

MARKETING & ADVERTISING OF NEW YORK STATE GROWN & CERTIFIED SPECIALTY CROPS

RFP0285 Addendum 1

Questions and Answers Issued March 10, 2023

**Please note that the questions that follow are taken verbatim from the emails received by the Department without editing.*

I. Although we believe we could provide what is asked in this proposal, our expertise is concentrated from-and-to the Latino Market. Therefore, we feel it might be more effective and beneficial for the department that is asking for this proposal, if we could partner with the business or organization that will be selected, because even though it "could" have the general requirements of this RFP, it might not really have the unique ethnic skills and experience, we "definitely" have. With that said... Is your department allowed and capable to share the contact information of the businesses and/or organizations that have submitted proposals? (or have been selected), so we could propose to them, to partner as their subcontracted "Latino component" for this project.

Answer: All bidders will be informed when a contract has been awarded. Contract awards may also be requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Law.

II. We noticed that there is a criterion for revenue of \$2 million. Our agency falls just under, but with our MWBE public relations partner, we fulfill the requirement. (We are also in the middle of the process to become a certified MBE as well.) We are very eager to submit our qualifications for the opportunity but have the following three questions:

1. Is there any leeway with the revenue requirement, specifically for MBE's? ***Answer: No, please refer to section 3.3 for minimum qualifications for this engagement.***
2. Can the revenue number be met with an aggregate of revenue from the submitting agency and subcontractors? ***Answer: No, please refer to section 3.3 for minimum qualifications for this engagement.***
3. Does the \$2 million annual billing criteria have to be for the last five years like the experience criteria? ***Answer: Yes.***

III. 3.5 C. Proposed campaign. By "Describe an overall concept and strategy" are you seeking speculative work (development of a strategy and creative concept) to be delivered as part of our RFP response? Can you provide expectation here? Are you seeking development of the specific sample marketing and advertising materials we would propose/implement or are you only seeking written concept plans, where specific sample marketing and advertising creative would be expected only if advanced to the CCP/oral presentations?

Answer: The more detail provided to describe your overall concept and strategy, including any specific sample marketing and advertising creative of your proposed campaign, will be used to evaluate your proposal and will be reflected in your score for this section.

IV. Regarding budget and cost proposal. Is there an expectation or initial preference around % of the \$1,000,000 budget that will be allocated to media vs that of agency personnel and production costs? Is there an ideal duration of in-market buys over that term? Understanding the desire to place media in major metro markets (NYC, Buffalo, Rochester, etc.), over a two-year term, it may be challenging to establish ideal reach and frequency in those markets assuming \$500,000 annually for both fee and working media.

Answer: The bidder should determine the best way to allocate funding to achieve the outcomes in their proposed campaign.

V. Regarding Resources and Channels Can you point us to all existing owned channels? Will you be managing the owned channels (website, social, etc.) or are you looking to the awarded vendor to manage those on your behalf? What resources at NYS Agriculture and Markets should we consider available to support/augment agency services (creative development/versioning, web development, social management, community management, print management, public/community relations, etc.)? Or would all of that be the responsibility of the selected partner? Will the agency be working with a primary team/contact at AGM for the development of strategic plans, approvals, and seasonal goals?

Answer: NYS Grown & Certified currently has Facebook and Instagram (Meta accounts), YouTube and Twitter accounts. We will be looking to the awarded vendor to manage those on our behalf. AGM staff will be available for consultation; however, the expectation will be that the selected vendor will manage the accounts, place the advertising and pay for all costs associated with such activities, using the awarded funds. A primary contact at AGM will be designated to work with the selected Contractor for the development of strategic plans, approvals, and seasonal goals.

VI. Hello - it sounds like this opportunity is seeking an ad agency, and not media placements directly. Is this accurate? If so, is there a way to be notified when an agency is selected? We are a storefront media platform (in NYC bodegas, c-stores, etc) that would like the opportunity for consideration. please let me know.

Answer: Correct, per section 1.3 of the RFP AGM is looking to “retain one contractor to provide a comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign, and public relations services for the NYS Grown & Certified program”. All bidders will be informed when a contract has been awarded. Contract awards may also be requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Law.

VII. 1. To confirm, the \$1,000,000 number mentioned is intended to include media spend or are there additional dollars for the advertising spend? 2. How does the NYS G & C integrate with the current Taste NY campaign and store branding? 3. Is there a delivery method (TV, Print, Digital etc.) that has been used more often in past campaigns? 4. Should the focus of this campaign be buyers, increasing Farmer and Retailer participation, or both (essentially general awareness)?

