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## **INVITATION FOR BIDS**

**Food Export Association of the Midwest USA** (Food Export-Midwest) and **Food Export USA-Northeast** (Food Export-Northeast) are seeking the assistance of a qualified consultant to assist our organizations with tailored technology guidance when it comes to our current Association Management System (AMS) software and other software systems integration. We are looking to evaluate our current technology setup and look at a variety of solutions to enhance our technology to better assist our stakeholders.

The selected consultant/organization will be responsible for the aforementioned activities during our 2021 Program Year, from March 1 to December 31, 2021.

Previous experience for not-for-profit groups/trade associations, international marketing, and food and/or agricultural groups will be considered favorably.

Attached please find the official Request for Proposal for details, requirements, and deadlines.

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The Deadline for proposals is 12 Noon ET on **March 5, 2021**.

**Please e-mail all proposals and questions to:**

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# **Request for Proposals**

## **Technology and CRM Selection Consultant**

### **Background**

The Food Export Association of the Midwest USA (Food Export–Midwest) and Food Export USA–Northeast (Food Export–Northeast) are not-for-profit export associations whose primary function is to develop export markets for midwestern and northeastern (respectively) producers and processors of value-added food and agricultural products. Our members include state agricultural promotion agencies from thirteen midwestern and ten northeastern states.

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–Midwest and 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–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are independent organizations that have been engaged in a strategic alliance since April of 2000. Through this alliance, the strategy and tactics of the organizations have been aligned so that the activities and services of each group are very similar with differences based primarily on geographic focus. Food Export–Midwest focuses on midwestern exporters and a series of eight overseas target markets, including Australia/New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and Mexico. Food Export–Northeast targets northeastern exporters and six overseas markets, including Europe, Central America, Canada, the Middle East, South America and the Caribbean.

By collaborating, the activities and services of each organization are open to participation by companies from the other region. The net effect is that exporters in the Midwest and Northeast have access to a larger range of export promotion opportunities, while the limited staffs at Food

Export– Midwest and Food Export–Northeast can focus on specific market development opportunities.

The states that are members of Food Export–Midwest include Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Food Export–Northeast encompasses Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

More information about Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast is available at [www.foodexport.org](http://www.foodexport.org).

### **Scope of Work**

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast maintain a joint database hosted in our Association Management System (AMS) that is named NetFORUM. This AMS was designed to be customized using native tools built into the AMS for developing new interfaces or modifying the database structure and has been utilized for over a decade with many customizations developed by different vendors. It interfaces with our web site that utilizes IIS10 and a Content Management System (CMS) named Sitefinity.

The selected vendor would need to be familiar with our current software systems to be able to evaluate them and their integration ability.

They would also need to be familiar with other AMS, CMS, and software solutions so they can advise us of the best way to proceed in our technology as an organization.

Objectives:

Food Export-Midwest and Food Export-Northeast have a few goals and objectives for this project:

- Evaluate Food Export's current technology and NetFORUM AMS software functionality and integration ability.
- Provide new ideas and recommendations to either further enhance our current AMS or select a new software system or systems to replace it with.

### **Requirements and Submitting a Proposal**

The vendor should be able to cite previous experience. Previous experience with Abila's NetFORUM Enterprise, Telerik's Sitefinity, not-for-profit groups, international marketing, and 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 vendor 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–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast are not liable for any costs associated with any company’s response to this RFP. Food Export–Midwest and Food Export–Northeast reserve 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 with rates per hour for the project described.

The selected contractor must agree to abide by Food Export–Midwest and 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](http://www.foodexport.org/codeofethics)).

If you suspect any instance of fraud, please contact our Ethics Reporting Line at: [www.foodexport.ethicspoint.com](http://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](http://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 age, disability, national origin or ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military status or membership in the military reserve.

The deadline for proposals is 12:00 noon ET on **Friday, March 5, 2021**. Emailed proposals will be accepted.

**Please email all proposals and questions to:**

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