



INVITATION FOR BIDS

Food Export – Midwest is seeking proposals for the provision of market research, market analysis, and information about market opportunities and barriers in the plant-based food and beverage ingredient industry in the following countries/regions: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates; India; and Turkey. Proposals may include one or multiple countries/regions.

The selected professional will be responsible for providing a draft report for review by Food Export no later than September 20, 2019 with a final report submitted by October 4, 2019. Previous experience with the ingredient and/or agricultural industry and ability to conduct on-the-ground research in given markets 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, July 15, 2019.

Please forward via email to:

Brendan Wilson
bwilson@foodexport.org
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA
309 W. Washington St., Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606 USA
TEL: 312.334.9200
FAX: 312.334.9230

Questions should be directed to the following via email to:

Sandy Renner, Activity Coordinator
srenner@foodexport.org

OR

Brendan Wilson, Senior International Marketing Program Coordinator
bwilson@foodexport.org

**Request for Proposals
Plant Based Food Ingredient Market Research**

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), 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 – 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.

Food Export - Midwest and Food Export- Northeast are independent organizations that have been engaged in a strategic alliance since April of 2000.

The states that are members of Food Export- Midwest include: Illinois, Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, and Missouri. 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.

Scope of Work

Food Export – Midwest is seeking proposals for the provision of market research, analysis, and information about opportunities and barriers in the plant-based food and beverage ingredient industry in the following countries/regions: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates; India; and Turkey. Proposals may include one or multiple countries/regions.

The specific plant-based food ingredient segments of interest include:

1. Plant-based protein ingredients
2. Plant-based bakery and snack ingredients & mixes

3. Plant-based oils for use as ingredients

Plant-based Protein Ingredients

The demand for plant-based proteins is growing globally due to lifestyle changes, lack of protein in some existing diets, and improved technology enabling the development of new protein-rich products, both food and beverage. The four categories by which a protein ingredient is evaluated for food use include nutritional (i.e., protein quality in terms of essential amino acids content and digestibility), functional (i.e., solubility, viscosity, gelation, etc.), organoleptic (i.e., taste, touch, smell), and claims (i.e., presence of allergens and processes used to modify the protein, etc.).

The project focus includes but is not limited to the following plant-based protein ingredients:

Soy Protein

Ingredients of Interest: Soy flours, meals, soy flake products, soy protein concentrates, isolates, protein hydrolysates, other.

Potential Applications: Meat analogues, baked goods, beverages, frozen desserts, salad dressing, cereal, meat products, other.

Pea Protein

Ingredients of Interest: Pea flours, concentrates, proteins, starches, fibers, isolates, protein hydrolysates, other.

Potential Applications: Extruded snacks, high protein snacks; baked goods, high protein baked goods; meat extenders; beverages; confectionery; egg replacement in pasta, cakes, cookies, batters/breading; high-protein ingredients in pasta and other meal products; texturizers and emulsifiers in a range of products such as soups, crackers, cookies, meat and sauces), other.

Pulse Protein (chickpea, beans, lentils)

Ingredients of Interest: Flours, concentrates, isolates, other.

Potential Applications: Meat extenders, emulsifiers, foaming agents, other.

Wheat Protein

Ingredients of Interest: Wheat protein, wheat protein isolates, other.

Potential Applications: Bread, noodles, dumpling wrappers, frozen dough, confectionery, minced seafood products, processed meat products, other.

Oat Protein

Ingredients of Interest: Oat protein concentrate, other.

Potential Applications: Breakfast cereals & bars, breads, nutritional shakes, healthy snacks, milk substitute, other.

Sunflower Seed Protein

Ingredients of Interest: Sunflower protein powders, other.

Potential Applications: Energy powder for beverages, other.

Plant-based Bakery and Snack Ingredients & Mixes:

Ingredients of Interest: Wheat & grain ingredient mixes, other.

