



**Food  
Export**  
Midwest USA



**Food  
Export USA**  
Northeast

YOUR CONNECTION TO GROWTH™

## **INVITATION FOR BIDS**

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are seeking one or more individuals/companies to be their In-Market Representative and assist in the execution of all responsibilities pursuant to their market development activities for processed foods in the Japanese market. These activities include Food Show PLUS!™, Market Builder service, Focused Trade Missions, various Buyers Missions, Virtual Consultation, Lead Qualification Service, market research, market development and food promotions, special projects and trade servicing for the program year. The selected In-Market Representative(s) will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2024 Program Year from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

Attached please find the official Request for Proposal for details, requirements, and deadlines.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on **Friday, September 29, 2023**. Only emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please send proposals to:

Joy F. Canono  
Food Export USA - Northeast  
Email: [jcanono@foodexport.org](mailto:jcanono@foodexport.org)

**Questions should be directed to:**

Teresa Miller, Chief Programs and Partnerships Officer  
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA  
Food Export USA – Northeast  
Email: [TMiller@foodexport.org](mailto:TMiller@foodexport.org)



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## **Request for Proposals Japan In-Market Representative**

### **Background**

The Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export – Midwest) and Food Export USA – Northeast (Food Export – Northeast) are not-for-profit export associations whose primary function is to develop export markets for midwestern and northeastern (respectively) producers and processors of value-added food and agricultural products. Our members include state agricultural promotion agencies from thirteen midwestern and ten northeastern states.

Both groups are participants in the Market Access Program (MAP) and Agricultural Trade Promotion (ATP), federal programs handled by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The MAP and ATP are intended to boost the export of value-added food and agricultural products from the U.S. through a partnership between FAS and approximately seventy-five other industry-based trade organizations. This includes primarily commodity-specific groups, as well as two other unaffiliated regional groups similar to Food Export - Midwest and Food Export - Northeast that handle the southern and western regions of the U.S.

The products covered for export promotion by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast include a wide variety of processed and semi-processed products found throughout the retail, foodservice, and food processing sectors. These include products or derivations of meat, dairy, poultry, seafood, grains, fruits and vegetables, salty and savory snack foods, confections, beans, sauces and condiments, pet foods, beverages, canned foods, animal feeds, bakery products, pasta and many others. Marketing channels include mass market retail, specialty foods, convenience foods, private label, healthy/organic, food ingredients, frozen foods, and others. Additionally, Food Export – Northeast promotes benchmark seafood products from the northeastern U.S. including lobster, scallops, monkfish, Atlantic herring, squid, Atlantic mackerel, dogfish and skate.

Food Export - Midwest and Food Export- Northeast are independent organizations that have been engaged in a strategic alliance since April of 2000. Through this alliance, the strategy and tactics of the organizations have been aligned so that the activities and services of each group are very similar with differences based primarily on geographic focus. Food Export - Midwest focuses on midwestern exporters and a series of eight overseas target markets, including China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, Oceania and Mexico. Food Export -Northeast targets northeastern exporters and eight overseas markets, including China, Europe, Hong Kong, Central America, Canada, the Middle East, South America, the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa. By collaborating, the activities and

services of each organization are open to participation by companies from the other region. The net effect is that exporters in the Midwest and Northeast have access to a larger range of export promotion opportunities, while the limited staff at Food Export - Midwest and Food Export - Northeast can focus on specific market development opportunities.

The states that are members of Food Export- Midwest include: Illinois, Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri and Oklahoma. Food Export – Northeast encompasses: New York, New Jersey, Vermont, Delaware, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

More information about Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast is available on the Internet at: [www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org).

### **Scope of Work**

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are seeking one or more individuals/companies to be their In-Market Representative and assist in the execution of all responsibilities pursuant to their market development activities for processed foods in the Japanese market. These activities include Food Show PLUS!™, Market Builder service, Focused Trade Missions, various Buyers Missions, Virtual Consultation. Lead Qualification Service, market research, market development and food promotions, special projects and trade servicing for the program year. The selected In-Market Representative(s) will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2024 Program Year from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

Please provide a quotation for each of the following services:

#### **1. Trade Servicing**

##### **Scope of Work**

The responsibilities of the selected In-Market Representative in carrying out trade servicing may include, but are not limited to:

- Visiting with potential importers, distributors, retailers, food service and food ingredient buyers and developing lists of these companies that are the most reputable, experienced, and in the best position to deal with our exporters.
- Developing and maintaining a database of potential importers and buyers from the representative's market, their contact information, and their product interests. Data developed as part of this trade servicing agreement will be shared with Food Export at the conclusion of the year.
- Conducting outreach and educational efforts on behalf of Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast to encourage participation in our programs and services including organizing Importer Seminars.
- Following up with buyers from buyers missions, FSP!™, Market Builder, Focused Trade Missions, other special projects and obtain evaluations and or identify problems which may be inhibiting sales.

