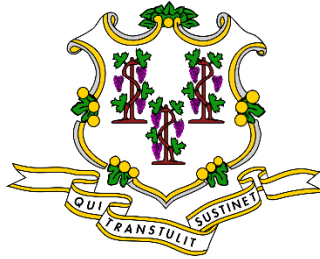


STATE OF CONNECTICUT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Request for Proposals (RFP) For Connecticut Milk Promotion Board

RFP Name: Consumer Dairy Nutrition Education and
Promotion

Issued By:

Connecticut Milk Promotion Board

January 19, 2023

The Request for Proposals is available in electronic format on the

State Contracting Portal by using the filter option to sort by

Organization for the Department of Agriculture

<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

or from the Department's Official Contact:

Name: Lindsay Raymond
Address: 450 Columbus Blvd. Suite 701, Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: 860-817-0193
E-Mail: Lindsay.Raymond@ct.gov

The RFP is also available on the Department's website at

CTGrown.gov/grants

No bidders conference will be held.

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN

February 21, 2023, by 4:00 p.m.

Amended 2.9.23 Form OPM 2 is not required at time of submitting the proposal. If a proposal is approved, OPM 2 is built into the Standard Terms and Conditions as of 7.1.22 by the Office of the Attorney General.

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name or Number.** DOAG-CTMPB-FY-24-26
2. **Executive Summary.** Proposals for qualifying consumer nutrition education and promotional projects should focus on increasing consumption and sales of dairy products in Connecticut by expanding access of milk and dairy products to consumers, retailers, institutions, and other applicable outlets and align with at least one or more of the following goals of partnering with (including but not limited to):
 - a) grocery, retail, processors, supply chain entities
 - b) health professionals and nutrition educators
 - c) institutions, particularly those who serve youth, and schools
 - d) other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board (CTMPB) has allocated up to **\$260,000** under the producer-approved Dairy Promotion Order for consumer nutrition and promotional activities. CTMPB determines promotion and nutrition education programs, and various dairy product research projects. The Board consists of nine members including Connecticut milk producers, a nutritionist appointed by the Connecticut Legislature, and the Commissioner of Agriculture. Connecticut has nearly 90 dairy farms. The dairy industry is the state's second-largest agricultural sector, generating over \$1 billion in economic activities, providing some of the highest economic multipliers in the state.

3. **RFP Purpose.** CTMPB seeks to positively impact dairy farmers' economic viability by increasing the purchase of and access to Connecticut fluid milk and dairy products. To achieve this, CTMPB will focus on retail consumers, chefs and restaurants, institutions, and other outlets as a result of developing, coordinating and implementing promotional, research, educational and other programs to the program partners.

The proposed programs submitted under this RFP should be designed to increase awareness of Connecticut dairy farms and increase Connecticut milk consumption in local, domestic, and international markets.

4. **Commodity Codes.** The commodity codes for services that the Department wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:
 - 86000000: Education and Training Services
 - 80000000: Management and Business Professionals & Administrative Services
 - 50130000: Dairy products and eggs
 - 85150000: Food and nutrition services
 - 85151500: Food technology
 - 85151600: Nutrition issues
 - 85151700: Food policy planning and aid
 - 86000000: Education and Training Services
 - 0105600: Health education and nutrition and food preparation instructional materials
 - 60105601: Dietary guidelines or balanced diets educational resources
 - 60105602: Nutritional curriculum menu planning skills instructional materials

- 60105603: Understanding nutrition labeling instructional materials.
- 86101504: Agriculture vocational training services
- 60105400: Consumer economics and money management and independent living instructional materials
- 86101501: Agro industry vocational training
- 86101502: Dairy industry vocational training

■ B. INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Official Contact.** The Department has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Department. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Department about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may be disqualified from further consideration.

Name: Mrs. Lindsay Raymond
Address: 450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 701, Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: 860-817-0193
E-Mail: Lindsay.Raymond@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

- 2. Registering with State Contracting Portal.** Prospective proposers must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration> if not already registered. Prospective proposers shall submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal (on their supplier profile), which will be checked by the Department contact. Prospective proposers should register as soon as possible as it may take several days to complete all forms required for registration.

