



**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 conduct strategic international market research into multiple food & ag industry sectors. Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast are also seeking one or more individuals/companies to conduct comprehensive surveys to U.S. suppliers and international buyers on a variety of topics including feedback on Food Export’s programs and services, supply chain issues, international travel, etc.

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

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on **Wednesday, October 26th, 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

Questions should be directed to:

Andrew Haught, International Marketing Program Manager
Food Export USA – Northeast at 215-829-9111 or via email to
AHaught@foodexport.org

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, 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 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.

Scope of Work

Food Export – Midwest and Food Export - Northeast are organizations each with a long history of effectively carrying out export market development programs for U.S. exporters. They also have a successful strategic alliance that was formed over twenty years ago. Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast have also developed and maintained key strategic partnerships with industry associations, other Market Access Program (MAP) Cooperators and export service agencies. Many of Food Export - Midwest and Food Export – Northeast’s core programs and services have been in existence well over a decade.

The organizations are seeking an individual/company to assist in the execution of two exploratory/descriptive surveys. One survey would be geared towards U.S. suppliers that participate in Food Export’s programs and services, and the second survey would be geared towards the international buyers Food Export has sponsored in the past few years to attend our Buyers Mission service.

1. The supplier-focused survey would be an exploratory/descriptive survey to garner feedback regarding topics that influence exporting transactions including but not limited to: 1) concerns on international travel, 2) resilience post-pandemic, 3) supply chain challenges, 4) educational needs/wants, 5) Explore issues that impact supplier engagement in our services, and other feedback.
2. The international buyer-focused survey would be an exploratory/descriptive survey to garner feedback on Food Export’s Buyers Mission service and trade lead service including 1) pre-mission communication and preparation, 2) buyer experience including pre-mission, on-site execution, and follow-up 3) U.S. exporter preparedness, 4) resilience post-covid, 5) meeting format, and other feedback.

Request vendor to develop a proper questionnaire that expands on the topics mentioned above. We are looking both quantitative and qualitative data. Open to use a variety of question types, such as multiple choice, Likert scale, dropdowns, ranking, open-ended, and more, to obtain all the information.

Analysis and interpretation of the results would be required for both projects. The information garnered from these surveys would need to be procured, compiled, and documented in a report by the vendor. The majority of work would need to be completed by January 31st, 2023.

Goal of the RFP

The information gathered by the U.S supplier survey will help inform Food Export regarding educational topics, educational services, types of activities we offer, approach to international activities, and to help improve our portfolio of services.

The information gathered by the international buyer survey will help inform Food Export regarding buyer experience at Food Export’s Buyers Missions, exporter preparedness, importer resilience post-pandemic, and other measures.

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).

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 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.

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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