



INVITATION FOR BIDS

Food Export - Northeast is seeking the assistance of a qualified communications professional (individual or company) to provide ongoing assistance with the execution of services in the areas of 1) industry relations development; 2) webpage redesign and ongoing content development; 3) digital and print content development and d) media relations.

Food Export seeks to expand awareness of Northeast U.S. seafood products in international markets and to raise the profile of the export market development work undertaken by Food Export – Northeast on behalf of the industry among both domestic and international audiences. The work under this project will benefit and support the Northeast seafood industry as a whole. Thus, all communications materials developed must be generic to the industry and not be identified with any one particular Northeast U.S. state, U.S. supplier and/or brand.

The selected professional will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2019 Program Year, from January 1 to December 31, 2019 and is renewable on an annual basis. Previous experience with the seafood and/or food industry and location with the Northeastern U.S. is strongly desired.

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

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on Monday, April 1, 2019.

Please forward to:

Food Export USA - Northeast
Andrew Haught, Senior International Marketing Program Coordinator
Food Export – Northeast
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Tel: (215) 829-9111
Email: ahaught@foodexport.org

Questions should be directed to the following via email or telephone:

Suzanne Milshaw, International Marketing Program Manager
SMilshaw@foodexport.org

OR

Andrew Haught, Senior International Marketing Program Coordinator
AHaught@foodexport.org



Request for Proposals Seafood Communications

Background

Food Export USA – Northeast (Food Export – Northeast) is a not-for-profit export association whose primary function is to develop export markets for northeastern producers and processors of value-added food and agricultural products. Our members include state agricultural promotion agencies from ten northeastern states.

Food Export – Northeast, and an allied organization serving Midwestern U.S. suppliers, Food Export Association of the Midwest USA, are participants in the Market Access Program (MAP), a federal program handled by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The MAP is 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 – 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. Furthermore, 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 – Northeast offers a Seafood Program to fish and shellfish suppliers from the northeastern member states. The program is focused on developing export opportunities and support for international promotion primarily for the benchmark species. In addition, Food Export – Northeast will continue to assess and pursue export opportunities for other Northeast seafood products. A menu of annual activities and services is developed and offered to the industry to create opportunities for them to enter new markets and expand sales.

More information about Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast is available on the Internet at: www.foodexport.org.

Food Export-Northeast, with the assistance of a qualified vendor, seeks to expand awareness of Northeast U.S. seafood products in international markets and to raise the profile of the export market development work undertaken by Food Export – Northeast

on behalf of the industry among both domestic and international audiences. Improved communications and awareness are keys to:

- 1) Increasing the overall exports of Northeastern U.S. seafood products to existing and new markets
- 2) Assisting in combating trade barriers currently in place which make U.S. seafood products less competitive in numerous markets
- 3) Further develop relationships with the overseas trade, domestic and international seafood stakeholders and the Northeast U.S. seafood industry.

The work under this project will benefit and support the Northeast seafood industry as a whole. Thus, all communications materials developed must be generic to the industry and not be identified with any one particular Northeast U.S. state, U.S. supplier and/or brand.

Scope of Work

Project 1: Industry Relations Development

Food Export-Northeast seeks to broaden and develop its domestic outreach to Northeast seafood partners and other industry stakeholders to build relationships and support for Food Export-Northeast's ongoing efforts in the region. Partners include a vast array of organizations connected to the region's seafood industry, such as state and regional seafood promotion entities, harvester organizations, and universities. Examples of stakeholders may include regional legislators or coastal economic development organizations. In particular, Food Export – Northeast looks to expand its reach to the aquaculture industry, develop new partnerships and map stakeholders both within the Northeast and Midwest U.S. The Contractor will provide strategy, planning and execution to maintain and enhance current relationships with our network of seafood stakeholders and reach out to new contacts with information about Food Export – Northeast's seafood program to expand our base. Ongoing maintenance of seafood specific database will also be required.

Project 2: Seafood Webpage Redesign and ongoing content development

Food Export-Northeast's current website (foodexport.org) has one general page for the seafood program. Food Export wishes to build new seafood pages within the existing Food Export website that are targeted to two specific audiences – U.S. suppliers and foreign buyers of U.S. seafood. Each audience will have access to tailored content. For example, the U.S. supplier area will contain information about upcoming activities and allow registration, while the foreign buyer site would promote the presence of Northeast seafood suppliers at upcoming shows/events in their market. Contractor will gather existing content ideas, suggest new ideas and propose layouts and designs which work within the general framework of the current Food Export website. Contractor will provide all approved material in requested formats to Food Export general website contractor for smooth integration on the site and participate in testing of new page roll-out.

