

Project *Apis m.*



Cover Crop Program Seed Supplier

Request for Proposals
May 2023

PROJECT SUMMARY

Product/Service Requested: **Cover Crop Program Seed Supply**

Proposed RFP Deadline Dates

Project Start Date	May 26, 2023
Deadline for Responses	June 26, 2023
Estimated Decision Date	June 27, 2023
Proposed End of Contract	December 31, 2024

Contact Information

Name of Contact	Stetcyn Maldonado
Address	PO Box 26, Salt Lake City, Utah 84126
Telephone	916.287.3035
Email	Stetcyn@projectapism.org

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Organization Background

Project Apis m. (PAm) is the go-to organization at the interface of research, honeybees, and agriculture. Since 2006, we have infused over \$10 million into honeybee research and \$2.9 million into forage programs, resulting in science-driven resources for bees and beekeepers. We work closely with commercial beekeepers, growers, and scientists in the USA and Canada to identify challenges as they arise. We are a 501(c)5 nonprofit organization governed by a Board of commercial beekeepers and other agricultural stakeholders. Learn more about [Project Apis m.](#) and our [Seeds for Bees Program](#).

Background Information

PAm is a sub awardee on a USDA Climate-Smart Commodities Partnerships Grant awarded to Blue Diamond Growers in September 2022 (more info found [here](#)) in which they support the project by providing almond growers with free cover crop seed to help increase the density diversity and duration of bee forage in California almond orchards, while adding organic matter to the grower's soil, increasing water infiltration, reducing erosion, and providing natural weed control. Project goals include 80,000 acres of cover crop, and 2,800 acres of conservation cover planted over 5 years, with first year goals of 5,000 acres cover and 200 acres conservation cover.

Glossary

RFP: The request for proposal issued to solicit bids for the product or service described herein.

Organization: The company issuing the RFP.

Contractor/Bidder: The company responding to the RFP.

Contract: The legal agreement between the organization and the contractor/bidder for the delivery of the products or services described in the RFP.

STATEMENT OF NEED

Scope of Work

Project Apis m. seeks a qualified seed supplier that can fulfill our planned seed orders for the 2023 cover crop planting season, June – December 2023 related to their sub-awarded USDA Climate-Smart Commodities Partnerships project. The selected contractor shall be responsible for providing the particular seed mixes and estimated quantities outlined below.

Seed Mixes

Expected seed mixes include but are not limited to the following and contents may change on an as needed basis:

Pollinator Brassica - 20% Early Canola, 25% Daikon Radish, 20% Yellow Mustard, 20% White Mustard, 15% Oriental Mustard

NitroBuilder – 65% Triticale, 25% Vetch, 10% Daikon Radish

Perennial Carbon Mix 2 – 20% Tall Fescue, 20% Orchard Grass, 15% Siberian Wheatgrass, 15% Crested Wheatgrass, 10% Yellow Blossum Sweat Clover, 10% Alfalfa, 10% Falcata Alfalfa

Annual Bee Clover – 17% Balansa Clover, 25% Persian Clover, 8% Rose Clover, 10% Crimson Clover, 25% Berseem Clover

Pollinator Wildflower - 9% Lace Leaf Phacelia, 4.5% California Poppy, 1% Alyssum, 2% Birds Eye, 2% Globe Gilia, 0.5% Goldfields, 10% Wallflower, 10% Calendula, 3% Five Spot, 15% Baby's Breath, 11% Chinese Forget-Me-Not, 15% Bachelor Buttons, 1% Yarrow, 6% Dwarf Sunflower, 6% Gum Plant, 1% Great Valley Phacelia, 3% Baby Blue Eyes

The seed provider should expect the majority of seed orders to be the Pollinator Brassica mix, with an estimated need of 16 tons in the first year. The estimated need for the Perennial Carbon Mix 2 is 4.5 tons, NitroBuilder is estimated at 8 tons, Annual Bee Clover is estimated at 5 tons, and Pollinator Wildflower is estimated at 0.5 ton in the first year.

Delivery Requirements

All seed must be delivered within 2 weeks of the placement of the seed order or by September 30, whichever comes soonest. Preference given to companies that can assist in organizing pickup and/or delivery to pick-up locations across the Central Valley of California.

