

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
**12:00 PM CST, June 24, 2019**

**RFP TITLE: SOYBEAN EXCELLENCE CENTERS – NIGERIA**

**RFP CONTACT:**

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**PROPOSAL DEADLINE:** June 24, 2019

**INTRODUCTION:**

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the USA, the United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) helps build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy in feed, aquaculture and human consumption, and promotes the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program. As a result of the Chinese tariffs that went into effect in 2018, the market pressured U.S. soy products to find markets elsewhere, by growing existing markets while also establishing new markets. To this end, USSEC has received support from USDA's Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP) whose mandate is to help U.S. agricultural exporters develop new markets.

As part of its effort to develop new customers for U.S. soy in emerging markets, and in partnership ATP, USSEC is undertaking concurrent initiatives in the Sub-Saharan African. Within Sub-Saharan Africa, five basic markets have been identified including Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. One primary initiative will be to establish Soybean Excellence Centers in Nigeria.

**PURPOSE OF RFP:**

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for the establishment of Soybean Excellence Center in Nigeria. This activity will be implemented in three phases as follows:

- 1.) Establish partnerships and locations
- 2.) Establish best practices
- 3.) Roll-out best practices

**BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

Identifying new and growing markets in Sub-Saharan Africa is part of a long-term strategy to build a strong pipeline of demand for U.S. soy and soy-related products. In order to build awareness of the benefits of soy in animal feed, aquaculture and human consumption, USSEC seeks to establish Soybean Excellence Centers in Sub-Saharan Africa specifically Nigeria initially. The Center will build awareness of benefits of soy use through education end users by establishing, teaching, and disseminating best

practices. The Centers will also facilitate business linkages between local and international businesses and value chain actors. Below we outline the market growth opportunities in each region and country.

#### *Sub-Saharan Africa: Nigeria*

USSEC will undertake new programming in Sub-Saharan Africa, beginning in Nigeria. Nigeria is a basic market that represents a substantial growth opportunity for U.S. soy given its large population and very low consumption of soy and soy-related products. There are significant opportunities to drive growth in protein consumption, improvements in the overall efficiency and functionality of the food chain and increases in the utilization of soy within the supply chain. In 2016, Nigerian consumption of soy and soy-related products was 1 kg/person per year compared to an average of 55 kg/person per year in current expansion markets. The best growth prospects for the region lie in the long-term, where growth opportunities are expected to be 27 MMT by 2030. With a current population of 186 million people expected to reach 264 million by 2030, fully bridging this gap would create more than 14 MMT in additional annual demand for soy and soy-related products by 2030. Encouraging soybean and soybean-related product consumption in Nigeria could turn the country into one of U.S. soy's top three growth markets by 2030.

#### *Approach*

In these immature and growing markets, USSEC has identified the primary constraint to be the lack of understanding of benefits of soy protein. Specifically, food and feed manufacturers and consumers lack an understanding of the potential uses and benefits (economic, technical, nutritional) of soy protein in human food and animal feed applications.

*In Nigeria*, USSEC will deploy a comprehensive set of solutions that will build soy demand in Nigeria and ensure that the U.S. is well positioned to capture the upside opportunity. USSEC efforts in Nigeria include the following:

- Animal Protein Consumption Campaigns
- Supply Chain Opportunity and Gap Analysis and Food Chain Enablement
- Longer-term Efforts to Diversify and Expand Global Demand for Meal from U.S. Soybeans

USSEC will prioritize a major new initiative to establish Soybean Excellence Centers targeting farmers, animal protein integrators, feed millers, animal nutritionists and local academic resources. This Center based in Nigeria will develop, communicate and demonstrate soy-based best management practices with an emphasis on providing opportunities for stakeholders to directly experience these practices in a real-world setting that is relevant to the local market and at a commercial scale.

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE:**

The Soybean Excellence Centers will target farmers, animal protein integrators, feed millers, agribusinesses, animal nutritionists and local academic resources.

