

1. Given the broad range of stakeholder interest in the food system is there interest in expanding the partnership as the research progresses?

The partners identified in the RFP were the organizations that were initially engaged. Since that time, we have had interest in the project from other partners including Tourism Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Agencies and First Nations Communities. The partnership will encourage broad participation in this project to gain access to key informants.

2. In Schedule in Section 8 of the RFP (top of page 9) notes the following: "Data collection phase: the six areas of demand for food are researched". Can you confirm if there are additional areas of food demand beyond the four listed in Section 4 of the RFP?

There are four areas of demand. The table in section 8.0 will be corrected to four areas of demand in the April 6th updated RFP (this was a typo).

3. Are food wholesalers/distributors are included under the food retail sector?

Yes, and within food service & food programs as they facilitate demand across these areas.

4. Are all the fees for the tasks and responsibilities of the RAIN Project Coordinator and Regional Outreach Assistants being covered outside of the budget to be quoted for this proposal?

Yes

5. For the Regional Outreach Assistants, can you elaborate on what 'part time' consists of? Can you provide any details on how these assistants will be recruited/hired and are they expected to have certain qualifications?

Each assistant is expected to be available to provide support to the consultant for 20 hours a week for 9 weeks within the Study period. Assistants will be recruited through partners, Employment Agencies and hired by RAIN/SSMIC. They must be a graduate of a diploma or degree program in a field of study with a preference relating to Business Administration/Commerce, Economic Development or a Social Science. They must have a valid driver's license, access to a reliable vehicle, experience conducting surveys/participating in research projects and excellent communication skills.

6. In the final report, is the consultant expected to report on findings/results for the region and/or do the findings/results need to be broken out by each sub-region (Algoma, Manitoulin, Sudbury, West Nipissing)?

The findings/results will need to be broken out by sub-region for Algoma, Manitoulin and Sudbury. We are only looking for demand trends from these three regions, West Nipissing will only have a focus group with producers to validate the trends found from Algoma, Manitoulin and Sudbury.

7. What is the approximate budget range for the study responsibilities that are to be completed by the consultant?

The approximate budget range is \$90,000 to \$130,000 before HST.

8. What studies have been done to date (or currently in progress) regarding this area's food economy?

Algoma-Manitoulin Agricultural Economic Sector Profile (2009)

<http://www.farminorth.com/websites/farminorth.com/images/research/2009%20Algoma-Manitoulin%20Agricultural%20Impact%20Study.pdf>

Blue Sky Region Agricultural Economic Sector Profile (2009)

<http://www.farminorth.com/websites/farminorth.com/images/research/2009%20Blue%20Sky%20Region%20Agri%20Economic%20Impact.pdf>

Greater Sudbury Food Strategy (2017)

<https://sudburyfoodpolicy.files.wordpress.com/2017/12/greater-sudbury-food-strategy.pdf>

Northern Ontario Agri-Food Strategy (2017)

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/northernagrifood/noas.htm>

Northern Ontario Dairy Processing Strategy (2017)

<https://www.nofia-agri.com/nofia-projects>

Trade Routes Report A review of preliminary findings (2017)

<http://rainalqoma.ca/Downloads/2017Report.pdf>

Enhancing Local Food in Northern Ontario – Agricultural Analysis, Literature Review and Anabaptist Research

<http://www.enhancinglocalfood.com/anabaptist-research>

<http://www.enhancinglocalfood.com/copy-of-reports>

Algoma Country Food Tourism Strategy (2017-18) – In progress (Culinary Tourism Alliance)

Greater Sudbury Food Tourism Strategy (2017-18) – In progress (Culinary Tourism Alliance)

9. For the four areas of demand in the supply chain are fish farms, traditional Indigenous food groups, food banks and on-farm stores also to be included?

Fish farms or on-farm stores would not be included in the areas of demand. Traditional Indigenous food groups or food banks would be included if they have specific programs that purchase food

10. Besides sources such as StatsCan, CANSIM databases, Analyst, Northern Policy Institute studies what additional data already exists around costs and numbers of food purchases in this area? And does data already exist from sources such as Nielsen and Euromonitor?

The partners are not aware of other available data on costs and numbers of food purchases in this area.

11. Some stakeholder interviews for larger retail grocery stores may need to be held in Toronto. Is this acceptable?

Yes

12. Is it necessary to benchmark the gathered data against the rest of Ontario or beyond?

No

13. For the focus groups, does "validate" mean that the farmer/food producers want to fully see how the findings can be brought to life for their specific businesses?

The focus groups would validate the experience of producers that are selling into the regional value chain or are making attempts to sell into the regional value chain.

14. Wawa is listed as an area for study, but the communities in between Sault Ste Marie and Wawa are not. Are these smaller communities in between to be included?

Communities between Sault Ste. Marie and Wawa can be included as they are in the Algoma District. There are additional resorts and businesses along this Hwy 17 corridor that can also be included.

15. To deliver the focus groups and other events, will it be necessary to rent spaces and provide refreshments? Will these costs be covered by RAIN/SSMIC or should they be included in the budget of the proponent?

RAIN will cover the cost of the focus group event venues for the project. The consultant may wish to bring extra refreshments for participants.

16. Do you have an idea for a timeline for selecting the successful proponent, award and signing the contract?

RAIN would like to select the successful firm and award the contract in May.