

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 17, 2025, by 5:00PM DUBAI TIME

RFP TITLE: Regional Animal Sector Lead – Middle East, North Africa / South & Central Asia (MENASCA)

RFP CONTACT: Kevin Roepke ; kroepke@ussec.org

INTRODUCTION:

The US Soybean Export Council (USSEC) requests proposals to assist in the continued development and implementation of the regional lead for animal utilization (the position) for the Middle East, North Africa / South & Central Asia (the region).

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 driven program.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC's standard practice is to RFP every 3 years, or as needed, in an open and competitive manner. This helps to ensure we are staying abreast of current technology and fair market values. We encourage all that are interested to apply, including current contractors. It also allows USSEC to evaluate proposals and select the best contractor based on technical qualifications, relevant industry experience, managerial abilities, strength of industry connections, and a suitable cost and time that meets the contract's requirements.

This RFP seek proposals for a lead of animal utilization within the region. The Head of Animal Utilization will promote U.S. Soy and engage key customers in the region. The contractor will also attend/host conferences, meetings, etc. as requested with approval by the Regional Director.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

The core strategy focuses differentiating, then elevating purchase preference for US soy, in addition to obtaining free and fair market access. Several markets in the region have a variety of market access challenges that require attention. The successful candidate will be able to articulate a clear strategy working with the Executive Director to differentiate and elevate a preference for US Soy in animal diets.

A critical, systems-based approach to communicating the U.S. Soy Advantage is required and having a development team that will assist the on the ground presence that interface directly with key customers will be available. USSEC will maintain the U.S. soybean industry's marketing and trade servicing capabilities in the region while

providing trade services, technical services and marketing support to importers, end users and soy industry organizations.

CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

The Regional Animal Sector Lead position necessitates advanced qualifications and extensive field experience. They must demonstrate a strong knowledge of both terrestrial and/or aquaculture-based production, aquatic animal nutrition. Data driven market analysis experience is also required for this role.

The role demands at least 10 years of relevant industry experience, including relationship management and displayed leadership and strategy development, preferably within the Middle East, North Africa and/or South Asia regions. Successful candidates will have a proven track record of engaging stakeholders across the feed, livestock and aquaculture sectors, such as producers, processors, and regulatory bodies.

Key skills include data-driven strategic planning, personnel management, effective time management, and strong presentation skills. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are essential for building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, collaborating with industry associations, NGOs, research institutions, as well as USSEC leadership and team members. Leadership qualities, adaptability to change, problem-solving abilities, and the capability to lead and motivate dynamic and multicultural teams are critical to success in this role.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

- Degree from a reputable university in business, communications, agriculture, animal science or similar
- At least 10 years' experience in sales with extensive marketing/branding knowledge
- Advanced language skills in Arabic and/or French are highly preferred
- Ability to network and build relationships
- Creativity and innovation to develop new and exciting programs for market development
- A proven track record of strategic thinking and planning
- Ability to multitask by planning and implementing many projects at one time
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Passion for the United States, international trade, and agriculture
- A receptive appreciation and willingness to advocate for new and innovative agriculture applications, such as GMOs, sustainable farming practices, etc
- Highest moral integrity and character

Located full time within Europe, South/east Asia or the Middle East/North Africa.

CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBJECTIVES:

The Contractor will drive USSEC's animal utilization areas in the region.

• Program Development

- o Strategize with the MENASCA Executive Director and USSEC Worldwide Focus Area Director/Manager to develop strategic goals, projects and activities for the region's programs to maximize utilization and inclusion rates of US soy.

- o Support technical consultants and administrators in implementing all phases of the project lifecycle from initiation to implementation to completion.

- o Maintain regular communication with the regional Executive Director and USSEC Worldwide Focus Area Director/Manager regarding program progress and initiatives throughout the region.

• Relationship Building and Business Development

- o Identify, establish, and nurture strong relationships with key customers, industry and trade representatives, relevant institutions, and government bodies to drive engagement and business growth for US soy. Support technical consultants to manage these relationships over time.

