global Aquaculture Program has been proactive on the topic of value-added products developed from soy. Technical materials were developed by USSEC prior to the

perceived need of soy protein concentrates (SPC), full fat soybean meal, and extruded soybean meal by the livestock and aquaculture industry. Thus, information was already available when nutritionists began to develop interest in these products.

The purpose of this project is to continue to be proactive surrounding value-added soy products, synthesizing insights and formalizing knowledge gaps surrounding use of value-added soy in various species. This work will involve conducting desk research and a literature review, with a focus on recent information and recent findings, and subsequent synthesis of insights into technical bulletins.

One “primer” technical bulletin on value-added soy products is requested. The bulletin should cover full fat soy, fermented soy, soy protein concentrate, and soy lecithin. The bulletin should answer the following questions:

- **Description:** Description of each value-added soy product. What is the product? Is it one product or a range of products and formats? These descriptions should be detailed, including typical nutrient parameters for each value-added product.
- **Availability:** Who is producing each value-added soy product, and where is it being produced? What is the volume of production (large scale, or only small scale)? What is the approximate cost of each product (cost range is appropriate, as cost varies substantially due to raw material cost, scale of production, production method, etc.)?
- **Product Benefits:** At a cursory level, what are the benefits of each product for animal and aqua consumption?

Four additional technical bulletins are desired, one for each of the following species: swine, poultry, ruminants (dairy and beef cattle), and aquaculture. The same products noted above – full fat soy, fermented soy, soy protein concentrate, and soy lecithin – should be covered in each species-focused technical bulletin. The exception is aquaculture; only full fat soy, soy protein concentrate, and soy lecithin should be covered, as materials have already been developed surrounding fermented soy. Also, note that for aquaculture, insights should be framed around four major species classifications: carps, omnivorous (freshwater) fish, carnivorous (fresh/marine/brackish water) fish and crustaceans (shrimp).

The information desired in each species-focused technical bulletin includes:

- **Benefits of Value-Added Product Inclusion:** What are the benefits of including value-added soy products in diets for each species? Reduced anti-nutritional factors? Increased digestibility? Functional health considerations? Other considerations?
- **Risks of Value-Added Product Inclusion:** Are there any risks or watch-outs surrounding inclusion of value-added products in diets for each species? What is the current maximum recommended inclusion rate, and why?
- **Other Feeding Considerations:** Are there any other considerations when feeding value-added soy products? Any considerations surrounding value-added product processing or ration development?

- Gap Assessment: What are the current gaps in knowledge surrounding the use of value-added soy products for each species? What are the recommended priorities for future understanding and research?

USSEC recognizes that species-specific knowledge is essential for successfully carrying out this work. Thus, if preferred, contractors may submit proposals for a subset of species on which they have expertise.

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE:**

The target audience for the technical bulletins include USSEC global and regional livestock nutritionists, aquaculture teams, aquaculture producers, aquaculture nutritionists, feed millers, investors, soy crushing companies, and government representatives. Information gathered as part of each literature review should be made available to the USSEC internal team as a “midpoint” deliverable.

#### **SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

The anticipated project timeline is seven to eight months. The technical bulletins are expected to contain the needed information outlined above and representative figures, tables, and images. A list of references will be required and any images should not be copyrighted (or permission to use image should be obtained). Example technical bulletins may be found at <https://ussec.org/aquaculture-20-technical-bulletins-to-dive-into/>

As noted above, USSEC recognizes that species-specific knowledge is essential for successfully carrying out this work. Thus, if preferred, contractors may submit proposals for a subset of species on which they have expertise.

#### **DELIVERABLES:**

| <b>Completion Date</b> | <b>Description of Deliverables</b>   |
|------------------------|--|
| February or March 2024 | Organization of the workplan and project kickoff meeting with USSEC team   |
| March 2024             | Conduct literature review regarding “primer” information on value-added soy products. Literature review materials due to USSEC March 31, 2024  |
| April 2024             | Draft version of the “primer” technical bulletin developed. Draft submitted to USSEC for review and comments. Target date for feedback incorporation / finalization of “primer” technical bulletin is April 30, 2024 |
| May-July 2024          | Conduct literature review for species-specific technical bulletins. Literature review materials due to USSEC July 31, 2024   |

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| August 2024    | Draft versions of the species-specific technical bulletins developed. Submitted in Microsoft Word (Version 2010 or later, in English) to USSEC for initial review and comments by August 31, 2024     |
| September 2024 | Feedback provided by USSEC; contractor incorporates feedback. Final version of the technical bulletins submitted in Microsoft Word (Version 2010 or later, in English) to USSEC by September 30, 2024 |

“Primer” technical bulletin must be completed prior to species-specific technical bulletins. Definitions and information included in the species-specific technical bulletins must align with and build upon the information included in the primer.

