

# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) / SOURCES SOUGHT NOTIFICATION (SSN)

## FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

### VENDOR MANAGED INVENTORY & DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT of RICE AND BEANS in PUERTO RICO

#### A. Notification

This is a Sources Sought Notice. The purpose of this notice is to obtain information regarding the 1) availability and capability of qualified sources and 2) availability of capable firms to provide the contemplated requirement listed below. The information provided herein is for informational purposes only. **THIS NOTICE IS NOT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL.** This notice is issued for information and planning purposes only and does not itself constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP). The Government does not intend to award a contract based only on responses to this Sources Sought Notice.

Responses to the notice will not be returned. Responders are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this notice. The Government will not pay for information received in response to this notice. There is no commitment by the Government to issue an RFP, make an award or awards, or to be responsible for any monies expended by industry responses to this notice. The Government does not request any proprietary information be submitted, nor shall it be liable for any consequential damages for proprietary information. Any information submitted for this notice (e.g. capability statement) is subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 USC 552 (a). All information received in response to this notice marked "Proprietary" will be protected and handled accordingly. Interested parties are responsible for adequately marking proprietary or competition sensitive information contained in their response.

#### B. Background

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Logistics Management Directorate has a national emergency response meal requirement to support 20% of the Island's population of 3.4 million habitants for **10 consecutive days** during presidentially declared national disasters. This represents a total of **680,000 impacted individuals**. Due to the massive amounts of commodities that are required to feed the population, courses of action have been identified to ensure options are considered to address the feeding needs of the impacted individuals.

FEMA seeks to identify vendors that may possess the capabilities of managing inventory and being able to distribute at a moment's notice (within 24 hours of receipt of FEMA's request) to support disaster survivors during emergency responses. In the recent years, FEMA expanded its footprint of warehouses in Puerto Rico to store initial response resources (IRR). However, we are finding more space is needed, especially for perishable commodities, such as meals and water. An alternate solution to space limitation is vendor-managed inventory. As part of supporting feeding plan, resources requested include approximately **510,000 lbs. of rice** and approximately **51,000 oz of canned beans** (details on section D.1). These resources are to be in a portable conveyable bundle based on daily consumption and not in bulk which may cause transportation issues for survivor families.

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### **C. Objectives**

For Market Research Only - FEMA is seeking information regarding vendor capabilities, from either manufacturers or distributors, on inventory management at vendor-site for rice and beans. The goal is to be able to readily distribute the items after a disaster event, and therefore the storage capability on the island of Puerto Rico is being considered.

1. To determine vendor's capabilities to provide feeding resources (rice and beans) to support 20% of the Island's population of 3.4 million habitants (680,000 survivors) for 10 days during an emergency response.
2. To determine industry capability to deploy large quantity of rice and beans within 24 hours of receipt of FEMA's request for shipment to designated Regional Staging Area or other location during a disaster.
3. To determine vendor's capability of product storage, management and maintenance at vendor site (warehouse). Information of warehouses must be shared with FEMA.
4. To determine industry's capability for procedures for inventory control and accountability and must be approved by FEMA. The vendor must be able to provide FEMA the following information: location, lot#, and expiration date when rice and beans are accepted into the vendor's inventory.
5. The industry's capability to manage inventory.
6. The vendor's ability to comply with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) storage and delivery requirements including safety, fire and inspection regulations.
7. The vendor's ability to provide FEMA with a copy of any insurance certificates covering personnel and the facility against liability, loss or damage, theft or fire during the term.
8. The vendor's ability of independently transport and track assets.

### **D. Conditions**

The following are additional considerations for the requirement:

1. Packaging.

This potential requirement is for vendors to have products in individually conveyable packages, suitable for rapid distribution. The packaging (e.g. grocery or tote bags, boxes, small crates) will facilitate the storage and prevent the spoilage of products and will be made easily transportable for an average family of four and shall be labeled with package contents.

The following items are recommended to be included for survivors:

- White Medium Grain Rice (no less than 3lb. bag)
- Kidney, Pink, Red or Assorted Beans (no less than 15oz. can)

Packaging by the case per household that feeds for 10 days is ideal.

