



309 W. Washington St.
Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606
P: 312.334.9200
www.foodexport.org



1617 JFK Blvd.
Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
P: 215.829.9111
www.foodexport.org

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export-Midwest) and **Food Export USA-Northeast** (Food Export-Northeast) are seeking the assistance of a qualified consultant to assist our organizations with tailored guidance when it comes to our current educational programming. We are looking to evaluate our current educational content and delivery methods and to look at a variety of solutions to enhance knowledge retention and interactivity with participants.

The selected consultant/organization will be responsible for the aforementioned activities beginning October 2022 to December 31, 2023.

Previous experience for not-for-profit groups/trade associations, international marketing, and food and/or agricultural groups will be considered favorably.

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

The Deadline for proposals is 12 Noon ET on **September 19, 2022**.

Please e-mail all proposals and questions to:

Ben Cortese
Food Export - Northeast
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 599-9740
Email: bcortese@foodexport.org

Brendan Wilson
Food Export - Midwest
309 W. Washington St., Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 334-9220
Email: bwilson@foodexport.org

Request for Proposals Exporter Education Consultant

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 Program (ATP), a federal program 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 Australia/New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and Mexico. Food Export–Northeast targets northeastern exporters and six overseas markets, including Europe, Central America, Canada, the Middle East, South America and the Caribbean.

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 staffs 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, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Food Export–Northeast encompasses Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

More information about Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast is available at www.foodexport.org.

Scope of Work

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast maintain a joint catalog of educational offerings hosted in our Learning Management System through Blue Sky E-Learn. This LMS is used to host Live Webinars via Zoom, store Recorded Webinars for on-demand viewing, house our integrated Export Essentials Online 11 Module learning course. It interfaces with our web site for participant registration.

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast offers a variety of other educational services such as a helpdesk to troubleshoot issues with transactions, export development and coaching, and in-person seminars. The goal of these programs is to create export readiness with food and agricultural suppliers in the Midwest and Northeast.

The selected vendor would need to be familiar with similar software systems to be able to evaluate User Experience and User Interface of our current selection of offerings.

They would also need to be familiar with other LMS, Webinar Hosting Platforms and software solutions so they can advise us of the best way to proceed with our education technology as an organization.

Objectives:

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast have a few goals and objectives for this project:

- Evaluate Food Export’s current educational strategy.
- Provide new ideas and recommendations to either further enhance our current educational offerings or better utilize our LMS.

Assist in the creation of these resources in compliance with Market Access Program (MAP) and Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP) funding guidelines.

Requirements and Submitting a Proposal

The vendor should be able to cite previous experience. Previous experience with Learning Management System software, Webinar Platforms, E-Learning Coursework, not-for-profit groups, international marketing, and food and/or agricultural groups will be considered favorably. The proposal should also include the names of the individuals who will be conducting the work and the qualifications of the proposed individual / vendor. The proposal should also include references. The vendor 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.

The quotation(s) should be submitted with rates per hour for the project described.

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 and/or ATP; 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, September 19, 2022**. Emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please email all proposals and questions to:

Ben Cortese
International Marketing Senior Coordinator
Food Export - Northeast
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 599-9755
Email: bcortese@foodexport.org

Brendan Wilson
International Marketing Program Manager
Food Export - Midwest
309 W. Washington St., Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60606
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Email: bwilson@foodexport.org