- o Work with USSEC's Worldwide Team to establish internal and external communications systems across regions to ensure active and consistent information sharing. Foster good rapport and collaboration through these channels to advance USSEC's mission. This may include integrating regional contacts into a centralized customer relationship management (CRM) system to be provided.

- o Support technical consultants in developing new opportunities to expand USSEC's reach and impact, maximizing return on investment for USSEC's members.

• Strategic Presence and Market Intelligence

- o Establish and maintain a clear and strategic presence for USSEC in the Middle East, North Africa, South and Central Asia, ensuring visibility and influence in the germane industries.

- o Promote a strong preference for U.S. soy in feed applications to increase U.S. soy exports, leveraging targeted marketing and outreach efforts.

- o Monitor and analyze industry and market developments, identifying opportunities and challenges related to market access for U.S. soy products.

- o Proactively address market access barriers and advocate for favorable trade policies to enhance the competitiveness of U.S. soy throughout the region.

• Proactive Collaboration and Partnership Development

- o Foster close collaboration with USSEC's in-region and worldwide trade and technical teams to align animal utilization initiatives and maximize global impact.

- o Engage with industry decision-makers, associations, NGOs, influencers, buyers, sellers, and government entities in the sectors to promote U.S. soy products and encourage soy-favorable policies. Support sub-regional consultants in their direct stakeholder engagement.

All the above efforts should contribute to developing a strong preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products throughout the region, ultimately leading to increased U.S. soy exports.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Under this contract, the Contractor shall promote the use and awareness of U.S. soybeans and soybean products through the following services:

1) Core:

Your core services are to:

- a. Direct Marketing to customers within the region on behalf of USSEC's Executive Director and global animal/aqua utilization director, which include but not limited to:
 - i. Differentiate the value, sustainability, and competitive advantage of U.S. soy to customers, end users, feed formulators, animal nutritionists and key opinion leaders.
 - ii. Provide ongoing support to processors and importers by creating downstream demand for their products.
 - iii. Provide education to processors and livestock producers to boost their economic viability using US Soy as a product of preference
 - iv. Establish key customer relationships for U.S. soy.
 - v. Maintain and strengthen the U.S. soy industry's key customer relationships.
 - vi. Increase end-consumer knowledge on benefits of soy and soy products.
 - vii. Promote new soy product applications.
- b. Assist USSEC's Regional Executive Director of with the strategic goals and objectives, which include but not limited to:
 - i. Identify potential growth markets for U.S. soy.
 - ii. Identify areas of strengths to maintain
 - iii. Identify areas of opportunities for increased support
 - iv. Identify the major and targeted Customers
 - v. Create a Customer Analysis for each of those targeted
 - vi. Identify key Associations
 - vii. Create an Association Analysis for each of those targeted
- c. Attend necessary strategic meetings.
- d. Training and knowledge of USSEC's and its Funding Sources' policies.
- e. Training and knowledge of USSEC's regional operational procedures

2) USSEC/Regional Hosted Events:

You will also be required to develop a trade team for two USSEC hosted Global Trade Exchanges, one hosted within the region and one hosted by USSEC HQ located in the United States.

- a. Events hosted within the region

- i. Identify a trade team of customers that should be targeted based on:
 - 1. Meeting topic(s)
 - 2. Strategic importance
 - 3. Customer impact
 - 4. Number of Customers (determined by Regional Director)
- ii. Complete an Event Summary Evaluation
- b. SoyConnex hosted annually within the United States
 - i. Identify a trade team of customers that should be targeted based on:
 - 1. Meeting topic(s)
 - 2. Strategic importance
 - 3. Customer impact
 - 4. Number of Customers (determined by Regional Director)
 - ii. Complete an Event Summary Evaluation

3) Representative Events:

You will also be required to propose hosted and/or non-hosted events for approval from the Executive Director. The event type can fall under one of the following:

- Hosted Event
 - Conference & Seminars
 - Technical Trainings and Site Visits
 - Trade Teams
 - Trade shows with and without a booth
 - Feeding Demonstrations
- Non-Hosted Events
 - Market Research
 - Sponsorship
 - Subscription
 - Advertisement
 - Publication
 - Membership

For each event proposed you will have to complete a travel approval request that contains an analysis of the event with information such as targeted audience, anticipated impact and expected outcome.

