



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

TAIWAN PROGRAM EVALUATION

I. INTRODUCTION

USA Rice is a nonprofit trade association representing all segments of the U.S. rice industry: producers, millers, exporters, and merchants, as well as other entities involved in the production and marketing of U.S. rice.

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 practically one hundred percent of U.S. rice supplies and exports. Furthermore, associate members of 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 20 countries. In addition, USA Rice represents the industry on federal legislative and regulatory matters, industry quality standards, education, research, product development and policy. Programs are funded by both USA Rice members and through various public programs for which USA Rice competes annually.

USA Rice has a total staff of approximately 30 employees, with its main office in Arlington, Virginia, United States of America, and other offices in Arkansas, Louisiana and Germany. Consultants and agencies are used as appropriate for a wide variety of projects, including for domestic and international promotion programs. USA Rice is an equal opportunity employer.

II. U.S. RICE INDUSTRY

As a condition of joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2002, Taiwan agreed to import a total of 144,720 MT of rice (brown rice basis) each year, of which 65 percent (94,068 MT) is to be imported by the public sector and 35 percent (50,652 MT) by the private sector. The U.S. receives 45% (64,634 MT) of the total quota volume.

The USA quota was split into 35,834MT under the normal tender scheme and 28,800 MT under the Simultaneous-Buy-Sell (SBS) tender scheme, respectively. Normal tenders are purchased by the Taiwanese government and the rice goes into government storage until released into the market. SBS tenders offer private importers the opportunity to bid on the ability to import a set amount of U.S. rice. The SBS rice is delivered directly to the importer.

Taiwan is the sixth largest import market for U.S. agricultural products, and U.S. export volume accounts for 23% of Taiwan's total agricultural product imports. Taiwanese consumers recognize the high quality of U.S. products and have developed preferences when making

purchasing decisions, so demand for U.S. agricultural products remains high and continued growth is expected.

USA Rice conducted third party consumer research in 2022 focusing on the perception of U.S. rice among consumers. Consumers' dependence on receiving information on the Internet continues to increase, and at the same time they prefer to be aware of new products in physical stores. All in all, whether it is foodservice, retail, or consumers, the Taiwanese market has entered the digital age, and USA Rice's emphasis on sustainability is also consistent with the current trend of pursuing environmental protection. These changes and trends have provided USA Rice with more new promotion methods and online marketing opportunities to deliver all the positive messages and brand values of U.S. rice.

RFP OVERVIEW

Research will include both an evaluation of the marketing program in Taiwan and activities as well as the development of a longer-term strategic plan appropriate for the market.

1. **Evaluation of Current Programs:** An evaluation of USA Rice's current international promotions program in Taiwan. Constraints, target audience and performance measures from our Unified Export Strategy should be evaluated for accuracy, validity, and effectiveness. Suggested amendments or changes should be noted. The evaluation should provide both quantitative and qualitative data on the U.S. rice industry's ability to achieve the performance measures. If performance measures are not achieved, the evaluation should provide insight and suggestions for future modifications. The impact of the U.S. rice industry's global programs around the world should be determined, encompassing all activities funded by the various FAS programs including Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development Program (FMD). Activities are meant to be measurable, increase sales and impact the target audience.

Below is a description of programs typically conducted in our markets. Further detailed background information for the remainder of country/regional promotions programs is available in our Unified Export Strategy (UES).

Programs

Trade Servicing

The objective of this activity is to reinforce market access and maintain cordial relations with local rice industry participants and government officials. This may include provision of market information, site visits, STRE events, hosting trade delegations, etc.

Consumer Promotions

The majority of our activities are focused on changing attitudes and behaviors to increase awareness of U.S. rice and encourage repeated purchase.

Foodservice Promotions

We work with the HRI sector in tourist areas and large cities to increase the usage of U.S. rice. In recent years, we have looked at the institutional sectors and/or food processing sectors to increase exports to this market segment.