- Participate actively in the usage of Food Export’s Dynamics database either by entering notes in the system or providing any updates on contacts listed.
- Liaising with USDA/FAS Posts on a regular basis. This includes proactive communication, monitoring and consolidating industry feedback.
- Informing Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast of market development opportunities that arise throughout the year and activities that should be included in our annual funding application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Unified Export Strategy (UES).
- Promoting Food Export’s Online Product Catalog and generating trade lead inquiries for dissemination to Midwest and Northeast companies.
- Traveling to the U.S. to visit with Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast to learn more about their operations, activities, and companies.
- Assisting with Branded Program inquiries as requested.
- Assisting our State Marketing Specialists on a limited basis.
- Informing Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast of any noteworthy market intelligence that should be included in our communication tools that goes out to exporters (newsletters, social media, blog, etc.)
- Reporting on any potential success story leads and actual sales that have resulted from a Food Export program or activity.
- Maintain social media engagement to create and increase awareness of Food Export programs and services.

***US Foodlink and US Feedlink Newsletter and Email Bulletins***

The In-Market Representative is responsible for the promotion and distribution of *US Foodlink and US Feedlink* by:

- Maintaining a database of addresses for distribution of the bi-monthly *U.S. Foodlink* and *Feedlink* newsletters, including importers, retailers, foodservice operators, other trade contacts and FAS Overseas Post(s)
- Continually add new addresses, update existing ones and send this database to Food Export-Midwest and Northeast December of each year or as requested
- Translate the *US Foodlink/Feedlink* newsletters, or collaborate regarding translation with relevant other market representatives conducting business in the same language if appropriate
- Promote the *US Foodlink/Feedlink* bi-monthly newsletters and email bulletins to all contacts
- See that buyers with an interest in the *US Foodlink/Feedlink* email bulletins are entered in Food Export Dynamics database with an active e-mail
- Inform Food Export – Midwest and Northeast of any success stories that may come out of the newsletters or email bulletins. This should include not only sales from

the New Products section, but any evidence of use such as attendance at a trade show due to use of the Events section or changes in operations due to research that is incorporated on the website

- Make recommendations for content and improvements to *US Foodlink/Feedlink*
- Conduct evaluation of *US Foodlink/Feedlink* every three years

In addition to the above, the In-Market Representative is expected to assist Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast to:

Track sales and other performance measures resulting from all events in which services are provided. Assist in documenting performance results by completing evaluations using Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast standard evaluation formats, where appropriate. Generate success stories as results warrant. Identify problems which may be inhibiting sales and in obtaining evaluation results.

- Refer participating importers and exporters to other relevant services offered by Food Export –Midwest and Food Export - Northeast, the FAS offices and other service providers that can further assist them in achieving increased sales/purchases of U.S. food and agricultural products.
- The In-Market Representative will be responsible for providing a monthly report outlining the trade servicing completed and any results achieved.

***Please quote on a per day basis. Please identify the country(ies) you can cover.***

## **2. Food Show PLUS!**

### **Background**

Food Show PLUS!™ is a trademarked service that provides U.S. companies with the information and support they need to be an effective exhibitor at an international trade show. We try to add value for exhibitors by focusing our efforts on maximizing their potential for developing leads, securing an importer/distributor, and realizing sales from the show. Ultimately, by being adequately prepared to do business at the show, companies make the best possible use of the trade show environment and improve their chances for building new sales relationships. The trade shows and activity dates will be determined later.

Food Show PLUS!™ will be offered through the selected In-Market Representative. A member state representative, staff member or a contracted activity coordinator will attend the show and coordinate all activities, and in general, provide onsite management of the activity. Publicity and recruitment for each Food Show PLUS!™ event is typically handled by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast staff, with support from each of our member states. Participating companies pay a modest participation fee to help offset Food Export’s cost of doing the event. We conduct an on-site evaluation plus a follow-up evaluation after six months.

