

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

March 27, 2020, 5:00PM CST

RFP TITLE: QUANTIFYING THE ORIGIN CERTIFIED DIFFERENCES IN QUALITY OF U.S. AND BRAZILIAN SOYBEAN EXPORTS.

RFP CONTACT:

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INTRODUCTION:

World soybean buyers make purchasing decisions on the perceived value of quality of soybeans at origin. One of the first tools used in making such decisions is the quality analysis of soybeans loaded. In the U.S., soybean cargoes are analyzed by the Federal Grain Inspection Services. In Brazil, soybean cargoes are analyzed by Independent Surveyors of seller's choice. This proposal seeks a report of the differences of different origin results on a weekly basis. This proposal DOES NOT seek to analyze the nutritional differences on quality.

PURPOSE OF RFP:

This request for proposal is the first of its type at USSEC. It will assist in determining the fair market value for the work to be performed and allows USSEC the opportunity to evaluate various proposals and select the best contractor for the job based on experience, availability, expertise, approach, and cost

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

There are simple soybean quality attributes that can help buyers make the right decision on global flows. Moisture, damage, heat damage, foreign material, oil content, and protein are basic elements in buyer's decision-making process. While every season is different, U.S. superior quality is prominent in many factors. This project seeks to highlight those differences. This information will help the U.S. leverage the value of U.S. Soy and influence the buying pattern of buyers around the globe.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Importers of soybeans and Global Trade desks

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

- Report weekly quality of soybeans loaded by export corridor as well as by country average.
- Cumulative quality results to be reported on weekly progressions as well.
- Quality attributes to be reported are moisture, damage, heat damage, foreign material, oil content, and protein content.
- Average, high, and low data sets are required by export corridor.
- In the US, public data from FGIS should be used.
- In Brazil, the data certified by independent surveyors must be used.
- As collecting the data from Brazil maybe more challenging, the data supplier must have at least 70% of the weekly flow covered. Data provider must have the capacity to prove the same (do not duplicate vessel quality on strings)
- For now, the report is to be provided in Excel but another dashboard may be chosen later at no cost to data provider.
- Independent surveyors’ certificates are not required, but USSEC requires the average weekly quality by export corridor.
- The U.S. corridors are USGX, TXGX, PNW, Export Container shipments, and U.S. Rail export flows (Mexico)
- The Brazilian corridors to be covered are Rio Grande, SFDS, Paranagua, Santos, Itacoatiara, Vitoria/Tub, Sao Luis/PDM, Santarem, Barcarena
- USSEC can make the data received public, and upon request, may send individuals/companies that challenge the data to the data provider. The data provider must answer these questions. Consistent inaccuracy can lead to contract termination.

DELIVERABLES:

Completion Date	Description of Deliverables
Weekly	Submit reports by the end of each Sunday beginning Apr 5 th until Sep 26 th 2021
ON PROPOSAL	Sample draft required for USSEC to review. Presentation that highlights quality differences will be valued.

PROJECT TIMELINE: Apr 5th 2020 - Sep 26th 2020

RFP TIMELINE:

- **RFP Distribution:** March 13, 2020
- **Project Proposals Due:** March 27 by 5:00PM CST
- **Selections Made By:** March 31, 2020

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@USSEC.ORG by **5:00PM Central Time on March 27, 2020**
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 Fee and Expense Breakdown
 - 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").

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 learn 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;
- U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), Inc. 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, audiotape, 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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Civil Rights Clause

Contractor agrees that during the performance of this Agreement it will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, parental status or protected genetic information. Contractor further agrees that it will fully comply with any and all applicable Federal, State and local equal employment opportunity statutes, ordinances and regulations, including, without limitation, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nothing in this section shall require Contractor to comply with or become liable under any law, ordinance, regulation or rule that does not otherwise apply to Contractor.