III. EVALUATION SCOPE AND PURPOSE

A vital function is to evaluate the overall impact of the U.S. rice industry's program in Taiwan. The objective of this evaluation is to determine whether, how and why this program affects U.S. rice exports to individual markets to plan future activities and funding levels for these markets. The evaluation will include an examination of the collective impact of specific activities on market segment and country goals and on the target audiences' perceptions, purchase, and consumption of imported U.S. rice. Our Unified Export Strategy (UES) represents both the strategic and activity plans for the U.S. rice industry and should be used as a blueprint for impact analysis with particular emphasis on performance measures. The evaluation will determine the industry's success in utilizing various activity tools to address the market constraints in determining market segment impact.

The unified evaluation will reflect the format of the UES by analyzing market segment impact utilizing a full range of industry responses under all participating programs (i.e. MAP, FMD). The industry anticipates that the inclusion of all market responses will result in a more accurate assessment of the relative successes and/or failures of market promotion strategies. The evaluation will rely on benchmarks and performance measures outlined in the UES to gauge impact and, where possible, will suggest improvements in establishing performance measures.

IV. PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES

The U.S. rice industry is seeking a consultant/firm to conduct a program evaluation of Taiwan's country-specific activities identified and outlined in our UES. The evaluation will include examining the collective impact of specific activities on the market segment and country goals specified in the industry's 2023 UES. The contract period is from April 1, 2024, through June 3, 2024.

Your proposal should address how your firm will coordinate and execute a program that fulfills the following evaluation requirements:

1. Analysis of achievement of specific activities: Determine the degree to which the activities were successful in addressing the market segment constraints as outlined in the UES. This will include assisting in the development and analysis of questionnaires to be distributed and collected by the U.S. industry at industry events. The purpose of these surveys is to establish benchmark levels of knowledge, interest and current use of U.S. rice of those who participate in these events. All activities should be analyzed based on the degree to which they address the market segment constraint. Examples of activities to be analyzed include but are not limited to:

- Seminars/workshops
- Public relations campaign
- Trade shows
- Social media
- Cooking Competitions
- Recipe Development

2. **Personal Contact:** Contact contractors and several stakeholders in Taiwan to discuss activities, goals and benchmarks as outlined in the activity plan including:

- a. the level of activity/awareness achieved by the U.S. rice industry, and the impact the country contractors are having on the trade and whether or not they are a recognized source of information on U.S. rice;
- b. opinions about the U.S. industry's achievements in the marketplace and perceptions about the impact the U.S. industry is having;
- c. satisfaction among target groups with the U.S. industry's performance in each country and the performance of the country contractors in particular;
- d. expectations about current and future trends which impact the U.S. industry;
- e. the extent to which key messages of the U.S. industry have come across;
- f. indications that rice industry activities have or will cause changes in purchasing behaviors, and;
- g. suggestions for future activities and performance measures.

3. **Ongoing Market Definition:** Determine the most appropriate size, composition, socio-economic group and geographical location of the target audience in each market segment.

4. **Continuous Improvement of Constraints:** Where such constraints are lacking, vague or inappropriate, work with USA Rice to develop and revise these as part of a continuing improvement process. The actual goals and benchmarks for each activity are included in the UES. The evaluator should be familiar with the market segment constraints and benchmarks at the outset of the contract period, and work with the industry early in the evaluation process should there need to be adjustments or revisions.

5. **Evaluation of Performance Measures/Benchmarks:** The evaluation will rely on benchmarks and performance measures outlined in the UES to gauge impact and effectiveness of activities. Assist in revising performance measures, if necessary, or developing new benchmarks to appropriately capture the effect of our activities on U.S. rice consumption.

6. **Final Report:** Final report due no later than June 3, 2024. This report will be used by the industry as an evaluation requirement for the 2025 UES. The full evaluation of the industry's performance, including feedback on all specific goals and benchmarks is required. The report will include the following:

- a. comparisons of the results or activities completed against the goals and benchmarks specified in the UES, each market segment, and to the extent possible, for each activity;
- b. quantified impact - presentation and analysis highlighting which activities had an impact contributing most successfully to industry's goals and objectives;
- c. any additional or updated statistics mentioned above, and an analysis of the data

explaining any trends;

d. recommendations:

