

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
**5:00 PM CST, 01/27/2023**

### **RFP TITLE:**

**REGIONAL AQUACULTURE NUTRITION & FEED MANUFACTURING TRAINING COURSE,  
AMERICAS**

### **RFP CONTACT:**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

*The USSEC is a non-profit organization that promotes sustainable, feed-based aquaculture production approaches through knowledge transfer, on-site trainings, seminars, workshops, conferences, industry tours and demonstrations. The specific goal of the USSEC Americas Aquaculture Program is to promote the use of United States soy products, in aquaculture feeds and the best aquaculture feeding practices. A key program objective is to see a growing, long-term, high-quality, feed-based aquaculture industry in the Americas Region and globally.*

*USSEC requests proposals to assist in the continued development, implementation and execution of strategies and programs within the Americas Region. For contractors, the expectations are to carry out the deliverables of the activities they are managing and are summarized in associated contracting documentation.*

*Through a global network of international offices and strong support in the U.S., USSEC helps 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.*

### **PURPOSE OF RFP:**

USSEC's standard practice is to RFP every 3 years in an openly and competitive manner. This type of cost analysis 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

*The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for a University of the United States to be the host of USSEC's Regional Aquaculture Nutrition and Feed Manufacturing Training Course. University Contractor is expected to provide all course coordination details. During this course each participant will learn and improve their knowledge of the latest technical information on soy feeds and best feeding practices for fish (freshwater and marine) and shrimp for the industry in the Region. This training will emphasize the economic, environmental, sustainability and food safety advantages the use of Soybean meal (SBM), Soy protein concentrate (SPC), soy oil, lecithin and other soy products used for fish and shrimp production in feed formulations, and must include important topics such as nutrition, production process, quality control, feeding programs, pellet feeds, extruded feeds, milling, certifications, aquaculture production and trends, marketing and exports opportunities for aquaculture products applied to this industry.*

*This aqua training also requires to participants to complete on-line pre-training course for at least one month in specialized aquaculture feed production topics of nutrition and manufacturing and then develops the classroom course in the University. USSEC will work to help the end users winning more value with using aqua feeds containing U.S. soy as a best ingredient due of its consistency, superior amino-acid profile, uniformity, and a sustainable production.*

#### **BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

Animal agriculture is the number one customer of U.S. soy and accounts for 98% of U.S. soybean (*source: Soyatech*). A rising middle class in high population growth regions of the world continues to increase global demand for protein. This will continue to drive demand for aquaculture feed and soybean meal, creating opportunities for U.S. soy farmers.

The U.S. Soybean Export Council aims to maximize awareness and preference for U.S. soy from the key decision makers by providing direct technical information. They will be provided with the tools needed to take informed decisions as well as to acknowledge the advantages and value of U.S soybean meals nutritional bundle into the aquaculture diets.

Through this proposal, influential aquaculture feed mills will be identified in the Americas and encouraged to adopt recommended feeding practices through technical training, feeding demonstrations, trade teams, conferences, and sponsorships of producer associations.

#### **TARGET AUDIENCE:**

This course is addressed to aquaculture feed mills, aqua nutritionists and technical personnel of the aqua feed mills involved in manufacturing process.

**1) AQUA NUTRITION AND AQUAFED MANUFACTURING TRAINING AND COURSE:**

USSEC expectations is to split this Regional Aquaculture Feed Production Course into two different phases for a total of 30 customers plus 2 USSEC staff

Phase 1: Corresponds to an online course (distance education program), which includes specialized topics that need to be provided to the participants in Spanish and English from March 1<sup>st</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Specialized aquaculture topics on nutrition, manufacturing and feeding practices must be considered. (Only for customers)

Phase 2: A classroom course that consists of a 4-day program (May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023). Taking into consideration that the participants will arrive to the Hotel in US on the day May 29<sup>th</sup> and will departure on the June 3<sup>rd</sup>. (Customers and USSEC staff)

**2) SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Description of Deliverables</b>
<b>February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023</b>	<p>Provide USSEC project manager with documentation for contract:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Signed W9 or W8BEN-E</li> <li>2. Banking information (USSEC template) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>3. Payment terms <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> </ol>
<b>February 15<sup>th</sup> –28<sup>th</sup>, 2023</b>	<p>Work with USSEC assigned staff to develop a program for both phases. Program should include topics such as but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Latest technical information on soy feeds, manufacturing and best feeding practices for aquaculture (freshwater fish and marine, as well as for shrimp for the industry in the Region).</li> <li>2. This training will emphasize the economic, environmental, sustainability and food safety advantages the use of Soybean meal (SBM), Soy protein concentrate (SPC), soy oil and lecithin in fish and shrimp production in aqua feed formulations.</li> <li>3. Must include important topics such as nutrition, production process, quality control, feeding programs, pellet feeds, extruded feeds, milling, certifications, aquaculture production and trends, marketing and exports opportunities for aquaculture products applied to this industry.</li> </ol> <p>Phase 1: Online Course (Distance Education Program)</p> <p>Include educational online modules to cover topics as follow, that will help each participant to learn more on the concepts that will be</p>

