REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) to Conduct Market Research in Togo

RFP NUMBER: ATP19-RFP-Africa-08-2019
Title: Assessment of market access issues, potential solutions, and the ideal conditions for U.S. soy in the Togolese market
Program: World Initiative for Soy in Human Health
Organization: American Soybean Association
Project Duration: Assessments should be completed prior to August 31, 2019
Proposal Due: June 28, 2019

1. Purpose
This RFP is a solicitation of applications from companies and/or individuals to conduct a market assessment on the business opportunities for U.S. soy in Togo, specifically those companies that are interested in utilizing soy as an ingredient in animal and aquaculture feeds, as well as food. This assessment should not only address the market access constraints but should also identify the potential opportunities for U.S. soy exports.

2. Background of the WISHH Program
The American Soybean Association (ASA) was founded in 1920 by soybean farmers and extension workers to promote soy for high protein applications in developmental settings. Overseas activities initiated in the mid-1950s, and to date ASA has worked in over 80 countries. The World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) was founded in 2000 to expand the work of the American Soybean Association (ASA) in developing emerging markets to improve health, nutrition and food security, building the groundwork for future markets of soy. WISHH provides services in food technology, business development, nutrition services, and program and proposal development. WISHH expertise extends its network into additional areas, such as aquaculture and animal feed.

ASA/WISHH connects trade and development to strengthen agricultural value chains in emerging markets, creating trade and long-term demand for U.S. soy. Trade can improve lives worldwide for both farmers and consumers. U.S. soy trade in emerging markets is pivotal to improve accessibility, affordability, and acceptability of high-quality plant and animal-sourced proteins in developing economies. Rising incomes in emerging economies generate further opportunity for trade. ASA/WISHH builds opportunity for long-term trade by improving agricultural value chains, human and animal nutrition, and farmer net incomes. ASA/WISHH initiatives broadly fit in two arenas: (1) trade-building long-term, early-stage market development, and (2) trade-building international agriculture and economic development. The St. Louis-based Program operates in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Central America.

ASA/WISHH offers over six years of proven feed sector capacity and decades of accumulated knowledge from ASA programs. Principal approaches include market and economic assessments, technical assistance and capacity building, food and feed trials and demonstrations, farmer field days, youth mentorship programs, food and feed value chain development, and market linkages.
ASA/WISHH achieves its mission by working in close partnership with: (1) the public sector (e.g., USDA, USAID, U.S. land grant universities, and host country governments), (2) the private sector (e.g., trade associations: Qualified State Soybean Boards and U.S. Soybean Export Council), and (3) private voluntary organizations. The Program draws upon the resources and experience of these partners and the services of a cadre of ASA/WISHH consultants with technical expertise in agricultural, international and commercial development spheres.

ASA/WISHH relies on decades of experience in food commercial development and agricultural development programming. The Program takes pride in its growing portfolio of success with U.S. government-funded projects, including USDA (Food for Progress, McGovern-Dole, Global Broad-Based Initiative, Foreign Market Development, Market Access Program, Emerging Markets Program, and Quality Samples Program) and USAID funding in both prime and sub-recipient capacities. ASA/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.

The WISHH program receives funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Emerging Markets Program (EMP), Market Access Program (MAP), Foreign Market Development Program (FMD), Agriculture Trade Promotion Program (ATP) and the Global Broad-Based Initiative (GBI). WISHH’s objective is to increase the international consumption of soy protein in the human, livestock, and aquaculture sectors in new markets and thereby create new opportunities for soybeans and providing higher economic returns to U.S. soybean producers.

3. Project Description

Market conditions are constantly changing in sub-Saharan Africa, with growth and development in specific sectors occurring in a relatively short time frame, creating new opportunities. Under this program, ASA/WISHH will investigate current market conditions in Togo to determine the opportunity for U.S. soy to enter the market.

The need for this market assessment comes from a desire to build a long-term strategy to facilitate the trade of U.S. soy into the Togolese market and surrounding regional markets. Recent market insights have revealed that the Port of Lome has exceeded the world average of container TEUs, the first port in West Africa to do so. Togo, with a population under 8 million people, is the final destination for only 15% of the cargo unloaded in the Port of Lome, while 75% is bound for Nigeria. Lagos, a mere six-hour drive from the port, is home to an estimated 23 million inhabitants of Nigeria’s total population of nearly 200 million. The remainder of the cargo is bound for destinations undefined, with strong indications of growing demand from Togo’s northern landlocked neighbors.

