REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
5:00 PM CST, 5/23/2025

RFP TITLE: CREDITING THE VALUE OF U.S. SOY

RFP CONTACT:

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INTRODUCTION:

Soybean meal (SBM) is the preferred protein source for poultry feed, and global demand for soybean meal is increasing as consumption of poultry products grows. U.S. soybean meal offers superior nutritional value and furthers efficient, sustainable production of poultry and swine that supports animal performance, health, and welfare. Moreover, the consistently high quality of U.S. soybean meal helps to keep feed formulation costs low by reducing the need to make significant adjustments to meet quality standards for the final product.

However, at present, most global customers rely on a few standard indicators of SBM quality and nutritional value (i.e. heat damage and crude protein, respectively) when making purchasing decisions. These indicators do not provide a complete picture of quality, nutritional value, and nutrient availability/digestibility, nor do they capture variability in the quality of SBM over time. Factors impacting SBM quality include geographic origin, agronomic practices, post-harvest management, and transportation among others. As with all agricultural products, there is a natural variation in quality from year-to-year, for example due to weather conditions, but some origins tend to display greater levels of variability than others. Processing practices are also a factor in the final quality of SBM with heat damage having a negative impact on nutritional quality. Hence, determining changes in nutritional composition and correlations between nutrients and heat damage indicators in the past is key to understand the effect of crop year and country of origin on the nutritional composition of the SBM as well as on the heat damage and protein quality indicators.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

Through this project, USSEC seeks a contractor to develop and publish information on more comprehensive measures of SBM quality that allow for comparisons across origins and over time, and to establish the impact of SBM from the different origins on broiler performance, body composition, and processing meat yield. These measures will better illustrate the value of U.S. soybean meal as feed ingredient, and allow customers to make more informed, strategic decisions about purchasing.

Specifically, the contractor will, through validated methods, establish the attribute values of U.S. vs. Argentinian, Brazilian, Bolivian, and Paraguayan SBM for the last five years regarding the following:

1. Comparison between SBM protein quality indicators (total amino acids, amino acid profile and digestibility, ratio of reactive lysine to total lysine, trypsin inhibitor activity and protein solubility) from different origins and identification of trends between and within years.
2. Correlation between nutritional composition and protein quality and heat damage indicators.
3. Comparison between the nutritional composition of the SBM (dry matter, crude protein, crude fiber, neutral detergent fiber, ether extract, sugars, and apparent metabolizable energy corrected for nitrogen (AMEn) and net energy (NE) from different origins and identification of trends between and within years.
4. Determination of the real energy contribution of SBM from different origins through the comparison of different energy systems (AMEn, NE, and productive energy, PE).
5. Determine the broiler response (performance, body composition, processing meat yield) to SBM quality and nutritional value across a comprehensive range of SBM batches.
6. Comparison between SBM-driven broiler performance, body composition, and processing yield indicators from different origins and identifications of trends between and within years.
7. Correlation between nutritional composition, protein quality, heat damage indicators, performance, body composition, and processing yield of broilers.
8. Comparison between the broiler response (performance, body composition, processing yield) associated with the use of SBM from different origins and identification of trends between and within years.

Then, using this data, the contractor will develop predictive models for SBM quality and broiler response (performance, body composition, processing yield) and publish data and analysis of SBM quality dynamics across origins and over time (covering the last five years).

This is envisioned as a project to take place over three fiscal years (ending September 30, 2025, September 30, 2026, and September 30, 2027, respectively). Applicants should submit proposals covering the three fiscal years. However, the initial contract will be through September 30, 2025, with the potential for renewal contingent upon performance and continued availability of funds.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

Through this project, USSEC ultimately aims to differentiate the quality and value of U.S. Soy through variable analyses and to quantify how origin impacts nutritional profile and real energy values that will be used in feed formulations, as well as the impact of SBM origin on broiler response. This will allow animals to display their full genetic potential, improve animal health and welfare, and reduce nutrient output to the environment, while elevating the preference for U.S. Soy as a protein source of choice. This section of the RFP provides further background information related to the focus of the project for the initial contract.

1. <u>Comparison between SBM protein quality indicators (total amino acids, amino acid profile and digestibility, ratio of reactive lysine to total lysine, trypsin inhibitor activity and protein solubility) from different origins and identification of trends between and within years:</u>

Meeting modern poultry genotypes' maintenance and production requirements for amino acids is essential to support their growth, health, and welfare, as well as to reduce nutrient excretion to

the environment, all of which increase poultry operations' efficiency and sustainability. To meet birds' requirements, it is imperative to determine the availability of essential and non-essential amino acids. In recent years, the availability and prices of many of those sources of amino acids have fluctuated for several reasons, including supply chain disruptions, geopolitical tensions, rising demand and production issues.