Applications: Wheat-based baked goods, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Fruit & vegetable powders

Potential Applications: cookies, muffins, donuts, bars, etc., to provide functional benefits, clean label, fiber, ability to claim serving of fruit or vegetable to final product, flavor, color, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Soy Lecithin

Potential Applications: Baked goods, candies, chocolate, cocoa, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Plant-derived prebiotic fibers

Potential Applications: Bread, cereal, snacks, supplements, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Probiotic cultures (both live & active and spore-forming)

Potential Applications: Fortification of baked goods (better-for-you biscuits, breads, crackers, cookies), beverages, chilled dairy, cultured dairy, supplements, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Ancient grains (such as below)

Amaranth / Potential Applications: Breakfast cereals, gruel, flour, blend with other flour to increase protein; gluten-free, other.

Barley / Potential Applications: Flaked for hot cereals, granola bars; ground for bread, cakes, cookies; cracked for improving texture of low-fat meat products, other.

Buckwheat (botanically classified as a dry fruit) / Potential Applications: Flour, blend with other flours to increase protein, breakfast cereal, biscuits, soba noodles, kasha, source of honey; gluten-free, other.

Sorghum (Milo) / Potential Applications: Flatbread, malted beverages, specialty foods such as popped grains, extruded snack foods, breakfast cereals, granolas, granola bars, other.

Spelt / Potential Applications: Flour for baking, pastas, crackers, snack products, other.

Rye / Potential Applications: Bread; filler in soups, sauces, and sausages; blend with mixes such as pancake or waffle mix; hot cereal, other.

Triticale (cross of wheat and rye) / Potential Applications: Flour for bakery products such as bread, cookies, tortillas, cakes and other soft wheat-type products, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Legumes

Potential Applications: Flours for production of bread and other baked goods, pastas, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Seeds (flax, sunflower, millet, other)

Potential Applications: Ground or whole; used to add omega-3 fatty acids, protein, texture and fiber to baked goods, other.

Plant-Based Oils as Ingredients

Ingredients of Interest: Soy Oils

Potential Applications: Shortening, margarine, salad oils, mayonnaise, salad dressings, sauces, frozen foods, baking mixes, soups, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Canola Oil

Potential Applications: Cooking oil, processed foods, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Sunflower Oil

Potential Applications: Frying / cooking, other.

Ingredients of Interest: Safflower Oil

Potential Applications: High linoleic – edible oil products, salad oils, soft margarines; high oleic – blending oil, substitute for olive oil, heat stable cooking oil to fry foods such as French fries, potato chips; infant food formulations; sprayed food coatings, other.

Deliverables

Country reports detailing:

- a. Define primary plant-based food ingredients being used in key food and beverage segments.
- b. Identify and profile key players in plant-based ingredients industry (local and international).
- c. Competitive landscape for the defined products. Identifying primarily where the products are being imported from.
- d. Identify key trends, key drivers, and key barriers as related to growth of the plant-based ingredient sector.
- e. Identify opportunities for plant-based food ingredients defined in scope of work, along with potential applications of the ingredient.
- f. In addition to the detailed report, provide summary data and tables that could be shared with stakeholders.
- g. Provide recommendations on best practices to introduce above products to the market

Note: Food Export-Midwest would consider breaking the deliverables up into multiple phases.

Goal of the RFP

Secure a provider of market information and data that will enable Food Export – Midwest to assist Midwestern exporters of plant-based ingredients in the target markets. The information gathered will be used to increase exporters' knowledge of the plant-based ingredient markets within the targeted countries. This knowledge will aid exporters in increasing exports of plant-based ingredients to the targeted countries.

Requirements

The successful candidate must be able to cite previous experience in ingredient and/or agriculture market research within the market 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 a quote for submission of a detailed market research report.

The selected professional will be responsible for providing a draft report for review by Food Export no later than September 20, 2019 with a final report submitted by October 4, 2019. 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 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 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. 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 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/or Northeast.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on Monday, July 15, 2019.

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