

Request for Proposals: Georgia Pecan Tour

Instructions

- 1) Review all information and documents herein
Pages 1- 11
- 2) Contractor must be able to meet federal E-verify employment requirements
to be awarded a contract with GPGA
- 3) Submit (1) PDF file with all necessary information to complete this

Request for Proposal (RFP) by 5 PM, Eastern Standard Time on

Thursday, October 31, 2024

to

mary@georgiapecan.org

****Mandatory response information is located on pages 3 - 5 of this document****

Request for Proposals (RFP)
RFP Release date: October 2, 2024
Questions deadline: October 12, 2024
Deadline for RFP Submission: October 31, 2024

Summary

The Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA) is soliciting bids for the complete development, design, management, and execution of a **Georgia Pecan Tour** as a buyers' workshop and trade event to be held December 15 through 18, 2024. The selected firm must have significant experience in farm to table work, culinary expertise, specialty crop promotion, and working with a diverse audience.

A) Work would include:

- 1) Identification and solicitation of buyers and food industry professionals to attend the event;
- 2) Development of the itinerary and program agenda;
- 3) Coordination of the logistics of the tour;
- 4) Development and execution of the key messaging/marketing campaign for the Georgia Pecan Farm Tour.

B) Furthermore, the successful bidder will provide take-away information and event evaluation to GPGA after the event and to close the loop in connecting participants with growers after the event by serving as the follow-up point of contact for interested participants.

C) Those suppliers who solicit bids for this proposal should discuss how they can address and facilitate the following required aspects of the tour:

- 1) On-farm Georgia pecan farm tours to highlight the safety and health of Georgia pecan products;
- 2) Product tastings and cooking demonstrations to show the superior flavor and versatility of use in cooking of Georgia Pecans;
- 3) Educational workshops to emphasize pecan health benefits and product availability
- 4) Sales-focused networking sessions to facilitate increased sales by linking Georgia growers directly to buyers.

The successful bidder will work with GPGA to develop the concept, secure venues, secure transportation, and equipment needed, provide guidance for the development of marketing and publicity pieces, and serve as the key recruiter for bringing in buyers, chefs, and other attendees for the event.

Qualifications of Bidders

Bidder must demonstrate **at least five years'** experience executing buyer-trade events and/or marketing promotions that include significant farm tour or farm-to-table events within the food/hospitality sector. Bidder must provide three references of such events executed.

Mandatory Scored Questions

Failure to answer these questions will result in disqualification of the proposal.

Offerors must indicate whether their proposal meets the individual requirements and provide a supporting narrative in a PDF document to be emailed to samantha@georgiapecan.org.

Question # (SR = Supplier Response)	Questions
1	Describe your company’s organizational history, philosophy, management, and structure. Please include discussion of the persons/teams who would be responsible for this project in terms of their project management experience and preferred communication methods.
2	Describe your company’s direct marketing and management experience for each of the following 3 categories within the last 5 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Pecans or other tree nuts 2) Georgia Grown branded products 3) Specialty crops (Limit to 3 examples per category)
3	Specify and describe the non-profit organizations that your company has directly worked with for a marketing or project management capacity and designate the years, projects, and project timeframes. (Limit discussion to 3 organizations.)

4	<p>Describe how your company can address and facilitate the following required aspects of the Georgia Pecan Tour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) On-farm Georgia pecan farm tours to highlight the safety and health of Georgia pecan products; 6) Product tastings and cooking demonstrations to show the superior flavor and versatility of use in cooking of Georgia Pecans; 7) Educational workshops to emphasize pecan health benefits and product availability 8) Sales-focused networking sessions to facilitate increased sales by linking Georgia growers directly to buyers.
5	<p>Describe how your company would evaluate the success of the Georgia Pecan Farm Tour using specific metrics of engagement to meet the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Create product awareness for Georgia Pecan to new buyers; and 2) Establish buying/purchasing relationships and agreements for Georgia Pecan growers with new buyer.
6	<p>Provide a timeframe for deliverables of the project, as well as a communication plan between your company and our organization, in order to meet expected project execution by August 2023.</p>
7	<p>Provide (3) references for marketing and/or project management events that were executed by your company, including contact information.</p>

Total Solution Proposed Cost	
	Solution Component
	<p>Provide the cost for the complete development, design, management, and execution of a Georgia Pecan Tour for year 1. Recognize there will be an option to renew the contract for year 2 and note any cost differences expected between the two years.</p>
	Total Solution Cost*

*COST quote should include all the following work:

- 1) Identification and solicitation of buyers and food industry professionals to attend the event. Serve as the key recruiter for bringing in buyers, chefs, and other food industry attendees for the event.
- 2) Development of the itinerary and program agenda to include, but not limited to:
 - a. Development and execution of the key messaging/marketing campaign for the Georgia Pecan Tour. Provide guidance for the development of marketing and publicity pieces.
 - b. Coordination of the logistics of the tour; Secure venues, secure transportation, and equipment needed for:
 - i. On-farm Georgia pecan farm tours to highlight the safety and health of Georgia pecan products.
 - ii. Product tastings and cooking demonstrations to show the superior flavor and versatility of use in cooking of Georgia Pecans.
 - iii. Educational workshops to emphasize pecan health benefits and product availability
 - iv. Sales-focused networking sessions to facilitate increased sales by linking Georgia growers directly to buyers.
 - c. Provide take-away information and event evaluation to GPGA after the event and to “close the loop” in connecting participants with growers.

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SECTION 1. OVERVIEW

The Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA) is soliciting bids for the complete development, design, management, and execution of a Georgia Pecan Tour as a buyers' workshop and trade event in December 2024.

The selected firm must have significant experience in farm to table work, culinary expertise, specialty crop promotion, and working with a diverse audience.

The event will include pecan farm tours to highlight the safety and health of Georgia pecan products, as well as product tastings and cooking demonstrations to show the superior flavor and versatility of use in cooking of Georgia Pecans. Educational workshops and sales meetings will emphasize pecan health benefits and product availability, while sales-focused networking sessions will facilitate increased sales by linking Georgia growers directly to buyers.

The successful bidder will work with GPGA to develop the concept, secure venues, secure transportation and equipment needed, provide guidance for the development of marketing and publicity pieces, and serve as the key recruiter for bringing in buyers, chefs, and other attendees for the event.

SECTION 2. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

A. Point of Contact

The sole point of contact for this solicitation is:

Mary Mikelyn Bruorton
Executive Director, GPGA
220 East 2nd Street, Suite A
Tifton, Georgia 31794
Phone: (229)382-2187
E-mail: mary@georgiapecan.org

B. Communications

All communication from GPGA specifically addressing this bid will occur via postings on the GPGA website at www.georgiapecan.org. GPGA will post notices to include, but are not limited to, any modifications to requirements; answers to questions received, and notice of award. *It is the responsibility of the vendor to monitor the website carefully and regularly for any such postings.*

C. Georgia Based Business

For the purposes of evaluation only, bidder's resident in the State of Georgia will be granted the same preference over bidders' resident in another state in the same manner, on the same basis, and to the same extent that preference is granted in awarding bids for the same goods or services by such other state to bidders' resident therein over bidders' resident in the State of Georgia. NOTE: For the purposes of this law, the definition of a resident bidder is a bidder who is domiciled in the State of Georgia.

D. Federal E-Verify Program participant

An affidavit to be signed and notarized by the bidder who is awarded the Contract is a requirement of this proposal to ensure the bidder utilizes the E-Verify or subsequent replacement program for authorized contractors and subcontractors in the execution of this project's work.

E. Proposal Timeline

1. The deadline for responses to this solicitation is October 31, 2024
2. Late responses will not be considered.
Responses may be modified or withdrawn prior to the response due date and time.

F. Selection

All timely responses will be evaluated through the evaluation process. The objective of the evaluation process is to identify the most competitive bid. For the purpose of this document, the terms 'bidder' and 'supplier' may be used interchangeably.

1. Administrative/Preliminary Review

First, the responses will be reviewed by the Issuing Officer to determine compliance with the following requirements:

1. Response was submitted by deadline via in accordance with Section 2E.
2. Response is complete and contains all required documents.

2. Evaluating Bid Factors

If the bidder's response passes the Administrative/Preliminary Review, the bidder's responses will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis by the Evaluation Committee. If a response fails to meet a mandatory requirement, the bid will be rejected.

3. Evaluating Cost

GPGA may utilize lowest cost, lowest total cost, and total cost of ownership (TCO) or greatest savings to determine the most competitive pricing. Submitted pricing will be evaluated on an overall basis.

4. Final Selection

Final selection will be made of the responsible bidder whose acceptable response is determined to be the most advantageous to GPGA, at GPGA's sole discretion, with cost/price/design/service being the primary considerations. This solicitation will result in a fixed price award. GPGA reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of responses received. Therefore, it is important that responses be submitted in the most complete terms possible from both the technical, service, and cost/price standpoint.

5. Upon selection of a supplier by GPGA, a purchase order will be offered to the supplier. If the supplier's forms (or parts of forms) are included in the supplier's response and included as attachments or exhibits to the final purchase order, the supplier agrees that, where there are contradictions or inconsistencies, the terms of the purchase order shall always supersede, manage, and control those of any such attachment or exhibit.

6. The contents of the response of the supplier will become obligations of the purchase order. Failure of the selected supplier to accept these obligations in a purchase order may result in cancellation of the selection.

7. Any restrictions on the use or inspection of material contained within the response shall be requested prior to the submission of the response itself. Written requests for confidentiality shall be submitted to GPGA by the supplier prior to the bid submission date. The supplier must state specifically what portion(s) of the response it is requesting to be considered confidential/proprietary with an explanation of the reasons that the materials are considered confidential/proprietary. GPGA will inform the supplier in writing which portions of the confidentiality/proprietary request will be honored and which will not. Requests shall adhere to the following:

- a. Confidential/proprietary information must be readily identified, marked, and separated/packaged from the rest of the response.
- b. Co-mingling of confidential/proprietary and other information is NOT acceptable. Neither a response in its entirety nor the response cost/price information will be considered confidential and/or proprietary.

8. Any information that will be included in any resulting purchase order cannot be considered confidential.

9. Responses will be open to public inspection due to federal funding for this event.

G. Term of Payment

The anticipated term of payment for the purchase order resulting from this solicitation is upon mutual agreement between GPGA and the selected vendor.

H. Work Location

The successful bidder will work with GPGA to determine appropriate locations for the Georgia Pecan Farm Tour.

I. Additional Requirements

It will be the responsibility of the successful bidder to meet the scope of the project by providing appropriate information as well as adequate resources to ensure the successful implementation of this project, which shall include evaluation and follow-up in partnership with GPGA.

SECTION 3. STATEMENT OF WORK

The Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA) is soliciting bids for the complete development, design, management, and execution of a **Georgia Pecan Tour** as a buyers' workshop and trade event. The selected firm must have significant experience in farm to table work, culinary expertise, specialty crop promotion, and working with a diverse audience.

A) Work would include:

- 5) Identification and solicitation of buyers and food industry professionals to attend the event;
- 6) Development of the itinerary and program agenda;
- 7) Coordination of the logistics of the tour;
- 8) Development and execution of the key messaging/marketing campaign for the Georgia Pecan Farm Tour.

B) Furthermore, the successful bidder will provide take-away information and event evaluation to GPGA after the event and to “close the loop” in connecting participants with growers after the event by serving as the follow-up point of contact for interested participants.

C) Those suppliers who solicit bids for this proposal should discuss how they can address and facilitate the following required aspects of the tour:

- 9) On-farm Georgia pecan farm tours to highlight the safety and health of Georgia pecan products;
- 10) Product tastings and cooking demonstrations to show the superior flavor and versatility of use in cooking of Georgia Pecans;
- 11) Educational workshops to emphasize pecan health benefits and product availability
- 12) Sales-focused networking sessions to facilitate increased sales by linking Georgia growers directly to buyers.

The successful bidder will work with GPGA to develop the concept, secure venues, secure transportation, and equipment needed, provide guidance for the development of marketing and publicity pieces, and serve as the key recruiter for bringing in buyers, chefs, and other attendees for the event.

SECTION 4. BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS

Failure of bidder to meet the following qualifications may result in elimination of bidder's bid from consideration.

- A. Bidder must have at least five years' experience executing buyer-trade events and/or marketing promotions that include significant farm tour or farm-to-table events within the food/hospitality sector.
- B. Bidder must provide three references of such events executed.

SECTION 5. COSTS/COMPENSATION

- A. Submit a firm, fixed-price for the deliverables described in Section 3. Statement of Work of this solicitation. Bidder should include detailed costs for design and materials required.
- B. The cost/price quotation(s) shall include all costs incurred by the bidder and its personnel in the performance of the work.

SECTION 6. EVALUATION

- A. The Evaluation Committee will consist of Georgia pecan industry professionals and researchers who are not employed by Georgia Pecan Growers Association (GPGA). The committee will use the criteria outlined to determine the proposal(s) that will be most advantageous to GPGA for the tasks and/or deliverables described within this proposal.

SECTION 7. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Questions

- 1. Questions regarding this RFP will be accepted only in writing via email until October 31,2024
No questions will be accepted after this date and time.
- 2. Send questions to mary@georgiapecan.org. Include - Georgia Pecan Farm Tour RFP - in the subject line of the e-mail.

B. Responses

- 1. Responses will be accepted via e-mail only. Send one (1) electronic version to mary@georgiapecan.org in the form of a PDF document. In the body of the e-mail, include:
 - a. The solicitation title
 - b. The solicitation due date and time.

C. Submit

1. A complete quote that is consistent with the Statement of Work in Section 3.
2. A primary bidder point of contact for the project, including name, position description, phone number, and e-mail address.
5. Bidder shall provide a statement that acknowledges Bidder's willingness to comply with all requirements described in this RFP solicitation and general concept requirements. NOTE: If Bidder is not willing to accept all terms and conditions, Bidder should provide a statement of explanation and a listing of all exceptions the Bidder requires. The request must include a listing of all additions or exceptions, an explanation of why the addition or exception is being sought and what specific effect it will have on the Bidder's ability to perform the requirements of the solicitation. GPGA will not accept any responses that are conditional on acceptance.

SECTION 8. AWARD INFORMATION

- A. This is a fixed price solicitation. Pricing must remain firm for the entire term of the purchase order. Any unique changes or modifications to the purchase order will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis ONLY, with final determination made by GPGA.
- B. GPGA reserves the right to reject all quotes and re-solicit at any time prior to the purchase order start date. GPGA reserves the right to cancel this solicitation in its entirety at any time without penalty. Illegible quotes or writing shall be deemed non-responsive and will not be evaluated. A quote with missing or inconsistent information may be considered non-responsive and may not be evaluated. GPGA will be the sole judge in determining the acceptability of an offer. GPGA also reserves the right to reject any or all quotes in part or in whole and to waive technicalities as allowed in the Procurement Rules.
- C. GPGA intends to use both the State of Georgia vendor lists and additional methods of vendor notification and marketing of this RFP.