Likewise, there is a renewed interest in the role of fiber in poultry nutrition, regarding its beneficial effects on intestinal health and microbiota. This is of particular interest currently due to the removal of antibiotics from poultry diets, which has resulted in an increased potential for harmful bacterial species to utilize undigested nutrients. Therefore, it is important to obtain information on the variation of fiber and its role in optimizing birds' intestinal health, nutrient utilization, and performance. However, fiber remains the dietary component that receives the least attention when developing poultry feed, even though it represents a significant portion of the diet.

2. Correlation between nutritional composition and protein quality and heat damage indicators.

Global customers typically utilize the analysis of heat damage and protein quality indicators as a tool to assess the quality of SBM that they purchase. However, to predict the nutritional value of SBM over time, and its variability, which is influenced by origin, genotype, and growing conditions, among other factors, it is key to establish correlations not only between crude protein and protein quality indicators (amino acid profile, digestible amino acids), but also between those and the heat damage indicators (ratio of reactive lysine to total lysine, trypsin inhibitor activity and protein solubility). These correlations aim to show our customers the importance of uniform and consistent processing to preserve the inherent nutritional quality of this ingredient.

Moreover, special attention must be paid to the indicators that can provide a more accurate prediction of the real nutritional value of SBM, such as reactive lysine, which establishes the real availability of lysine for the animal and the degree of destruction of thermolabile amino acids (*e.g.,* lysine and cystine) due to either harsh thermal processing or a high percentage of beans exhibiting heat damage, as well as the real correlation between trypsin inhibitor activity and SBM protein quality.

3. Comparison between the nutritional composition of the SBM (dry matter, crude protein, crude fiber, neutral detergent fiber, ether extract, sugars, and apparent metabolizable energy corrected for nitrogen (AMEn) and net energy (NE) from different origins and identification of trends between and within years.

Dietary energy supply is of critical importance and represents a major cost in poultry feeds. Therefore, it is necessary to precisely estimate the energy contribution of ingredients and to understand the fate of dietary energy will aid prediction of the dietary energy fraction available for production. Together with the amino acid digestibility, apparent metabolizable energy (AME) has a large effect on animal performance. Thus, it is key to ensure that the right energy value is considered in the selection of SBM to facilitate optimal feed formulation and to minimize the environmental footprint.

4. Determination of the real energy contribution of SBM from different origins through the comparison of different energy systems (AMEn, NE, productive energy, PE).

Although the AME and apparent metabolizable energy corrected for nitrogen (AMEn) energy system has been the main energy system for the broiler industry since 1958, it is not perfect as its sensitivity to body lean mass gain and breast meat yield is limited, and it does not consider the

utilization efficiency of different nutrients and amount of heat produced during the digestion process and their metabolism. On the other hand, net energy (NE) represents a closer estimate of the "true" energy value of feeds. The most precise energy evaluation system should be an NE-related system, that takes the energy lost as heat increment (HI) into consideration and accounts for the energy retained as body mass and the energy loss as heat production. Unfortunately, information about the NE value of SBM for poultry is still scarce. However, a dietary energy system that is sensitive to feed conversion ratio (FCR), meat yield, and nitrogen losses and enables the industry to precision feed dependent upon performance needs, genetics, age, environmental temperature and humidity and nutrient content must be used. Therefore, a comparison between the different energy systems is required to determine the real energy contribution of SBM from different origins.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

USSEC consultants will use the prediction tools and peer-reviewed publications to communicate with customers about the advantages of U.S. soybean meal. Peer-reviewed publications will also benefit the broader scientific community.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Year 1:

- Develop models to predict SBM quality for different origins and publish information on the SBM quality dynamics different origins over the last five years (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay).
- Provide the attribute values of SBM from different origins, based on the global database on SBM quality:
    - Compare the nutritional composition of the SBM (dry matter, crude protein, crude fiber, neutral detergent fiber, ether extract, sugars, and apparent metabolizable energy corrected for nitrogen, AMEn, and net energy, NE) from different origins (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay).
    - Identify trends between and within crop years for SBM from different origins (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay).
- Compare protein quality indicators (total amino acids, amino acid profile and digestibility, ratio of reactive lysine to total lysine, trypsin inhibitor activity and protein solubility) of SBM from different origins (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay) and identify trends between and within crop years.
- Establish correlations between nutritional composition and protein quality and heat damage indicators of SBM from different origins (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay).
- Determine the real energy contribution of SBM from different origins through the comparison of different energy systems (AMEn, NE, productive energy, PE).
- Produce a narrative report that includes the following sections:
    - Executive Summary.
    - Methodology and Data Sources.
    - Key findings.
    - A PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the narrative report and highlights key findings.