- Secretary of State recognition – Click on appropriate response.
- Non-profit status, if applicable
- Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V
- Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) – Requires Notarization; available at: [Microsoft Word - OPM Form 5 Consulting Agreement Affidavit 3-28-14 \(ct.gov\)](#)
- OPM Gift Form 1 Gift and Contribution Certification [Form 6A \(ct.gov\)](#)

- 3. RFP Information.** The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact, or from the Internet, at the following location:

- Department's RFP Web Page: <https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/Commissioner/Commissioner/Dairy-Funding-Opportunities>
- State Contracting Portal (go to CT Source bid board, filter by Agriculture) <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

We recommend any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement check the Bid Board for any solicitation changes. Interested proposers may receive additional e-mails from CT Source announcing addenda that are posted on the

portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

- 4. Schedule.** Below is the current schedule. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") marked by * are non-binding target dates only. The Department may amend the schedule as needed. Any change to binding due dates will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, the Department's RFP Web Page.

- **RFP Released:** **January 19, 2023**
- **Deadline for Questions:** **February 6, 2023**
- **Answers Released:** **February 9, 2023**
- **Proposals Due:** **February 21, 2023**
- **(* Anticipated Proposer Selection:** **on or after March 1, 2023**
- **(* Anticipated Start of Contract Drafting:** **March 8, 2023**
- **(* Anticipated Start of Contract:** **July 1, 2023**

- 5. Contract Awards.** The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding. The Department anticipates the following:

Total Funding Available: up to \$260,000
Number of Awards: One or more with partial funding.
Contract Term: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2025
Funding Source: CTMPB Checkoff Dollars

- 6. Eligibility and Minimum Qualifications of Proposers.** Private businesses, nonprofits, and universities that are not affiliated with the CT Milk Promotion Board are eligible. Project proposals shall not promote one single brand or trade name. Final projects, research, programs, and approved activities are property of the CT Milk Promotion Board and will be made publicly available as appropriate through CT Milk Promotion Board's dedicated website and/or social media channels.

To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

- a) **A non-profit organization, business, or educational institution in good financial standing**
 - b) **In operation for at least three years**
 - c) **Proof of financials may be requested during the contract process to verify.**
 - d) **Comply with the State of Connecticut guidelines for ethics and contracting.**
- 7. Letter of Intent.** A Letter of Intent (LOI) is not required by this RFP.

- 8. Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFP or the Department's procurement process must be directed, in writing, to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone.

All questions received before **4:00 p.m. February 6, 2023**, will be answered. However, the Department will not answer questions when the source is unknown (e.g. nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Department may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. The Department may

combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and noted as such.

The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Department's RFP webpage.

9. RFP Conference. An RFP conference will not be held to answer questions from prospective proposers.

10. Proposal Due Date and Time. The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP.

Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before **February 21, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. through the online portal:**

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/CTDoAg/CTMPBConsumerNutritionAndEducationApplication2023>

The time stamp will only be determined by the electronic time stamp of the receiving system. *Server time stamps will not suffice for proof of submission.* Respondents are strongly advised to submit the proposal early as difficulties with technology will not render a respondent's proposal as acceptable if submitted late.

Proposals received after the due date and time will be ineligible and will not be evaluated. The Department will send an official letter alerting late prospective proposers of ineligibility.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- One (1) conforming electronic copy of the original proposal in pdf format.

The proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

To submit the proposal please visit the <https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/Commissioner/Commissioner/Dairy-Funding-Opportunities> pages for more information, copies of the guidance, and needed forms.

Proposals may only be submitted via the Cognito link which may also be accessed through the agency grants page listed above or applicants may also use this web address:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/CTDoAg/CTMPBConsumerNutritionAndEducationApplication2023>

11. Multiple Proposals. The submission of multiple proposals is an option for this procurement. However, prospective proposers will not be awarded more than one (1) award.

II. PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

■ A. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

CTMPB is a board administered within the CT Department of Agriculture and is tasked to increase purchases of and expand access to milk and dairy products for consumers, retailers, institutions, and other applicable outlets.

Mission - Develop, coordinate, and implement promotional, research, and other programs designed to promote Connecticut dairy farms and milk consumption. The CTMPB five (5) year target is to accomplish an increase in dairy purchases and consumption throughout the supply chain in Connecticut. It is expected that the awarded proposal will contribute to the target goal.

