

**NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF
RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE PRIDE OF NEW YORK PROGRAM**

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets seeks proposals from qualified proposers to evaluate the effectiveness of, and make recommendations for, the improvement of the Pride of New York, the Department's farm product and processed foods marketing and promotion program.

Proposals **MUST BE RECEIVED** by the Department's Division of Fiscal Management by 4:30 p.m. Eastern daylight savings time on May 23, 2008. Faxed and e-mailed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals delivered after the scheduled date and time will not be accepted. Only proposals submitted by proposers attending the mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference scheduled for April 24, 2008 will be accepted by the Department.

Proposal Submission Requirements

The cost and technical components of proposals must be submitted in separate sealed envelopes. The entire proposal shall be submitted in one envelope that is clearly marked with the proposer's name and labeled "Proposal – Pride of New York Program Evaluation." Inside the envelope shall be two (2) separate envelopes which shall each be identified with the proposer's name. One envelope shall be identified as and contain the proposer's Technical Component, the other identified as and contain the proposer's Cost Component.

A signed original and four (4) copies of each proposal shall be submitted to:

Lucy Roberson, Director
Division of Fiscal Management
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE RFP

All questions about this RFP must be submitted in writing by facsimile, or e-mail to:

William Kimball
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12235
bill.kimball@agmkt.state.ny.us
FAX: (518) 457-2716

All questions must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. Eastern daylight savings time May 2, 2008. A list of questions about the RFP, and answers to those questions, as well as any addendums to the RFP, will be posted in the "Funding Opportunities" section of the Department's website, www.agmkt.state.ny.us, along with the electronic version of this RFP. All questions and answers will be posted by May 8, 2008. All questions and answers are incorporated into this RFP as a formal addendum.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Pride of New York Program was created by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets in 1996. The Program's mission is to increase consumer demand for agricultural products grown and food products processed within New York State by:

- Developing and promoting the Pride of New York brand.
- Assisting growers and food processors with branding their products.
- Supporting farm businesses, food retailers, foodservice outlets and wholesalers in the promotion and marketing of New York State products.
- Helping consumers identify Pride of New York branded products.

Achieving the Program's goals is a multifaceted task: it begins with a strong and expanding level of participation among growers and processors; requires acceptance and cooperation on the retail, food service, wholesale levels to promote and offer access to Pride of New York identified products; and demands an effective communications program to raise awareness and demand among consumers.

The Pride of New York Program offers participants an array of services and assistance to promote and market New York food and agricultural products including:

- Providing cost effective promotional opportunities to enhance participants' marketing capabilities and increase support channels for distribution.
- Developing and implementing branding campaigns to build top-of-mind awareness and consumer preference.
- Participating in trade shows and consumer events that offer increased exposure to and between growers, processors, distributors, direct marketers, retailers, restaurants and consumers.
- Building relationships throughout the food industry from farm to table.

An examination of the effectiveness of the Pride of New York Program is timely, given the growing demand by consumers for "locally" produced food products. This demand is being driven by concerns about food safety and quality, food security, interest in supporting family farms and local economies as well as environmental and energy concerns associated with transporting food long distances. Food retailers, food service establishments, wholesalers and distributors recognize this consumer demand and are seeking sources of supply of locally produced food products to provide their clientele.

New York State is home to large and diverse production agriculture and food processing industries and is well positioned to meet the growing demand for locally produced food products. In addition, the quality of New York produced and processed food products, as well as interest worldwide in consumables associated with New York, provide increased opportunities to market products nationally and internationally. With a current annual budget of approximately \$1 million, the Pride of New York Program is designed to encourage consumers to purchase New York produced and processed food products and to help the State's food industry capture a significantly larger share of the consumer's food dollar, especially in New York and adjacent states. The Department seeks an independent objective examination of the Pride of New York Program to determine its effectiveness and to identify opportunities for its improvement.

To assist in preparing your proposal, attached is a copy of (1) the Pride of New York program request for proposals issued in August, 2004; (2) the selected proposal; (3) the current contract; and (4) the Pride of New York program budget for FY 06-07 and 07-08. The selected proposer will have access to all documents and records related to the Pride of New York program in conducting the review.

REVIEW

The objectives of this review are to:

- (1) Evaluate organizational and management aspects of the Pride of New York Program, including its purposes and objectives, funding, staffing and

operational management to determine if it is positioned to most effectively maximize the sale of New York produced and processed food products, and take advantage of the growing demand for local food products.

