



INVITATION FOR BIDS

Food Export - Northeast is seeking one or more individuals/companies to assist with the implementation and management of our generic seafood export promotion activities, primarily for seafood from the Northeast United States. The types of activities for which help is required include: Buyers Missions; Food Show PLUS!™ and Trade Shows; Focused Trade Missions; Outreach & Communications; Trade Data, Analysis, Market Research & Reporting; International Seafood Promotions; Strategic Planning & Information Sessions; and Special Projects. The contractor will work closely with and be supervised by the appropriate International Marketing Program Manager. The contractor will also be expected to liaise with our State Department(s) of Agriculture and In-Market Representatives (IMR), as appropriate. The selected contractor will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2020 Program Year (January 1 – December 31, 2020).

In the Scope of Work sections below are more details on the activities for which Food Export - Northeast is seeking assistance. Most activities are coordinated in close partnership with our member state staff at various state agricultural promotion agencies. The specific duties and responsibilities assigned to a contractor will vary by activity and by year. Such tasks will be assigned by an International Marketing Program Manager.

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 23, 2019**. Emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please forward proposals to:

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

Questions should be directed to:

Suzanne Milshaw, International Marketing Program Manager,
Food Export USA – Northeast at 215-829-9111 or smilshaw@foodexport.org



Request for Proposals Activity Coordination - Seafood

Background

Food Export USA – Northeast (Food Export – Northeast) is a not-for-profit export association whose primary function is to develop export markets for northeastern producers and processors of value-added food and agricultural products. Our members include state agricultural promotion agencies from ten northeastern states. Additionally, Food Export – Northeast has been in a strategic alliance with the Food Export Association of the Midwest USA since 2000.

Both groups are participants in the Market Access Program (MAP), a federal program handled by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The MAP is 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 – 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 – 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 – Northeast offers a Seafood Program to fish and shellfish suppliers from the northeastern member states. The program is focused on developing export opportunities and support for international promotion for the benchmark species which include: American lobster,

squid, scallops, monkfish, Atlantic mackerel, Atlantic herring and dogfish. In addition, a Food Export – Northeast will continue to assess and pursue export opportunities for other Northeast seafood and Midwest products. A menu of annual activities and services is developed and offered to the industry to create opportunities for them to enter new markets and expand sales.

Food Export - Northeast is seeking one or more individuals/companies to assist with the development, implementation and management of our generic seafood export promotion activities, primarily for seafood from the Northeast United States. As a “commodity” type program with many U.S. suppliers (harvesters/fishermen) but a limited number of exporters, the primary focus is to increase exports in the areas of Market Entry and especially Market Promotion. In addition, the contractor monitors and reports on trade data; participates in policy issues relevant to the industry; develops and implements a strategic plan; creates and distributes marketing and communication tools; reaches out to the U.S. industry and international trade members to foster export opportunities; develops and coordinates international promotions; and performs other duties as assigned by Food Export.

The types of activities for which help is required include: A) Buyers Missions; B) Food Show PLUSTM and Trade Shows; C) Focused Trade Missions; D) Outreach & Communications; E) Trade Data, Analysis, Market Research & Reporting; F) International Seafood Promotions; G) Strategic Planning & Information Sessions; and H) Special Projects. The contractor will work closely with and be supervised by the appropriate International Marketing Program Manager. The contractor will also be expected to liaise with our State Department(s) of Agriculture and In- Market Representatives (IMR), as appropriate. The selected contractor will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2020 Program Year (January 1 – December 31, 2020). Orientation of any new contractors will likely commence in November 2019.

In the Scope of Work sections below are more details on the activities for which Food Export-Northeast is seeking assistance. Most activities are coordinated in close partnership with our member state staff at various state agricultural promotion agencies. The specific duties and responsibilities assigned to a contractor will vary by activity and by year. Such tasks will be assigned by the International Marketing Program Manager.

A. Scope of Work: Buyers Missions

Buyers missions are activities in which a team of foreign buyers is invited to travel to the U.S. The purpose of these activities is to encourage and facilitate the purchase of U.S. products. Buyers missions may involve a stop in one or more Midwest or Northeast cities for one-on-one meetings with U.S. suppliers. The team often visits a major U.S. trade show where the buyers walk the show and may have additional one-on-one meetings. Supermarket tours are also often planned for the team to allow them to see innovative products and merchandising techniques.

