



California Walnut Commission (CWC)

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Public Relations and Advertising Agency - India

BACKGROUND:

The California Walnut Commission (CWC) conducts marketing activities on behalf of the California walnut industry. Marketing activities are funded by grower assessment and the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Market Access Program (MAP) under the administration of the department's Foreign Agricultural Service. Programs and marketing activities under this program are subject to the regulations and review of the USDA. This Request for Proposal (RFP) contains all necessary information for a firm to formulate and submit a proposal for the public relations and advertising portion of this account.

The CWC has been active in the India market since 2012. The CWC is seeking a public relations and advertising agency partner with a proven track record for creative excellence in strategic program development and execution. The agency will conduct multichannel programs to raise consumer awareness and respective purchase of California walnuts. Core functions include but are not limited to: Media Relations, Social Media, Advertising, Consumer Marketing, Brand Building, Science Communications, Opinion Leader Outreach and/or Events.

Approximately one-half of budget funds are obtained through the Market Access Program and all are subject MAP regulations. The requested budget for public relations in India for the upcoming marketing year (2018) is \$775,000.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT:

This RFP is limited to India and initially to the marketing year beginning January 1, 2018 and ending December 31, 2018. The initial contract can be extended for two marketing years beyond the first year based upon mutual agreement between all parties. After a total of three years the project must be re-bid.

SCOPE OF THE PROPOSAL:

All proposals must include the following:

- Agency introduction and philosophy.
- Agency team proposed for the California Walnut Commission account.
- Market overview as it relates to California walnuts (relative strengths and weaknesses of the product, etc.) and how your agency can address this market.
- Proposed activities to promote walnuts for the marketing year 2018.
- Recommended strategy, both short and long-term.
- Budget recommendations, including estimated out-of-pocket expenses and fees.
- List of references with complete contact information.
- Primary agency contact and contact information.
- **Successful Case Studies** including benchmark(s)/measured successes (e.g. ROI)
- Additional information that would be of assistance (i.e., government relations, etc.)

SELECTION CRITERIA: PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING AGENCY:

All proposals will be judged against the following selection criteria. Each criterion is weighted by the percentage indication to be used in developing an overall score for each proposal.

- a) Expertise in creating and executing food based public relations for consumers, including ability to plan, develop and implement creative concepts, efficient and effective media selection, and timing of public relations, etc. Experience with health claim regulations and implications is preferred. (25%)
- b) Knowledge of the Indian market, specifically the retail food chain and distribution systems. Additional knowledge of the food manufacturing industry is useful. (15%)
- c) Knowledge of the social media landscape in India and experience in developing social media programs that can be evaluated annually. (15%)
- d) Creative and executable program ideas in line with CWC messaging, including case studies of past successful programs. (15%)
- e) Experience with the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office, Market Access Program (MAP) and the American Embassy staff. (10%)
- f) Suggested fee schedule (e.g., planning fees, commission rates, etc.). (10%)
- g) Completeness and thoroughness of proposal. (5%)
- h) Language capabilities in Hindi and English (5%)

TIMING AND SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:

Two hard copies should be submitted in English and received in Folsom no later than Tuesday, **October 31, 2017**. In addition, **an electronic copy of the proposal sent via email or electronic file transfer is also required on or before the day of the deadline**. For more information, please contact Ms. Graviet at the address and contacts below.

All proposals must be submitted to:

Pamela Graviet, Senior Marketing Director, International
California Walnut Commission
101 Parkshore Drive, Suite #250
Folsom, CA 95630
Phone: 916-932-7070
Fax: 916-932-7071
Email: rfp@walnuts.org

REVIEW PROCESS:

The review process may occur in two steps. First, all interested agencies will submit a proposal outlining their agency's and individuals' qualifications for this account as listed in the *Scope of Proposal*. These proposals will be reviewed and scored. Firms with the best overall scores may be invited to formally present their proposals. If it is determined that one firm clearly scores well above the rest, selection will occur and the second step will be eliminated.

Second, if multiple firms have high scores, selected firms will be asked to formally present their concept of proposed activities for California walnuts in India. All costs for all materials developed for this presentation will be the agency's responsibility. As part of this process, in country interviews and presentations may be conducted in early November with the CWC Senior Marketing Director, International. If unable to schedule interviews and presentations at that time, meetings through Skype or another video conferencing medium will be conducted no later than November 17th. All companies submitting proposals will be notified in writing of the selection results no later than November 30th.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

A copy of the following is attached for your information:

1. CWC India 2016 Unified Export Strategy (MAP Application – Marketing Plan)
2. India 2016 Country Progress Report
3. India 2016 Country Activity Program Evaluation Study

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Selected agency must be able to travel to California for the CWC annual Global Marketing Conference being held January 8-12, 2018.