



**American Seed Trade Association**

**Contractor: Phytosanitary Policy and Trade – Latin America Contractor**

**R E Q U E S T   F O R   P R O P O S A L**

**May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

Founded in 1883, the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) is one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. Its membership consists of nearly 700 companies and universities involved in seed production and distribution, plant breeding, and related industries in North America. As an authority on plant germplasm, ASTA advocates for science and policy issues of industry-wide importance.

ASTA's mission is to be an effective voice of action in all matters concerning the development, marketing and movement of seed, associated products and services throughout the world. ASTA promotes the development of better seed to produce better crops for a better quality of life.

#### **Objective:**

ASTA is seeking proposals for a contractor to develop and implement a strategic plan for ongoing engagement with the Latin American seed industry, public sector researchers, and relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders regarding phytosanitary issues affecting seed trade.

The ideal contractor will possess a proven network of connections within the Latin American regulatory and plant health communities, including key stakeholders such as research institutions, industry associations, national seed associations, non-governmental organizations and relevant governmental organizations. This network should enable effective communication and collaboration on phytosanitary issues related to seed trade. Expertise about Mexico and Peru is particularly welcomed. The contractor should demonstrate a deep understanding of Latin American and international policies pertaining to phytosanitary affairs that impact seed movement across the globe. This includes regulations, agreements, and guidelines established by regional bodies such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Trade Organization (WTO), among others.

This contract is for one year with the option to renew based on satisfactory completion of deliverables.

#### **Goal:**

Ensure ASTA is represented and assumes a leadership role when appropriate in discussions within Latin America concerning phytosanitary issues that may impact seed trade. Currently, there exists a disparity in consignment-level certification standards among countries, leading to inconsistencies in phytosanitary requirements and procedures. This lack of harmonization can create confusion for exporters and hinder international trade. The contractor will advocate for alignment in the development of phytosanitary science-based and risk-proportioned regulatory policies, which significantly influence seed trade between countries. Additionally, the contractor will support ASTA's logistical needs by organizing and implementing workshops, drafting agendas and written materials, responding to proposed regulatory policies, as well as monitoring the evolving dynamics of market acceptance in Latin America. A key component of ASTA engagement in the region includes fluency in both English and Spanish.

#### **Background:**

The American Seed Trade Association is committed to helping establish an effective, global system for exchanging germplasm for all its members. The role involves developing (in consultation with ASTA staff) the ASTA position, representing ASTA at planning meetings and consultations with governmental

agencies. ASTA supports an alignment on science-based and risk-proportioned phytosanitary regulatory policies through an integrated, three-pillar approach that includes: 1) policy engagement, 2) stakeholder outreach, and 3) public-facing communications at the national and global level. Past efforts have included collaboration with the Seed Association of the Americas (SAA), Asociación Nacional de Productores de Semillas (ANPROS), Asociación Mexicana De Semilleros (AMSAC), and the US Embassy in engaging with Latin American researchers, policy makers, reviewers, stakeholders, and leading researchers in plant health.

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM CONTACT**

Questions concerning technical specifications or Statement of Work requirements must be directed to:

<b>Name</b>	Dr. Martha Malapi
<b>Address</b>	1701 Duke St, Suite 275 Alexandria, VA 22314
<b>Phone</b>	703-837-8140
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:mmalapi@betterseed.org">mmalapi@betterseed.org</a>

**CONTRACTUAL CONTACT**

Any questions regarding contractual terms and conditions or proposal format must be directed to:

<b>Name</b>	Dr. Samuel Crowell
<b>Address</b>	1701 Duke St, Suite 275 Alexandria, VA 22314
<b>Phone</b>	703-837-8140
<b>FAX</b>	703-837-9365
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:scrowell@betterseed.org">scrowell@betterseed.org</a>

**DUE DATES**

A written email confirmation of the Contractor’s intent to respond to this RFP is required by June 4, 2024. All proposals are due by 5:00 pm, EDT on June 21, 2024 in electronic format sent to [mmalapi@betterseed.org](mailto:mmalapi@betterseed.org) and [scrowell@betterseed.org](mailto:scrowell@betterseed.org)

**SCHEDULE**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
1. RFP Distribution to Contractors	05/21/2024
2. Written Confirmation from Contractors with Bid Intention	06/04/2024
3. Questions from Contractors due about scope of work	06/07/2024
4. Responses to Contractors about scope due	06/14/2024
5. Proposal Due Date	06/21/2024
6. Target Date for Review of Proposals	06/24/2024
7. Final Contractors Selection Discussion(s)--	06/28/2024
8. Anticipated decision and selection of Contractor(s)	07/05/2024
9. Anticipated commencement date of work	07/15/2024
10. Final report/invoice due	01/15/2025

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION EVALUATION**

### **FACTORS FOR AWARD CRITERIA**

Any award to be made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost, and management requirements. Evaluation of offers will be based upon the Contractor's responsiveness to the RFP and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a Contractor:

1. Completion of all required responses in the correct format.
2. The extent to which Contractor's proposed solution fulfills ASTA's stated requirements as set out in this RFP.
3. An assessment of the Contractor's ability to deliver the indicated service in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP.
4. The Contractor's stability, experiences, and record of past performance in delivering such services.
5. Availability of sufficient high quality Contractor personnel with the required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed.
6. Overall cost of Contractor's proposal.

ASTA may, at their discretion and without explanation to the prospective Contractors, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective Contractors.

### **SCOPE OF WORK REQUIREMENTS**

The following information should be used to determine the scope of this project and provide pricing for this engagement.

### **DELIVERABLES**

For the purpose of the agreement resultant from an accepted proposal, the CONTRACTOR, at a minimum, will be responsible for the following:

- The Contractor shall communicate periodically to ASTA on changes in phytosanitary import/export requirements in Latin America that may affect seed trade.
- The Contractor shall prepare for and represent ASTA as a subject matter expert at ongoing international phytosanitary meetings in Latin America.
- The Contractor shall organize meetings, workshops, and sessions to discuss the alignment of phytosanitary regulatory policies in Latin America. Groups include National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of Latin America and the United States, the seed industry and National Seed Associations.
- The Contractor shall provide a written report of the outcomes of the meeting no longer than 15 days after a relevant meeting takes place.
- The Contractor shall provide updates to ASTA's members during the Phytosanitary Committee and Emerging Diseases Subcommittee meetings.

For the purpose of the agreement resultant from an accepted proposal the ASTA, at a minimum, will be responsible for providing the CONTRACTOR with:

- Relevant and up-to-date contacts of U.S. seed industry serving on ad-hoc subject matter working groups related to contractor priorities.
- Travel expenditures related to mutually agreed upon trips related to contractor's scope of work.

### **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Contractor whose offer will be the most advantageous to ASTA in terms of expertise, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

ASTA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Contractor,
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer,
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers, and
- Award more than one contract.

Contractor's proposal shall be submitted in several parts as set forth below. The Contractor will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal and to provide an adequate basis for ASTA's evaluation of the Contractor's proposal.

Contractor's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between ASTA and the selected Contractor(s). The submitted proposals are suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary
2. Approach and Methodology
3. Project Deliverables
4. Project Management Approach
5. Detailed and Itemized Costs
6. Appendix: References
7. Appendix: Contractor Bio/Resume

The detailed requirements for each of the above-mentioned sections are outlined below.

### **DETAILED RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS EXECUTIVE**

#### **SUMMARY**

This section will present a high-level synopsis of the Contractor's responses to the RFP. The Executive Summary should be a brief overview of the engagement, and should identify the main features and benefits of the proposed work.

**SCOPE, APPROACH, AND METHODOLOGY**

Outline proposed strategy to achieve desired goals. This section should include a description of each major type of work effort and activity being requested of the Contractor. All information that is provided will be held in strict confidence.

**DELIVERABLES**

Include descriptions of the anticipated outcomes of activities conducted for work related to the project. For example:

1. Identification of specific individuals, associations, and companies that should be engaged through the project's activities.
2. Outline a strategy to build coalitions with existing organizations and/or through existing projects to coordinate on advocacy efforts.
3. As appropriate, identify opportunities for convening events or workshops to further engage stakeholders in policy discussion.
4. Outline a proposed budget (by month and/or quarter) to meet these deliverables.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

Provide description of key personnel involved with project and approximate timeline of work completion.

**DETAILED AND ITEMIZED RATE AND COSTS**

Include a fee breakdown for services provided, including anticipated hours required for project completion.

**APPENDIX: REFERENCES**

Provide three current professional references.

**APPENDIX: Resume**

Resume: one or two page summary of the skills, experience and education for all personnel working on the project.