### **Scope of Work**

The types of services considered for each Food Show Plus!™ trade show are categorized as base services and additional services. Base services include those that directly relate to the generation of export results, at all events in which we offer Food Show PLUS!™, the base services must be delivered. For shows where we traditionally have had significant supplier participation, we may include an “a la carte model” of additional services offered that are tailored for the show/market.

#### Base services (required)

- Targeted invitation to qualified buyers to exhibitor booths and setting-up appointments, when possible
- On-site show assistance by In-Market Representative
- Market Briefing
- Local industry tours as appropriate
- Qualifying exhibitors' leads from the show, and profile information on the top few
- Assisting eligible exhibitors with obtaining Branded Program reimbursement
- Providing a final activity report to Food Export

#### Additional services (offered at larger Food Show PLUS! activities on an a la carte basis to suppliers based on need as determined by Food Export and In-Market Representative)

- Providing technical (food industry) interpreters at the show booth
- Translation of up to 2 pages of basic exhibitor material (usually company or product information), into appropriate foreign languages,
- Conduct store check analysis.
- Post-Show Follow-up assistance. In-Market Representatives can assist each participant with questions or correspondence with top show leads for one to two months after the show takes place.

While Food Show PLUS!<sup>TM</sup> services offered may vary slightly depending on the market, trade show organizers, and Activity Coordinator, at the minimum, the In-Market Representative is responsible for ensuring that the services mentioned above are provided in a timely manner. Further explanation of the services and other administrative tasks include:

1. Providing key messages about the market and the show and any information that can be utilized to promote and sell the activity.
2. Developing an executive summary of goals, objectives, plans and budget to administer the project, and a detailed timeline for completion of each phase of the project plan in close coordination with the Activity Coordinator. Budget should include a total cost to administer the project.
3. Communicating project details to the appointed Activity Coordinator.
4. Utilizing promotional materials to promote the Food Show PLUS!<sup>TM</sup> service to companies registered for the trade show. In-Market Representative may be required to contact companies to promote the service.
5. If translation of material is part of the specific Food Show PLUS!<sup>TM</sup>, Companies must receive final translated version three weeks before the show as long as all company information is received in a timely basis. Companies will be responsible for printing profiles. (Translation is limited to a maximum of 2 pages of text per company.)
6. If store check is part of the specific Food Show PLUS!<sup>TM</sup> The store check report will be based on visits to at least three different supermarkets in a major city in the market. If the product is new-to-market and there are no competitive brands, then information should be reported on a product(s) that could be considered a close competitor to the item of interest. Retail outlets selected for this research should be able to provide the U.S. exporter with a view of a wide range of the major brands in the market. In the case of food ingredients, the store check report lists examples of product applications in the market; identifies where in the supply chain that the

- ingredients are needed; and whether the product is imported directly or through specialized intermediaries.
7. Providing an adequate number of interpreters during show hours, if necessary, to serve the participating companies. The In-Market Representative is responsible for hiring qualified interpreters with knowledge of the food industry and applicable terminology, and managing their services during show. Instructions/expectations should be provided to each interpreter prior to the show. Training will be conducted in advance of the show for interpreters and participating companies. U.S. companies may assist to brief the interpreters on product knowledge, knowledge of the selected food industry, and applicable terminology.
  8. Attending the show to supervise activities and interpreters.
  9. Conducting daily meetings with the Activity Coordinator while at the show.
  10. Providing bi-weekly progress reports and maintaining close communication with the Activity Coordinator.
  11. Communicating with the show management to obtain a list of U.S. companies who sign up for the show and communicate said list to the Activity Coordinator-maintaining close communication with the Activity Coordinator.
  12. Inviting appropriate buyers to Food Show PLUS!<sup>TM</sup> participants' booths and set-up appointments, where possible, i.e., invite major importers of ketchup to ketchup exhibitors' booth.
  13. Providing a detailed final report inclusive of:
    - a. Executive Summary
    - b. Review of project
    - c. List of Participants and corresponding company evaluations
    - d. Summary of project and each segment
    - e. Evaluation of each project segment
      - Company profiles
      - Store checks
      - Interpreters
      - Industry tours
      - Press releases (if any)
    - f. Recommendations to improve services at the trade show or future activities
    - g. In-Market Representative comments and evaluation results
    - h. Digital pictures of the event including show signage and where possible, representative photos of the area.

