



# **Request for Proposal-Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP) in Southeast Asia**

**April 3, 2025**

## **1. Purpose**

The California Wild Rice Advisory Board (CWRAB), representing the California wild rice industry is requesting proposals from qualified activity coordinators to manage a series of programs including recipe development, consumer advertisements, and retail and foodservice promotions on the CWRAB's behalf in Southeast Asia. See below for export volume, from USDA Gats.

<b>Year</b>	<b>U.S. Exports to Southeast Asia</b>		<b>Exports as a Share of Total U.S. Exports to the World</b>		<b>Share of World Trade</b>	
	Volume (MT)	Value (\$)	% Volume	% Value	% Volume	% Value
2018	206	\$1,129,358	6%	6%	100%	100%
2019	230	\$1,089,659	6%	6%	100%	100%
2020	315	\$1,316,751	10%	9%	100%	100%
2021	100	\$583,000	3%	4%	100%	100%
2022	80	\$568,470	2%	3%	100%	100%
2023	102	\$716,480	3%	5%	100%	100%
2024	147	\$843,000	3%	5%	100%	100%

## **2. Background Information**

The CWRAB represents 100% of the California wild rice producers within the state, which accounts for 50% of U.S. production. Most producers are located in Northern California, specifically in Shasta, Modoc, and Lassen counties; however, production does reach as far south as Sacramento. In total, there are roughly 11,000 acres of wild rice in California.

The CWRAB's international promotion efforts have been primarily run through the USA Rice Federation, through the Market Access Program (MAP). Activities have focused on developing the UK market for U.S. wild rice as a whole. The CWRAB was able to participate in the Agricultural Trade Promotion (ATP) program to promote California wild rice in Russia. However, when the Russia/Ukraine war began, activities in Russia were halted and shifted to support the UK projects.



The CWRAB sees great potential for wild rice in the international arena because it is high in protein, classified as low GI, and overall very nutrient-dense. Southeast Asia is home to a growing middle class, which is expected to grow by roughly 5% annually through 2030 ultimately making it one of the largest middle class' in the world. Additionally, 55% of the region's population is under the age of 35 with access to a disposable income. This demographic is traditionally focused on healthy eating habits and sustainably produced products. The potential high purchasing power of Southeast Asian consumers makes it an attractive market for a premium U.S. product like California wild rice.

However, education in the market is needed to differentiate wild rice from regular rice in both preparation techniques and nutritional content. Recipe development, consumer advertisements, and retail and food service promotions will help educate all sectors of society to hopefully increase wild rice consumption in Southeast Asia.

### **3. Scope of Services and Responsibilities**

The selected activity coordinator will be responsible for all aspects of the approved activities in Southeast Asia. This could include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Educating foodservice operators, retailers, importers/distributors, and consumers on the attributes of California wild rice through developing messaging highlighting versatility, nutrition, and quality. Specific activities include:
  - Development of trade education materials
  - Merchandising of California wild rice through one-on-one merchandising visits
  - Trade Shows/Culinary Events/Seminars
  - Recipe Development
  - Retail and Foodservice Promotions with larger restaurant chains and retailers (menu promotion for food service operators and in-store sampling promotions for retailers).

The chosen agency will enter into a year-long contract with the CWRAB beginning June 1, 2025, through May 31, 2026.

The agency or individual selected to conduct activities will contract with CWRAB and will be subject to the regulations associated with programs administered by the Foreign Agricultural Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, including but not limited to the Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP), Market Access Program (MAP) and other market development programs.

**All proposals are due by May 3, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. U.S. Pacific Time.**

### **4. Evaluation of Proposal**

Please provide a proposal encompassing activities commencing June 1, 2025, through May 31, 2026. Proposals should be **limited to 10 pages** and should minimally include the following:

- Company information including prior experience with comparable projects
- Staff capacity, capabilities, and backgrounds



- Proposed scope of work and methodology
- Justification for the proposed scope of work and methodology
- Estimated budget for activity management including breakdown of all fees and associated expenses

CWRAB will independently review and evaluate each proposal and selection will be made on the basis of the following criteria:

- Ability to meet or exceed all requirements
- Adequacy and availability of professional-level staffing
- Credentials and related experience
- Project approach
- Budget description

CWRAB reserves the right to award the contract to the individual/agency with the best combination of attributes and ability to successfully serve the organization's objectives, not necessarily the lowest bid.

## **5. Budget & Timeline**

CWRAB intends to award a fixed-price contract for this project. **The total budget for all related fees and expenses for the period of June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026, shall not exceed \$69,000.** Submitted proposals should reflect this budget. Funds for this project come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Agriculture Promotion Program and are subject to the annual availability of funds in that program.

## **6. Authority**

The chosen entity will work under direct supervision with the prior approval of CWRAB or its delegated agent. All expenditures must fall within the project budget and must be pre-approved by CWRAB.

## **7. Non-Discrimination Clause**

CWRAB is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, veteran status, political beliefs, medical condition, sexual orientation, or marital/familial status.

## **8. Other**

CWRAB reserves the right to notify applicants of cancellation of these activities at the CWRAB's discretion. CWRAB will not be liable for any associated with any Agency/Firm response to this Request for Proposal.

CWRAB reserves the right to not award this contract if, in the opinion of the reviewers, no suitable proposal has been received. CWRAB reserves the right to request supplemental information or otherwise negotiate with the individual/agency regarding their proposal.



## 9. Instructions for Submitting Responsive Proposals

Response proposals or questions regarding this RFP should be submitted electronically to:

Michelle Borges

[mborges@calwildrice.org](mailto:mborges@calwildrice.org)

Director of Technical Affairs and Operations

California Wild Rice Advisory Board

[www.calwildrice.org](http://www.calwildrice.org)

**All proposals are due by May 3, 2025 5:00 p.m. U.S. Pacific Time.** CWRAB anticipates making a final decision on a contractor by May 16, 2025 but reserves the right to reach a decision and/or notify applicants of the CWRAB's selection at a later date.

Thank you very much for your interest in working with the California Wild Rice Advisory Board.