Experience	To be considered, contractors should have credible and longstanding experience providing seed to agricultural clients in California's Central Valley.
Qualifications	<p>The organization expects contractors to have the following certifications and qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience developing seed mixes well suited to California's Central Valley.• Experience shipping large quantities of seed to farmers and growers during a short and demanding planting season.• Understanding of organic certification and requirements of seed to meet that certification.• Understanding of laws surrounding seed choice for California's Central Valley.• Understanding of the Seeds for Bees mission and program
Contract Term	The selected contractor shall provide all services described herein for a minimum of 1 year. The organization, in its sole discretion, will have the option to renew the contract for a period of 1 year by agreement of both parties up to the end of the USDA Climate-Smart Commodities Partnerships program, estimated to be around December 2027.
Timeliness	The organization expects contractors to compile and deliver seed orders in a timely manner, so growers have seed before a narrow planting window in the fall. All seed must be delivered by September 30, with the greatest number of orders expected in the month of August.
Customer Service	The selected contractor shall provide adequate support in the event of any service issues. At a minimum, the selected contractor shall provide an account manager that will serve as the buyer's main point of contact throughout the project. The account manager should be available during normal business hours at a minimum.
Number of Employees	Prospective contractors should be of a sufficient size to supply the quantity of seed requested in a timely manner. Prospective contractors must have the staff capacity to provide the requested services within the time frame stated in the RFP.
Financial Health	To be considered, all prospective contractors should be financially sound.
Subcontractors	The organization expects the contractor to employ skilled trade services from outside contractors as needed. However, all services conducted by subcontractors must be performed under the supervision of the contractor. It is understood that the contractor will be responsible for all payment of fees charged by the subcontractor(s).

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Requirements	<p>Proposals must be submitted by the proposal deadline (May 19th, 2023) as a PDF or Word document. Proposals are to be emailed to the project contact provided in the Project Summary.</p> <p>Each proposal should contain a cover letter, which includes the contractor's response to the organization's statement of need, and any additional documentation that is relevant to answering the RFP. Contractors should explain how their operations will meet the total seed quantities and delivery requirements over the season. Submissions not received by the deadline will not be considered.</p>
Cost Proposal	<p>Contractors should submit a cost proposal for the project. This proposal should describe the cost for each seed mix and estimate shipping charges to almond growers in California's Central Valley. Describe any additional or necessary costs.</p>
Experience & Qualifications	<p>Contractors should describe their experience in the market and any qualifications they have that relate to the project. The proposal should include information about the number of years the contractor has been in operation, their longest-tenured clients and how established they are in the market.</p>
Regulatory Compliance	<p>Contractors should document that they are currently in compliance with any local, state, and federal regulations that are relevant to this market. They should provide evidence of appropriate certifications and licenses, if applicable, and indicate how they stay up to date on regulatory changes.</p>
Competition	<p>Contractors should indicate how they maintain a competitive edge over other providers in the market. This information will be important for setting this proposal apart from the others that the organization receives. Contractors are also encouraged to document their reputation among peers and clients.</p>
References	<p>Contractors should include at least three references from clients for whom similar quantities of seed orders have been filled during the past two years. Please include the names, telephone numbers and e-mails for each contact.</p>
Service Offerings	<p>Contractors should submit a comprehensive list of all related services they offer. Additionally, contractors should indicate whether they offer any bundling discounts based on contract size.</p>
Conflicts of Interest	<p>Contractors should disclose whether they will face any potential conflicts of interest by entering into this contract. Failure to disclose conflicts of interest in advance could result in termination of the contract.</p>

SELECTION CRITERIA

Technical Proposal	Contractors will be selected based on how well they are able to meet the organization's needs. Preference will be given to contractors with technical proposals that meet all requirements set forth in the RFP.
Cost Proposal	Contractors will be evaluated based on the competitiveness of their cost proposals.
Experience & Qualifications	Contractors' experience in the market and their qualifications for meeting the organization's needs will be key factors in the final decision on contract awards. In particular, the organization will consider how many years contractors have been active, and how long their longest-tenured clients have been with them
Timeliness	Contractors will be evaluated based on the timeliness of their work plans. Preference will be given to contractors that have a record of completing services on schedule.
Reputation	Contractors should have a good reputation among clients and the larger market. In particular, the organization will look for contractors that are known for the quality of their services. The organization will give strong consideration to references from past clients.
Service Offerings	The organization will evaluate prospective contractors based on the range of services they offer. Strong preference will be given to contractors that provide a wide range of services, in addition to the solutions being sourced in this RFP.
Supplier Diversity	The organization will give preference to traditionally underrepresented suppliers. In particular, the organization will look for the following types of diverse contractors: women-owned enterprises, minority-owned enterprises, veteran-owned enterprises, and small businesses.

ADDITIONAL NOTES REGARDING FEDERAL FUNDING

To be made aware to the applicant: All contracts made through this RFP must contain specific provisions found within Appendix II to Part 200 (as applicable) which can be reviewed here:

[https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/appendix-](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/appendix-Appendix%20II%20to%20Part%20200)

[Appendix%20II%20to%20Part%20200](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/appendix-Appendix%20II%20to%20Part%20200)