



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

I. DATE

March 20, 2024

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify a contractor to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the aquaculture industry in Kazakhstan. In 2020, the Kazakh government announced aquaculture is a priority sector. ASA/WISHH wants to better understand the aquaculture industry, its value-chain and identify potential partners to develop and implement an aquaculture program.

This assessment requires the expertise of an individual or firm that understands agricultural value chains and can recommend appropriate activities. This assessment should utilize a variety of information gathering techniques, and not rely solely on desk research. Other acceptable data collection techniques include in-person or virtual interviews. The ASA/WISHH team recognizes that reliable data may not be currently available for the Kazakh aquaculture sector. It is therefore important that submitted proposals take this into consideration and offer a sound methodology for data collection and analysis.

The market assessment will be used by ASA/WISHH on whether to develop and implement a Kazakh aquaculture program starting in 2025.

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., U.S. exporters and 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-funding, including USDA (Food for Progress, McGovern-Dole, Global Broad-Based Initiative, Foreign Market Development, Market Access Program, Emerging Markets Program, Agricultural Trade 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.

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 company to provide unique and strategic insight into the following questions and topics. Each question or topic should be answered in the market assessment.

1. Consumers
 - a. Who are the primary consumers of fish and how much fish are they consuming?
 - b. What is the annual demand for fish (listed by species type)? – presented in a table.
2. Distributors
 - a. Current fish distribution channels (includes local and imported)
 - b. Market weight/size/price/species (imports and locally produced) - presented in a table

3. Feed producers
 - a. Overview of the fish feed market (includes supply and demand, types of feed being produced locally and imported, quality of feeds, projected demand)
 - b. Identify current fish feed producers in Kazakhstan and provide descriptions (contact information, company description, website, production capacity, utilized capacity, local demand, exports)
 - c. Current feed distribution channels
 - d. Current and planned fish feed projects (includes government and non-government investment in the industry)
 - e. Raw materials sourcing
 - f. Feed selling price per MT
 - g. Description of common fish feed production technologies and equipment being utilized
 - h. Opportunities and challenges for the feed industry
4. Local institutions
 - a. Current government and non-government support programs for the aquaculture and feed production industries (e.g., financial, technical, regulatory, etc.)
 - b. Listing of Universities with active aquaculture programs
 - c. Current government policy and financial initiatives supporting the aquaculture industry
5. Fish producers
 - a. Current fish production (listed in MT) by species
 - b. Market growth potential for the next 5-10 years.
 - c. Overview of common production systems
 - i. Volumes produced per system
 - ii. Geographic locations of aquaculture farms
 - d. Fish production costs
6. Recommendations
 - a. Should WISHH implement an aquaculture program in Kazakhstan?
 - b. What activities should be implemented?
 - c. What budgets are required for the recommended activities?

Project Deliverables (all materials should be presented in English):

1. One market assessment report addressing key questions and topics highlighted in the RFP
2. Works cited
3. A list of companies and individuals that contributed information and their contact information for follow-up
4. Presentation of final report and Q & A session

ASA/WISHH has an In-Country Representative in Kazakhstan that can recommend companies and organizations to interview, along with assisting to arrange in-country logistical support (hotel reservations, airport/hotel transfers and ground transportation). The consultant will pay for all hotels, meals, ground transportation and other in-country travel costs.

The maximum budget is \$43,000 which includes professional fees, overhead and travel. No other funding is available for this activity.

V. TIMING

All activities must be completed by July 15, 2024.

RFP posted	March 20, 2024
Questions due to ASA/WISHH	March 29, 2024
Questions to be posted to WISHH Website	April 3, 2024
Proposals due to ASA/WISHH	April 17, 2024
Virtual Interviews start	April 22, 2023
Contract awarded	April 26, 2024
Contract signed	April 30, 2024
Stakeholder calls	Every two weeks until project completion
Final deliverables and invoice due	July 15, 2024

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 experiences (can be submitted as a CV)
2. A proposal that includes the following sections
 - Proposal executive summary
 - Action plan to conduct the comprehensive assessment and potential travel
 - Proposed budget
3. Checklist of additional items that must be submitted:
 - Attachment A Technical Proposal Authorization Cover Page Completed and Signed
 - Full detailed proposal with executive summary
 - Proposal detailed budget
 - WMOSB Proof of Certification (if applicable)

Proposals should be submitted no later than 4:00 PM CDT on April 17, 2024. To be considered for the award, proposals must be submitted by e-mail to Alan F. Poock at apoock@soy.org.

Mr. Poock 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 Alan F. Poock at apoock@soy.org **no later than 4pm CDT on March 29, 2024**. All questions and responses will be available on the WISHH [website](#) on or shortly after April 3, 2024. 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 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. 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 ASA/WISHH. 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 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 ASA/WISHH. No contractual relationship will exist except pursuant to a written contract document signed by the authorized procurement official of ASA/WISHH and by the successful vendor(s) chosen by 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: Technical Proposal Submission sheet

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 Large Business
 For-Profit Small Business
 Government Owned/Operated 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 _____