- (2) Determine consumer awareness and familiarity with the Pride of New York Program.
- (3) Evaluate Pride of New York Program projects, activities and promotional events.
- (4) Evaluate the Pride of New York Program's outreach efforts to retailers, food service providers, wholesalers and distributors.
- (5) Evaluate the Pride of New York Program's capacity and effectiveness addressing marketing and promotion opportunities arising from trends in consumer demand for products in emerging food categories, including organic, kosher, ethnic, convenience and healthy food products.
- (6) Evaluate the Pride of New York Program's consumer and trade advertising and outreach efforts.
- (7) Compare the Pride of New York Program with other State food and agricultural product marketing and promotion programs.

KEY EVENTS/DATES

Timetable of Key Events

Event:	Date:
Mandatory pre-proposal conference	April 24, 2008
Final date for receipt of written questions	May 2, 2008
Official responses to questions posted on website	May 8, 2008
Proposal due time and date	May 23, 2008
Notification to proposers selected for oral presentation	May 30, 2008
Oral presentations	June 9, 2008
Notification of Award	June 17, 2008

Pre-Proposal Conference

Attendance at the Pre-Proposal Conference is mandatory.

The Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on April 24, 2008 at Department Offices, 10B Airline Drive, Albany, New York.

Proposers shall notify the Department, by April 21, 2008 of their intent to attend by mailing or faxing the attached Registration form as instructed in that Registration.

QUALIFICATIONS

In order to qualify to submit a proposal, proposers must demonstrate the availability of an experienced multi-disciplinary person or team to direct and participate in the evaluation and recommendation effort.

A project staffing plan, including professional biographies of key personnel, must be provided. Information about the capability and experience of the proposing organization, or institution, to administer and carry out projects of the scope and complexity of this proposed review must be provided.

Areas of expertise should include:

- Marketing, advertising and promotion, preferably with experience in food and agriculture.
- Analysis and evaluation of marketing and promotion activities and programs.
- Consumer and business surveys.
- Planning, design and implementation of marketing and promotion events, activities and programs.
- Economic research methods, including design, administration and analysis of surveys or other research tools.
- Marketing and promotion program management including funding, staffing, budgeting functions.

DELIVERABLES

The selected proposer shall provide, in hard copy and electronically, the following:

1. An Evaluation of the Pride of New York Program Organization and Management

The proposer shall conduct a thorough examination and review of the organization and management of the Pride of New York Program including funding, staffing and operational management. The examination shall include interviews with the Program's current advertising agency and members of the Program's industry advisory committee. Organization and management strengths and weaknesses in terms of meeting Program goals and objectives should be identified and recommendations for improvement provided.

2. An Evaluation of the Level of Consumer Awareness and Familiarity

The proposer shall conduct a statewide survey by geographic region of consumers. The survey shall determine consumer familiarity with the Pride of New York Program, recognition of the Pride logo and tag line, and test the potential acceptance and effectiveness of alternative themes. The survey shall also determine the extent to which the Program influences consumers' food buying decisions. In addition, the survey shall determine consumer interest in buying locally produced and processed food products and identify the factors that contribute to that interest.

3. An Evaluation of Pride of New York Projects, Activities and Promotional Events

The proposer shall review Pride of New York projects, activities and events to determine their effectiveness in terms of meeting the Program's goals and objectives. The proposer shall identify projects, activities and events which have proven to be effective and identify those which should be discontinued and recommend potential new projects, activities and events that would enhance achievement of Program goals and objectives.

4. An Evaluation of Pride of New York Outreach Efforts to Retailers, Food Service Providers, Wholesalers and Distributors

The proposer shall review Program staff efforts to reach out to retailers, food service providers, wholesalers and distributors designed to encourage participation in the Pride of New York Program and make New York produced and processed food products available to customers and consumers, evaluate those efforts and recommend how outreach can be improved to gain greater participation by these food industry sectors which will result in the sale of larger volumes of New York products.

5. Identify and Explain Emerging Products

The proposer shall review and assess previous and ongoing projects and activities involving or featuring organic, ethnic, kosher, healthy and convenience food products and identify potential new projects, activities and events that would capitalize on consumer demand for products in these and other emerging categories and that would benefit participating producers, processors and marketers.

6. An Evaluation of Pride of New York Consumer and Trade Advertising and Outreach

The proposer shall review previous and ongoing consumer and trade advertising campaigns in all media; evaluate the effectiveness of advertising in terms of meeting Program goals and objectives and recommend how Program advertising can be improved to maximize return on investment; review and evaluate the effectiveness of the Pride of New York website in terms of outreach to consumers and the trade regarding the Program's purpose, product and participant information dissemination, product sourcing and consumer education and present recommendations on how the website can be improved.