Some aspects of timeline are flexible based on contractor’s availability and will be finalized with the selected contractor(s) before contracting is finalized. If submitting proposals for a sub-selection of species, USSEC may request the above timeline be condensed.

#### **PROJECT TIMELINE:**

The contract will run from March 2024 through September 30, 2024

#### **RFP TIMELINE:**

- **RFP Distribution:** January 12, 2024
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** January 24, 2024
- **Project Proposals Due:** February 2, 2024
- **Selections Made By:** February 13, 2024
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** February 14, 2024

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

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

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@USSEC.ORG](mailto:RFP@USSEC.ORG) by **5:00 Central Time** on February 2, 2024.
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.

## **Appendix: Technical Bulletin Style Guidelines**

### Paper:

Although this is flexible, USSEC would prefer technical bulletins to be “easily digestible” by the reader. The length should be only what is needed (comprehensive, yet succinct), and formatted to A4 pages of single-spaced text in 12-point font. Please include figures, tables and images as they increase value to the reader. Photos in particular must be captioned. All materials must be free from copyright restrictions (or specific written permission must be obtained and provided for use and attribution provided in the text).

- Shorter is preferable.
- Use clear understandable English. Simple is better.
- Please include important tables, figures and other information that will help inform the audience.
- Please email us the material (or USSEC can supply a link to an upload site) with text and table files in Microsoft Word. Figures and images included in the text should also be sent separately as well in high resolution .jpeg format.
- An example technical bulletin template may be provided. If any issues with correct formatting, then the material can be provided in technical paper format and USSEC will reformat the text to fit the desired technical bulletin style.

### Content:

Please keep your paper and presentation as practical and understandable as possible. Make sound recommendations based on literature and/or experience. Highly scientific concepts are welcome if they are relevant to the industry and can be put into practice. USSEC in particular is interested in applied research, meaning information that can be of immediate benefit to commercial industry.

### Nomenclature:

Please use standard metric units and convert where necessary. Materials are targeting a global audience that will not relate to bushels, pounds, acres, Fahrenheit, feet, ounces, inches, etc.

#### Energy:

- Please use kcal/kg when discussing energy content of feed. If the original paper is in megajoules (MJ), please indicate kcal/kg in parenthesis next to each number.

#### Nutrients and dry matter:

- Please indicate the dry matter basis for nutrients values mentioned. For soybean meal, 88% dry matter is typical. For feed 88% dry matter would be good to use. Corn may be 13 or 14% DM. Please indicate.

- Typically aquaculture feeds are fed on a 10% moisture level basis. If feeds are significantly different from this please indicate.

Screen sizes:

- Please use millimeter (mm) hole space. If original paper or data is in gauge or mesh, please indicate mm hole space in parenthesis next to each number.

Try to make your message as easy to understand as possible for the reader and audience. Non-technically inclined or commercial target audiences may read these papers, so do not assume that the reader will be familiar with research terms.

### References:

You should include references to add credibility and give credit where due. Please follow the example below in citing references. The titles and page numbers of articles should be given.

Examples:

Anderson, J., Ramamurthy, S., Jeffay, K., "Real-Time Computing with Lock-Free Shared Objects," Proceedings of the 16th IEEE Real-Time Systems Symposium, IEEE Computer Society Press, December 1995, pp. 28-37.

Baruah, S., Howell, R., Rosier, L., "Algorithms and Complexity Concerning the Preemptively Scheduling of Periodic, Real-Time Tasks on One Processor," Real-Time Systems Journal, Vol. 2, 1990, pp. 301-324.

Goddard, S., Jeffay, K., "Analyzing the Real-Time Properties of a Dataflow Execution Paradigm using a Synthetic Aperture Radar Application," Proc. IEEE Real-Time Technology and Applications Symposium, June 1997, pp. 60-71.



## 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, audiotape, 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](mailto: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.