#### **SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

##### *Goal*

To build awareness of benefits of soy use through education of end users by establishing, teaching, and disseminating best practices.

### *Objectives*

Soybean Excellence Centers (SECs) will demonstrate commercial scale production that is relevant to the local environment that can be used to showcase real-world application of cutting-edge animal ag feeding practices, and the specific benefits of increased inclusion of soybean meal derived from U.S. origin, within target countries and for each relevant species. These education centers will demonstrate best in class production practices in a real-world environment at a commercial scale creating a resource for ongoing promotional efforts, education, education and relationship building / PR. These facilities will be designed and tailored to fit the market dynamics specific to each location.

An ideal SEC will have the following attributes:

- The ability to demonstrate direct improvements in animal ag production efficiencies following consultation with a dedicated USSEC facilitated technical service team and implementation of recommended improvements. These recommendations are expected to emphasize the nutritional benefits of feed rations with enhanced soy inclusion and may include additional recommendations on animal rearing best practices.
- Best practices will be documented and summarized for both demonstration and research purposes and be used to show economic benefits to stakeholders
- Testimonials from the local collaborating operator, including owner-operators and/or nutritionists, will be available to use in promoting the benefits of U.S. soy.
- The process of providing the baseline assessment, planning and training to convert a local facility into an SEC will generate data that can be analyzed and summarized for potential academic publications and reports that can be used in local and regional ag shows and conferences promoting associated benefits.
- A plan in place on how to “institutionalize” the training by creating an on-going curriculum that will lead to a “certification” that is renewable by employing CEU type programming.

### **Activities:**

In each country, within a phased approach carried out over three years, the implementing contractor will conduct three overarching activities including establishing partnerships and selecting locations; determining relevant best practices for the location/region; commencing the rollout of best practices. Each phase must be completed in full and accepted by USSEC before moving to the next phase. It is envisioned that each phase will take one year.

#### *Phase 1: Establish partnerships and select location:*

The location will be targeted based on ease of access ensuring that it is representative of “typical” conditions in the region. The determination of the best partner (or partners) for that area may be a private enterprise or a public university considering any cultural concerns or biases. Specific screening criteria will be established and utilized in this process including, but not limited to:

- Scale of operation and relevance to region
- Location and appropriateness of facility to desired operations

- Progressive orientation
- Interest and receptivity towards approach
- Other parameters identified by the bidder and detailed in their proposal

The project team will negotiate a collaboration agreement with each partner that will include the following core contributions:

- The project will provide technical assistance to support the implementation of production best practices related to animal production and specifically feeding with an increase of U.S. soy-based products. Resources to support the establishment of appropriate facility improvements or additions to host tour and educational opportunities.
- The partner will provide ongoing access to facility to host educational and trade facilitation groups, access to data and experience results relative to adoption of best practices to be shared.

*Phase 2: Determine relevant best practices for the location/region:*

The USSEC project team will engage with partner organizations with strong technical expertise in nutrition and production practices for the relevant species. This will include a summary of best practices for operations at various stages of development and relative sophistication.

Once partners are identified the project will perform a baseline assessment of the partner facilities including inputs from local production experts or qualified advisors as well as experts from the U.S. This will include data gathering on current/existing practices as well as typical outcomes related to operational performance to serve as a baseline that enables tracking of progress/improvements as a result of implementing recommended improvements in later stages of this project. The baseline assessment will be used to identify stakeholder challenges and how the SEC and the facility may teach best practices, recommend necessary improvements for the facility operations and customize an improvement plan using the best practices developed in step 1. These improvements will be based on a comparison of current management practices with those that can be reasonably implemented to improve production efficiencies and profitability.

Demonstrations and lessons will then be built around these recommended changes in practices illustrating the benefits as they are implemented.