Year 2:

- Determine broiler response to SBM quality across a comprehensive range of SBM batches, enhancing the global database on SBM quality. This study will focus on broiler production in the Americas region. This should include:
    - Performance metrics (feed intake, weight gain and feed conversion ratio)
    - Body composition (lean mass, fat and bone)
    - Processing meat yield parameters (breast fillet, tenderloins, wings, leg quarters)
- Develop and deliver a factsheet and a white paper with the outcomes of Year 1, that includes a gross general comparison of broiler response (performance, body composition, processing meat yield) based on SBM origins.
- Produce a narrative report that includes the following sections:
    - Executive Summary.
    - Methodology and Data Sources.
    - Key findings.
    - A PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the narrative report and highlights key findings.

Year 3:

Note: All studies related to broiler performance will focus on boiler production in the Americas region.

- Develop prediction models to predict broilers' performance and carcass composition/yield according to SBM origin over the last five years.
- Establish correlations between nutritional composition, protein quality and heat damage indicators of SBM from different origins (U.S., Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay) and broilers' performance (feed intake, weight gain and feed conversion ratio) and carcass yield (white meat, breast and tenders and ready-to-cook parts: total white meat, leg quarters and wing) and composition (lean mass, fat, bone).
- Establish correlations between AMEn, NE, productive energy, PE and broilers' performance (feed intake, weight gain and feed conversion ratio) and carcass yield (white meat, breast and tenders and ready-to-cook parts: total white meat, leg quarters and wing) and composition (lean mass, fat, bone).
- Produce a narrative report that includes the following sections:
    - Executive Summary.
    - Methodology and Data Sources.
    - Key findings.
    - A PowerPoint presentation that summarizes the narrative report and highlights key findings.

DELIVERABLES (YEAR 1):

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
Within five business days of contract start date	Hold a kick-off call with USSEC assigned staff. Establish a regular communication schedule.
Within fifteen business days of contract start date	Submit an outline describing the methodology for the project overall and variables to be analyzed. Include information on the methodology for the correlation study including data sources and variables that will be included in the regression.
06/30/25	Submit preliminary report on the nutritional value of SBM from different origins (Argentina, U.S., Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay).
07/16/25	Submit preliminary report on SBM from different origins quality dynamics over time and trends detected between and within years.
07/30/25	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
08/15/25	Submit preliminary report on real energy contribution of SBM from different origins.
08/29/25	Submit preliminary report on the correlation between conventional nutritional components and heat damage indicators.
09/15/25	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
09/30/25	Submit two manuscripts on the developed model and corresponding findings to peer-reviewed journals
09/30/25	Submit final narrative report, PowerPoint presentation, and the prediction tool.

DELIVERABLES (YEAR 2):

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
Within five business days of contract start date	Hold a kick-off call with USSEC assigned staff. Establish a regular communication schedule.
Within fifteen business days of contract start date	Submit an outline describing the methodology for the project overall and variables to be analyzed. Include information on the methodology for the correlation study including data sources and variables that will be included in the regression
04/30/26	Submit preliminary report on the prediction of broilers' performance based on SBM quality and nutritional value.
05/30/26	Submit preliminary report on the prediction of broilers' processing yield based on SBM quality and nutritional value.
06/15/26	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
06/30/26	Submit preliminary report on the prediction of broilers' body composition based on SBM quality and nutritional value.
07/29/26	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
08/31/26	Submit preliminary report on the development of factsheet and white paper.
09/30/26	Submit two manuscripts on the developed model and corresponding findings to peer-reviewed journals
09/30/26	Submit final narrative report, PowerPoint presentation, and the database on broiler response (performance, body composition, processing meat yield)

	across a comprehensive range of SBM batches, enhancing the global database on SBM quality.

