



American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute

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BENSON, NC 27504

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American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute (ASPMI)

Request for Proposal – Eastern Canada Promotion Campaign

Background:

The American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute (ASPMI) is a U.S. agricultural trade association representing U.S. sweet potato packers, growers, exporters, processors, trading companies, state associations, and affiliated industries. The role of the Institute is to explore, develop and maintain international markets for U.S. sweet potato exports through promotion, market research, and evaluation of potential new export markets. U.S. sweet potato exports are growing sharply, with key foreign markets including the UK, Benelux, and Canada.

ASPMI is seeking a creative agency specialized in food marketing and public relations to assist in conducting a generic promotional campaign of U.S. sweet potatoes in Eastern Canada, mainly targeting Ontario and Quebec. Promotional activities are primarily funded by the USDA's Market Access Program (MAP) and are subject to the regulations and review of USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service.

Scope of the Proposal:

Your proposal should include the following:

1. Agency introduction and philosophy
2. Agency team proposed for the ASPMI account
3. Market overview as it relates to U.S. sweet potatoes (relative strengths and weaknesses of the product, etc.) and how your agency can address this market
4. Recommended strategy, both short and long-term
5. Proposal for conducting the activities outlined below
6. Budget recommendations, including estimated out-of-pocket expenses and fees
7. Primary agency contact and contact information

8. Additional information that would be of assistance (i.e., government relations, current work samples, etc.)
9. Statement that working with the Institute construes no conflict of interest with the Agency's other clients or affiliates.

Specific scope of work:

For the fiscal year July 2018 through June 2019, ASPMI envisions its promotional campaign in Eastern Canada encompassing:

1. Organizing and promoting product demonstrations/tastings targeting consumers at leading food events in the region.
2. Translating, adapting, and producing promotional materials (e.g., recipe cards) for the target market.
3. Conducting a media campaign (paid advertising, PR, and social media) targeting consumers in the target market.
4. Providing regular updates on consumer and industry trends relevant to the sweet potato trade in the target markets.
5. Other promotional tactics that your firm recommends to further expand demand for U.S. sweet potatoes in the region.

Selection Criteria

1. Knowledge of the Canadian produce trade and foodservice industry.
2. Contacts in the target country involved in the produce and sweet potato trade.
3. Expertise in creating and executing tracking/reporting public relations plans targeting the food and foodservice trade, including press relations.
4. Experience with USDA/FAS cooperator promotion programs.
5. Experience in paid media, PR, and social media relevant to the produce and sweet potato industry.
6. Experience in developing promotional activities that can be evaluated on a year-to-year basis.

7. Relevant background of staff to be assigned to this project.
8. Experience with the U.S. Agricultural Trade Offices, Foreign Agricultural Service, the U.S. cooperators and the American Embassy staff.
9. Suggested fee schedule (e.g., planning fees, monthly representation fees, etc.).
10. Completeness and thoroughness of the proposal.

Timing and Submission of Proposals:

Please submit your proposal in English no later than **May 25, 2018**, to:

American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute
700 E. Parrish Dr. Suite C
Benson, NC 27504
919-894-1067

Jerry Hingle, International Program Consultant
Email: Jerry@intltradeassociates.com

Sue Langdon, Program Consultant
Email: sue@theruffinagency.com

No in-person interviews will be conducted, although interviews may be conducted via video conferencing following reviews of the written proposals. ASPMI reserves the right to award the contract to the company with the best combination of attributes, not necessarily the lowest bid.

For more information please contact Jerry Hingle at Jerry@intltradeassociates.com or tel 504-756-3520.

ASPMI is an equal opportunity employer and complies with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital, family or parental status. To file a program discrimination complaint, by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410. By fax: (202)690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov .