



Request for Proposals

Project Name: Rosebud Farm Company – Industrial Hemp Crop Production Feasibility Study

Company Name: Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO)

Project Due Date: November 15th, 2021

Contact: Koby Hagen, Rosebud Farm Company Agricultural Planner and Manager

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Introduction

The Rosebud Farm Company (RFC) is a subsidiary of the Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO). Founded in 2013, RFC has managed 1,400 acres of irrigated farmland and 600 acres of non-irrigated farmland through local farm contracts. It has been steadily building its capacity to directly farm this acreage as well as develop a long-term strategic agricultural plan to support food sovereignty for the Sicangu Lakota Oyate (Rosebud Sioux Tribe).

While the Sicangu Lakota Oyate's food practices have not historically centered around large-scale agriculture, creating regional food and agricultural hubs and sub-hubs is an essential piece of economic development and food sovereignty for tribal communities across the United States. According to the Native American Agricultural Fund (NAAF), Native American farmers sold \$3.54 billion worth of agricultural products ("Reimagining Native Food Economies: A Vision for Native Food and Agriculture Infrastructure Rebuilding and Recovery"). This was only 8% of the food's total value, where the remaining revenue earned was generated in food processing, trade and food services by non-tribal entities.

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe is land rich yet infrastructurally deficient. Its land area span about 1,970.362 square miles, where 85% of the 34,947 enrolled tribal members reside. Within this landscape, there are only three grocery stores, eight convenience stores, and three stand-alone venues to purchase prepared foods on the reservation. Most of the products within these food sources are imported from afar, nutritionally deficient, and are not relevant to sustaining cultural food practices into the future. Moreover, many of these agricultural products sold are not organic and they are vulnerable to climate change weather extremes. If reliance on these imported agricultural products continues, food insecurity

will increase and food system economic development will be hindered within tribal communities like the Sicangu Lakota Oyate.

To counteract food insecurity, build food sovereignty, and create a circular food and agricultural economy, RFC is planning to implement specialty crop production, investment in innovative farm practices and infrastructure that can withstand climate change, and build regional agricultural hub operations to foster local economic development.

Project Overview

RFC will be expanding its agricultural production area and specialties within the next five years. In the spring of 2021, RFC planted 125 acres of hemp seed to be harvested for grain. The goal was to see if it could be a profitable crop and to see if a particular variety could thrive in an arid grassland environment. While the results from this trial have yet to be compiled, we need to further explore industrial hemp crop products and their markets to place our farming energies in the most beneficial hemp production pathways possible.

Industrial hemp is low-input, drought tolerant crop that has been grown throughout the world for thousands of years. It has been proclaimed to be a crop of the future given it has many uses and can grow in many places. It has the potential to become one of the tribe's specialty crops given its high-quality grain, oil and fiber products. Before we decide to invest in more industrial hemp farming and infrastructure, we need to have a holistic view of the current regional and national hemp market for grain, oil, and fiber as well as a clear understanding of what it would cost to invest in the infrastructure needed to produce organic hemp products (raw and value-added). We need a feasibility study to illuminate this pathway.

Project Goal

By 2023, RFC will have an industrial hemp production plan that includes the following objectives:

- We have the necessary infrastructure to produce, store and ship organic hemp grain seed and fiber
- Our industrial organic hemp production is part of our regenerative agriculture master plan
- We have a sound revenue stream that will fund other Sicangu food sovereignty initiatives and RFC agricultural infrastructure

To do this, we are seeking a hemp crop production feasibility study to understand how much it will cost to produce organic hemp in a regenerative way. This feasibility study will take into consideration everything from production scale to financing resources for organic industrial hemp.

Scope of Work

The scope of work will highlight the feasibility of organic hemp production with the Rosebud Farm Company. We want to select the right hemp crops to grow at this time. If we choose to grow more than one, say hemp grain for seed and hemp plants for fiber, we want to be sure we phase them into our strategic production plan in a lucrative and manageable way. Given that we do not own any farm equipment nor infrastructure and that we may potentially have a lot of upfront costs, we want to ensure that the equipment and infrastructure we invest in can be utilized for not just organic hemp, but other organic crops as well.

This feasibility study will give us a thorough analysis of the organic hemp production industry along with regionally-specific overview of hemp production costs, required infrastructure and staff, and buyer markets. The following deliverables must be included in the scope of work to complete this feasibility study.

Deliverables

The feasibility study will include the following deliverables:

- An outline and description of the production process of hemp seed grain, hemp seed oil, and hemp fiber
- Specific production inputs, planting, equipment and harvest needs and costs for hemp seed grain, hemp seed oil and hemp fiber
 - Inputs required; average input cost/acre
 - Dryland and irrigated yield/acre
 - Seed-to-harvest equipment required and average purchase price for each piece
 - Storage requirements
 - Farm labor estimates cost/acre (tilling, sowing, harvesting, drying)
- Market Potential
 - Identify raw material product demand; local and regional markets and potential buyers
 - Identify value-added product demand; local and regional markets and potential buyers
 - 5-year market trend summary
 - Identify regional market buyers
- Recommendations to create an organic RFC industrial hemp product brand; includes which crops/products to focus on and rationale
- A detailed list of research, resource, and retail partnerships that will expedite innovative organic industrial hemp production, processing and consumption
- A detailed list of financing and grant options that can assist in supporting equipment, infrastructure, seed, and field input costs for organic hemp farming

Anticipated Selection Schedule

The Request for Proposal timeline is as follows:

Request for RFP: August 23rd, 2021

Deadline for Questions: August 30th, 2021

RFC Responds to Questions: September 3rd, 2021

Quotes from Service Providers Due: September 10th, 2021

Selection of Service Provider: September 17th, 2021

Project due: November 15th, 2021

Time and Place of Submission of Proposals

Respondents to this RFP must submit one original and five copies of their proposal, received no later than September 10th, 2021. Responses should be clearly marked “RFP - **Rosebud Farm Company – Hemp Crop Production Feasibility Study**” and mailed or delivered to the contact person listed above. Responses may also be submitted via email: please email koby@sicangucorp.com with the subject line “Request for Proposal - **Rosebud Farm Company – Specialty Crops Market Study**” with the proposal attached as a pdf.

Timeline

The project is to be completed by November 15th, 2021.

Elements of Proposal

A submission must include, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. Description of the firm or organization including a general overview and names and credentials of the team who will be completing the project.
2. A one-page narrative outlining the organizations strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they relate to the project.
3. A proposed budget for the project, including a breakdown of the time and cost requirements for each deliverable outlined in the ‘Project Goals; ‘Scope of Services’ and ‘Deliverables’ sections.
4. Testimonies from past clients.
5. May include previous examples of completed feasibility studies.

Evaluation Criteria

The successful respondent will have been operating continuously and offering consulting services for a minimum of 24 months.

The education, experience, knowledge, skills, and qualifications of the firm and the individuals who will contribute to the project.

The competitive cost of services.

The expertise of the firm in completing similar studies or projects.

Tribal affiliation will also be considered. REDCO is a tribally chartered corporation under the Rosebud Sioux Tribe (RST), and as such follows the tribe's procurement policies. Indian preference therefore applies. However, all service providers are invited to apply, and evaluation of other criteria in addition to tribal affiliation will play a significant role in the selection process. The selected service provider will be required to have or obtain a Rosebud Sioux Tribe business license prior to commencement of the project.

Possible Roadblocks

Potential roadblocks include market data for niche or emerging organic crops. There may be little to no organic crop market history for some of the crops listed on our interest list. For some crops, direct inquiry with specialty farms and producers may be required.

Budget

The ideal project budget is \$5,000, with the possibility of up to \$8,000 for the right proposal. The budget includes all costs incurred by the service provider in completion of the project, including any travel expenses that may be necessary for visits to the Rosebud.