

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: September 02,2026

RFP Title: Aquaculture Feed Specialist

RFP CONTACT:

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Proposal Deadline: September 02,2026

INTRODUCTION:

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) champions U.S. Soy worldwide. Through innovation, sustainability and partnerships, we connect farmers to global markets.

USSEC members represent the soy supply chain, including U.S. Soy farmers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses and agricultural organizations.

USSEC is funded by the U.S. soybean checkoff, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) matching funds, and industry.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) Global Aquaculture Program is dedicated to advancing sustainable aquafeed and aquaculture production worldwide through the promotion of U.S. Soy-based ingredients and technical support. The program aims to build preference for U.S. Soy by demonstrating its nutritional performance, supply reliability, and sustainability profile by working across all segments of the production chain from feed manufacturers and fish farmers to industry associations and researchers.

PURPOSE OF RFP AND BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

USSEC seeks proposals from qualified individuals or firms to serve as the USSEC Aquaculture Feed Specialist for the period October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. The Contractor will provide global technical leadership in aquafeed formulation, feed-ingredient evaluation, industry consultation, training, and market

intelligence. The Contractor will support USSEC aquaculture teams in Europe, the Americas, South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and East Asia.

The assignment is intended to increase the use, awareness, and demonstrated value of U.S. soybeans and soybean products in aquafeeds. The Contractor will help feed manufacturers and producers optimize U.S. Soy in practical formulations, strengthen feed sustainability, and translate technical work and demonstration results into actionable guidance for industry and the USSEC Global Aquaculture Team.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Aquafeed manufacturers, nutritionists, formulators, and purchasing personnel
- Aquaculture producers and production managers
- Aquaculture industry associations, technical organizations, and conference participants
- Universities, researchers, consultants, and other technical partners
- USSEC regional teams, Global Aquaculture Team members, and research and strategic advisory groups

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

The Contractor shall promote the use and awareness of U.S. soybeans and soybean products through the following services:

- **Industry consultation and technical support.** Visit and consult with aquaculture industry representatives in target countries identified by USSEC and provide technical support to aquaculture producers across all USSEC regions.
- **Feed-mill engagement and education.** Conduct technical support activities, trainings, conferences, seminars, workshops, and technical meetings with aquafeed mills to help them gain greater value from sustainable U.S. Soy.
- **Feed Formulation workshop leadership.** Participate in and serve as the technical lead for aquafeed formulation workshops organized by USSEC.
- **Global program technical advice.** Provide overall technical advice and support to the USSEC Global Aquaculture Team in the design and implementation of projects and activities.
- **Feed formulation and demonstrations.** Create practical formulations that optimize the use of U.S. soy products in demonstration projects and demonstrate approaches for maximizing U.S. Soy utilization in global aquafeeds.

- **Sustainability analysis.** Demonstrate how U.S. Soy can improve feed sustainability, including through reductions in forage-fish dependency ratio (FFDR), fish-in/fish-out (FIFO), and carbon emissions.
- **Market intelligence.** Collect and provide data on aquaculture feed use, formulation practices, ingredient sourcing, and market trends, including factors affecting U.S. Soy inclusion and market share. Markets of interest may include but are not limited to: Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Indonesia, Turkiye, Egypt, Vietnam, China, Bangladesh, Chile, and Norway.
- **Research participation.** Participate in development of USSEC research initiatives/priorities as needed.
- **Technical communications.** Produce clear written summaries of key demonstration-project results for an industry audience and develop or update technical presentations on priority aquafeed topics.
- **Strategic advisory support.** Participate in an advisory capacity at USSEC Aquaculture strategic-planning meetings or industry advisory-committee meetings at the request of USSEC Aquaculture leadership.

CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS AND POSITION REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced degree in aquaculture nutrition, animal nutrition, feed science, animal science, fisheries, or a closely related field; a Ph.D. is preferred
- At least 10 years of professional experience in aquafeed formulation, aquatic-animal nutrition, feed-ingredient evaluation, technical consulting, or a closely related field
- Demonstrated expertise formulating practical commercial diets for multiple aquaculture species and production systems
- Strong knowledge of soybean meal and other soy products used in aquafeeds, including nutritional value, processing, quality, inclusion constraints, and sustainability attributes
- Demonstrated ability to use, manage, and improve aquafeed formulation databases and tools
- Experience leading technical workshops and providing practical support to feed mills, formulators, nutritionists, producers, and senior industry stakeholders
- Ability to analyze feed-use, ingredient-sourcing, pricing, and formulation data and translate findings into commercially relevant recommendations
- Strong technical writing, presentation, facilitation, project-management, and interpersonal skills
- Professional fluency in English; other relevant language capability is preferred

- Willingness and ability to travel internationally and work across multiple time zones and USSEC regions

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable):

This is a global contractor assignment. Countries, travel, workshop schedules, and technical priorities will be designated by USSEC and may be adjusted in response to market conditions, program needs, funding availability, and approved budgets. All travel and externally delivered materials require appropriate USSEC coordination and approval.

The Contractor must protect confidential commercial information obtained from feed manufacturers and producers while providing USSEC with the reporting, contact, and market-intelligence information required under the agreement.

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
October 1, 2026– September 30, 2027	Develop and deliver new and updated presentations on key topics of interest to aquaculture feed mills and submit the technical presentations in PowerPoint format. Where applicable, presentations may be provided and delivered in the local language, including Spanish.
Monthly	Submit a monthly report covering all work completed, including industry and producer consultations, participation in events, and general technical assistance. Reports must be submitted in native Word format and comply with USSEC content and formatting requirements.
Within 10 business days of trip completion	Submit a trip mission report for all travel conducted, in accordance with USSEC requirements for content and format.
As requested throughout the contract term	Submit feed formulations and sustainability analyses for demonstration projects; feed formulation and technical workshop materials; feed-use and trend data; written summaries of key demonstration projects; and other technical or advisory materials requested by USSEC Aquaculture leadership.

PROJECT TIMELINE: October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** August 19, 2026
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** August 26, 2026
- **Project Proposals Due:** September 02, 2026
- **Selections Made By:** September 09, 2026
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** September 11, 2026

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG and CC mcheatham@ussec.org and amonreal@ussec.org, by 5:00 pm **Central Time**
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 selected contractor.
- 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 learn 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 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.

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.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) focuses on attaining market access, differentiating, and elevating preference for the use of U.S. Soy for human consumption, aquaculture, and livestock feed in more than 90 countries. USSEC members represent the soy supply chain including U.S. Soy farmers, processors, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusinesses, and agricultural organizations. USSEC is funded by the Soy Checkoff, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) matching funds, and industry. Visit www.ussec.org for the latest information about USSEC and U.S. Soy internationally.

Our 16-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and eight 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 77 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 primary



contractors. U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. is contracted to manage projects for international marketing and global opportunities activities.

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.

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 and providing proof of payment to the subcontractor for any work they have performed. If proof of payment cannot be provided, USSEC will be unable to reimburse the contractor. 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.