

Commodity Procurement Staff 1400 Independence Avenue, SW. Room 3522, STOP S-0239 Washington, DC 20250-0239

**Synopsis** 

Document Type: Sources Sought Notice Solicitation Number: AG-FCFR-RFI-13-001

Posted Date: July 17, 2013

Original Response Date: July 31, 2013

Current Response Date: July 31, 2013

Original Archive Date: Current archive Date:

Classification Code: (89) Subsistence

NAICS Code: 311421 Fruit and Vegetable Canning

Contracting Office Address
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
Commodity Procurement Staff,
1400 Independence Avenue Stop 0239
Washington, DC, 20250

This Request for Information (RFI) will serve as market research to obtain information on the availability and specifications for shelf stable, individual serving sizes of canned sliced or diced fruits (such as apricots, mixed fruit, pears, and peaches) for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). All information gathered in response to this RFI/Notice will be used solely for planning purposes. This is not a formal solicitation, but a request for interested parties to provide information. No solicitation published by this office for these products currently exists.

## **Description**

This is a Request for Information (RFI) as defined in FAR 15.201(e). The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service, is interested in purchasing shelf stable fruit cups for domestic food assistance programs, especially the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

USDA seeks information about the availability of individual portions of shelf stable fruit cups to offer to the 31 million school children served every day through NSLP. The objective is to purchase a product that is packed in 100% domestic juice (slightly sweetened fruit juice(s) and water, slightly sweetened fruit juice(s), or fruit juice(s)) or domestically produced extra light syrup and would contribute a minimum  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup drained volume of fruit to help menu planners meet meal pattern requirements. The information requested includes the individual net weight and average drained weight that would be needed to provide a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup serving of fruit.

## Additional reference:

"Nutrition Standards for Schools," USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS): <a href="http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf">http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf</a>

## Page 2

"Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurements, dated April 2013," USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS): <a href="https://www.ams.usda.gov/commoditypurchasing">www.ams.usda.gov/commoditypurchasing</a>

"Vendor Qualifications Requirements, dated September 2012," USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS): www.ams.usda.gov/commoditypurchasing

## **Process**

All information provided with regard to the commercial practices for these products should take into account USDA's 100 percent domestic origin requirement. Interested parties should answer the following questions and provide the requested information:

- 1) interest in supplying this product to AMS;
- 2) product brand name; product commercial specifications, label, and commercial warranty;
- 3) container size, packing media, individual net weight and average drained weight;
- 4) pack size(s), and commercial prevalence of each pack size;
- 5) shipment configuration (packages per case; cases per pallet; pallets per truckload;
- 6) cases per truckload; net product weight per case (in pounds); gross case weight (in pounds); net product weight per truckload (in pounds); gross truckload weight (in pounds));
- 7) capacity capabilities;
- 8) historical price of the product;
- any other relevant information, recommendations, comments, issues and/or concerns that would be beneficial to the Government;
- 10) Name, Title, contact information, and organization name, as applicable.

All vendors that are considering offering products to meet this requirement to USDA must comply with all applicable Federal and State mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution of the product within the commercial marketplace. The delivered product shall comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Responses and questions shall be emailed to the attention of Megan Busa at Megan.Busa@ams.usda.gov. These responses are requested to be received no later than July 31, 2013.