***This service is provided on an as-needed basis. Participation varies by market but on average, 5 companies register for this service per show, each requiring approximately ten days of work. Please quote on per participant basis indicating costs for the base package and separately for the additional services.***

### **3. Market Builder**

#### **Background**

The Market Builder Service is designed to assist U.S. companies to learn whether their products are appropriate for a given export market, and if so, to establish a base for securing an appropriate distributor relationship in that market. The service is provided by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast through their network of In-Market Representatives. The service consists of two independent packages, i.e., Market Scan and Rep Finder. Although companies are encouraged to sign up for both packages (or a full Market Builder), companies may choose to participate in one or both packages detailed below depending on

their needs and goals in the market. Participating companies will need to choose a product and identify the export market for which they want the service to be conducted. For the Market Scan component, the In-Market Representative will have thirty days after samples or company literature from participants are received to complete the scope of work. In the interest of standardizing reports that our export companies receive, Food Export has developed report templates which include the components outlined below.

## **Scope of Work**

### **Package A – Market Scan**

1. Introduction and Product Specific Market Overview  
The In-Market Representative will provide a well-rounded, comprehensive overview of the market, current product usage in the market and applicable trends.
2. Store Check  
The In-Market Representative will assist U.S. food companies to determine competing and similar products that are being sold in the overseas market.
3. Competitive Product Shopping  
The In-Market Representative will purchase samples of similar and competing products sold in the market – up to US\$25 value of samples + shipping. If need be, the IMR can send only the products’ packaging, especially when products are liquid, shelf-sensitive, etc.
4. Distribution Analysis  
This section outlines physical movement of the product to be successfully delivered and marketed to the end customer.
5. Importation Analysis & Regulations  
The In-Market Representative will create a report that identifies import regulations and restrictions affecting the importation of said product into the country.
6. Distributor Referrals  
The In-Market Representative will forward product samples (if possible), product brochures or literature, company profile and indicative export pricing to six appropriate and pre-qualified importers. The representative will create a report containing feedback from at least five buyers regarding said product.
7. Target Importer List  
The In-Market Representative will provide a list of potential importers, including those involved in the distributor referrals above. Importers will be prioritized according to interest in the product as well as provide a brief summary of each importer’s profile such as distribution, existing product lines and other available public information. Buyers that are not interested are also listed with reasoning behind the lack of interest.
8. In-Market Representative’s General Marketability View  
This includes the IMR’s view of product’s marketability with important marketing recommendations; should be subjective and based on opinions and/or observations in the market and no more than two to three paragraphs.



## **Package B – Rep Finder**

### **1. Distributor Referrals**

The In-Market Representative will forward product samples, product brochures or literature, company profile and indicative export pricing to six appropriate and pre-qualified importers. The In-Market Representative will create a report containing feedback from at least five buyers regarding said product.

### **2. Target Importer List**

The In-Market Representative will provide a list of potential importers, including those involved in the distributor referrals above. Importers will be prioritized according to interest in the product. The list will include contact name and contact information as well as also provide a brief summary of each importer's profile such as distribution, existing product lines and other available, public information. Buyers that are not interested are also listed with reasoning behind the lack of interest.

### **3. In-Market Assistance**

The In-Market Representative will arrange at least three one-on-one appointments between participating U.S. exporters and targeted importers in his/her market. It must be clear to supplier before project begins that a minimum of three one-on-one meetings only stands if market allows and finds product conducive.

The In-Market Representative will make arrangements for the time, place, interpreter (if necessary) and other details of the meetings.

The In-Market Representative will also make personal introductions and accompany the supplier to the appointments and will assist with communication or interpretation, if necessary, and moderate the sessions. The Representative will also provide the participating U.S. exporter with a candid evaluation of the meetings and make recommendations for future action steps.