U.S. soy exports are often uncompetitive due to a variety of market access issues in West Africa. ASA/WISHH is seeking new solutions to these problems with a primary focus on local value addition. The Port of Lome established a free trade zone in 1968 that allows for the importation of raw materials for processing and re-export duty free. An examination of the current status of the agro-processing sector and potential for future investment is the key component of the proposed market research. Congestion within Nigerian ports and the current lack of capacity to handle high volume container vessels makes Togo a worthwhile study in regards to alternative regional shipping destinations. WISHH additionally seeks for the assessment to uncover additional trade barriers that may need to be addressed to open the market to U.S. soy products. This market assessment should focus on the following:
1. Identify the primary market access barriers that are preventing U.S. soy products from entering the market
2. Identify the most suitable and effective strategies for addressing the market access issues
3. Identify the conditions required for U.S. soy to gain market share in Togo
   a. Local value addition
   b. Logistics
   c. Price
   d. Regulatory
   e. Others
4. Clearly examine and define the current status and future potential for agro-processing in Togo and create an economic value proposition for the export of value-added U.S. soy proteins for export to regional markets.

Expected outputs/deliverables:
1. One market assessment addressing key questions and topics highlighted in Sections 3 and 4.
   a. Reference Appendix A for a suggested report outline. Changes should be made where necessary.
   b. The final report should provide strategies for increasing U.S. soy exports
   c. The market analysis is to be based on primary and secondary data collection.
2. A descriptive list of stakeholders
   a. Individuals involved in the key market access issues in Togo
   b. Companies that are currently importing soy products, or have the ability to do so
   c. Entrepreneurs that may be interested in investing in soy value chain activities
   d. Individuals from this list will be selected to participate in additional follow up activities.
   e. To follow outline provided in Appendix B
3. The measurable goals and objectives of the proposal are the following:
   a. Conduct at least 15-25 interviews (in country and by phone), including key informants such as FAS, feed processors, importers, and farmers
   b. Complete and submit all deliverables and activities proposed within the specified timeline

4. Scope of Work
   As a part of this program, ASA/WISHH seeks to retain a consultant to address the following questions and topics:

   General soy demand and utilization information:
   1. Information on soy foods
      a. What types of soy foods are most popular?
      b. Where are the majority of soy foods coming from (import vs. local production)?
      c. Which companies are involved?
      d. Please describe the demand and supply situations.
   2. Information on finished feeds (animal and aquaculture)
      a. Where is finished feed coming from (import vs. local production)? Quantity?
      b. What feed products are made locally? Which are imported? Quantity?
      c. Which companies are importing? Which are producing locally? Quantity?
      d. The total quantities imported and produced per year
   3. Information on feed ingredient imports (animal and aquaculture)
      a. Where are feed ingredients coming from (import vs. local production)? Quantity?
      b. Which ingredients are procured locally? Which are imported? Quantity?
c. Which companies are importing? From where? Quantity?
4. What is the soybean processing capacity and feed production output?

Policy information:
1. Provide an outline of the major government policies (U.S. and Togolese) regarding the soy utilization areas (food and feed).
   a. What are the trade implications of these policies?
   b. Assessment on barriers and limiting factors to growth of the feed industry
2. Assessment on barriers and limiting factors to growth of the feed industry
3. Examine the impact of international trade policy on trade relations between the U.S. and Togo:
   a. Identify the impact that U.S. and Chinese tariffs have had on trade with Togo and other West African markets (If any).
   b. The positive and negative effects should be examined

Industry stakeholder information:
1. Who are the relevant stakeholders in terms of livestock, poultry and fish production; feed production; feed import; major international organizations working in the sector; NGOs, and other important members of the feed value chain?

Trade:
1. Regional trade structures and relationships
   a. For example what is the impact of the new Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement?
2. What would be the most cost-effective way for a Togolese company to gain access to U.S. soybeans or products containing U.S. soybeans (e.g., finished fish and poultry feeds)?
3. Which countries are the main competitors to U.S. soy?
4. Overview and analysis of the current transportation infrastructure, as well as insight into future efforts to add transportation capacity. What are the main corridors and modes of transportation to neighboring landlocked countries?
5. Analysis of the implications of the ratification of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement on regional trade

Deliverables:
1. Market assessment report completed similar to the outline provided in Appendix A
2. At least one trip to Togo to meet with industry stakeholders and familiarize them with the WISHH program
3. Detailed list of industry stakeholders including the information provided in Appendix B

5. Deliverables for RFP
1. Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria requested in the RFP scope of work. The proposal should include the following sections:
   a. Company background and relevant experience
   b. Proposal summary
   c. Proposed action plan for the completed scope of work
   d. Proposed budget including materials, service fees, and travel
   e. Proposed timeline for completing the assessment
2. Proposals should be submitted no later than 5:00 pm CST on Friday, June 14. To be considered for the award, proposals must be submitted by email to Chris Slemp (cslemp@soy.org).