*Phase 3: Rollout of these practices*

The project team will employ a technical services consulting approach where experts will engage directly with the operational management of the local partner and educate/train those individuals on recommended best practices. These efforts will include delivery via face-to-face support as well as written and/or multimedia training materials. Results will be measured, tracked and documented to illustrate the improvements from changes in production practices and nutritional shifts as a basis for case study development. Case study outcomes reflecting the baseline situation, recommended improvements, implementation experience and outcomes developed will be prepared. Using this case study input, a demonstration and education curriculum will be prepared to be used in training and lessons for key stakeholders in the region.

The project will develop a communication and outreach plan to attract visitors to the center via showcase events hosted at the SEC facility and provide sponsored transportation where appropriate. In order to provide a support system for best practices adoption and implementation the project will develop a cooperative-extension-style support network for farmers who visit the SEC and adopt new best

management practices as a result providing networking and advise. The project will document result of demonstration participation and subsequent adoption of best practices learned through visits to the SEC.

**Performance Measures**

This project will contribute to the following performance measures:

**Sub-Saharan Africa**

<b>Performance Measure</b>
# of surveyed companies <b>in Sub-Saharan Africa</b> that are planning/committed to further research and development including soy as a nutritive, economic or functional ingredient <sup>b</sup>
% of surveyed participants <b>in Sub-Saharan Africa</b> who report an increased understanding of the value of using soy as a functional or nutritive ingredient and recognize potential for increased profitability <sup>b</sup>
# information campaign activities conducted <b>in Sub-Saharan Africa</b> about the advantages of consuming soy
# of <b>Sub-Saharan African</b> key accounts (e.g., supply chain partners) currently utilizing U.S. soy
# of <b>Sub-Saharan African</b> companies purchasing U.S. soy products for the first time.

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)**

**DELIVERABLES:**

The following deliverables are envisioned: **Exact dates and timelines will be mutually agreed upon by contractor and USSEC upon award of the Contract.**

<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Description of Deliverables</b>
July 12, 2019	Agreed upon number of animal ag soybean excellence centers established with fully implemented best management practices by the end of year 2
	Demonstration facilities established at the SEC at the end of year 2 including a conference center/meeting space that will allow U.S. soy to host regional and international stakeholders at the center Location (s) identified and
	Series of SEC demonstration processes and collateral materials (case studies, training, curriculum) established by the end of year 2 including materials that clearly demonstrate the benefits of adopting U.S. soy based best management practices in animal ag feeding practices within the region
	Top feed mills representing 75% of commercial feed production within the region invited to the SEC – 50% of those exposed express an intent to change their feed formulations as a result of the SEC program based on a follow-up survey
	Top and influential livestock and poultry producers representing 50% of the commercial production within the region invited to the SEC – 50% of those

	exposed have made at least 1 change to their operation as a result of the program at the SEC based on a follow-up survey
	Representatives from all regulatory agencies in the region invited to programs/tours at the SEC - All representatives exposed to the center will agree or strongly agree that the best management practices prescribed at the center create meaningful benefits for aquaculture in the region
	The SEC results in positive coverage from a minimum of 5 distinct media outlets in year 1 and 10 in year 2 with overall coverage that reaches a national audience

**PROJECT TIMELINE:**

Our expectation is for the **Soybean Excellence Center** project to last three years, approximately from **DATE** to **DATE**. We are asking that the Project Proposal include details about what the proposed timeline and scope would look like.

**RFP TIMELINE:**

- **RFP distribution- June 5, 2019**
- **Last Day to Submit Questions: June 12, 2019 by 5:00PM Central Time**
- **Project Proposals Due: June 24, 2019 by 5:00PM Central Time**
- **Selections Made by: July 1, 2019**
- **Prospective Contractors Notified by: July 5, 2019**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria listed below:

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@USSEC.ORG](mailto:RFP@USSEC.ORG) by **5:00PM Central Time on June 24, 2019**
2. A description of Prospective Contractor’s capabilities, resources and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
3. A thorough proposal outlining Prospective Contractors planned work, deliverables and timeline to complete the work.
3. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor’s personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
4. Provide a minimum of two names and contact information for other similarly sized clients for reference purposes.
5. Detailed Budget
  - All bids for services must provide a breakout of how the fee was derived including but not limited to a breakdown of hourly rate and the amount of effort they anticipate to do the work.

