

ADVANCE CONTRACT AWARD NOTICE (ACAN)

1. Advanced Contract Award Notice

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), in collaboration with representatives of the organic sector, had created an advisory body; the Organic Agriculture Standards Interpretation Committee (Agri-SIC), to assist in the interpretation of the Canadian Organic Standard (CAN/CGSB 32.310 and CAN/CGSB 32.311).

The purpose of this Advance Contract Award Notice (ACAN) is to signal the government's intention to award a contract for these services to the Organic Federation of Canada (OFC), 12-4475 Grand Boulevard, Montreal, Quebec H4B 2X7. Before awarding a contract, however, the government would like to provide other potential suppliers with the opportunity to demonstrate that they are capable of satisfying the requirements set out in this Notice, by submitting a statement of capabilities during the 15 calendar day posting period.

If other potential suppliers submit a statement of capabilities during the 15 calendar day posting period that meet the requirements set out in the ACAN, the government will proceed to a full tendering process on either the government's electronic tendering service or through traditional means, in order to award the contract.

If no other supplier submits, on or before the closing date, a statement of capabilities meeting the requirements set out in the ACAN, a contract will be awarded to the pre-selected supplier.

2. Background

The Canadian Organic Agriculture Standards, Organic Production Systems: General Principles and Management Standards (CAN/CGSB-32.310) and Organic Production Systems: Permitted substances lists (CAN/CGSB-32.311), are incorporated by reference in the Part 13: Organic Products of the *Safe Foods for Canadians Regulations* (SFCR). The standards are written by experts of the organic sector through the Canadian General Standards Board's (CGSB) standards development process. The SFCR requires that organic products (i.e. organic food, feed and seed) be certified to the Canadian Organic Standards. The SFCR also outlines the organic certification system known as the Canada Organic Regime. The purpose of the Canada Organic Regime is to regulate all parties involved in the certification of organic products (including operators, Certification Bodies and Conformity Verification Bodies) and to verify all applicable regulatory requirements, standards and guidance documents are being met.

The Organic Agriculture Standards Interpretation Committee (Agri-SIC) is an advisory committee to the Canada Organic Office of the CFIA. The Agri-SIC provides a transparent process for responding to questions from certification bodies and operators seeking interpretation of the organic agriculture standards. The mandate of the Agri-SIC

is to provide answers (interpretive guidance) on organic agriculture standards issues. Since approved interpretations become precedents for the industry, they are posted for public consultation prior to final publication on the Web.

3. Criteria for assessment of the Statement of Capabilities (Minimum Essential Requirements)

Any interested supplier must demonstrate by way of a statement of capabilities that it meets the following requirements:

- The service provider must represent the entire value-chain, (including input suppliers, producers, processors, food service industries, retailers, traders and associations) and all provinces and territories of the organic industry in Canada.
- The service provider must provide for a transparent and democratic process for electing members of the expert advisory committee.
- The service provider must provide for a transparent and democratic process for consulting and communicating the final responses.
- The service provider must have the expertise and resources to develop proposed answers to question coming from organic stakeholders in both official languages.

Elected committee members must:

- Have been on the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) Committee on Organic Agriculture; or
- Have experience in the standard development process or standards drafting as well as technical expertise in at least one aspect of organic production such as crop production; livestock production; processing (food manufacturing); or
- Have significant (at least 4 years) experience in the interpretation, implementation and/or compliance verification of the Canadian Organic Agriculture Standards such as crop producers; livestock producers; processors (food manufacturers); importers, distributors and retailers; Certification Bodies; CB Verification Officers (VO).

4. Justification for the Pre-Selected Supplier

The members of the expert advisory committee are elected through a transparent process facilitated by the Organic Federation of Canada. There is no other organic industry association in Canada with the mandate to facilitate this process. There are no alternative sources of supply for the same expert advice. In order to enforce Part 13: Organic

Products Of the *Safe Foods for Canadians Regulations* in a consistent manner, the Canada Organic Office must respond to questions on the Canadian Organic Standards through a transparent process. Although the Canadian Organic standards are incorporated by reference into the *Safe Foods for Canadians Regulations*, the Organic Standards are an industry standard.

The Organic Federation of Canada (OFC) is a body that represents the organic sector in each province and territory. Its members are democratically elected and broadly represent the organic sector including representation from all segments of the organic value chain (i.e. producers, distributors, processors, input manufacturers, importers and exporters, and certification bodies). The OFC is the most appropriate organization in Canada to coordinate the work of the Agriculture Standards Interpretation Committee as it is the only geographically and sub-sector inclusive and representative body for the Canadian Agriculture Organic Industry, with directors in each Canadian province and territory. There is no other organic industry association current in existence in Canada that covers the whole value chain to the same extent and scope as the membership and mandate of the OFC. The OFC has the in-house expertise and resources to develop proposed answers to question coming from organic stakeholders in both official languages in a timely manner.

5. Ownership of Intellectual Property

Ownership of any Intellectual Property arising out of the proposed contract will vest in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

6. Period of the proposed contract

The proposed period of the contract is from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

7. Cost estimate of the proposed contract

The estimated value of the contract is \$26,285.20 CAD (GST/HST extra).

8. Suppliers' right to submit a statement of capabilities

Suppliers who consider themselves fully qualified and available to meet the specified requirements may submit a statement of capabilities in writing to the Contracting Authority identified in this Notice on or before the closing date of this Notice. The statement of capabilities must clearly demonstrate how the supplier meets the advertised requirements.

9. Closing date for a submission of a statement of capabilities

The closing date and time for accepting statements of capabilities is March 4, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. (EST).

10. Inquiries and statements of capabilities

Inquiries and statements of capabilities are to be directed to:

Carol Trottier
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
59 Camelot Drive, Ottawa ON K1A 0Y9
Telephone: 613-291-2857
E-mail: carol.trottier@inspection.gc.ca

11. Policy Information

The statutory and regulatory requirements applicable for this ACAN process are the following:

Government Contracts Regulations (GCRs) – Article 6(d) - only one person or firm is capable of performing the contract. Please refer to Appendix B – TB Questions for Sole Source.

12. Trade Agreements

The contract is not subject to any trade agreements.