The responsibilities of the individual(s) that are contracted under this RFP include:

Project Phase: Activity Planning and Preparation (approximately 25%)

Primary Tasks:

- Development and submission of activity plan and project budget
- Liaise with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives
- Solicitation of buyer nominations from In-Market Representatives and FAS

offices/Posts

- Collect buyer nominations, review and recommend buyers for selection
- Assist with the development of recruitment materials for U.S. suppliers
- Work with Food Export staff to develop a recruitment list
- Collaborate with liaisons on company calls
- Monitor recruitment progress
- Responsible for contacting and securing participation for the activity

Project Phase: Activity Execution (approximately 50%)

Primary Tasks:

- Confirm buyer participation and create Buyer Profiles
- Communicate buyer information to travel coordinator
- Assist with securing a tradeshow booth and requests for proposals for vendors (i.e. meeting room, hotel), as needed
- Development and/or execution of retail store tour or other site tour (when applicable)
- Collect supplier meeting preferences and profiles; follow up with unpaid participants on fees
- Ongoing communication with buyer and supplier participants
- Develop meeting matrix
- Monitoring of activity budget
- Provision of information for buyer newsletter to Food Export staff
- Ensure that all activities and expenses are in compliance with all MAP regulations, and Food Export – Midwest/Food Export- Northeast policies and procedures
- Cross-selling of Food Export programs and services, as appropriate
- Coordination and communication with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Offices/Posts, freight logistic coordinator and others as needed
- Ongoing communication with supplier participants
- Take Photographs of activity participants and U.S. Pavilion

Project Phase: Post-Event Wrap-Up (approximately 25%)

Primary Tasks:

- Collect outstanding initial evaluations
- Ensure all expenses are submitted to Food Export within 30 days after activity completion
- Follow up on post-event supplier and In-Market Representative inquiries
- Provide buyer feedback through Food Export database notes section
- Participate in wrap-up call with Food Export staff and provide reporting on activity as directed
- Provide activity photos and other written material for use by Communications (i.e. blog post, social media outlets)
- Document success stories and submit to program staff

Additional duties such as recruitment, on-site coordination and additional services to be defined will be assigned on a case-by-case basis with pre-authorization by the International Marketing Program Manager.

Based on our experience, we estimate an average-sized Buyers Mission activity (typically 10 buyers traveling in the mission and 30 suppliers participating) will require approximately 75 hours of work, exclusive of on-site coordination.

B. Scope of Work: Food Show PLUS!™ and Trade Shows

Food Show PLUS!™ describes Food Export – Midwest/Food Export- Northeast's approach to assisting U.S. exhibitors at key international trade shows with the main objectives of preparing them and helping maximize their experience at the show. We do not pursue a traditional approach of buying booth space from the show organizer and reselling it to exhibitors at a discount. Instead, we try to add value for exhibitors by focusing our efforts on maximizing their potential for developing leads, securing an importer/distributor, and realizing sales from the show.

Food Show PLUS!™ targets key international trade shows where we can offer a package of appropriate services to exhibitors. The services offered vary by show and are selected based on: the requirements of the market; services offered by the show organizers; services offered by the local FAS office; and our ability to provide effective support. Every attempt is made not to duplicate services offered from another source. Our Food Show PLUS!™ services are performed primarily by our network of foreign in-market representatives who are located in 19 markets around the world.

The types of services considered for each Food Show PLUS!™ include:

- Assisting exhibitors with registration with the show organizers;
- Pre-show product research regarding pricing, import regulation, competitor analysis;
- Targeted invitation of qualified buyers;
- Setting up introductions between buyers and suppliers;
- Translation of exhibitor material into appropriate language(s) for show visitors;
- Providing technical (food industry) interpreters at the show booth;
- On-site show assistance by the local in market-representative;
- In-market briefing and local industry tours, as appropriate;
- Qualifying exhibitor leads from the show, and conducting checks on the top few;
- Writing and sending a generic follow up letter in the local language to all contacts; and
- Assisting eligible exhibitors with obtaining Branded Program reimbursement.
- Providing a final report

In addition to offering Food Show PLUS! Services at trade shows, the contracted party will also be responsible for the organization of a pavilion or industry representation at major seafood shows such Seafood Expo Global, Asia Seafood Show, China Fisheries, etc. This also entails U.S. domestic as well as overseas travel.