Project 3: Digital and Print Content Development

Food Export – Northeast seeks the creation of new Northeast U.S. seafood-specific digital and print content to be utilized for outreach to both the U.S. seafood industry as well as overseas seafood trade and consumers. Ideally, content created will be able to be easily adapted for use in multiple countries.

Priority content creation for 2019 includes the following projects:

- a) Lobster Handling Video for Importers – instructional video for handling live lobster from delivery to final sale
- b) Lobster Products Guide – a guide to live lobster grades, products, value-added and ready meals with preparation resources.
- c) Production of recipe and use guides for processed (frozen) lobster meat for the foodservice industry.
- d) Northeast US Oyster Guide – overview of the variety of Northeast U.S. oysters, location and conditions in which they are grown, seasonality, and flavor profiles.
- e) Overview of Northeast US Seafood Industry - overview of characteristics of region’s fisheries, key species, harvesting, processing and sustainability.
- f) Production of recipe and use guides for Northeast U.S. oysters for the foodservice industry.
- g) Production of videos highlighting Food Export seafood activities for use on website, social media, e-newsletters and media relations.
- h) E-newsletter template development and assistance in content creation for two newsletters targeting a) U.S. suppliers and b) domestic industry partners and stakeholders for distribution at end of 2019.
- i) Additionally, Food Export – Northeast would like to expand its existing seafood materials library with new digital material including, but not limited to: northeast key species in various preparations as well as ports and harvesting vessels. Material will be utilized, for example, to support overseas seafood promotions such as “US Lobster Roll Rumble” or a particular restaurant chain promotion of Northeast U.S. seafood products.

For the above items, Food Export – Northeast, individual suppliers and/or partner organizations of Food Export – Northeast can be tapped for existing content as well as extensive expertise on new content to be produced and connect Contractor with appropriate sites for content capture.

Project 4: Media Relations

Food Export – Northeast seeks Contractor to prepare press releases around major seafood trade events and other notable activities to increase the profile of Food Export – Northeast’s work in the general and seafood media. Additionally, Contractor will produce specific press releases, blog posts and social media posts to highlight overall program successes.

Project 5: Special Projects

Provide assistance on an as-needed basis for additional domestic and international projects. Some examples include: assisting with projects that support the development of marketing materials such as custom marketing materials, advertorials, copywriting projects, special presentations or any other projects in need of marketing communications vendor assistance. Assistance may also be needed to create success stories which includes reaching out to Food Export companies and gathering information about their activities and writing a success story based on the Food Export guidelines. The responsibilities of the contractor for these projects would be to work with the International Marketing Program Manager to provide input on a plan of work for the project and to provide the assistance required.

Requirements

Request for Proposals – Seafood Communications 2019

The communications professional must be able to cite previous experience in industry and media relations, digital content creation and development as well as strong general experience in marketing and communications. Previous experience with the seafood and/or food industry and location with the Northeastern U.S. is strongly desired and should be detailed in the response. Past experience with not-for-profit groups and international marketing will be considered favorably. The contractor should respond to the proposal with proposed hourly rate(s) for the various types of services indicated in the scope of work; customized project scopes will be developed and approved for each individual project assigned to the contractor. 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
6. List the specific country/countries in Europe where expertise and services can be rendered..

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.

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).

If you suspect any instance of fraud, please contact our Ethics Reporting Line at: 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 or Food Export – Northeast does not comply with MAP; FAS; Food Export – Midwest or 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.

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 age, disability, national origin or ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military status or membership in the military reserve.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on Monday, April 1, 2019. Please forward to:

Food Export USA - Northeast
Andrew Haught, Senior International Marketing Program Coordinator
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Tel: (215) 829-9111
Email: ahaught@foodexport.org

Questions should be directed to the following via email or telephone:

Suzanne Milshaw, International Marketing Program Manager
SMilshaw@foodexport.org

OR

Andrew Haught, Senior International Marketing Program Coordinator
AHaught@foodexport.org