If the proposed event is approved, you will be required to collaborate with a global project operations team (GPOT) member for proper and timely event development prior to the event. This development must be in accordance with policies and procedures and will utilize approved templates and forms. In addition, you will be solely responsible for the completion of the following reports/analysis after the event:

- a. Event Summary Analysis
- b. Success Story with Graphic from Event

General support and alignment of USSEC's strategic initiatives include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Program Alignment:** Coordinate closely with USSEC's Executive Director and Worldwide Focus Area Director and Manager to develop a regional strategy, which aligns perfectly with USSEC's global strategy and programs to execute it.
- **Program Implementation Support:** Work with Technical Consultants to support the implementation of aquaculture programs across the region.
- **Stakeholder Engagement Activities:** Identify opportunities for high-impact in-person or virtual trade servicing and networking activities aimed at cultivating relationships with key local industry and government stakeholders. Support execution of these activities to ensure successful outcomes.
- **Project and Initiative Support:** Provide project support for USSEC's major regional buyer-support programs and country-level initiatives that promote U.S. Soy, with the goal of increasing U.S. Soy exports.
- **Event Participation:** Ensure active participation of regional representatives, decision-makers, and influencers in major conferences, workshops, and trade missions organized by USSEC.
- **Workshops and Seminars:** Collaborate with USSEC's regional team to organize country-specific workshops, seminars, and roundtable discussions to further USSEC's mission.
- **Visitor Programs:** Support planning of in-person or virtual trade and industry meetings for USSEC leadership, visiting U.S. farmer leadership and trade teams, and USSEC member exporter companies. Coordinate with the Worldwide Focus Area to ensure unified messaging during these events.
- **Information Requests:** Respond promptly and accurately to inquiries from U.S. exporters, importers, end-users, processors of U.S. soy, trade organizations, government officials, and other stakeholders regarding U.S. Soy and local agricultural industry matters.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)

- Preference will be given to proposals from companies/individuals residing in or already doing business in the country/region indicated.
- Submitter must have the following technological requirements:
 - o Reliable high speed internet access
 - o WhatsApp
 - o Microsoft Office 365 Suite—Outlook, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Teams & SharePoint

CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:

- Abide by instructions from USSEC's management, accounting, and compliance teams.
- Meet the Services, Deliverables, and KPIs outlined in the Master Agreement and Addendum.
- Uphold USSEC's core values: (1) Deliver World Class Performance, (2) Act Responsibly, (3) Foster Our Diversity, and (4) Trust Our Team.
- Refrain from any activities that contradict or reflect negatively on USSEC or USSEC's Mission or its members.

REPORTING AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- **Monthly Reports:** The contractor must submit a monthly report to USSEC leadership along with the monthly invoice, using the prescribed USSEC format. Each monthly report should include (at minimum):
 - o A summary of regional activities and project/program status.
 - o Updates on market developments related to the industry, trade issues, and U.S. soy usage.
 - o A chronological list of activities conducted during the reporting period, including any business development activities. For each significant activity or presentation, provide a brief description of the topic or outcomes.
 - o A list of key interactions/meetings with stakeholders (e.g., industry leaders, government officials – including USDA Foreign Agricultural Service personnel, agricultural NGO representatives, importers, end-users, U.S. Soy family organizations).
 - o Budget details, including updated expenditure or investment figures for this contract and a summary of regional aquaculture budget utilization, as provided by or coordinated with the global project operations team (GPOT).
- Note:** Urgent or time-sensitive developments must be communicated to USSEC leadership immediately and should not wait for the monthly report.
- **Ad Hoc Reports:** Provide ad hoc reports to USSEC leadership upon request. (These on-demand reports may be requested to address specific issues or to provide updates between regular monthly reports.)

