



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE WORLD INITIATIVE FOR SOY IN HUMAN HEALTH (WISHH)**

**TITLE:** Current and prospective U.S. soy protein ingredient distributors serving the Central American Food Industry

**I. DATE:** April 2, 2024

### **II. PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to obtain ingredient supply chain market intelligence on the Central American food and beverage industry for use in the effort to expand the number of U.S. soy protein commodity ingredients (defatted soy flour, soy concentrate, and soy isolate) distributors serving the region.

### **III. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

The American Soybean Association was founded in 1920 by soybean farmers and extension workers to promote soy for high protein applications in developmental settings. ASA has worked in over 80 countries since the inception of its overseas program in the mid-1950s. The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) was founded in 2000 to expand the work of the ASA in developing and emerging markets to improve health, nutrition, food security, and to build the groundwork for future U.S. soy protein markets. WISHH provides services in food technology, business development, nutrition services, and program and proposal development. WISHH expertise extends beyond food and into aquaculture, poultry, and animal feed.

The U.S.-based program in St. Louis, Missouri, operates in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Central America and the Dominican Republic. WISHH connects trade and development to strengthen agricultural value chains in developing and emerging economies, creating long-term demand for U.S. soy in countries where trade is pivotal to improving accessibility, affordability, and acceptability of high-quality plant and animal-sourced proteins. The Program's initiatives broadly fit into two arenas: (1) trade-building long-term, early-stage market development, and (2) trade-building international agriculture and economic development.

WISHH achieves its mission by working in close partnership with the public and private sectors, and non-governmental organizations. The Program has decades of experience in commercial food development and agricultural development programming and draws upon the resources and experience of partners and the services of a cadre of WISHH consultants with technical expertise in the agricultural, international, and commercial development spheres. The Program takes pride in its growing portfolio of success with U.S. government-funding, including USDA (Food for Progress, McGovern-Dole, Global Broad-Based Initiative, Foreign Market Development, Market Access Program, Emerging Markets Program, Agricultural Trade

Program, and Quality Samples Program) and USAID funding in both prime and sub-recipient capacities. WISHH has also attracted both private sector and other complementary funding sources from various donors to build on and leverage core funding from Qualified State Soybean Boards.

#### **IV. SCOPE OF WORK**

WISHH has received FY2024 Market Development Program grant funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service to conduct promotional activities with food processors and distributors serving the Central American and Dominican Republic region. The activities focus on increasing the awareness and use of U.S. soy protein commodity ingredients (defatted soy flour, soy concentrates, and soy isolates) in food and beverage applications in the region. Currently, there is interest in and demand for U.S. soy protein ingredients from food and beverage processors in the region. However, prospective buyers are encountering challenges securing supply. A large majority of these ingredient purchase inquiries are for less than full shipping container size orders. The challenge has been to locate U.S. soy protein suppliers willing to sell less-than-container quantities to first-time buyers who are medium and large F/B companies in the region. WISHH is building prospective distributors in the region to overcome this impediment.

The firm selected will conduct a market research study of the Central American food and beverage industry supply chain that characterizes current U.S. soy protein ingredient availability in the region; identifies current and prospective soy protein ingredient distributors; as well as includes the following:

- Distributor company name and contact details
- The countries and market segments (baking, processed meat, etc.) they currently serve
- Their current product offerings
- Their ingredient suppliers and corresponding country of origin
- Reasons why they buy from the suppliers they do
- Their interest in expanding their product offerings and markets covered in the near future
- For those not carrying soy protein ingredients, gauge their openness to carrying them and those sourced from the U.S.
- Their interest in receiving qualified sales leads for U.S. sourced soy protein ingredients
- The value they associate with/or not carrying/starting to carry U.S.-sourced soy protein ingredients
- Gauge their openness to receiving and/or meeting with qualified sales leads for U.S.-sourced soy protein ingredients
- Their perception of the value/benefits to their companies they would gain by adding U.S. soy protein ingredients to their product list
- The obstacles they associate with adding U.S. soy protein ingredients to their product list
- The technical assistance they envision needing to add U.S. soy protein ingredients to their product list

- The value to their company from WISHH providing free-of-charge, after-the-sale technical assistance to their customers in order to maximize the customer’s experience using U.S. soy protein ingredients.

**V. MARKETS TO BE STUDIED**

Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

**VI. TIMING AND DELIVERABLES: APRIL 5 – MAY 29, 2024**

RFP Posted	April 2, 1024
Questions accepted through	April 10, 2024
Questions and answers posted to WISHH Website	April 12, 2024
Proposals due	April 19, 2024
Contractor notified of selection	April 24, 2024
Contract executed	April 26, 2024
Progress report - Virtual Meeting	May 22, 2024
Draft Report due	May 27, 2024
Feedback on Draft Report due to contractor	May 28, 2024
Final Report due	May 29, 2024

**VII. SELECTION CRITERIA AND CRITERIA WEIGHTS**

Proposals submitted will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Comprehensiveness	35%
Consultant skills/experience	30%
Cost	20%
Timing	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Special consideration will be given to Women or Minority Owned Small Business (WMOSB) entities with SBA certifications (proof of certification must be provided at time of submission).