The responsibilities of the individual(s) that are contracted under this RFP include:

Project Phase: Activity Planning and Preparation (approximately 25%)

Primary Tasks:

- Development and submission of activity plan and project budget
- Liaise with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives
- Solicitation of buyer nominations from In-Market Representatives
- Assist with the development of recruitment materials for U.S. suppliers
- Coordination with show organizer and standbuilder (when applicable)
- Booth placement and pre-show logistics (when applicable)

Project Phase: Activity Execution (approximately 50%)

Primary Tasks:

- Assist with participant exhibit inquiries
- Create activity instructive for participants
- Collect supplier profiles and information for pre-show research; follow up with unpaid participants for fees
- Ongoing communication with supplier participants
- Prepare supplier profiles for submission to IMRs
- Assist with securing a tradeshow booth and requests for proposals for vendors (i.e. meeting room, hotel), as needed
- Monitoring of activity budget
- Deliver pre-show research to participants as prepared by the IMRs
- Coordination and Communication with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives, show organizers, standbuilder and other show vendors (when applicable), FAS Post (travel notification) and others as requested
- Ensure that all activities and expenses are in compliance with all MAP regulations, and Food Export – Midwest/Food Export- Northeast policies and procedures
- Cross-selling of Food Export programs and services, as appropriate

Project Phase: Post-Event Wrap-Up (approximately 25%)

Primary Tasks:

- Collect outstanding initial evaluations
- Ensure all expenses are submitted to Food Export within 30 days after activity completion
- Follow up on post-event supplier or IMR inquiries
- Participate in wrap-up call with Food Export staff and provide reporting on activity as directed
- Provide activity photos and other written material for use by Communications (i.e. blog post)

- Document success stories and submit to program staff

Additional duties such as recruitment, on-site coordination and additional services to be defined will be assigned on a case-by-case basis with pre-authorization by the International Marketing Program Manager.

Based on our experience, we estimate a Food Show PLUS!™ activity will require approximately 45 hours of work exclusive of on-site coordination and recruitment.

C. Scope of Work: Focused Trade Missions

The Focused Trade Mission is designed to offer U.S. exporters both a sales opportunity and educational experience. Often, cost and time prohibit U.S. tradeshow exhibitors from the opportunity to study the market outside the tradeshow walls. The Focused Trade Mission will offer U.S. companies a first-hand experience of the target market and highlight opportunities and constraints. This program provides market analysis of the potential export products, meetings with buyers, market briefings, retail tours and assistance with following-up on sales leads. Coupled with the educational component of this mission, there will be a tabletop reception to put U.S. exporters in contact with potential buyers.

The responsibilities of the individual(s) that are contracted under this RFP include:

Project Phase: Activity Planning and Preparation (approximately 20%)

Primary Tasks:

- Development and submission of activity plan and project budget
- Liaise with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives
- Assist with the development of recruitment materials for U.S. suppliers

Project Phase: Activity Execution (approximately 60%)

Primary Tasks:

- Collect supplier profiles and information for pre-event research;
- Follow up with unpaid participants for fees
- Prepare supplier profiles for IMR submission
- Assist with requests for proposals for vendors (i.e. meeting room, hotel), as needed
- Create activity instructive for participants
- Coordinate shipping of event samples to market
- Deliver pre-event research to participants, as prepared by the IMRs
- Monitoring of activity budget
- Coordination and Communication with Food Export staff, states and In-Market Representatives, travel coordinator, and others as requested

Project Phase: Post-Event Wrap-Up (approximately 20%)

Primary Tasks:

- Collect outstanding initial evaluations
- Ensure all expenses are submitted to Food Export within 30 days after activity completion
- Follow up on post-event supplier or IMR inquiries
- Participate in wrap-up call with Food Export staff and provide reporting on activity as directed
- Provide activity photos and other written material for use by Communications (i.e. blog post, social media outlets)
- Document success stories and submit to program staff

Additional duties such as recruitment, on-site coordination and additional services to be defined will be assigned on a case-by-case basis with pre-authorization by the International Marketing Program Manager.

Based on our experience, we estimate a Trade Mission activity will require approximately 50 hours of work exclusive of on-site coordination and recruitment.