6. Proposals should be no longer than **10 pages** (8 ½" x 11").
7. Preference may be given to the bidder with the capacity and history of doing similar work in other countries / regions.

**NOTES:**

- Prospective Contractors are hereby notified that proposals will be duplicated for internal review only. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of all information presented. The appropriate representatives from staff and legal counsel will review proposals. Proposals will not be returned.
- USSEC reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the submitter of the conditions contained in the request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between USSEC and the contractor selected.
- Confidentiality - Without USSEC's prior written consent, Prospective Contractors and its officers, employees, agents, representatives, affiliates, and subcontractors shall not disclose to any third party any documents, materials or information that the Prospective Contractors learns from or is provided in relation to the RFP request.
- During the evaluation process, USSEC reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from proposers, or to allow corrections of errors and omissions.
- USSEC reserves the right to reject any proposal that is in any way inconsistent or irregular. USSEC also reserves the right to waive proposal defects or deficiencies, to request additional information, and/or to negotiate with the Prospective Contractor regarding the proposal.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that Fees are in lieu of any and all other benefits, including, but not limited to, repayment of any and all taxes related to contractor service fees, health and life insurance, administrative costs and vacation.
- Prospective Contractor agrees that any income taxes, value added taxes or any other form of direct or indirect taxes on compensation paid under the contract shall be paid by Contractor and not by USSEC or Funding Sources.
  - Prior to any payment to a Contractor, a contractor must provide a W-9, W-8, or W-8BEN upon agreement signature
- Non-Competition. Contractor shall not act as agent or representative for any product or service directly or indirectly competitive with U.S. soybeans or soybean products for the length of the contract.
- USSEC and Prospective Contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). USSEC provides EEO to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.



## **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND**

### *BUILDING A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. SOY*

USSEC's strategy can be found here: <http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/>

USB's Long Range Strategic Plan can be found here: <http://unitedsoybean.org/about-usb/strategic-planning/>

We are a dynamic partnership of key stakeholders representing soybean producers, commodity shippers, merchandisers, allied agribusiness and agricultural organizations.

Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., we help build a preference for U.S. soybeans and soybean products, advocate for the use of soy in feed, aquaculture and human consumption, promote the benefits of soy use through education and connect industry leaders through a robust membership program.

Our 15-member board of directors is comprised of four members from the American Soybean Association (ASA), four members from the United Soybean Board (USB), and seven members representing trade, allied industry, and state organizations.

New board members are seated annually. We are receiving funding from a variety of sources including soy producer checkoff dollars invested by the USB and various state soybean councils; cooperating industry; and the American Soybean Association's investment of cost-share funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Foreign Agriculture Service.

The United Soybean Board, created by the 1990 Farm Bill to manage and direct the National Soybean Checkoff, is dedicated to marketing and research for the soybean industry. USB is comprised of 73 volunteer soybean farmers representing the interests of fellow growers nationwide. Each board member is nominated by Qualified State Soybean Boards (QSSBs) and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Because of the limitations on administrative and salary costs established in the Act, USB outsources the majority of its program management responsibilities to USB's three primary contractors:

- SmithBucklin-St. Louis for domestic marketing, new uses, production research and Board initiative activities;
- Osborn & Barr Communications for communications/public relations activities and;
- United States Soybean Export Council (USSEC) for international marketing and global opportunities activities.

As one of these three primary contractors USSEC may also undertake initiative activities on behalf of USB. USB considers primary contractor staff (approximately 60 people) as core USB staff. These three primary contractors use a number of subcontractors and, together, these entities carry out approximately 450 projects each year for USB. USB also manages approximately 10 subcontractors.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 {voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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