**VIII. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS.** The Consultant(s) will have the following qualifications:

- At least five years of market research/market assessment experience, ingredient procurement, and/or previous work experience in the food and beverage industry in Central America and/or the Dominican Republic.
  - Consultants who do not have experience evaluating the food/beverage markets in these regions are strongly encouraged to partner with qualified

industry/technical expert(s) based in the region/country who have had significant commercial category experience in the study region.

- Experience in study design, data collection and analysis of qualitative data and supervisory capabilities in each of these areas.
- Proficient in written and spoken Spanish and English.

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria requested in the Request for Proposal:

1. A description of the bidder's capabilities and experiences (can be submitted as a CV)
2. Daily professional rate in U.S. dollars (USD \$)
3. The following questions need to be answered in a separate document:
  - What is your market research/market assessment experience, ingredient procurement, and/or previous work experience and for how long in the food and beverage industry in the Central American region?
  - If you will be partnering, what commercial category/marketing research experience does your industry/technical expert have in the region?
  - What type of study design, data collection and data analysis experience do you have?
  - Are you proficient in written and spoken Spanish and English?
4. Checklist of additional items that must be submitted:
  - Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page Completed and Signed
  - Proposal with 100-word executive summary
  - Proposal detailed budget
  - WMOSB Proof of Certification (if applicable)

Proposals should be submitted no later than 4:00 PM CDT on April 19, 2024. To be considered for award, proposals must be submitted by e-mail to Marypat Corbett, [mcorbett@soy.org](mailto:mcorbett@soy.org). Ms. Corbett will confirm receipt of each proposal; if receipt has not been confirmed, your proposal has not been received.

If your proposal is not authorized by signature on Attachment A Proposal Authorization Cover Page, it may not be considered and may be rejected.

**Submission of Questions:** All questions regarding the preparation of proposals must be submitted in writing (by e-mail) to Marypat Corbett at [mcorbett@soy.org](mailto:mcorbett@soy.org) **no later than 4pm CDT on April 10, 2024**. All questions and answers will be available on the WISHH website on or shortly after April 12, 2024. No questions will be answered over the phone or in person; all questions must be in writing and sent via email.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:** In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture 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. WISHH is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The firm or individual selected will be required to sign the WISHH code of conduct and conflict of interest statement.

This RFP contains no contractual proposal of any kind, any proposal submitted will be regarded as a proposal by the vendor and not as an acceptance by the vendor of any proposal by WISHH. No contractual relationship will exist except pursuant to a written contract document signed by the authorized procurement official of WISHH and by the successful vendor(s) chosen by WISHH.

Offerors submitting proposals must (1) be officially licensed to do such business in the country of *their* business operation, (2) be able to receive USDA funds, and (3) not have been identified as a terrorist prior to being awarded a contract. In addition, Offeror may be required to provide the following information prior to awarding of the contract:

- Documentation to verify licensure (i.e., tax id, registration certificate, etc.)
- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Equal Opportunity

## **IX. ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Technical Proposal Submission sheet

## **X. Budget**

- Total proposal not to exceed \$10,000.

**XI. Organization website:** <http://www.wishh.org/>

**ATTACHMENT A: Technical Proposal Submission Sheet**

*(Complete this form with all the requested details and submit it as the first page of your technical proposal, with the documents requested above attached. Ensure that your proposal is authorized in the signature block below. A signature and authorization on this form will confirm that the terms and conditions of this RFP prevail over any attachments. If your proposal is not authorized, it may be rejected.)*

Date of Technical Proposal:	
RFP Number:	
RFP Title:	

We offer to provide the goods/services described in the Scope of Work, in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in Request for Proposal referenced above. We confirm that we are eligible to participate in public procurement and meet the eligibility criteria specified.

The validity period of our proposal is \_\_\_\_\_days/weeks/months from the time and date of the submission deadline.

Type of Business/Institution (Check all that apply)

Offeror certifies that it is:

- Non U.S. Owned/Operated       Government Owned/Operated

(If Non U.S. Owned/Operated is selected, continue to Anti-Terrorism Certification)

**OR FOR US ORGANIZATIONS ONLY:**

- |                                      |   |                              |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
|                                      | Nonprofit<br>Large Business                               | For-Profit<br>Small Business | Government Owned/Operated<br>College or University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women Owned | <input type="checkbox"/> Small and Disadvantaged Business |                              |  |

Anti-Terrorism Certification

The Offeror, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous 10 years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts.

The Offeror also verifies that it does not appear on 1) the website of the Excluded Party List: <https://www.sam.gov>; or 2) the website of the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the “1267 Committee”): <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/consolist.shtml>.

The undersigned declares s/he is authorized to sign on behalf of the company listed below and to bind the company to all conditions and provisions stated in the original RFP document including attachments from ASA/WISHH.

**Proposal Authorized By:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Authorized for and on behalf of:*

*(DD/MM/YY)*

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ \

Business Registration Number \_\_\_\_\_