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- International Soy Industry Customers within the Middle East, North Africa, South and central Asia
- Soy Importers, refiners, wholesale distributors, exporters, retail distributors, cold chain providers, industry associations, government agencies, commodity traders and brokers, restaurants, hotels, and other institutions.
- Soybean crushers, feed manufacturers, livestock, and poultry producers.
- Nutritionists, feed formulators and animal diet decision makers

PROJECT TIMELINE:

Contract start date: Q4 2025

Contract end date: September 30, 2026, to be continued indefinitely pending reviews and funding.

Following this period, and subject to regular contract reviews and an annual performance evaluation, the contract may be renewed for a mutually agreed term or period, subject to and in alignment with the terms of each marketing season and or the tenure of the funding source.

RFP TIMELINE:

- RFP Distribution: September 22, 2025
- Last Day to Submit Questions: October 3, 2025
- Project Proposals Due: October 17, 2025
- Selections Made By: October 30, 2025
- Prospective Contractors Notified By: October 31, 2025

Please note that the selection and notification period outlined in this RFP may be extended under certain circumstances. While we aim to adhere to the specified timeline. Unforeseen factors may necessitate an extension. Such factors include, but are not limited to:

- A high number of submissions may require additional time for thorough evaluation and review; conversely time maybe required to draw more submissions to meet compliance standards
- Additional time may be required if we need to request clarifications or additional information from prospective contractors.
- Conflicts in scheduling with key evaluators or decision-makers within USSEC may result in delays.
- Changes in regulatory requirements or funding sources may impact the timeline for finalizing selections.

We appreciate your understanding and patience should an extension become necessary. We will communicate any changes to the timeline promptly to ensure transparency throughout the selection process.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Proposals must include, at a minimum, the specific criteria listed below:

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG, Nikita Sharma (Nsharma@ct.ussec.org) and Kevin Roepke (Kroepke@ussec.org) by October 17, 2025 at 5:00pm GST (GMT+4)
2. A description of the Prospective Contractor's capabilities, resources, and experience, with an emphasis on experience related to this RFP.
3. A thorough proposal outlining the Prospective Contractor's planned work, deliverables, and timeline to complete the work.
4. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor's personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.

5. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.

6. Detailed Budget: All bids for services must include a breakdown of how the fee was derived, including but not limited to, a daily rate breakdown and the anticipated effort required to complete the work.

7. 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 the 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 their officers, employees, agents, representatives, affiliates, and subcontractors shall not disclose to any third party any documents, materials, or information learned from or 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, request additional information, and/or 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, social services, 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 the 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 an 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 the Prospective Contractor agree 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.

ADMINISTRATIVE DELIVERABLES:

| Completion Date | Description of Deliverables |
|--|---|
| As incurred, within the contract term dates | <p>Provide applicable project support documents, forms and templates for the proper implementation of events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide to Regional Project Team Lead and/or applicable USSEC department required and approved USSEC documents, forms and templates for review and approval.• All documents, forms and templates will be turned in according to the task timeline provided by the Regional Project Team Lead |
| Monthly, or as incurred Provide invoice of professional fees for payment. | <p>Provide with the invoice any materials, presentations, trip reports, etc. created and utilized for any applicable services that were accomplished.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all applicable invoices are submitted within 30 days of transaction and are compliant with USSEC policies and procedures.• Ensure invoice is submitted to ap@ussec.org |
| By the 5th calendar day of each month | <p>Detailed report of monthly activities and events attended with expected impact(s) and outcome(s).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure Report Template is utilized.• Ensure report details all events with critical discussion of results for any applicable services that were accomplished.• Provide inside or along with the report any insights gained that can improve the execution of the activities and events.• Provide to Regional Director and Regional Project Team Lead. |
| December 31 | Detailed summary of year's work with recommendations |
| Ongoing | Submission of invoices and expenses will be in accordance with Section III.3.c. of this Addendum. |

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: <https://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.