



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE WORLD INITIATIVE FOR SOY IN HUMAN HEALTH (WISHH)

I. DATE

September 1, 2021

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this request for proposals is to identify a contractor to serve as a strategic lead for the American Soybean Association's WISHH program (ASA/WISHH) efforts to increase the availability of U.S. soy in African and Asian aquaculture production. ASA/WISHH has received funding to support aquaculture market development activities in Asia and Africa. This strategic investment will expand aquaculture production in the frontier markets of Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Cambodia. These expansion efforts present a significant long-term soy sales opportunity for U.S. soybean farmers. The purpose of this project is to broaden investment in aquaculture production through a comprehensive strategy targeting new export markets, identifying new opportunities, and improving value chains that will drive new demand for U.S. soy in these markets. Through the work of an aquaculture global strategist, WISHH will drive increased aquaculture feed production and efficient fish production using U.S. soy in these new U.S. soy export destinations.

WISHH is seeking the services of an aquaculture expert to advise on WISHH's global aquaculture program strategy to maximize the return on investment for projects funded under USB, QSSB, and USDA. The consultant will focus on expanding WISHH's aquaculture program globally. The consultant will make contributions to WISHH's forward looking strategies, providing technical expertise and insight to ensure that interventions are strongly grounded in aquaculture best management practices. This project will enable ASA/WISHH to use approaches unique to each market to introduce new technologies, provide technical assistance and build the capacity of the next generation of aquaculturalists.

The global aquaculture comprehensive strategic plan will be used by ASA/WISHH to develop and implement its aquaculture program starting 2023.

III. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

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 and 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 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.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

ASA/WISHH seeks the services of a consultant with technical expertise in aquaculture and market development to advise on the expansion of WISHH's global aquaculture program, focusing primarily on markets in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

The contractor will develop a global aquaculture comprehensive strategic plan that will allow ASA/WISHH to develop and implement its aquaculture program. ASA/WISHH currently has aquaculture programs on a country or regional basis but wants to develop a comprehensive global strategy to increase program delivery efficiency, obtain the required funding levels and ultimately increase demand for U.S. soy protein.

The targeted countries in Asia are Cambodia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Targeted countries in Africa are Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. Recommendations for expansion countries are requested.

The purpose of this activity is 1) to develop a strategic plan for conducting aquaculture sector market development activities in the targeted countries and 2) increase export opportunities for U.S. soy protein.

Through the writing of a strategic plan the consultant will help ASA/WISHH accomplish the following:

1. Help ASA/WISHH allocate resources and prioritize markets. The contractor should be familiar with the market development continuum (Attachment A) and incorporate this when building the strategic framework.
2. Write a market development strategy for the targeted countries under this program and provide suggestions for future markets to target. A five-year market development strategy is required for each country. Five-year plans should include identification of market priorities, suggestions for new and improved technologies, partnerships, targeted stakeholders, budget requirements, recommended activities, staffing and resource needs, new markets and other relevant resources and activities. This will be a plan for future market development activities in the targeted countries, as well as recommendations for expansion. The market development strategy should include a logical framework that details entry and progression for any potential market, specifying where particular programs and evaluation tools should be used. Suggestions for evaluating success and monitoring progress are desired to ensure that market development activities are on track.
3. Construct a market development road map highlighting the uses for USDA market development funds including MAP, FMD, EMP, GBI, and QSP. The purpose of this is not to tell WISHH what the funds can be used for, but to provide a strategy for using them in new markets to expand aquaculture production and feed utilization. An understanding of these funding sources will be beneficial in completing the activity recommendations.
4. Identify the current constraints for each of the markets and recommend specific action items to address the barriers.
5. Conduct international travel as needed to meet with relevant stakeholders and gain further expertise and insight on the targeted markets.
 - a. If international travel is to be utilized, the consultant should identify the potential markets and purpose of each trip.
 - b. Please note that travel costs will be reimbursed under a separate budget.

6. Provide recommendations to ASA/WISHH for follow-up activities to be conducted after the completion of the USDA funded five-year CAST Cambodia program. The project is scheduled to end in 2023.

Project Deliverables:

1. Strategic plan for targeted countries
2. Participation in at least one online webinar to discuss the strategic insights being provided in the report. The WISHH team has a potential opportunity for this activity through a partnership in Africa.
3. A preliminary report to be used for incorporating materials into the 2023/24 proposals

V. TIMING

All activities must be completed by July 31, 2022

Questions due to ASA/WISHH	September 12, 2021
Answers posted	September 15, 2021
Proposals due to ASA/WISHH	September 30, 2021
Contract awarded	October 11, 2021
Contract signed	October 15, 2021
Activities begin	November 1, 2021
Stakeholder call	November 16, 2021
Stakeholder call	January 11, 2022
Preliminary report due ¹	March 15, 2022
Stakeholder call	May 17, 2022
Final deliverables due	July 31, 2022

¹This report does not need to be a final draft. ASA/WISHH requires a preliminary strategy report to be submitted for use in writing 2023/24 proposals.