***This service is provided on an as-needed basis. A detailed template for the report will be provided; Market Scan reports average 25 – 40 pages. A full Market Builder requires approximately 6-7 days of work. Please provide quotes for each package of the Market Builder service and for providing the combined packages per project.***

## **4. Buyers Missions**

### **Background**

Food Export – Midwest's and Food Export Northeast's approach to organizing buying teams is to first identify sectors of the food industry in which their suppliers are competitive. These sectors include Grocery Products, Specialty Foods, Seafood, Food Ingredients, Private Label, Natural/Organic, Food Service (HRI), Pet Food, and Feed Ingredients and Additives. Next, markets that are appropriate for that segment of the food industry are targeted, and important Buyers within these sectors are selected.

Buyers are invited to travel to the U.S. to participate in a broad series of private one-on-one meetings with U.S. suppliers. These meetings offer an unparalleled opportunity for each to learn more about the other's business, product line, marketing requirements or capabilities, strategies, opportunities, requirements and limitations.

### **Scope of Work**

The responsibilities of the selected In-Market Representative in carrying out a Buyers Mission are as follows:

- 1) Work with Activity Coordinator(s) to determine needs of the Buyers Mission.
- 2) Pre-qualify and recruit appropriate Buyers, including any recommendations made by the local FAS Office.
- 3) Communicate closely with Buyers to understand their buying interests.
- 4) Provide a detailed profile of each Buyer to the Activity Coordinator.
- 5) Assist Activity Coordinator with details of the itinerary.
- 6) Assist Activity Coordinator to understand any special/cultural needs the Buyers may have.
- 7) Work with Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast and their travel agents to make appropriate travel arrangements.
- 8) Depending on the mission, the In-Market Representative may be requested to attend the mission to assist with various tasks, such as interpretation, communication and general management/logistics of mission.
- 9) Post-activity report should include comprehensive comments from the buyer regarding their interactions with suppliers
- 10) Assist with follow-up after the mission is completed to understand the results of the mission (i.e., sales made).
- 11) Assist Activity Coordinator or Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast with six-month evaluation process.

*Please quote on a per buyer basis.*

## **5. Focused Trade Missions**

### **Background**

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast and their member states work with small and medium-size food companies. Among the challenges of working with these companies is their lack of understanding and exposure to many markets. Often times, these companies try to sell their products and develop business relationships in countries they have not traveled to or toured in order to familiarize themselves with the basics of that market. This lack of understanding leaves U.S. exporters with only product specifications and prices as tools to market to foreign markets and often ends in failure.

The Focused Trade Mission is designed to offer U.S. exporters both a sales opportunity and educational experience. This project will take advantage of established relationships and programs available to U.S. exporters and provide a unique opportunity to travel to a target market not anchored to exhibiting at a tradeshow. Often, cost and time prohibit U.S. tradeshow exhibitors from the opportunity to study the market outside the tradeshow walls.

The Focused Trade Mission will partner with the following services and service providers: FAS Overseas office, Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast representatives, the Branded Program and member state representatives to offer U.S. companies a first hand experience of the target market and highlight opportunities and constraints. Coupled with the educational component of this mission, there will be scheduled meetings and a tabletop reception to put U.S. exporters in contact with potential Buyers.

## **Scope of Work**

Total participation averages eight or more companies per mission, depending on recruitment. The responsibilities of the selected In-Market Representative in carrying out a Focused Trade Mission are as follows:

