



USA RICE

Market Development Consultant

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

USA Rice

USA Rice is a nonprofit trade association representing all segments of the U.S. rice industry, including but is not limited to producers, millers, exporters, and merchants, as well as other entities involved in the production and marketing of U.S. rice. The organization was founded in 1994 under the leadership of the industry's three national associations: the Rice Millers Association, USA Rice Council, and the USA Rice Farmers (formerly known as US Rice Producers Group).

USA Rice's grower representation includes approximately 90% of the U.S. rice crop. The organization also represents virtually all U.S. rice millers and processors, as well as the nation's major rice exporters, which account for nearly 100% of U.S. rice supplies and exports. Furthermore, associate members of the USA Rice cover almost the entire marketing and distribution channels for U.S. rice.

USA Rice operates a domestic promotion program as well as export promotion programs in more than twenty countries. Programs are funded by both USA Rice members and through various public programs for which USA Rice competes annually.

USA Rice is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, and has subsidiary offices in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Germany. Consultants and agencies are used as appropriate, for a wide variety of projects, including domestic and international promotion programs.

USA Rice is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, gender identity, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or familial status.

II. MARKET DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Regional Trade Promotion Activities:

Trade promotion is critical to USA Rice's international activities and market access expansion. In Europe/Middle East/Africa (hereafter referred to as the "region") U.S. rice faces several obstacles that inhibit market expansion. High prices, regional rice producers, import policies and tariffs, strong competition from other origins, and logistics



disadvantages limit the volume of U.S. grown rice exported to the region. USA Rice sees increased opportunities for diverse types of U.S. rice sales in several of the markets in the region.

Asia Market Data Monitoring and Analysis:

Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea have a variety of rice tender schedules and import obligations; compilation of the data associated with these tenders facilitates market access and clarity to USA Rice and its members. Accurate and up-to-date data monitoring and analysis allows USA Rice to respond quickly to market demands and to address our trading partners' needs and concerns.

Food Aid Market Access:

U.S. rice has been a critical part of U.S. international food assistance programs for decades. Used across all three international food assistance programs – USDA's Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole Food for Education and USAID's Title II program – rice represents a nutritious, easily transportable, and highly in-demand food source for people in need around the globe. Tonnages vary by year, averaging around 70,000MT across all programs with high years seeing up to 150,000MT.

Key issues facing rice usage in food aid include high costs, shipping delays, packaging quality, and shifting preferences from commodities to cash-based assistance.

III. USA RICE MARKET DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

USA Rice objectives in Regional Trade Promotion include:

- Increasing both the value and volume of U.S. rice exports, expand types and varieties of US rice exported to the region beyond currently exported varieties.
- Building long-lasting and consistent trade relationships.
- Positioning the U.S. rice industry as a consistent trading partner for importers and millers.
- Work with Director of Europe/Middle East/Africa promotions and actively involve local importers in USA Rice promotional efforts and support sales of U.S. rice brands on the market.
- Create demand for diverse types of U.S. origin rice in high potential segments of the regional whole and retail trade as well as foodservice.
- Collect and analyze data available on high priority markets to help develop marketing strategy, monitor impact of activities, and use results as part of the annual UES application process.



USA Rice objectives in Asia Market Data Analysis and Monitoring include:

- Prioritizing efficient and up-to-date record keeping of tender databases of international trading partners.
- Compilation of trade data dossiers to be used by U.S. rice industry members and international trading partners in annual meetings and other international trade settings.

