

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE

5:00 PM CST, 5/7/2021

### RFP TITLE: ANALYSIS OF RAW SOYBEANS AND SOYBEAN MEAL PRODUCED IN EUROPE FROM BRAZILIAN ORIGIN

#### RFP CONTACT:

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#### PROPOSAL DEADLINE: MAY 7, 2021

#### INTRODUCTION:

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, advocates for the use of soy in livestock and aquaculture feed and human consumption, promotes the benefits of soy use through education and connects industry leaders through a robust membership program.

#### PURPOSE OF RFP:

USSEC seeks a contractor to collect and analyze samples of raw Brazilian soybeans and soybean meal produced from Brazilian soybeans in Europe. The contractor will collect all samples (both raw beans and soybean meal) from processing plants in Europe, analyze them for indicators of quality and nutritive value, compare results to published data, and interpret findings in a narrative report.

#### BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

Nutritionists and feed mill managers believe that the quality and the nutritional value of soybean meal (SBM) and heat processed beans (full fat soybeans - FFSB) depends primarily on the procedure and equipment used to process the beans. However, new information indicates that although the processing plant is important, it is not the only factor in the quality of the final product. In fact, the physicochemical characteristics of the original beans may have greater effects on the quality of the final product than commonly understood.

In this respect, the geographical area of bean production (latitude, altitude, day length, pluviometry, temperature, soil, etc.), weather conditions around harvesting (fermentation, sprouting, etc.), management of the beans at the farm level (i.e., moisture content of the bean, air drying conditions, bean storage) and transport through the ocean, might influence the quality of the raw beans and thus, the nutritional value of the SBM and FFSB. In this respect, the high pluviometry registered during the last harvesting season in certain parts of Brazil might

alter the quality of the soybeans with increased percentage of damaged beans and lower lysine concentrations. It is anticipated that 2021 raw soybeans from Brazil will be of lower quality than in previous years, and therefore the quality of soybean meal produced from Brazilian soybeans will also be lower.

Through the work described in this RFP, USSEC is seeking to better understand the quality of Brazilian soybeans arriving in European processing plants and the quality of the resulting soybean meal, as well as to gain some preliminary insight into the impact of origin and processing facility on final product quality.

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** The direct audience is the USSEC team. USSEC may present results to additional audiences including plant crushers, full fat producers, purchasing managers, and nutritionists.

**SCOPE (SERVICES) OF WORK:**

- Identify processing plants in Europe that produce soybean meal using Brazilian beans. Develop a protocol for collecting a total of 20 representative samples of raw soybeans and soybean meal from a subset of those facilities. The contractor will select samples at random and preserve their identity (i.e. information on date origin of the beans, supplier, vessel, ports of departure and arrival, and person in charge of the sampling). The contractor is responsible for obtaining any approvals or agreement required by the processing plants.
- Collect and analyze the samples for major constituents, including all those with greater influence on quality and nutritive value of the beans (i.e., free fatty acids profile, and peroxide index of the lipid fraction, simple sugars, starch, oligosaccharides, and sucrose of the carbohydrate fraction, amino acid profile, urease activity, PDI, KOH, trypsin inhibitors, and reactive lysine of the protein fraction) and SBM (i.e., simple sugars, starch, oligosaccharides, and sucrose of the carbohydrate fraction, amino acid profile, urease activity, PDI, KOH, trypsin inhibitors, and reactive lysine of the protein fraction).
- Produce a narrative report that presents, evaluates, and interprets the results obtained. The contractor will compare results to published data on standard, previous year, and current year quality of soybeans and soybean meal. Specifically, the study will compare data on protein quality traits and energy constituents (i.e. oil quality, protein quality, and sucrose content). It is anticipated that the quality of 2021 raw soybeans from Brazil will be lower than in previous years, and this this will result in lower quality soybean meal. In the narrative report, the contractor will assess the validity of that statement based on published data and the results of the sample analysis.

**DELIVERABLES:**

Deliverable dates listed below are illustrative and the contractor may propose an alternative timeline. However, all work must be completed by September 30, 2021. Preference will be

given to applicants who demonstrate the ability to produce quality work within a shorter timeframe.

<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Description of Deliverables</b>
Within 10 business days of contract signing	Finalize sampling protocol and variables for analysis with USSEC input
August 31, 2021	Submit draft report
September 30, 2021	Submit final report with USSEC comments addressed

#### **PROJECT TIMELINE:**

USSEC anticipates the contract will begin May 21, 2021 and end September 30, 2021.

#### **RFP TIMELINE:**

- **RFP Distribution:** April 23, 2021
- **Last Day to Submit Questions:** April 30, 2021 by 5:00PM Central Time
- **Project Proposals Due:** May 7, 2021 by 5:00PM Central Time
- **Selections Made By:** May 14, 2021
- **Prospective Contractors Notified By:** May 14, 2021

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

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

1. Please email the proposal to [RFP@USSEC.ORG](mailto:RFP@USSEC.ORG) by **5:00PM Central Time on May 7, 2021**
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 to do 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 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

### *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 the majority 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 a number of 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 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](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 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.