



YOUR CONNECTION TO GROWTH™

## **INVITATION FOR BIDS**

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are seeking one or more individuals/companies to conduct strategic international market research into multiple food & ag industry sectors including pet food and frozen food sectors.

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

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on **Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022**. Only emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please send proposals to:

Joy F. Canono  
Food Export USA - Northeast  
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Email: [jcanono@foodexport.org](mailto:jcanono@foodexport.org)

### **Questions should be directed to:**

Andrew Haight, International Marketing Program Manager  
Food Export USA – Northeast at 215-829-9111 or via email to  
[AHaight@foodexport.org](mailto:AHaight@foodexport.org)



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## **Request for Proposals**

### **Supplier & Buyer Focused Evaluation & 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) and Agricultural Trade Promotion (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, Jonah crab, monkfish, squid, 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 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 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 Northeast and Midwest are also seeking a company/individual to conduct comprehensive market research on targeted product sectors in the international marketplace. Some sectors for consideration include the frozen food sector and pet food sector. Within those sectors, we want to identify which product categories are strong for US companies located in the Northeast and Midwest US. Once those categories are identified, we want to conduct research on the top markets for those categories and which distribution channels would be best to focus on. The research could include the following information:

#### 1) Market Check

- a. The vendor will investigate whether and where study products and, close competitors to them, are currently available in the retail and, if applicable, HRI sectors.
- b. The types of information that are to be reported include:
  - i. Type of product
  - ii. Product form and size
  - iii. Location of product (retail, type of foodservice outlet)
  - iv. Regular prices in U.S. dollars and any special price offerings, if any
  - v. Countries of origin

#### 2) Distribution Analysis

- a. The vendor will provide information on the make-up of the distribution channels through which the study products are to be sold in the market. Types of information would include the number, size and make-up of the major players in the channel (ex. retail, foodservice or ingredient) and any trends evident in the changing nature of that channel over time.
- b. The distribution analysis should differentiate the differences in distribution between the HRI and retail sectors.

#### 3) Importation Analysis

- a. The vendor will include details in the report on the restrictions affecting importation of products within the identified sectors and include the following:
  - i. Import statistics by volume and value based on the HS code, or a similar product, to demonstrate market share
  - ii. Packaging and labeling requirements including date codes, local language requirements, importer information and unite of measurement
  - iii. Import barriers
  - iv. Tariffs; value-added taxes and other fees

#### 4) Targeted Importer Development

- a. The report will include a list of key potential importers/buyers within the market for the study products including their contact name and information.
  - b. The importer information will include which study products are of interest to the importers and should be prioritized according to interest in the product.
  - c. The list will also provide a brief profile of each importer such as distribution, existing product lines, and other available public information.
  - d. Buyers not interested in study products can also be listed along with their reasoning behind the lack of interest.
- 5) Marketability Assessment and Recommendations for Further Market Development Activities
- a. The report should conclude with the vendor's assessment of market opportunities and challenges for each study product within the HRI and retail sectors.
  - b. Should there be opportunities identified, the vendor is asked to provide recommendations for follow-on market development activities to increase awareness and, ultimately, imports of these products.

**Goal of the RFP**

The information provided by the research projects will help inform Food Export identify target markers, appropriate distribution channels, and enhance activities that focus on these sectors.

## **Requirements**

The vendor must be able to cite previous experience in market research, industry assessment and evaluation. 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 ATP; 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.

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