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### **2. Warehouse Storage Conditions.**

FEMA seeks local, on-island warehouse facilities that maintains a temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit and maintain a humidity level at 60% or below, or at conditions that meet manufacturer's recommended storage degree and humidity. Warehouses must be of wind and watertight construction and must be free from pests. This requirement entail that the vendor warehouses will be subject to inspection by US Government representatives prior to acceptance by FEMA as a suitable facility and periodic inspection during contract performance. It is responsibility of the vendor to provide their warehouse staff with pertinent Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while working under pandemic conditions. During disaster response, provide the warehousing services 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

### **3. Delivery.**

Preference is for the vendor to provide transportation of the rice and beans to the determined locations (may include multiple stops). The vendor must have rice and beans palletized and must use the required transportation vehicle as deemed necessary for transfer of products (20' - 53' containers, lifted box trucks, pallet jacks, if needed). The warehouse must be capable of providing the labor and material handling equipment to begin uploading the inventory and provide transportation to destination within 24 hours of FEMA's notification to the vendor. Proper documentation of truckload contents must accompany each container. It is responsibility of the vendor to provide their truck drivers with pertinent Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while working under pandemic conditions. During disaster response, have capability to provide the delivery services 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

### **4. Potential Delivery Locations.**

#### **i. Regional Staging Area**

- Arecibo
- Bayamon
- Caguas
- Canovanas
- Mayagüez
- Ponce

#### **ii. FEMA Incident Support Bases**

- Aguadilla
- Ceiba

## **E. Questions to the Industry**

Interested parties are requested to submit as part of their statement of capability how they are capable of meeting below requirements and recommendations to the Government on alternative solutions.

### **1. What are your capabilities for fulfilling below requirements?**

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- Vendor Managed Inventory at vendor warehouse - Total quantities of rice and/or beans production on a yearly basis.
  - How long would it take from the time of award to complete the quantities production?
  - Do you have warehousing capability that meets the above criteria, section D.2?
  - Do you have transportation capability that meets the above criteria, section D.3?
2. What is your recommended to approach to providing vendor-managed inventory?
  3. What is your typical packaging configuration for rice and/or beans? Can they be reconfigured if needed?
    - How many 3lb bags of rice in a case?
    - How many 3lb bags of rice cases per pallet?
    - How many 15oz cans of beans in a case?
    - How many 15oz cans of beans cases per pallet?
  4. Will this requirement impact in any way with your current business with grocery industry? How? Is there a potential way of mitigation if challenges are foreseen?
  5. Is your facility equipped with backup power generator and a water cistern system?
  6. Historically how long did it take or was needed for your business to return to full production after a disaster event, such as an earthquake or hurricane landfall? Does your business have a continuity of business plan in case of disaster events?
  7. Is your business able to operate at full capacity in this COVID environment?
  8. Do you have in-house or contracted capability to provide transportations during an emergency response?
  9. What is your typical lead time for delivery to your commercial customers after order request during emergency situations?
  10. Do you have unique or special capabilities you'd like to highlight?
  11. Administratively, the vendor's statement of capability shall also include the information listed below.
    - Company Name/Division, mailing address, e-mail address, telephone, and website
    - Single point-of-contact name, title, telephone, and email address
    - DUNS number and company structure (Corporation, LLC, partnership, joint venture, etc.). *Please note that companies must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) to receive an award from federal agencies.* <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>
    - Applicable NAICS codes under which the company customarily does business.
    - Business size for NAICS Codes, such as socio-economic status, if qualified as one or more of the following:
      - 8(a) firm (must be certified by SBA)
      - Small Disadvantaged Business (must be certified by SBA)
      - Woman-Owned Small Business
      - HUB Zone firm (must be certified by SBA)
      - Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business

### F. Response Format

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In order to better assist in the review of submittals to this RFI, respondents are encouraged to prepare a capabilities statement and respond to the above questions in a format that closely adheres to the following:

The document format shall be either Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) formats. Responses shall be prepared using 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins, and 8.5” by 11” paper and shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length, including images, data displays, charts, graphs, and tables.

Respondents are encouraged to ensure that their submittals are complete and address all items outlined within this notice. Respondents may provide additional promotional literature in addition to their response as long as the literature conforms to the response format.

### **G. Response Deadline and Point of Contact Information**

FEMA will only consider submissions in response to this notice that are in the form of Microsoft Word and/or PDF (searchable format) documents attached to emails received no later than **12 PM EST, Thursday, November 5, 2020**. No phone calls will be accepted or returned.

Point of Contact:

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