- **Approximately \$260,000 is available from CTMPB. Funding will be allocated by the board at its discretion across its funding priorities and based on the submissions received.**
- **Depending on the quality of applications, the CTMPB may award full or partial proposal applications.**

■ B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

1. ***Proposal Statement:*** Proposals should focus on educating the target audience on the nutritional benefits of milk and dairy products and/or increasing consumption of dairy products in Connecticut by expanding access to milk and dairy products to consumers, retailers, institutions, and other applicable outlets. Successful projects will align with at least one or more of the following goals in partnerships with:
 - grocery, chefs and restaurants, processors, and supply chain.
 - health professionals and nutrition educators
 - institutions, particularly those who serve youth.
 - other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally
2. For each respective goal, prospective proposers should develop, design, and execute activities and programs that educate the target audience and/or increase the consumption of dairy products in Connecticut. ***These activities and programs may include, but shall not be limited to:***
 - Partnerships with grocery, chefs and restaurants, processors, and supply chain on projects that:
 - activate in-store consumer experiences and education, i.e., shelf talkers, contests
 - implement shopper marketing features (i.e., email marketing/home mailers, etc.) to highlight the sustainable nutrition of dairy as part of consumers' weekly meal plan
 - Develop consumer education campaigns including digital, social, and geotargeting
 - partner with other agricultural groups (for example: farm wineries, farm breweries, etc.) to showcase pairings with dairy products
 - Partnerships with health professionals and nutrition educators through projects that:
 - promote the value of milk and dairy through events, speakers, and organization sponsorships

- Showcase the importance of dairy in the diet by farm tours (virtual or in-person), speakers, and webinars
- Develop/inform a curriculum that engages supporting health professionals (including pre-professional) with science driven data
- Partnerships with educational institutions, particularly those who serve youth through projects that:
 - Develop or inform classroom curriculum (virtual and in-person) on dairy sustainability, dairy nutrition, and dairy farm experiences
 - Encourage activation of the “Fuel Up to Play 60” program in schools
 - Develop and administer school nutrition equipment and/or program grants to increase access and availability of milk and dairy products
- Partnerships with other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally:
 - Obtain access to existing campaign assets and consumer insight research to incorporate in multi-media marketing strategy.
 - Utilize national dairy science research and communications for consumer education
 - Activate/Implement national campaigns on a state level.

3. Examples of ineligible projects:

- A project that uses contract funds for lobbying purposes; and
- A project that promotes a specific dairy product brand, product, or dairy farm.
- A project that promotes non-bovine dairy products such as goat, sheep, etc.
- Projects that cannot be conducted in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, ordinances, or other guidance issued related to COVID-19.

■ C. SCOPE OF SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Organizational Requirements:** Participating proposers may be located outside of the state but must have a consistent and dedicated presence in the State to conduct activities, all of which, except research, shall be conducted in Connecticut.
 - Organizations must be in good business standing in the State of Connecticut to apply, be able to contract as a vendor and be in good standing with the IRS.
2. **Staffing Requirements:**
 - Organization must demonstrate enough dedicated staff to conduct programs. CTMPB will not pay for normal organizational costs or other staff functions. Permissible staff costs will be limited only to those that are directly associated with the programs listed in this RFP.
 - Record keeping for staff time will be required for reimbursement.
 - If staff is conducting programs in schools or with youth groups, organizations should make sure proper background checks have been conducted before staff work with children.
 - Staff will be required to regularly communicate with the CTMPB contract administrator through regular bi-weekly meetings. This should be included in the timetable submitted for the completion of work.
3. **Data and Technology Requirements:** Organizations are required to have access to appropriate social media, analytics, and have relevant technology as needed. If technology is requested, this should be clearly connected and necessary to the projects. The organization should be clear and regularly provide the metrics to record and track data from activities to show the impact of events conducted towards meeting the goals

of CTMPB.

4. Financial Requirements: Organizations must practice industry-accepted general accounting practices. The State, at its discretion, may request balance statements, or annual reports. Organizations will be required to submit financial reports for reimbursement with invoices or proof of payment during the contract if awarded.

5. Budget Requirements, A budget table shall include:

- Justification of services and costs
- Subcontractor costs
- Total amount requested

■ D. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance metrics highlight key priorities that will be analyzed with providers collaboratively during the life of the contract. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an indication of significant performance metrics of interest to CTMPB. CTMPB looks forward to working with providers to define additional important performance metrics.

While providers are welcome to propose or provide additional metrics towards meeting CTMPB goals, ultimately CTMPB is looking for activities that focus on increasing consumption and sales of dairy products in Connecticut by expanding access to milk and dairy products to consumers, retailers, institutions, and other applicable outlets. The proposal shall demonstrate alignment with at least one or more of the following goals:

1. Partnerships including but not limited to grocery, retail, processors, and supply chain.
2. Partnerships including but not limited to health professionals and nutrition educators.
3. Partnerships including but not limited to institutions, particularly those who serve youth, and schools.
4. Partner with other milk and dairy promoters in the region and nationally.

CTMPB seeks to positively impact dairy farmers' economic viability by increasing the purchase of and access to Connecticut fluid milk and dairy products. To achieve this, CTMPB will focus on retail consumers, chefs and restaurants, institutions, and other outlets as a result of developing, coordinating and implementing promotional, research, educational and other programs to the program partners. A proposer should be very clear and concise in demonstrating the number and types of activities align with the Board's goals. Activities that do not further achievement of these goals or are not clearly tied to meeting these goals will be rated less successful.

CTMPB, at its discretion, may negotiate activities with the awarded proposer during the contract phase.

■ E. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/DATA REPORTING

As part of the State's commitment to being more outcome oriented, CTMPB seeks to actively and regularly collaborate with providers to enhance contract management, improve results, and adjust service delivery and policy based on learning what works. Reliable and relevant data is necessary to ensure compliance, inform trends to be monitored, evaluate results and performance, and drive service improvements. As such, CTMPB reserves the right to request/collect other key data and metrics from providers. This and other metrics shall be included in the final agreement:

- **Staff will be required to regularly communicate with the CTMPB Board Coordinator through regular meetings every two (2) weeks.** This should be included in the timetable submitted for completion of work.
- **CTMPB shall request reports regarding progress, any relevant data to show impact of project and funds used.** Templates for reporting shall be provided. This should be included in the timetable submitted for completion of work.
- **In meetings or reporting, CTMPB shall approve any materials produced** including but not limited to publications, audiovisuals including interviews, farm tours, videos, by any contractor in association with this RFP or as a result of this funding. **Approval shall be obtained two weeks prior to production.** The contractor shall request the logos in a timely manner.

By submitting a proposal, it is presumed the necessary IT to obtain such data and metrics is possessed by the proposers.

III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OVERVIEW

■ A. SUBMISSION FORMAT

1. **Required Outline.** All proposals must be submitted through the online portal presented in Section IV Required Proposal Outline. If the proposal is not received through the portal it will not be evaluated.
2. **Cover Sheet.** Proposers must complete and use the Cover Sheet format provided by the Department in the Appendix.
3. **Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms with the required Proposal Outline.
4. **Executive Summary.** Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding one (1) page of the main proposal and cost proposal.
5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required appendices or forms identified in the RFP are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required appendices or forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.
6. **Style Requirements.** Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:
 - Paper Size: 8.5"x11"
 - Page Limit: 6 pages, not including additional supporting appendices)
 - Font Size: 12
 - Font Type: Times New Roman
 - Margins: 1 in
 - Line Spacing: 1.5
7. **Pagination.** The proposer's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, including the required appendices and forms, must be numbered in the footer.

8. Packaging and Labeling Requirements. Not required for this RFP.

9. Declaration of Confidential Information. Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. In the proposal submission, the proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

10. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Department will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ B. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1. Evaluation Process. It is the intent of CTMPB and the Department to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Department and CTMPB will conform with its written procedures for PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85). Final funding allocation decisions will be determined during contract negotiation.

2. Review Committee. CTMPB will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Review Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. The Review Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements, further explained below, by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The Review Committee will make recommendations to the Board, who will make the final selection. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or

influence any member of the Review Committee or CTMPB may result in disqualification of the proposer.

- 3. Minimum Submission Requirements.** To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) be received on or before the due date and time; (2) meet the Submission Format requirements in Section III Proposal Submission Overview; (3) follow the Required Proposal Outline further described below in Section IV; and (4) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Department will reject any proposal that deviates from the requirements of this RFP.
- 4. Evaluation Criteria.** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Review Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. Proposals that are thorough, clear, concise, lack jargon with well-defined terms, and well planned will be the most successful.

Evaluation Criterion Title	What would a top score look like?
Organizational Profile, and Experience (in Appendices)	Proposer has articulated a history of providing services to the identified target populations within their proposed service area.
Budget	Proposer has accurately demonstrated justifications for costs and activities listed; budget is thorough, clear, and accurate and takes reasonable costs into consideration
Work Plan	The activities proposed and the methods to achieving the outcomes sought are clear, creative, connected and shall achieve the objective.
Timeline	Proposer demonstrates a reasonable timeline for accomplishing goals and tasks.
Data and Technology	Proposer has articulated a plan to electronically collect, analyze and share the information collected.

- 5. Proposer Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Review Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to CTMPB. The final selection of a contractor is at the discretion of CTMPB. The proposer selected will be notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Pursuant to Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Order No. 3, any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Department's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The Department reserves the right to decline the submission of all proposers when it is determined there is an insufficient number of prospective proposers, or otherwise in the best interests of the Department and/or CTMPB.
- 6. Debriefing.** Within ten (10) days of receiving notification from CTMPB, unsuccessful proposers may contact the Official Contact and request information about the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the ten (10) days. If unsuccessful proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the

Official Contact and request a meeting with the Department to discuss the evaluation process and their proposals. If held, the debriefing meeting will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals. The Department will schedule and hold the debriefing meeting within fifteen (15) days of the request. The Department will not change, alter, or modify the outcome of the evaluation or selection process as a result of any debriefing meeting.

- 7. Appeal Process.** Proposers may appeal any aspect the Department's competitive procurement, including the evaluation and proposer selection process. Any such appeal must be submitted to the Official Contact. A proposer may file an appeal at any time after the proposal due date, but not later than thirty (30) days after an agency notifies unsuccessful proposers about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. The filing of an appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Department to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 8. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Department's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General. Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the Department website. Proposers if awarded must be prepared to enter into a contract with the Department for work to begin on July 1, 2023. As a result, negotiations will be limited and restricted to a defined period of time as will be specified by the State at its sole discretion.

IV. REQUIRED PROPOSAL OUTLINE

- A. Cover Sheet**
- B. Table of Contents**
- C. Executive Summary**
- D. Main Proposal**
- E. Attachments** (clearly referenced to summary and main proposal where applicable)
- F. Declaration of Confidential Information**
- G. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement**
- H. Statement of Assurances**

A: Cover Sheet

The Respondent must use a Cover Sheet capturing the following information:

- RFP Name or Number:
- Legal Name and D/B/A:

- FEIN:
- Street Address:
- Town/City/State/Zip:
- Contact Person:
- Title:
- Phone Number:
- E-Mail Address:
- Authorized Official:
- Title:
- Signature/eSignature:

Legal Name is defined as the legal business name of the organization submitting the proposal.

Contact Person is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal.

Authorized Official is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

B: Table of Contents

Proposers must include a Table of Contents that lists sections and subsections with page numbers that follow the organization outline and sequence for this proposal.

C: Executive Summary

The page limitation for this section is one (1) page briefly describing how the Proposer meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Proposal Overview and a brief overview of why the Respondent should be selected for the activities highlighted in the scope of services.

D: Main Proposal Submission Questions

*****Please note the maximum total page length for this section is six (6) pages.** (all appendices and other attachments should be referred to in Section C indicate page limits and are separate from the proposal limit listed here.) CTMPB Review Committee will not read answers longer than six (6) pages in this section.

Application Submission Details Should Include:

- 1. Work Plan and Timeline:** The purpose of this section is for the proposer to explain the tasks, participants, time estimates, and schedule for providing the purchased service. Possible areas of inquiry may include, but are not limited, to the following:
 - a) Start Date
 - b) Timetable / Schedule
 - c) Tasks, Deliverables
 - d) Methodologies
 - e) Measurable Objectives

In the *Work Plan and Timeline*, the applicant should highlight the following items through the items listed above across the six pages:

Service Geography: Applications should clearly identify in which region they are proposing services, including the specific towns.

Target Population: Prospective proposers must identify the community and population needs they plan to address through their proposed services. Applications should indicate which of the Department identified target population(s) they are going to serve, based on supporting evidence of need and agency experience.

Scope of Services: Which of the strategies (or all) is the proposal aligning with and what are the methodologies used. Highlight items such as:

- a) Documentation of the needs: Why are you choosing to align with this outcome?
- b) What resources are lacking in this outcome and how will the Proposer approach forming relationships to increase milk and milk product sales and consumption through aligning with this goal?
- c) Community collaboration
- d) Service Capacity / Delivery Plan / Systems / Processes / Protocols
- e) Quality Assurance Protocol: How will you follow up or what data will be used pre-event to determine success and impact?

2. Data and Technology

The provider should indicate information on their technological capabilities and how they will measure and track the success of their work. CTMPB is interested directly in the proposer's information management and performance measurement systems for activities.

- a. How will the proposer identify target audience satisfaction?
- b. What are the evaluation/outcome measures collected to show impact.

3. Subcontractors

If any subcontractors for the provision or delivery of a service will be used the proposer should clearly identify for what purpose, what activities and the costs associated with use.

E: Attachments

Only required attachments and page limits are permitted. Any additional attachment(s) or pages that exceed the identified limit will not be evaluated. See the Proposal Checklist in Appendix C for a list of relevant attachments and page limits. Further, the required attachments must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions may result in disqualification.

1. Budget (2 pages maximum)

The purpose of this subsection is to gather information about how the proposer developed the proposed budget and cost allocations. This shall include:

- a. Narrative/Justification
- b. Line-Item Budget Form
- c. Subcontractor Costs

The Proposer should be careful to make sure the budget is clear and fully explained through the narrative.

2. Organization Description and History: (1 page maximum)

Provide a general overview of your organization including its history and prior experiences. Proposers should highlight the credentials of organization to accomplish the goals of the RFP by referencing items such as:

- a. Purpose, Mission, Vision, Values
- b. Entity Type / Parent Organization / Years of Operation
- c. Location of Offices / Facilities
- d. Functional Organization
- e. Current Range of Services
- f. Qualifications
- g. Relevant Experience
- h. Accreditation / Certification / Licensure
- i. Governance System

References may be requested.

3. Staffing Plan Strengths and Qualifications of Agency & Staff: (1 page maximum)

Proposers should provide information on the quality and quantity of the key staff that will be associated with this project. Do not account for your organizational staff that are operational who will not be associated with the goals of this project. The staff highlighted should be staff that will be paid for their work on this project directly:

- a. Key Personnel / Managers
- b. Qualifications
- c. Job Descriptions—who are they and what will they do to meet the goals of this RFP?
- d. Staff Training / Education / Development if necessary, to complete work
- e. **OPTIONAL:** Organizations may submit an Organizational chart of 1 page that does not apply to the page limits.

F: Statement of Assurances

Sign and return Appendix B.

V. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. PSA STANDARD CONTRACT, Appendix A & B

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Appendix A and B of the State's "standard contract" for PSAs:

1. Appendix A of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, quality assurance, and required reports.
2. Appendix B will include terms of payment, budget, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting PSA contract.

A sample of Appendix A and B are available from the Department's Official Contact upon request. The appendices of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected proposer (contractor), and the Attorney General's Office.

Note:

Included in the Standard Terms and Conditions of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations. If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department and the resulting contract has an anticipated value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts has an anticipated value of \$100,000 or more, the proposer must inform the proposer's principals of the contents of the SEEC notice.

■ **B. ASSURANCES**

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Department may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.
- 4. Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Department may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.

5. **Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Department for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
2. **Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Department shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
3. **Exclusion of Taxes.** The Department is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
4. **Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
5. **Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Department may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Department, and at the proposer's expense.
6. **Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Department. The Department may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations, or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Department. At its sole discretion, the Department may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.
7. **Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Department, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Department may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Department may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
8. **RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Department or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary

parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Department and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations, or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Department and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Department.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Department reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Department or CTMPB deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Proposals.** If no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Department may at the request of the CTMPB, reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Department reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Department may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Department reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.
- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The Department reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Department further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Department may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Department may set parameters on any BFOs received. If awarded, the Department will notify the proposer of the time limits for contract negotiation and signature. Work must start timely on July 1 and by submitting a proposal, Contractors agree to the criteria of the RFP and to limited negotiations.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The Department reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the

contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.

- 8. Key Personnel.** CTMPB and the Department reserve the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. CTMPB and the Department reserve the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. CTMPB and the Department reserve the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by CTMPB or the Department.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.
- 3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Proposals for State contracts with a value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, excluding leases and licensing agreements of any value, shall include a consulting agreement affidavit attesting to whether any consulting agreement has been entered into in connection with the proposal. As used herein "consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information or (C)

any other similar activity related to such contract. Consulting agreement does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of C.G.S. Chapter 10 as of the date such affidavit is submitted in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. § 4a-81. The Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) is available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/ethics_forms

IMPORTANT NOTE: A proposer must complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 5 to the Department with the proposal.

- 4. Gift and Campaign Contributions, C.G.S. §§ 4-250 and 4-252(c); Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Orders No. 1, Para. 8 and No. 7C, Para. 10; C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2).** If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with an anticipated value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, the proposer must fully disclose any gifts or lawful contributions made to campaigns of candidates for statewide public office or the General Assembly. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The gift and campaign contributions certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) is available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/ethics_forms

IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit OPM Ethics Form 1 to the Department prior to contract execution.

Nondiscrimination Certification , C.G.S. §§ 4a-60(a)(1) and 4a-60a(a)(1). If a proposer is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the Department with *written representation* or *documentation* that certifies the proposer complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. A nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The nondiscrimination certification forms are available on OPM's website at http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/nondiscrim_forms

IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful proposer must complete and submit the appropriate nondiscrimination certification form to the awarding Department prior to contract execution.

VI. APPENDIX

A. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BFO	Best and Final Offer
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity (CT)
CT	Connecticut
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
POS	Purchase of Service
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
RFP	Request For Proposal
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
U.S.	United States

- *contractor*: a private organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a PSA contract with the Department as a result of this RFP
- *proposer*: a private organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP
- *prospective proposer*: a private organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by a contractor to provide a specific action as part of a PSA contract with the Department as a result of this RFP
- *The Department*: The Department of Agriculture, on behalf of the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board

B. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Connecticut Department of Agriculture, on behalf of the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board

The undersigned Respondent affirms and declares that:

1) General

- a. This proposal is executed and signed with full knowledge and acceptance of the RFP CONDITIONS stated in the RFP.
- b. The Respondent will deliver services to the Department the cost proposed in the RFP and within the timeframes therein.
- c. The Respondent will seek prior approval from the Department before making any changes to the location of services.
- d. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with the State of CT or the Federal Government.
- e. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor to the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor's organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with other states within the United States.

Legal Name of Organization:

Authorized Signatory

Date

C. PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

To assist prospective proposers in managing proposal planning and document collation processes, this document summarizes key dates and proposal requirements for this RFP. Please note that this document does not supersede what is stated in the RFP. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Overview, Required Proposal Submission Outline, and Mandatory Provisions (Sections II, III, and IV of this RFP) for more comprehensive details. It is the responsibility of each respondent to ensure that all required documents, forms, and attachments, are submitted in a timely manner.

KEY DATES

<u>Projected Timetable of Activities to Accomplish Outcomes</u>		
The Department reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.		
Item	Action	Date
1		
2		

BUDGET GUIDELINE

The Contractor may use and attach an excel format. Please at least include the following listed below. Budgets and the narrative justification of items should be kept to no more than two pages. The budget is not included in the proposal page limit.

<u>Proposed Budget</u>				
The Department reserves the right to modify or accept portions of this table at its sole discretion.				
Item	Item	Justification	Proposed Amount	Total
1				
2				
3				

Registration with State Contracting Portal (if not already registered):

- Register at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration>
- Submit required form along with the application on the Department Portal:
 - OPM Gift Form 1 Gift and Contribution Certification [Form 6A \(ct.gov\)](#)

Proposal Content Checklist:

- Cover Sheet**
- Table of Contents (1 page)**
- Executive Summary:** high-level summary of proposal and cost, not to exceed 1 page in length
- Main proposal body answering all questions with relevant attachments.**
- Proposed budget** Limited to no more than 2 pages
- Statement of Assurances included therein**
- IRS Determination Letter** (for nonprofit proposers)

- Two years of most recent annual audited financial statements; OR any financial statements prepared by a Certified Public Accountant** for proposers whose organizations have been incorporated for less than two years
- Forms listed therein for registering on the State Contract Website.**

**If awarded Proposers maybe required to submit any other form as required by the Attorney General to contract with the Department.*

Formatting Checklist

- Is the proposal formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 (letter-sized) paper?
- Is the main body of the proposal within the page limit?
- Is the proposal in 12-point, Times New Roman font?
- Does the proposal format follow normal (1 inch) margins and 1 ½ line spacing?
- Does the proposer's name appear in the header of each page?
- Does the proposal include page numbers in the footer?