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA AND CRITERIA WEIGHTS

Proposals submitted will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Comprehensiveness	35%
Consultant skills/experience	30%
Cost	20%
Timing	15%
TOTAL	100%

Special consideration will be given to Women or Minority Owned Small Business (WMOSB) entities with SBA certifications (proof of certification must be provided at time of submission).

VII. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Proposals must contain at a minimum the specific criteria requested in the Request for Proposal:

1. A description of the bidder's capabilities and experience (Can be submitted as a CV)
2. A proposal that includes the following sections (10 pages maximum):
 - a. Proposal executive summary
 - b. Action plan
 - c. Proposed budget (maximum budget of \$100,000 not including travel expenses)
3. Checklist of additional items that must be submitted:
 - Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page Completed and Signed
 - 100-word executive summary of the proposal
 - Full detailed proposal
 - Proposal detailed budget
 - WMOSB Proof of Certification (if applicable)

Proposals should be submitted no later than 5:00 PM CDT on September 30, 2021. To be considered for award, proposals must be submitted by e-mail to the following: Chris Slempp (cslempp@soy.org) and Josh Neiderman (jneiderman@soy.org). Mr. Slempp will confirm receipt of each proposal; if receipt has not been confirmed, your proposal has not been received.

If your proposal is not authorized by signature on Attachment A Proposal Authorization Cover Page, it may not be considered and may be rejected.

Submission of Questions: All questions regarding the preparation of proposals must be submitted in writing (by e-mail) to Chris Slempp at cslempp@soy.org (cc: jneiderman@soy.org, apooock@soy.org, tfang@soy.org) **no later than 5pm CST on September 12, 2021.** All questions and responses will be available on the WISHH [website](#) on or shortly after September 15, 2021. No questions will be answered over the phone or in person; all questions must be in writing and sent via email.

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. ASA/WISHH is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The firm or individual selected will be required to sign the ASA/WISHH code of conduct and conflict of interest statement.

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.

Offerors submitting proposals must (1) be officially licensed to do such business in the country of *their* business operation, (2) be able to receive USDA funds, and (3) not have been identified as a terrorist prior to being awarded a contract. In addition, Offeror may be required to provide the following information prior to awarding of the contract:

- Documentation to verify licensure (i.e., tax id, registration certificate, etc.)
- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Equal Opportunity

X. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Submission sheet

Attachment B: Continuum Tool

ATTACHMENT A: Technical Proposal Submission Sheet

(Complete this form with all the requested details and submit it as the first page of your technical proposal, with the documents requested above attached. Ensure that your proposal is authorized in the signature block below. A signature and authorization on this form will confirm that the terms and conditions of this RFP prevail over any attachments. If your proposal is not authorized, it may be rejected.)

Date of Technical Proposal:	
RFP Number:	
RFP Title:	

We offer to provide the goods/services described in the Scope of Work, in accordance with the terms and conditions stated in Request for Proposal referenced above. We confirm that we are eligible to participate in public procurement and meet the eligibility criteria specified.

The validity period of our proposal is ____days/weeks/months from the time and date of the submission deadline.

Type of Business/Institution (Check all that apply)

Offeror certifies that it is:

- Non U.S. Owned/Operated Government Owned/Operated
 (If Non U.S. Owned/Operated is selected, continue to Anti-Terrorism Certification)

OR FOR US ORGANIZATIONS ONLY:

- Nonprofit For-Profit Government
 Large Business Small Business College or University
 Women Owned Small and Disadvantaged Business

Anti-Terrorism Certification

The Offeror, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous 10 years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts.

The Offeror also verifies that it does not appear on 1) the website of the Excluded Party List: <https://www.sam.gov>; or 2) the website of the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the “1267 Committee”): <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/consolist.shtml>.

The undersigned declares s/he is authorized to sign on behalf of the company listed below and to bind the company to all conditions and provisions stated in the original RFP document including attachments from ASA/WISHH.

Proposal Authorized By:

Signature: _____ Position: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Authorized for and on behalf of: _____ (DD/MM/YY)

Company: _____

Address: _____

Business Registration Number _____

Attachment B: Communication continuum tool