1. Final Report will contain the following:

- i. identity of the Consultant;
- ii. identification of the activities evaluated to date;
- iii. identification and description of each activity's timing, target audience, budget, expenditures and contributions;
- iv. country progress reports containing the following information:

Country Executive Summary

- Evaluation findings
- Strengths/weaknesses
- Recommendations and proposed changes

Constraint/Performance Measure Table

- Constraints, target audience and performance measures by sector for each country
- Benchmarks, target and actuals

Review of constraints, performance measures and activities

- Collective impact of activities against respective constraint as per performance measures
- U.S. exports achieved compared with performance measures and market share
- U.S. sales by market segment
- Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of key activities, which were most/least successful and why

Conclusion/lessons learned

- Was the constraint adequately identified
- Were performance measures appropriate
- What other circumstances affected progress against constraints

Overall Market Recommendation

- Is the program designed to meet the market goal; if not, recommended changes – different country/product mixes?
- Where is the program in terms of maturity (growth, declining, etc.)?
- Is the allocation of expenditures appropriate for the target audiences?
- How can other factors that address the achievement of the goal be addressed?
- To what extent is the achievement of the goal dependent on overcoming the constraints?
- Proposed changes in strategy/performance measures – particularly focusing on future market opportunity or new areas

for industry focus.

Trade Results/Benchmarking

- Consumption of rice, trade, U.S. share
- Size of end use market, e.g. foodservice, consumer, institutional, for sushi, etc.

V. REQUESTED INFORMATION/SELECTION CRITERIA

USA Rice wishes to provide you with as much latitude as possible in presenting the unique attributes of your firm. For consistency, however, we ask that you **include the following components** in discussing your capabilities:

- a. Ability to access, compile and analyze necessary trade and technical data;
- b. Experience with similar research and consulting projects;
- c. Ability to coordinate with USA Rice country representatives, and headquarters offices in Arlington, VA.;
- d. Knowledge of the global rice industry;
- e. Knowledge of U.S. rice industry;
- f. Budget costs;
- g. Experience and background of staff assigned to this project; and
- h. Fluency in written and spoken English.

VI. CONTRACT AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The contract for this account will be written on an end-result fee paid out in installments as follows:

1. a first installment of 1/2 of the total budget upon signing of the contract;
2. a final installment of 1/2 upon acceptance of the final report

VII. PROPOSAL FORMAT

The format of the proposal is open, except for the breakdown of costs. While the fee will be all-inclusive, we require that the following information be specifically included in the budgeting section of the proposal to compare the value of various proposals. The more detailed the information you provide, the better assessment we can make as to the overall merit of your proposal. The cost breakdown should include:

1. Name and title of all staff people assigned to this account with corresponding hourly rates at which USA Rice will be charged, and the approximate number of hours per month that each person will spend on the account. For example:

a. Senior Staff Consultant:

\$1.00/hour x 2 hours/month

\$ 2.00

b. Project Director:	
\$ 0.75/hour x 20 hours/month	\$15.00
c. Support Staff:	
\$.25/hour x 60 hours/month	<u>\$15.00</u>
d. Total Monthly fees:	<u>\$32.00</u>
e. Project duration:	6 months
Total project cost (d x e):	<u>\$64.00</u>

* None of these examples reflect any expectation of staff requirements or a fee structure. These hourly rates should include any administrative or overhead costs that are part of the normal course of doing business. They should not reflect specific administrative costs.

2. A listing and explanation of any other costs that your firm feels should be incorporated into the final fee.

USA Rice reserves the right to award the contract to the company with the best combination of attributes, not necessarily the lowest bid.

A copy of the Taiwan section of our 2023 Unified Export Strategy is available upon request.

VIII. FINANCIAL

The total budget for all aspects of this scope of work, including all fees, overhead, third party expenses (including subcontracting fees), travel and other expenses is \$30,000. Submitted proposals should not exceed this budget. Funds for this project come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's FMD, MAP and/or ATP programs and are subject to the availability of funds in that program.

IX. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Individuals / agencies are invited to submit proposals to USA Rice by close of business (5 pm EST) March 15, 2024. Please email your proposal to the following address:

Sarah Moran
smoran@usarice.com