USA Rice objectives in Food Aid include:

- Maximizing programming of U.S. rice – both regular milled and fortified – across all U.S. government programs.
- Maintaining lines of communication regarding food aid related developments and activities with USDA, USAID, and World Food Programme (WFP).
- Engaging directly with Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), to discuss the benefits of rice as food aid, the applicability of rice in various locations, analysis of market activity trends and other relevant information.
- Supporting in-kind food aid as the priority in US government funding and legislation. Working with PVOs to encourage usage of in-kind food aid in their programs.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

USA Rice seeks a qualified individual or agency to support trade and promotional activities, and to accomplish the following scope of work:

- Management of international trade tender databases.
- International trade data compilation and analysis.
- Direction of USA Rice Food Aid Subcommittee, organization of subcommittee meetings and subcommittee's collaboration with USDA and USAID.
- Management of food aid purchases database and all associated data collection and dissemination.
- Assist in development and monitoring of promotional activities in The Region as defined by the UES and the USA Rice VP international.
- Social media management, content development and monitoring for The Region.
- Attendance at trade development events as defined by USA Rive VP international, such as trade shows, seminars, and USDA Agriculture Trade Missions in the Region.
- Administrative support including, but not limited to, processing of invoices, UES data collection, and regional reports.



The firm or consultant shall successfully complete the above scope of work from February 1 – December 31, 2024. The firm will work directly with the USA Rice Director of EU, Africa, & Middle East Promotions as well as the Vice President, International. The agency or individual selected to conduct activities will contract with USA Rice and will be subject to the regulations applicable to the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service funding programs including the Foreign Market Development (FMD), Market Access Program (MAP), and/or Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP).

V. PROPOSALS

USA Rice requests that you include the following components in discussing your capabilities:

- A. Describe how you/your agency will achieve the Objectives outlined in Section III and the Scope of Work outlined in Section IV.
- B. Explain why your qualifications and background make you the best individual/agency to represent USA Rice.
- C. Provide information regarding your past work, especially related to representing U.S. agricultural commodities.
- D. Please detail which of your staff members will make up the USA Rice team and explain their roles and experience.
- E. Include a monthly retainer necessary to complete this scope of work.
- F. Include any additional information that demonstrates the ability to perform the functions outlined in this Request for Proposal.

VI. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Potential conflicts of interest relative to this program are as follows: agency representation of another entity that is directly competitive to rice, e.g., pasta, tortillas, potatoes; or a firm of record for any U.S., or other rice company. Please disclose any conflicts of interest.

Additionally, no USA Rice employee, officer, board member, or agent thereof will participate in the review, selection, award, or administration of a contract if a real or apparent conflict of interest arises. Such a conflict would arise when an employee, official, board member, agent, or the employee's, officer's, board member's, or agent's family, partners, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of these parties or their affiliates has a financial or other interest in the contract.

USA Rice officers, employees, board members, and agents thereof shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or subcontractors. Procedures shall also provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, board members, or agents thereof.



VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

USA Rice reserves the right to award the contract to the individual/agency with the best combination of attributes and ability to successfully serve as the organization's marketing representative in these market development activities, not necessarily the lowest bid.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION

The individual or agency selected for the position will report directly to Eszter Somogyi, Director of Europe, Middle East & Africa Promotions, with further oversight by Sarah Moran, Vice President, International.

IX. FINANCIAL

The total budget for all aspects of this scope of work, including all fees, overhead, third party and admin expenses, is a maximum of \$26,600 for the entire duration of the contract, invoiced as monthly retainers supported by monthly activity reports. This fee shall be full compensation for all services and general duties rendered hereunder. **USA RICE** shall not be liable for any local taxes, sick pay, vacation pay, severance pay, bonuses or other social or welfare payments. In addition to above, any specific activities related to promotional activities or international travel on behalf of USA Rice must be approved by VP International on a case-by-case base and will be invoiced in addition to above indicated budget in compliance with USA Rice travel policies. Funds for this contract come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service programs and are subject to the annual availability of funds in those programs.

X. PROPOSAL DUE DATE / PROJECT TIMING

Proposals are due by close of business on December 15, 2023. For the individual or agency selected to complete this scope of work, the contract will run for 11 months commencing on February 1, 2024, and ending on December 31, 2024. If mutually acceptable, the contract may be renewed at the end of the calendar year at the option of USA Rice.

XI. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Individuals / agencies are invited to submit proposals to USA Rice by close of business (5pm EST). Please direct your proposal to the following email address:
smoran@usarice.com.