

## Northeast Food for Schools RFP, Addenda 2

### Extended Deadline

We have extended the deadline to submit bids for this RFP. The new deadline is:

**end of day on Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

### Description of Adjustments to the RFP

- On Page 6, #1 "Attachment C" has been corrected to "Appendix B".
- On Pages 5, 7, and 9 where Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans are motioned, language has been adjusted to refer to an HACCP plan or other third-party food safety audit of certification.
- On Page 13, the number of delivery slips that must be provided to schools upon delivery has been decreased from 2 to 1.

### Responses to Written Vendor Questions

1. Does this RFP replace the need for a school to solicit 3 quotes from vendors? If so, will the products, pricing, and availability be made available to each school district participating in the program or is this information we should plan on sharing as we have direct conversations with the Food Service Directors?
  - Yes – for awarded vendors, and for the products vendors submit in their pricing sheet, this RFP replaces the need for Massachusetts schools and school districts to solicit 3 quotes (I.e., Request for Quotes [RFQ]) or do RFP, Invitation for Bids (IFBs), or additional formal procurement processes prior to contracting.
  - Yes – the product & pricing sheets you submit will be made available to school districts for their reference.
2. Do we need to submit pricing for both Periods 1 and 2 by the bid submission deadline? If so, can pricing be adjusted before or during the school year? Either up or down?
  - Yes – product pricing must be submitted for both Periods 1 and 2 in the bid submission.
  - Yes – pricing may be adjusted to a **lower** price during the contract period. If a majority of vendors awarded through this RFP experience price decreases compared to the prices they listed in their bid submission, MAPC will facilitate a process to collect updated pricing.
  - No – pricing may not be adjusted to a **higher** price during the contract period.
3. Is there flexibility with the Item Origin (farm name, state) to source from an alternative farm that meets the local requirements if the listed origin in this RFP ends up being short or out of

product? Or, should we plan on listing all possible farm names in the price proposal sheet that we could potentially source the listed item from?

- Yes – there is flexibility on farm origin of specific products if the alternative farm complies with the 'local' definition of being within 400-miles of the purchasing school district. If you anticipate sourcing a product from multiple farms, please list them in the pricing sheet.

4. There are 3 categories of products that any given school could order from [us]:

- products approved to order through the RFP process
- products not approved to order through the RFP process, but still qualify for the Northeast Foods for Schools Program
- products not approved through the RFP process, and do not qualify for the Northeast Foods for Schools Program

At each delivery, [we] provide a printed copy of a delivery ticket along with an invoice for each order that a customer submits. Invoices are also emailed the day of delivery. We are working to develop a flag labeled on each invoice calling out eligible items that qualify for the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (aka MA Northeast Foods for Schools Program), but this is still in process. We hope that this flag can be developed, but it is yet to be confirmed as we just transitioned to a new ordering and billing platform.

There will be times when a school places an order for the three types of product categories noted above. [We] will not be able to create separate delivery tickets and invoices for each product category. Is this ok?

- This is not a problem. As long as the district can identify if the product is an eligible product to request for reimbursement through NFS funding, the invoice can include both eligible and ineligible items. The invoice itself is not the mechanism by which a district requests reimbursement. They enter information from the invoice into an online portal to request their reimbursement.

5. For all our customers, we only provide one copy of each delivery ticket and invoice at delivery. Will one copy be sufficient?

- Yes – this is sufficient, and the language in the RFP has been changed to reflect this (see above section).

6. As a food distributor who does not process any foods, we are not required to have a HACCP plan. We are an approved vendor for Sage Dining and Sodexo school food management programs and as a result we have an AIB Audit. Would you suggest submitting this certification in lieu of a HACCP plan?

- Yes - AIB Audits are third party food safety audits. Submitting an AIB Audit rather than an HACCP would be sufficient. The language in the RFP has been changed to reflect this (see above section).

7. Is there a way to know how many stops per school system, or if they have a central warehouse?
  - No – we have not been able to compile information about each of the school districts' needs in terms of drop-off locations. After vendors are awarded through this RFP, we will facilitate vendors and school districts in getting in touch with one another to discuss logistics and contracting.