Answer: 1.) The \$1,000,000 is all inclusive; there is no additional funding. 2.) NYS Grown & Certified and Taste NY are separate but complementary marketing programs, each with their own branding guidelines. Although co-branding may be possible, this RFP is specific to NYS Grown & Certified. 3.) Various types of media have been used in past campaigns. 4.) This is a consumer-focused campaign but increasing farmer and retailer participation will support brand visibility.

VIII. Regarding Bid Form. Understanding final campaign plans and tactics would be developed through collaboration following award and deeper understanding, is there flexibility to deviate from the proposed bid-form post project award?

Answer: As noted on the Bid Form, the selected Contractor will only be paid for the actual number of hours expended at the hourly rates bid. Also, per the Bid Form, bidder must provide the estimated media and production spend and percent commission on media and percent commission on production. The selected Contractor will only be paid the percent commission on media and percent commission on production for actual media and production costs.

IX. Regarding Deliverable Timelines: Can you elaborate on “the start of each growing season” and what that timeframe typically looks like? When specifically, should the agency expect to receive AGM’s seasonal priorities and goals? Is AGM expecting new creative at the start of each growing season? Regarding creative testing, will you require this every growing season? Would you be open to other methods of testing beyond qualitative?

Answer: “The start of each growing season” correlates with retailer display planning that usually takes place in the first quarter of the year. The conversation regarding seasonal priorities and goals would also take place within the first quarter of the year. AGM would not necessarily expect new creative at the start of each growing season. AGM would not necessarily require creative testing every growing season. Yes, AGM would be open to other methods of testing, depending upon what was proposed.

X. Regarding Goals and Performance Measures: It sounds like the primary goal is to raise consumer awareness, preference and demand for NYS products. What can you tell us about the singular most important communication objective of this campaign? (Primary take-away for target audiences)? What can you tell us about the prioritization of target audiences? (Consumer vs trade producer, retailer, distributor, etc.)? To what extent should our initial proposal and recommendations focus consumer awareness vs increased producer participation? What can you tell us about the prioritization of target markets? Among major metro areas? To what extent are you seeking promotion of an overarching NY Grown and Certified awareness campaign vs the promotion of specific specialty crops, farmers, producers and brands. What about promotion of specific NYS associations (New York Apple Association, NY Vegetable Growers Association, etc.)? Are there specific NYS G&C and Specialty Crops that will be highlighted or featured that we can be aware of ahead of time? Above and beyond the success of campaigns and achieving key AGM KPI's, how will you evaluate the success of an agency relationship over the term of the contract?

Answer: Please refer to Section 1.3 of the RFP for primary goals for this solicitation. The primary objective is to increase the purchase/consumption of NYS Grown & Certified Specialty Crops. This is a consumer-focused campaign but increasing farmer and retailer participation will support brand visibility. This is a statewide campaign with the goal of reaching as many consumers as possible. NYS associations are not the focus of this campaign but are stakeholders in its success. All edible NYS G&C Specialty Crops should be taken into consideration with the focus on New York's leading crops. Performance measures, Advertising Effectiveness Analysis/Optimization, and Post-Campaign/Promotional Reports will be evaluated in accordance with Sections 2.1.4, 2.1.5, and 2.1.6 of the RFP.

XI. Regarding Former and Existing Campaigns: Can you elaborate on the vision of expanding the statewide “Look for the Label” campaign? How did the Look for the Label campaign perform? Any major gaps or opportunities what should be explored based on learnings from those prior efforts? What strategies, creative, assets and materials will be provided as a continuation of that campaign vs what do you envision as being created new for this subsequent multifaceted campaign? E.g., will there be a continuation of advertising assets already established in these markets? To what effect are we leveraging existing assets and strategies to expand on previous projects through print and TV? What other campaigns and tactics will be in market through other efforts and previous partnerships that these new efforts should complement? Or will this new campaign be the only media in market for this term? Do you have any media mandates (must haves)? Is the primary emphasis mass media through TV and Radio, or are you open to alternate suggestions to best allocate available funds?

Answer: Although AGM is open to expanding upon former and existing campaigns, including “Look for the Label”, AGM is seeking new and innovative strategies, creatives, assets and materials to promote NYS Grown & Certified Specialty Crops to consumers through this RFP. AGM has pre-existing in store and on-label signage that will be in market; it is expected that this new campaign will be the primary media in market for the term of the contract. AGM is looking for a robust multi-media campaign and is open to suggestions to best allocate available funds to meet the needs and achieve the goals referenced in Sections 1.2 and 1.3 of the RFP.