REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
5:00 PM U.S. Central Standard Time, November 6th, 2023

RFP TITLE: SOYBEAN EXCELLENCE CENTER – MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA - EGYPT

RFP CONTACT:
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PROPOSAL DEADLINE: November 6th, 2023

PURPOSE OF RFP:
The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals for the ongoing management of Soybean Excellence Center in Egypt. Preference for bids to be fixed fee that includes consulting fees, phone/internet communication expenses, computer hardware/software, local residence government fees/taxes, and overhead. Travel expenses will be billed separately upon agreement with USSEC. Person/organization chosen will be considered a contractor and not an employee.

This contractor chosen will implement the SEC program as follows:

1.) Collaborate with established partnerships and locations in Egypt and coordinate with other MENA countries.
2.) Establish best practices in coordination with local industry and USSEC
3.) Roll-out best practices in coordination with local industry and USSEC
   a. Plan, schedule, and implement multiple training programs per year in Egypt, USA, or other countries as needed, both in person, virtual and hybrid.
4.) Provide overall management and administration in local market of the SEC in close coordination with USSEC Europe MENA Regional team and USSEC leadership and stakeholders.

SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:

Goal
To build awareness of benefits of soy use through education of end users by establishing, teaching, and disseminating best practices.

Objectives
Soybean Excellence Centers (SECs) will demonstrate commercial scale production that is relevant to the local environment that can be used to showcase real-world application of cutting-edge animal ag feeding practices, and the specific benefits of increased inclusion of soybean meal derived from U.S. origin, within
target countries and for each relevant species. These education centers will demonstrate best in class production practices in a real-world environment at a commercial scale creating a resource for ongoing promotional efforts, education, education and relationship building / PR. These facilities will be designed and tailored to fit the market dynamics specific to each location.

An ideal SEC will maintain the following attributes:

- The ability to demonstrate direct improvements in animal ag production efficiencies following consultation with a dedicated USSEC facilitated technical service team and implementation of recommended improvements. These recommendations are expected to emphasize the nutritional benefits of feed rations with enhanced soy inclusion and may include additional recommendations on animal rearing best practices.
- Best practices will be documented and summarized for both demonstration and research purposes and be used to show economic benefits to stakeholders.
- Testimonials from the local collaborating operator, including owner-operators and/or nutritionists, will be available to use in promoting the benefits of U.S. soy.
- A plan in place on how to “institutionalize” the training by creating an on-going curriculum that will lead to a “certification” that is renewable by employing CEU type programming.

Activities:

The implementing contractor will conduct three overarching activities; including maintaining partnerships and selecting locations; determining relevant best practices for the location/region; commencing the rollout of best practices.

**Phase 1: Maintain partnerships and selected locations:**

The current locations are based on ease of access ensuring that it is representative of “typical” conditions in the region. The determination of the best partner (or partners) for that area may be a private enterprise or a public university considering any cultural concerns or biases. Specific screening criteria will be established and utilized in this process including, but not limited to:

- Scale of operation and relevance to region
- Location and appropriateness of facility to desired operations
- Progressive orientation
- Interest and receptivity towards approach
- Other parameters identified by the bidder and detailed in their proposal

The project team will negotiate a collaboration agreement with each partner that will include the following core contributions:

- The project will provide technical assistance to support the implementation of production best practices related to animal production and specifically feeding with an increase of U.S. soy-based products. Resources to support the establishment of appropriate facility improvements or additions to host tour and educational opportunities.
- The partner will provide ongoing access to facility to host educational and trade facilitation groups, access to data and experience results relative to adoption of best practices to be shared.

**Phase 2: Determine relevant best practices for the location/region:**
The USSEC project team will engage with partner organizations with strong technical expertise in nutrition and production practices for the relevant species. This will include a summary of best practices for operations at various stages of development and relative sophistication.

Once partners are identified the project will perform a baseline assessment of the partner facilities including inputs from local production experts or qualified advisors as well as experts from the U.S. This will include data gathering on current/existing practices as well as typical outcomes related to operational performance to serve as a baseline that enables tracking of progress/improvements as a result of implementing recommended improvements in later stages of this project. The baseline assessment will be used to identify stakeholder challenges and how the SEC and the facility may teach best practices, recommend necessary improvements for the facility operations and customize an improvement plan using the best practices developed in step 1. These improvements will be based on a comparison of current management practices with those that can be reasonably implemented to improve production efficiencies and profitability.

Demonstrations and lessons will then be built around these recommended changes in practices illustrating the benefits as they are implemented.

*Phase 3: Rollout of these practices*

**PROJECT TIMELINE:**

Our expectation is for the Soybean Excellence Center project to conduct continuing training and educations programs in the Region for the foreseeable future.

We are asking that the Project Proposal include details about what the proposed timeline and scope would look like.

**RFP TIMELINE:**

- **RFP distribution- October 18th, 2023**
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** November 1st, 2023 by 5:00PM U.S.A. Central Time
- **Project Proposals Due:** November 6th, 2023 by 5:00PM U.S.A. Central Time
  - Submit to: RFP@USSEC.ORG
- **Selections Made by:** November 8th, 2023
- **Prospective Contractors Notified by:** November 10th, 2023

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Please email the proposal to RFP@ussec.org by *5:00 PM Chicago time on November 6th, 2023*

2. Instructions to Prospective Contractors:
   - Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria listed in the Request for Proposal:
     1. A description of the Prospective Contractor’s capabilities, resources and experience. Emphasis should be placed on experience related to this RFP.
     2. Resumes for each of the Prospective Contractor’s personnel assigned to work directly on the implementation of the contract.
     3. References from a minimum of two clients who have used your services for similar project.
     4. Detailed Fee and Expense Breakdown
       - All bids for services must provide a breakout of how the fee was derived including but not limited to a breakdown of daily rate and the amount of effort anticipated to do the work.
5. 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 any and all other benefits, including, but not limited to, repayment of any and 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 USSEC**

**BUILDING A PREFERENCE FOR U.S. SOY**

USSEC’s strategy can be found here: [http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/](http://ussec.org/about-ussec/vision-mission/)
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.

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 of 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.

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 any and 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.