7. A Comparison of the Pride of New York Program with Other States' Programs

The proposer shall provide a comparative analysis of the Pride of New York Program with other states' food and agriculture marketing and promotion programs including comparisons of staffing, funding, types of products included and marketing and promotion methodologies.

8. Final Report

The final report shall detail the proposer's findings and recommendations and must include an executive summary. All recommendations in the final report must be fully documented and supported with data and assumptions. The report must also provide detailed written and graphic presentation of data from any and all surveys and interviews conducted. The consultant shall provide 10 copies of the full report and 30 copies of the executive summary.

PROJECT DURATION

The project period shall be approximately four months commencing upon approval of the contract between the Department and the proposer by the Attorney General and the Office of the State Comptroller.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals shall conform to the format described below:

Technical Component

Please provide all the information requested. The information you provide will be used for the technical evaluation of the proposal. Failure to provide all information requested may result in a reduced rating or disqualification of a proposal.

PROPOSER INFORMATION

1. Provide the proposer's name, principal place of business and address.
2. Provide the name, address and contact information for the person(s) who will represent the proposer throughout the RFP process.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Provide the certification required by New York State Tax Law section 5-A.
2. List and describe completed projects that were similar to this review in scope and complexity. Include in the description proof of expertise in the areas identified in the Qualifications section of this RFP. Also, provide the names and phone numbers of at least 3 references with personal knowledge of your expertise and experience.
3. List the names of all key project personnel. (Please attach professional biographies of all key personnel).

WORK PLAN

1. Program Organization and Management
 - a. Describe your strategy and method for undertaking an examination and review of the organization and management of the Pride of New York Program including input from the Program's current advertising agency and industry advisory committee.
 - b. Describe how you will evaluate Program strengths and weaknesses, including funding, staffing and operational management, in terms of meeting Pride of New York goals and objectives and how you will formulate recommendations for improvement in those areas.

2. Consumer Awareness and Familiarity

a. Describe how you will design and conduct a statewide survey by geographic region to determine consumer awareness and familiarity with the Pride of New York Program.

b. Describe how in this survey you will determine: (1) what message the logo and tag line convey; (2) potential alternative themes, logos and tag lines; (3) the extent to which the Program influences food buying decisions (4) consumers' interest in buying locally produced and processed food products; and (5) what factors contribute to consumers' interest in buying "local."

3. Projects, Activities and Events

a. Describe your strategy and method for reviewing Pride projects, activities and events to determine their effectiveness in terms of meeting Program goals and objectives.

b. Describe how, and by what measure you will determine which projects, activities and events which have proven to be most effective versus those that have not and how you will identify new projects, activities and events that would enhance achievement of Program goals and objectives in the future.

4. Retailer, Food Service, Wholesaler and Distributor Outreach Efforts

a. Describe how you will review Program efforts to do outreach to retailers, food service providers, wholesalers and distributors.

b. Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts in encouraging retailers, food service providers, wholesalers and distributors to participate in the pride of New York Program and make New York produced and processed products available to their customers.

c. How will you identify potential improvements Program outreach efforts to these sectors?

5. Emerging Product Category

a. Describe how you will review and assess the effectiveness of previous and ongoing projects and activities which involve or feature organic, ethnic and kosher, healthy and convenience food items.

b. Describe how you will identify potential new projects, activities and events that would capitalize on consumer demand for food products in emerging categories and generate increased sales and income for New York producers, processors and marketers.

6. Consumer and Trade Advertising and Outreach

a. Describe how you will review previous and ongoing consumer and trade advertising campaigns.

- b. Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of previous and ongoing consumer and trade advertising campaigns.
- c. Describe your strategy for developing recommendations to improve Program advertising efforts.
- d. Describe how you will evaluate the Pride of New York website.
- e. Describe your strategy for developing recommendations to improve the Pride of New York website.

7. Comparison with Other States' Programs

- a. Describe your method and strategy for comparing the Pride of New York Program with marketing and promotion programs in other states.
- b. How will you determine how many and which states you will select for making comparisons?

