United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service

Washington, DC 20250

Note: New vendors and subcontractors must supply all of the required paperwork (Appendix-I, Financial Statement, and 3 Reference Letters), and must register in the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA). In addition, all Vendors must also be registered in the CCR within 48 hours after bid opening or your company may be considered non-responsible.

FV-320 Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Date Issued: December 11, 2007

Miscellaneous Products, Announcement FV-320, Invitation 032

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) invites offers to sell fresh sweet potatoes for processing as indicated below and per the Announcement for donation to the Child Nutrition Program. Offers are due by 1 p.m., Central Time, **Wednesday, December 26, 2007**. Acceptances will be announced by midnight, January 14, 2008. Deliveries are to be made from February 16, 2008 through March 15, 2008.

Offers are invited from the trade for:

Fresh Sweet Potatoes for Processing	Bulk	520,000 lbs

A specification for Bulk Fresh Sweet Potatoes for Processing is attached.

No offer will be made to 8(a) vendors on this invitation.

All prime vendors are reminded that they are prohibited from subcontracting with companies or individuals that have been suspended or debarred.

All invitations with orders for the state of New York must have the pack date stamped on the outside of each carton. The pack date should be annotated as per the following example: (05/01/2003). Orders for the state of New York requiring the special marking will be indicated by (**). This applies to New York orders "Only," if and when they appear on an invitation.

Bids must be submitted electronically via the Domestic Electronic Bid Entry System (DEBES) on the Internet. Offeror must be assigned a Logon ID by USDA to access the site. The Internet address is: http://pcsd.usda.gov/debes which translates into a connection of https://pcsd.usda.gov:3077/mdbc1000.exe? Once connected, follow the online procedures. A 'HELP' button provides detailed instructions for using the system or call 202-720-4517 for assistance.

Bidders are cautioned to bid only quantities they can reasonably expect to produce and deliver in accordance with the contract. Inquiries about Announcement FV-320, Appendix-1, the Commodity Specification for Miscellaneous Products dated June 2003, or this Invitation should be directed to the Contracting Officer, USDA/AMS/Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Commodity Procurement Branch STOP 0239, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-0239, telephone (202) 720-4517. An electronic version of this invitation can be obtained through the World Wide Web via the Commodity Procurement Home Page at http://www.ams.usda.gov/cp.

Purchases will be made on a delivered basis, subject to Announcement FV-320, to the listed locations. Delivery by trucks or railcars is optional to the contractor, except for those destination(s) which specify delivery by truck only or rail only.

ANNOUNCEMENT : FV320
INVITATION : 032
COMM GROUP : 89 BULK FRESH PROCESSING
COMM TYPE : 22 BULK FRESH SWEET POTATOES
PACK SIZE : 90 BULK

ITEM NO	DESTINATION CITY	ST	TRANS RESTR	QUANTITY (LBS)	PRICE PER (LBS)
SHIPPING PERIOD 02/16/08 - 02/29/08					
001	PLOVER	WI	TRUCK ONLY	240,000	_____
002	PLOVER	WI	TRUCK ONLY	40,000	_____
003	PLOVER	WI	TRUCK ONLY	80,000	_____
SHIPPING PERIOD 03/01/08 - 03/15/08					
004	PLOVER	WI	TRUCK ONLY	160,000	_____
TOTAL QUANTITY FOR COMMODITY TYPE				**520,000**	
TOTAL QUANTITY FOR INVITATION				**520,000**	

Felicitas C. Lofton
Contracting Officer
Commodity Procurement Branch
Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Attachment

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR FRESH SWEET POTATOES FOR PROCESSING

1. **Grade** - U.S. No. 2 or better for Sweet Potatoes for Dicing or Pulping.

2. **Cured** – Applicant warrants sweet potatoes are cured according to standard curing procedures.

3. **Pack** – Bulk

4. **Crop Year** – The sweet potatoes shall be from the current packing season/crop year.

5. **Size** – Whole sweet potatoes shall be specified not less than 1.75 inches to 3.5 inches in diameter. Maximum diameter roots must pass freely through a 3.5 inch inside diameter tube.

6. **Varieties** – Beauregard or Covington. Varieties can not be mixed.

7. **Defects, Serious Damage, and Foreign Material**:

    a. Sweet potatoes should be run on sizing and dirt removal belt prior to loading.
    b. Any load of sweet potatoes found to contain broken glass or foreign substance, which may be harmful to health or adulterates the finished product, will be rejected.

8. **Domestic Product Requirement**:

    Documentation is required to support the domestic origin of the product.

9. **Grading and Inspection**:

    a. Inspection must be performed by Federal, Federal-State, or Inspection Service.
    b. Product will be inspected as delivered at destination using one of the following methods:

    Sampling Methods:

    Sampling may be drawn either by hand or mechanical techniques

    a. Hand Sampling: Sample obtained by manually passing a tray through the flow of sweet potatoes by a USDA inspector or an approved sample puller. Sample puller may be a processor employee.

b. Mechanical Sampling: Sample obtained mechanically by a trained and approved sample puller. (Federal Inspection Service must approve all mechanical samplers)

Samples may be graded individually or aggregated by either of the following

a. Each truck load is graded and certified individually.
b. Grading and certification can include that days run for individual growers and a single days harvesting from the same field for the individual grower constitutes a combined sample

Sampling Procedures:

a. Samples should be representative of the load and the number of samples selected in accordance with USDA handbook instructions.
b. Sampling is performed by either method a. or b. as identified in the Sampling Method above.
c. Samples should be taken from the back, middle, and front of the truck as it is unloaded.
d. After the sample is drawn, it is then carefully deposited in a sample bin(s). Sample slips/scale tickets bearing pertinent information are either inserted in the bin or attached to the outside of the bin.
e. Sample bins are submitted for grading, where they are individually weighed and handled by machinery and dumped mechanically. This method helps to stabilize the accuracy and helps to eliminate bruises caused by handling of samples.

10. **Invoices and Payment**: Invoices and payment will be in accordance with Section X. Invoices and Payment, Announcement FV-320.

11. **Good Handling Practices (GHP), Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and Food Defense Audits**:

GHP/GAP verification and an annual Food Defense Audit will be performed by the Fresh Products Branch beginning July 1, 2007. Verification will be based on the supplier's ability to meet the minimum score in each category for the entire system from field to receiving. Verification must be completed no later than 10 days prior to the first day of the contract delivery period for the first load on the contract. A copy of the GHP/GAP and the Food Defense Audit tool for fresh commodities is available at http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbgapghp.htm.