	<p><i>presented at the phase II. The objective is to ensure that all participants will understand the advanced level of the program:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Aqua Nutrition</i></li> <li>2. <i>Manufacturing</i></li> <li>3. <i>Best Feeding Practices</i></li> <li>4. <i>Practical demonstrations in plant</i></li> </ol> <p><i>All lectures should be provided in Spanish and English by university staff.</i> <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></p> <p><i>Phase 2: Face to Face Program (Classroom course)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Include 6 to 8 lectures per day.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Negotiate Hotel room block for 32 people</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>30 customers + 2 staff</i></li> <li>b. <i>Negotiate rate within FAS per diem limits for (May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023)</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>3. <i>Management of hotel group reservations (USSEC will pick up the bill)</i></li> </ol>
<p><b>March 1<sup>st</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023</b></p>	<p><i>Phase 1: Distance Education Program (online course):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Implement the online distance course through a distance/online education platform</i> <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>2. <i>Online course evaluations</i> <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>3. <i>All course material, communication and giveaways should include USSEC's logo</i></li> <li>4. <i>Create and manage the registration system website to be supervised by the correspondent USSEC representative. The system registration must allow to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Online registration management including website and maintenance required</i></li> <li>b. <i>Person that supports the participants with the doubts and concerns that arise in the development of the online modules</i> <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>May 30<sup>th</sup> – June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023</b></p>	<p><i>Phase 2: Face to Face Program (classroom course):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Logistic Coordination with USSEC staff to be the host of a 4-day AQUANUTRITION &amp; FEED MANUFACTURING TRAINING COURSE and provide:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Hotel breakfast included (USSEC will pick up the bill)</i></li> <li>b. <i>Venue for classroom days: Conference Center or facilities at the University to conduct the classroom portion</i></li> <li>c. <i>Ground transportation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Hotel-Airport-Hotel</i></li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hotel-Conference venue-restaurant-Hotel</li> <li>• Conference venue to Closing ceremony venue</li> </ul> <p>d. Coordinate and provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch and coffee breaks at the facility within the FAS Perdiem limits</li> <li>• Dinners at restaurants for May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 2<sup>nd</sup> (within the FAS Perdiem limits)</li> </ul> <p>2. Others:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. All speakers according to approved program.</li> <li>b. Visual aids and all other materials required for classroom learning experiences.</li> <li>c. Simultaneous translation services English Spanish by recognized and successful interpreters and any equipment that is needed for these services during the classroom course portion of the program. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>d. Group photo and certificate for the online module for participants that successfully completed the program.</li> <li>e. Organize and coordinate Graduation Ceremony for the course completion.</li> <li>f. Apply USSEC survey with an 85% return rate.</li> </ol>
<p><b>No later than June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023</b></p>	<p>Phase 1 &amp; Phase 2: Provide USSEC project manager with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invoice <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>2. Electronic materials for each presentation. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>3. Completed surveys with an expected response rate of at least 85%. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>4. Post-board report including summary and receipts of all expenses. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> <li>5. Participants list with the following contact information: <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Name</li> <li>b. Title</li> <li>c. Company</li> <li>d. Email</li> <li>e. Phone number <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub></li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Brief English narrative report of the event notifying issues, challenges, next steps, and recommendations.</li> </ol>

**RFP TIMELINE:**

- RFP Distribution: January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Last Day to Submit Questions: January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, by 05:00 PM Mexico Time
- Q&A Session: January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 11:00 CT. Request the zoom access link by sending an email to [americasRFP@ussec.org](mailto:americasRFP@ussec.org))
- Project Proposals Due: January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, by 05:00 PM Mexico Time

- Selections Made By: January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Prospective Contractors Notified By: January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION (if applicable)**

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

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

1. *Please email the proposal to [americasrfp@ussec.org](mailto:americasrfp@ussec.org) by 5:00PM Mexico Time on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012*
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 Budget
  - 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 doing 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 learns 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 all other benefits, including, but not limited to, repayment of 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 most 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 several 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 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](mailto: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 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.