OTHER REQUIRED DOCUMENTS (*Provide originals only*) to be included in your Technical Component:

- a signed and notarized non-collusive bid certification form, as required by Section 139-d of the State Finance Law;
- a completed Contractor Responsibility Questionnaire;
- a completed Contractor Disclosure of Contacts Form;
- a completed Contractor Disclosure of Prior Non-Responsibility Determination;
- MacBride Stipulation – The bidder shall certify that it either has no business operations in Northern Ireland, or if it does have such business operations, it shall take lawful steps in good faith to conduct such operations in accordance with the MacBride Fair Employment Principles;
- a signed copy of any Addendums to the RFP (see Department's website for any Addendums that have been posted since the release of the RFP).

Cost Component

In the Cost Component to set forth the amount, in a lump sum, you will charge for the services and deliverables sought by this Request for Proposals.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Technical Evaluation (60 points)

The technical component of the proposal shall be evaluated based on the following factors:

- the proposer's understanding of underlying issues and the objectives of the study; (20 points)
- the adequacy of the proposed work plan and methodology; (20 points)
- the qualifications and experience of the proposer and project staff. (20 points)

Cost Evaluation (40 points)

Each proposer's Cost Component will be evaluated by comparing it with the lowest proposed cost. The lowest proposed cost will be awarded the maximum total of 40 points. The remaining proposed costs will be assigned scores based on the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Low cost component}}{\text{Cost being evaluated}} \times 40 \text{ points}$$

Total Score

After completion of the technical and cost evaluation, a score will be assigned to each proposal with the technical score weighted at 60 points and cost score weighted at 40 points.

Oral Presentations (10 points)

The Department reserves the right to require oral presentations from the five highest scoring proposers. The focus of the oral presentation will be to clarify proposed research strategies, work plans and methodologies. The information disclosed in the oral presentation may result in an adjustment to the proposer's technical score.

AWARD

The award will be made to the proposer that provides the best value for the services and deliverables sought by the Department. The Department will send written notice to the successful proposer. A contract containing the terms and conditions and responsibilities of the successful proposer shall be developed by the Department and will incorporate the proposal. A copy of the standard clauses that set forth the general terms and conditions required in all contracts awarded by the Department as well as

any special conditions that will be required for this contract is attached to this RFP (see Attachment 2).

The Department and the Office of the State Comptroller reserve the right to audit the selected proposer's books and records relating to the performance of the project during and up to six years after the completion of the project.

LIABILITY

The Department shall not be liable for any costs incurred by any Propser for work performed in the preparation of and production of a proposal or for any work performed prior to the approval of the contract by the State Comptroller.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Department reserves the right to:

- reject any or all proposals received with respect to this RFP;
- waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and concurrence of the applicant;
- request from Propser additional information as deemed necessary to more fully evaluate its proposal; and
- amend the proposal's contents after release, with appropriate written notice to all potential proposers;

APPENDIX A

Appendix A contains standard clauses required in all State contracts. Appendix A will be a part of any contract awarded under this RFP, and the successful proposer will be responsible for complying with the terms and conditions contained therein.

MINORITY AND WOMEN OWNED BUSINESSES EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND GOALS

See Clause 12, Equal Employment Opportunities for Minorities and Women, in Appendix A.

For this contract the Department has established the following goals:

Minority business enterprises	1%
Women owned business enterprises	1%

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

All proposals submitted and all related contracts and reports may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Law.

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO NEW YORK STATE TAX LAW SECTION 5-A

Pursuant to Tax Law Section 5-a, contractors with New York State are required to certify whether or not the contractor, its affiliates, its subcontractors and affiliates of its subcontractors are required to register to collect state sales and compensating use tax. The successful contractor will be required to complete and sign, under penalty of perjury, the Contractor Certification Form ST-220. (See Attachment 9.) Contractors must also submit a copy of the Certificate of Authority, if available for itself, any affiliates, any subcontractors and any affiliates of the subcontractors required to register to collect state sales and compensating use tax. If Certificates of Authority are unavailable, the contractor, affiliate, subcontractor or affiliate of subcontractor must represent that it is registered and that it has confirmed such status with the Department of Taxation and Finance.

VENDOR RESPONSIBILITY

Vendors are invited to file the required Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire online via the New York State VendRep System or may choose to complete and submit a paper questionnaire. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System Instructions available at www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep or go directly to the VendRep System online at <https://portaJ.osc.state.ny.us>. For direct VendRep System user assistance, the OSC Help Desk may be reached at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email athelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us. Vendors opting to file a paper questionnaire can obtain the appropriate questionnaire from the VendRep website www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep or may contact the State Agency or the Office of the State Comptroller for a copy of the paper form.