- 1) Develop an executive summary of goals, objectives, plans and budget to administer the project, and a detailed timeline for completion of each phase of the project plan in close coordination with the Activity Coordinator. Budget should include a total cost to administer the project for eight companies.
- 2) Communicate project details to the appointed Activity Coordinator. Conduct pre-event product research (approximately 5 – 8 pages) on one product per registered supplier which includes three of the four following components: market overview, cost assessment, importation analysis and distribution analysis.
- 3) Conduct a market briefing in conjunction with FAS Office. The In-Market Representative will coordinate with the FAS Office to present a market briefing to the participating companies. If agreed by FAS, the briefing could take place in FAS facilities. In-Market Representative will make the request to the FAS office as soon as the project is approved.
- 4) Organize pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings. The In-Market Representative will set-up a number of appointments with importers, distributors, supermarket buyers, etc. The appointments may take place in a joint meeting space or at the importers' offices, as appropriate for the market.
- 5) Arrange supermarket or industry tours. In-Market Representative will organize visits to different retail stores as part of the learning experience of visiting the market. During the tours, companies will be able to learn who is doing business in the market, what types of products are selling, and what prices various products are selling at in the market.
- 6) Conduct a Table Top Show and Reception. In-Market Representative will organize a table-top display of participating companies products and, where feasible, a reception including sampling of the products being showcased. The table-top display can be held at the FAS facilities, if available. Importers, Distributors and Buyers will be invited to the reception (a minimum of thirty trade contacts should be confirmed). In-Market Representative will produce and disseminate invitations to the showcase to all local trade contacts.
- 7) Transportation coordination: The In-Market Representative will coordinate the in-country transportation of all the mission participants to business events that are part of the Focused Trade Mission agenda. Passenger vans will be rented as they are needed.
- 8) Interpreters: The In-Market Representative will coordinate hiring additional interpreters, so all the participating companies are able to get clear translation/interpretation during the complete Trade Mission.
- 9) Hotel Reservations: The In-Market Representative will be in charge of arranging hotel accommodations for mission events as well as lodging for all Mission participants at federal per diem rate. (Exporter/participants will pay their own lodging and meal expenses).
- 10) Importation of samples into the market: The In-Market Representative will coordinate the importation of the samples into the market.
- 11) The In-Market Representative will arrange for the printing of a mission brochure containing information on all the Mission participants, including contact information and company and/or product profiles. Approximately 500 copies (or a sufficient number of copies according to the needs of each particular market) may be printed in large, professional format. Each participating exporter will use this as a handout during

the showcase, the reception and during the one-on-one business appointments. Any brochures remaining will be left at the FAS office to hand-out to people inquiring for information.

***Based on our experience, we estimate a Focused Trade Mission activity will require approximately 50 days of preparation work plus the execution of the mission. Please provide a quote which is comprised of an overall administrative fee for the mission, plus a per-supplier participant fee for mission services for participants one through eight, then, include cost per supplier beyond eight participants.***

## **6. Virtual Consultation**

The responsibilities of the In-Market Representative in carrying out the virtual consultation includes:

- Review supplier profile report to be submitted by Food Export - Staff indicating a supplier's product, previous experience in the market, goal for participation in a call, and questions pertaining to the one-on-one video conference.
- Conduct preliminary research in order to be able to answer supplier questions and provide valuable feedback to help the supplier attain a better understanding of the market.
- Questions may pertain to the following topics:
  - Product preferences (taste, ingredients, format, etc.)
  - Package size, color, type, etc.
  - Red Flags (issues with product that may make it a bad fit for the market)
  - Basic import data based on product type
  - Trade show information (size, audience, potential, etc.)
  - Country specific information regarding consumers
  - Basic marketability of product based on product type
- Participate on the 30 min. video call
- Provide basic follow-up to any further questions discussed during the consultation. The follow-up will be limited to and included in a consultation report (no more than one page). The consultation report will provide a record of what was discussed during the virtual consultation and will be provided to the supplier by the Food Export tactic lead.

***Please quote on a per participant basis.***

## **7. Lead Qualification Service**

The responsibilities of the In-Market Representative in carrying out lead qualification service:

- Review information submitted by the supplier this will include:
  - Business Card Info
  - Trade Show Attended
  - Focus of initial meeting/conversation
  - Key Product Takeaways
  - Reason for Desired Business
    - Particular appeal to the market?
    - Buyer particularly interested in products?
- Researches/contacts potential buyer to collect information, which may include:
- Demographics

- Org. Category: Broker, Consolidator, Wholesaler, etc.
- Access to Decision Makers
- Organization Description
  - Background/History
    - Year Founded/HQ
    - Industry Segment
- Products Information
  - What products do they carry/produce already?
  - What products do they have interest in importing?
  - Customers? Import Directly?
  - Shipping Information/Quotation Preferences
- Additional Information – Differences per market
  - Catch all text box where the IMR can share any pertinent info about the buyer not included above
    - Red Flags?
    - Things to consider when pursuing business
    - Cultural tendencies to be aware of
  - Disclaimer
- Submit information gathered to Food Export within two weeks of initial information submitted.

*Please quote on a per lead basis.*

## **8. Market Research, Development and Promotion**

### **Scope of Work**

The responsibilities of the selected In-Market Representative in carrying out market research, development and promotion are as follows:

- Undertake industry and/or sector studies as requested;
- Identify, recommend and facilitate promotional opportunities in the food service, food retail, seafood and food ingredient sectors of the market;
- Develop and assist with implementation of promotional activities within the guidelines specified by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast including negotiating promotional terms, assisting with in-store merchandising and display, development of promotional concepts and materials, etc;
- Assist in ensuring that products from the Midwest and Northeast are included in the promotion;
- Submit a report on the activity and provide required evaluation results;
- Perform other specific consulting work as requested by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast.

*Please quote on a per day basis.*

## **9. Special Projects**

### **Scope of Work**

New and special projects may arise and are undertaken by Food Export - Midwest and Food Export - Northeast. Enhancements to existing programs and services may likewise be undertaken in response to evolving market conditions or emerging market opportunities. Assistance is often needed on these undertakings and may be assigned during the term of this contract. Contractors are often engaged in these new projects or adjusted events. They

are responsible for working with the International Marketing Program manager or designated Food Export staff to provide input on a plan of work for the project, as appropriate, and to provide the assistance required and assigned. A specific Scope of Work and Fees will be determined and agreed upon by Food Export and the contractor prior to the commencement of the special project. A contract amendment may be executed as necessary.

*Please quote on a per day basis.*

### **Requirements**

The In-Market Representative must be able to cite previous experience in market research, market assessment and evaluation, and market promotion/public relations activities. Previous experience with not-for-profit groups, international marketing, and food and/or agricultural groups will be considered favorably. The contractor must also be financially and legally capable of entering into and executing a contract for the above stated projects. In addition, please provide the following information:

1. Name of Entity (as it would appear on contract/invoices)
2. Main point of contact
3. Complete Mailing Address / Physical Office Address
4. EIN/TIN/SS number (or if an overseas entity, the equivalent tax identification number in your country)
5. Type of Structure (choose one):  
 Individual    Corporation    LLC    Partnership    Sole Proprietorship

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are not liable for any costs associated with any company’s response to this RFP. Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast reserve the right to not award this contract if, in the opinion of the evaluators, no suitable proposal is received. The awarded contract may be renewed for up to three (3) years.

Selected vendors may be requested to participate in interviews with Food Export staff and/or its representatives.

The selected contractor must agree to abide by Food Export –Midwest and Food Export – Northeast Terms and Conditions:

Food Export Midwest and Food Export - Northeast do not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, national origin or ancestry, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation or military status. Persons with disabilities who require alternate means of communication of program information should contact us.

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast do not tolerate fraud in their programs or services, and expect all participants to comply with our code of ethics ([www.foodexport.org/codeofethics](http://www.foodexport.org/codeofethics)).

If you suspect any instance of fraud, please contact our Ethics Reporting Line at: [www.foodexport.ethicspoint.com](http://www.foodexport.ethicspoint.com) or 1-855-727-6715 (domestic toll-free.)

We reserve the right to deny services to any firm or individual which, in the sole opinion of Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast do not comply with MAP, and all other federally funded programs; FAS; Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast regulations or policies, or otherwise reflect positively on them; their members states; FAS; or USDA, in pursuit of their mission of increasing food and agricultural exports, or for continued public support for their programs. For more information, please see our Terms and Conditions located at [www.foodexport.org/termsandconditions](http://www.foodexport.org/termsandconditions).

The selected contractor must agree to abide by the provisions contained in Section 202 of Executive Order 11246 (30 Federal Register 12319) with regard to employment and contracting practices. In addition, Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast require that its contractors may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast acceptance of proposal is conditional upon contractor disclosing all existing relationship with another party that has the potential of impacting and/or influencing the contractor's ability to carry out the scope of work.

By responding to this request for proposal, you are certifying that your company nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency. If you are unable to certify to the preceding statement, but wish to proceed with a proposal to this request, you will need to include an explanation as to why you cannot certify this statement as an attachment to your proposal

The contents of this Request for Proposal and Scopes of Work are confidential and business proprietary. They may not be re-used for any purpose, in whole or part, including any text, or related concepts, strategies or tactics described, without written permission from Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on **Friday, September 29, 2023**. Only emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please send proposals to:

Joy F. Canono  
Food Export USA - Northeast  
Email: [jcanono@foodexport.org](mailto:jcanono@foodexport.org)

**Questions should be directed to:**

Teresa Miller, Chief Programs and Partnerships Officer  
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA  
Food Export USA – Northeast  
Email: [TMiller@foodexport.org](mailto:TMiller@foodexport.org)