DELIVERABLES (YEAR 3):

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
Within five business days of contract start date	Hold a kick-off call with USSEC assigned staff. Establish a regular communication schedule.
Within fifteen business days of contract start date	Submit an outline describing the methodology for the project overall and variables to be analyzed. Include information on the methodology for the correlation study including data sources and variables that will be included in the regression.
04/30/27	Submit preliminary report on the prediction of broilers' performance and carcass composition/yield according to SBM origin.
05/16/27	Submit preliminary report on the correlations between nutritional composition, protein quality and heat damage indicators of SBM from different origins and broilers' performance, body composition, and carcass yield.
05/30/27	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
07/31/27	Submit preliminary report on the correlations between AMEn, NE, productive energy, PE and broilers' performance, body composition, and processing yield.
08/29/27	Preliminary results review with the Americas Animal Utilization Lead.
09/30/27	Submit two manuscripts on the developed model and corresponding findings to peer-reviewed journals
09/30/27	Submit final narrative report, PowerPoint presentation, and the prediction tool.

PROJECT TIMELINE:

This is envisioned as a project that will span three fiscal years. The initial contract will be from approximately May/June 2025 to September 30, 2025, with the possibility of renewal through September 30, 2026, and then through September 30, 2027, based on performance and contingent upon continued availability of funds. Applicants should submit proposals covering the three fiscal years; budgets must be broken out by fiscal year.

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** May 5, 2025
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** May 12, 2025, 5:00pm Central Time
- **Project Proposals Due:** May 23, 2025, 5:00pm Central Time
- **Selections Made By:** May 29, 2025
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** May 30, 2025

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG and [mcheatham@ussec.org, kliliensiek@ussec.org, madkison@ussec.org] by ***5:00PM Central Time*** on ***5/23/2025***

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 doing 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: https://ussec.org/about-ussec/
USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here:
https://www.unitedsoybean.org/strategic-plan/

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.

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.

MANDATORY CONTRACTUAL TERMS

Contracts: ***the following terms are required***:

1. USSEC, as well as the Secretary of Agriculture, may terminate the contract and be relieved of payment. USSEC will pay for all work performed under contract until the date of termination.

2. Any work a contractor undertakes prior to contract approval by AMS is at their own risk and USSEC is not financially liable if the contract is not approved.

3. Funds paid to the contractor may not be used for the purpose of influencing legislation or governmental policy or action. “Influencing legislation” is defined as any attempt to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment thereof concerning current or proposed legislation or any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or with any government officials who may participate in the formulation of legislation. “Government officials” refers to federal employees outside of USDA, foreign, and State governments/officials, legislators, and legislative staffs. “Influencing of governmental policy or action” is defined as any action the principal purpose of which is to bring about a change in existing policy or regulation or affect the outcome of proposed policy or regulation, except those actions which are specifically provide for in the Soybean Act and Order.

4. The contractor must (a) keep accurate records, books and documents involving transactions relating to the contract; (b) retain the records, books and documents for 3 years; and (c) said records, books and documents may be subject to inspection and audit by a representative of USDA and/or USSEC.

5. EEO policy statement: contractor agrees that, during the performance of this Agreement, contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, protected genetic information, or reprisal. 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, but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Genetic Information Act of 2008, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinances, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to the contractor.

6. Subcontractors. Subject to USSEC’s approval, the contractor may subcontract specific tasks to outside parties. Should the contractor elect to subcontract specific tasks, subcontractors will be subject to the same contractual terms as its contract agency in regard to:

(1) Reporting and record keeping;
(2) Travel expenses;
(3) Title of property;
(4) Confidential information
(5) Influencing legislation and/or influencing governmental policy or action;
(6) Federal civil rights policies.

The primary contractor agency who has a direct contract with USSEC will be fully responsible for the quality of all work product, including any approvals from AMS. Any such authorization in the contract must state that entering into a subcontract does not relieve the contractor of primary responsibility to carry out the terms and conditions of the underlying contract in accordance with the Act, Order, Regulations and USDA policies.

7. Confidentiality

   Financial or commercial information obtained under contract with USSEC that is privileged and confidential shall be kept confidential by all persons, including employees and former employees of USSEC, USDA and the contractor having access to such information.

Contracts: ***the following terms are not allowed***:

1. Indemnification provisions, unless it is clear that the indemnification will in no way obligate the U.S. government to pay on a potential claim.

2. Liquidated Damages

Intellectual property. Rights will be governed by the Bayh Dole Act, 35 U.S.C. §200-212 for any entity that is a "contractor" as defined by the Act at §201(c).

Expenses. The following expenses are prohibited under the Act and Order:

1. University Principal Investigator salaries;
2. University overhead/indirect costs; non-Principal Investigator salaries are an exception
3. Entertainment expenses;
4. Spousal/family/companion expenses;
5. Personal expenses (except as specifically allowed in USSEC's Travel policies;
6. Open bars;
7. Funding of capital equipment unless the equipment is purchased (a) in direct connection with a plan or project, and (b) necessary for the completion of the plan or project.