



Request for Proposal

RFP NO. 2016 – FSEARR

The Washington State Fruit Commission dba Northwest Cherry Growers, hereafter “Agency”, is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from firms interested in participating on the project titled **2016 – FSEARR**. The Agency is seeking to obtain a professional public relations, advertising and merchandising presence in the SE Asia Region market for Northwest Cherries (NWCG) and Washington Stone Fruit (WSFC) for peaches, nectarines and apricots. The SE Asia Region consists of Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Proposal Guidelines:

This RFP represents the requirement for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until midnight PST February 16, 2016. Any proposals received after this date and time will be rejected. Proposals may be submitted either *hard copy* or *electronically*. All proposals **must include “Reply to RFP - 2016 – FSEARR”** in the subject.

Please include the following specific items when submitting your proposal:

Please submit separate proposals for cherries and stone fruits

1. An outline of the proposed mechanics of the responsibilities set out below in the Scope of Work accompanied by creative marketing tactics for your country/region that would effectively create consumer demand. Please submit cherries separate from stone fruits.
2. Proposer’s fees charged for market representation. Please submit cherries separate from stone fruits.
3. Background information on your company (e.g. number of employees, resources, where company is based, etc.) This background information on your company can be combined for cherries and stone fruits - do not need to submit separately.
4. A list of related food commodities currently previously represented. This information can be combined for cherries and stone fruits - do not need to submit separately

The Agency will conduct a fair and extensive evaluation based on criteria listed herein and select the candidate who best fits the requirements. All proposals must be signed by an official agent or representative of the company submitting the proposal.

Contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon selection of the winning bidder for this RFP. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by Agency and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project.

RFP Project Coordinator:

The RFP Coordinator is the sole point of contact in the Agency for this procurement. All communication between the Consultant and the Agency upon release of this RFP shall be with the RFP Coordinator, as follows:

Name	Teresa Baggarley
E-mail Address	teresa@nwcherries.com
Mailing Address	105 S. 18 th St., Suite 205, Yakima, WA 98901
Phone	(509) 453-4837

Project Purpose and Description:

The purpose of this project is to obtain professional public relations, advertising and merchandising presence in the SE Asia Region market for Northwest Cherries (NWCG) and Washington Stone Fruit (WSFC) for peaches, nectarines and apricots. The SE Asia Region consists of Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Project Scope:

The scope of this project includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Work with Agency officials on plans and programs within the budget on activities in all merchandising and promotion areas.
- (b) Develop and perform trade and market promotional efforts on behalf of the Agency.
- (c) Work with local media in developing positive publicity opportunities for the Agency.
- (d) Contact headquarters of retail grocery chains, wholesalers, distributors, importers, institutional or food service distributors and organizations, food editors, and others in positions to influence promotional and marketing activities for the Agency.
- (e) Endeavor to induce third-party cooperation of related food products and joint promotional efforts to broaden the Agency's efforts and reduce costs.
- (f) Monitor the approved promotional programs inaugurated to ensure adequate and complete implementation as agreed by the Agency.
- (g) Attend, at the request of the Agency, Foreign Agricultural Service-sponsored trade fairs and exhibits and other such activities where attendance shall be to the advantage of the Agency.
- (h) Assist Northwest Cherry growers and sales people when they visit this market. This includes setting up meetings and any other needs of our industry people.
- (i) Report market status weekly from mid-May until the end of August to Agency and then as conditions change during other times of the year. The report will all include market conditions, all-merchandising and promotion-related activities updates and any access issues that may need immediate attention.
- (j) The contracting group agrees to provide Agency with a thorough evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the program for the period undertaken, highlighting those activities that prove to be most effective and offering suggestions to mitigate those areas not effective.
- (k) Perform evaluations of consultation services and additional projects approved by the Agency.

- (l) Submit to Agency by September 15th of each year, an Annual compilation report of the NW Cherry season encompassing all activities, observations, market issues, packaging suggestions, market dynamics, category leaders, potential political problems, and other issues as requested by the Agency.
- (m) Submit annual Country Progress Reports (CPR) and Unified Export Strategies (UES) as required by FAS and the Agency.
- (n) Perform other reasonable activities as required by the Agency.
- (o) Agency may implement a stone fruit program (peaches, nectarines and apricots) in this market in 2016. If this program is implemented, the above scope of work items would also apply to the stone fruit program.

Evaluation Procedure:

Responsive proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this solicitation and any addenda issued. The evaluation of proposals shall be accomplished by an evaluation team(s), to be designated by the Agency, which will determine the ranking of the proposals.

Evaluation Weighting and Scoring:

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

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| 1. Organizational Experience | 5 Points |
| 2. Creativity | 10 Points |
| 3. Previous Work | 15 Points |
| 4. Project Team Structure/Qualifications/Reliability | 10 Points |
| 5. Technical Expertise & Experience | 10 Points |
| 6. Overall Proposal Suitability | 5 Points |
| 7. Value and Cost | 10 Points |

Request for Proposal and Project Timeline:

Request for Proposal Timeline:

- All proposals in response to the RFP are due not later than midnight PST **2/16/16**.
- Evaluations of proposals will be conducted from **2/16/16 to 2/19/2016**.
- If additional information or discussions are needed with any bidders during this evaluation period, the bidder(s) will be notified.
- The selection decision for the winning bidder will be made no later than **2/19/2016**.
- Upon notification, the contract negotiation with the winning bidder will begin immediately.
- Notification to bidders who were not selected will be completed by **3/31/16**.

Project Timeline:

Estimated project start date is **3/1/16**.

Estimated project completion date is **2/28/17**, at which time the contract can and may be extended by the Agency.

Special Notes:

Frequent interface with the traditional markets in order to develop a rapport and trust with this very important component of the distribution chain. Information transfer and merchandising will be an integral part of the program.

The goal of the Agency in this contracted relationship is to use, through existing and evolving means, all conduits available to create consumer demand for NW Cherries and Washington stone fruit in the SE Asia marketplace. Respect for and adherence to accepted social mores goes without saying. It is the desire of the Agency to “grow” the market base while adapting to those marketing modalities as they arise. The Agency headquarters or its designee will directly supervise program administration.

NOTE: We are a State agency and as such, all records are subject to public disclosure. Any and all materials submitted in response to this RFP may be requested through process by the general public and/or competitive firms.

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