

RAISIN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

ADMINISTERING THE FEDERAL MARKETING
AGREEMENT AND ORDER REGULATING THE
HANDLING OF CALIFORNIA RAISINS

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FROM THE RAISIN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

1. Background

California raisins have been promoted in SE Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore & Thailand) and Vietnam for many years. The Raisin Administrative Committee (RAC) currently spends appx \$700k per year in combined MAP, ATP and RAC funding to promote California raisins in the SE Asia markets and appx \$150k annually in Vietnam. SE Asia is the second largest market for California raisins with current annual import volume of 8,500 metric tons at a value of almost \$30 million. Annual California raisin exports to Vietnam currently total more than 2,000 metric tons at a value of almost \$9 million. California raisin imports in SE Asia increased 5% in our latest fiscal year (Aug 2022 – July 2023). Exports to Vietnam increased by 47%, our fastest growing market in the world. California raisins are the market leader in both SE Asia and Vietnam with value shares of 55% and 41% respectively.

There are no significant trade barriers in SE Asia and Vietnam to importing California raisins. We do have higher tariffs in several markets (Vietnam 13%, Indonesia & Thailand 5% and Philippines 3%) than some other raisin origins who have free trade agreements. Chile, Australia and Turkey are higher quality competitors in the region while lower cost raisins from India, China and Iran are also widely used. All of the raisins consumed in both SE Asia and Vietnam are imported.

Both markets have very low per capita consumption of raisins with SE Asia at .04 kg and Vietnam at .09 kg (US is about .4 kg for reference) and represent significant development opportunities as their economies develop. In the region, only Singapore (.34 kg) has per capita consumption comparable to the US.

The RAC will provide additional materials to the successful bidder(s) including the latest UES application, country progress reports, annual program presentation, consumer research and other reporting as requested.

2. Objectives

The RAC is requesting bids on two research projects to study the raisin market and our promotional activities, one for SE Asia and one for Vietnam. Proposals may be submitted for one or both markets.

The consultant should:

- Interview key importers, distributors, manufacturers and retailers of raisins/ products with raisins (at least 20 for SE Asia and 10 for Vietnam, trade contact lists will be supplied by the RAC); RAC marketing agencies; and California raisin packers shipping to the market to help understand challenges and opportunities as well as effectiveness of the RAC promotion programs and agencies.
- Prioritize the countries in SE Asia by potential for medium term (3-5 years) CA raisin export growth

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- Identify the key channels for raisin consumption in the market and assess the challenges and opportunities for California raisins to achieve growth while continuing to command a premium price
 - Quantify size of the natural sun-dried raisin market vs golden raisins, sultanas and currants in each channel, expected channel growth and recommended priorities for California raisins
 - Assess the strengths and weaknesses of California raisins vs other origin raisins in each channel
 - Identify the most effective California raisin selling points to customers and end users in each channel
- Identify key food trends in the market with potential to propel or slow California raisin growth
- Include photos of raisin shelf sets in key retailers and summarize availability by origin
- Assess promotion strategies and tactics conducted by the RAC in the market over the last few years
 - Achievement of UES performance measures
 - Recommend shifts in strategies and/or tactics that would likely yield increased growth
- Estimate the ROI of RAC promotion spending on California raisin revenue
- Evaluate RAC's promotion agency in the market
 - Knowledge of category, competitors, key channels, importers, distributors, customers and consumers
 - Quality of execution

3. Budget

Maximum budgets are as follows:

- SE Asia: \$60,000 USD
- Vietnam: \$20,000 USD

Proposals for both countries should include a cost for each individual market in case only that market is awarded to the bidder and a cost if both projects are awarded to the bidder. Costs are all inclusive and should cover any anticipated travel or out-of-pocket costs. Cost proposals that meet all deliverables at a cost below the maximum budget are encouraged if feasible.

4. Proposals

Proposals should be sent to Tim Kenny, Vice President of Marketing, Raisin Administrative Committee by email: tim@raisins.org.

Proposals should be received by February 2.

Questions on the RFP should be submitted in writing by January 19 and the RAC will send responses to all RFP recipients by January 23.

Follow-up interviews will be scheduled with finalists the week of February 12. The successful bidder(s) will be advised by February 20.

5. Report Timing

Deadline for draft submission of the reports is May 31, 2024.

6. Payments

RAC will pay up to 50% of the contract value upon initiation of the project and the remainder upon approval of the final report.

7. Evaluation Criteria

- **MAP Evaluation Experience-** List specific recent examples. Any subcontractors should also be identified and their recent MAP evaluation experience listed.
- **Market Experience-** List specific examples including work of any identified subcontractors.
- **Market Presence-** Respondent and/or contractors
- **Primary Research-** Number of trade interviews
- **Collaboration-** Willingness to embrace client input and work as a team
- **Cost-** Relative to the key deliverables (e.g. number of trade interviews)

The RAC abides by the provisions contained in Section 202 of Executive Order 11246 (30 Federal Register 12319) with respect to employment and contracting practices and prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities on the basis of age, disability, national origin or ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military status or membership in military reserve.