D. Scope of Work: Outreach & Communications

- Outreach to the U.S. seafood industry and develop new relationships and opportunities to work with the industry
- Educate U.S. seafood suppliers about Food Export's programs/services and corresponding opportunities to grow exports overseas; cross-promote programs and services at all times
- Liaise with and educate overseas importers and trade about:
 - a. The high-quality fish and shellfish products available from the region;
 - b. The sustainability of U.S. fisheries; and
 - c. The reliability of U.S. suppliers, who are known for their consistent quality and high food safety standards.
- Write articles and provide information for media and news outlets related to the industry and international trade
- Monitor news related to the industry and share information with Food Export – Northeast, USDA-FAS and other parties as appropriate.
- Respond to media, trade, member state and government inquiries in collaboration with Food Export – Northeast
- Develop and solicit input related to responses and positions on seafood policy issues affecting the industry in the Northeastern region
- Contribute to the design, development, content and distribution of seafood newsletters, marketing materials, promotional items and related content
- Promote the Northeast U.S. seafood region/industry and its seafood products to the overseas

trade, retail and foodservice markets, through collateral promotional and point-of-sale materials

- Provide support to seafood suppliers participating in Food Export programs and services and liaise with In-Market Representatives as appropriate

E. Scope of Work: Trade Data, Analysis, Market Research & Reporting

- Obtain trade data from multiple sources throughout the year to analyze trends and opportunities for the benchmark products from the region
- Develop strategic plan initiatives, including activities, events, programs, services, promotions and market strategy to assist Food Export – Northeast in expanding export opportunities for seafood suppliers
- Monitor progress and report periodically on the status of exports for individual products and suppliers and also for the industry and world outlook for seafood trade
- Create presentations to educate and promote awareness of export opportunities and challenges
- Develop and write success stories related to the industry and Food Export – Northeast's events and services

F. Scope of Work International Seafood Promotions

- Develop, coordinate, monitor and report on seafood promotions in international markets. The promotions may be retail, foodservice, online or in other formats that suit the opportunities in the market.

G. Scope of Work: Strategic Planning & Information Sessions

- The contractor will be asked to draft a strategic plan for export development for the Northeast US seafood industry which includes preparation of a matrix of markets, products and tactics to be used to expand exports over the next 3 years.
- Participate in and plan for strategic planning meetings including the annual Food Export member state meetings. Create presentations and content to support the strategic planning objectives and opportunities related to the seafood program.
- Throughout the year, the contractor will be expected to obtain training and attend information sessions. The objectives of these sessions will be to provide more information to domestic contractors on the nature of Food Export-Midwest and Food Export USA; our constituents; overall organizational strategy; particular events and services; and operational details.

H. Scope of Work: Special Projects

- New and special projects are often undertaken by Food Export - Northeast. Outside assistance is often needed on these projects. Some examples include: assistance with

collecting activity evaluations, managing individual aspects of the Food Export on-line product catalog, assisting with training and education of new partners, vendors and staff; and more. The responsibilities of the contractor for these projects would be to work with the International Marketing Program manager to provide input on a plan of work for the project, as appropriate, and to provide the assistance required and assigned.

Requirements & Submitting a Proposal

The contractor must be able to cite previous experience in planning and conducting similar activities for food and agricultural products, and working effectively with people and by telephone, email and in person. Previous experience with not-for-profit groups, international marketing, 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 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 - Northeast is not liable for any costs associated with any company's response to this RFP. Food Export - Northeast reserves 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 as a rate per hour for assisting with the activities as outlined in the Scopes of Work above. Vendors may choose to submit different rates per hour for various aspects such as: activity coordination, recruitment of participants, on-site services during an activity, administrative tasks, etc. Typically, pre-approved direct, eligible expenses related to carrying out the activity such as production of materials or travel costs are reimbursed separately.

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 – 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; 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 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/or Northeast.

The contractor must agree to abide by Food Export – Midwest and Food Export – Northeast invoicing guidelines which include:

- Invoice must contain a unique invoice number
- Individual invoices per project or activity
- Each invoice must include the current hours being invoiced, the hours already invoiced on the project, and the total number of hours agreed upon for the vendor to carry out the project

- Invoices must be submitted no less-frequently than at the completion of each project phase
- Final invoices must be submitted within 30 days of completion of the project.
- The Scope of Work for a specific project as agreed to by the vendor, Food Export – Midwest and/or Food Export – Northeast must be included as a basis to track the actual work performed against the agreement.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on Wednesday, October 23, 2019. Emailed proposals will be accepted.

Please forward proposals to:

Food Export USA – Northeast
Joy F. Canono
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 420
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email: jcanono@foodexport.org

Questions should be directed to the following:

Suzanne Milshaw, International Marketing Program Manager,
Food Export USA – Northeast at 215-829-9111 or smilshaw@foodexport.org