3. All proposals should be submitted with the name of the proposal and your company name in the subject line.

6. Skills/Knowledge
   - The desired candidate should have at least 10 years of market research experience in the agriculture industry, preferably in Africa.
   - Excellent communication skills in both verbal and written English and an ability to communicate in French.
   - Experience in study design and data collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and supervisory capabilities of each of these areas.
   - The ability to convey information accurately and clearly at meetings or in reports, to personnel and clients with different backgrounds or levels of business competency.
   - The ability to network and identify new companies for participation in WISHH programs.
   - Computer literacy and knowledgeable in the use of word processing software as well as in use of the internet.
   - Willingness to travel to African countries
   - Passion for people and the strengthening of private business capacity
   - Tolerance for stress
   - Proven intercultural communication skills
   - Ability to be flexible and meet strict deadlines

7. Notes
   Award: This RFP does not commit the ASA/WISHH to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparations or submission of proposals, or costs incurred in making necessary studies for the preparation thereof or to procure or contract for services or supplies. The ASA/WISHH reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP and to negotiate with any of the vendors or other firms in any manner deemed to be in the best interest of the ASA/WISHH. The ASA/WISHH reserves the right to negotiate and award only a portion of the requirements; to negotiate and award separate or multiple contracts for the elements covered by this RFP in any combination it may deem appropriate, at its sole discretion to add new considerations, information or requirements at any stage of the procurement process, including during negotiations with vendors; and reject proposal of any vendor that has previously failed to perform properly or in a timely manner contracts of a similar nature, or of a vendor that, in the opinion of the ASA/WISHH, is not in a position, or is not sufficiently qualified, to perform the contract.

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 the ASA/WISHH. No contractual relationship will exist except pursuant to a written contract document signed by the authorized procurement official of the ASA/WISHH and by the successful vendor(s) chosen by the ASA/WISHH.

Conflict of Interest: All team members must provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or disclosing any real or potential conflicts of interest.
Non-Discrimination Statement: In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, ASA/WISHH prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation or all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program or activity conducted. ASA/WISHH is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Submission of Questions: All questions regarding the preparation of proposals must be submitted in writing (by e-mail) to Chris Slemp at cslemp@soy.org (cc: jneiderman@soy.org) no later than 5pm CST on Friday, June 14, 2019. A copy of all written questions and responses will be provided to all interested organizations by email request or shortly after Monday, June 3, 2019. No questions will be answered over the phone or in person; all questions must be in writing and sent via email.

Guiding Principles: Consultants must conduct all activities in an ethical manner. Market research activities should appropriately balance the desired creation of evidence with the protection of human subjects, including safeguarding the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants. Evaluators are responsible for applying ethical principles in all stages of the research, and for raising and clarifying ethical matters with stakeholders during the course of the activity.
Appendix A: Market assessment report outline (example)

I. Executive Summary
II. Methodology
III. Basic Market Information
IV. Supply Situation
IV. Demand Situation
V. Trade Situation
VI. Regulatory/Market Access Issues
VII. Recommendations
Appendix B: Key account summary

Please provide the following information for key accounts that WISHH can recruit for future activity participation. You may add others that you were unable to meet with during this contract.

1. Company/organization name
2. Contact (name, phone number, and email)
3. Address
4. GPS coordinates of the facility (if available)
5. Brief description of the company (include core competencies, primary customers, product information and other relevant information)
7. If an importer, what products are they importing, what is their yearly import volume, and where do they source their products from?
8. If a processor what products are they processing and what is their yearly processing capacity?
9. If a farmer what is their yearly feed demand?
10. If a feed miller, what types of feeds and what is the quantity produced per year?
11. If a feed importer, where do they obtain their product from?
12. What equipment does the company use for soybean value addition?
13. Comments and other suggestions