

Request for Proposals No. 2025-14

Addendum 01 – Q&A

This document is posted to capture the questions received, and agency answers provided, during the question and answer period of RFP No. 2025-14, issued September 26, 2024.

All amendments, addenda, and notifications related to this procurement will be posted on the [OSPI website](#) (if this was an open procurement) and on the Washington Electronic Business Solution ([WEBS](#)) website. Additional questions concerning this procurement must be submitted to contracts@K12.wa.us. Communication directed to other parties will be considered unofficial and non-binding on OSPI, and may result in disqualification of the Consultant.

1. How are the bid amounts decided, will this be a guarantee or an estimate?

The pounds estimate is based on the school's pre-order survey which will be completed in February 2025. We prefer the schools to order the amounts they committed to on the SY25-26 Pre-Order Survey. Based on actual monthly orders during SY25-26, the final amount may be different than the estimate.

2. Are there any safeguards in case of overproduction due to a lower result than previously estimated?

If the SY 25-26 monthly orders made by schools are less than what was estimated or projected, then OSPI will only order what is actually needed. In the case of extra products in our inventory they will then be added to surplus for any school to purchase.

3. Is there an over/ under threshold for difference between pounds bid and what can actually be supplied? Is it better to bid the max possible amount, or lower in case of changes?

We will not know until we can see what the schools pre-ordered in February 2025. On the proposal, we want to know how much product in total you can supply. Give the maximum number of pounds as this is considered in the evaluation portion of your proposal.

4. Out of the three different warehouses, is it possible to deliver to only one location?

We prefer to offer the product on both east/west sides of the state. We would need to see the pre-order results to determine if this is possible based on the region's interest.

5. What is the likelihood of USDA supplementing or providing more funds to increase LFS products? How much of the leftover supplement is covering products for this year?

It is likely we will receive more funding, and the USDA AMS will tell us how we can use it. The schools are paying for products this year, but a few items were brought in at no cost to help spend down the previous funds and sustain the project.

6. Is there a chance that the scope of the project could increase?

The table in the RFP represents our best estimate of the project's size for SY 25–26. We included the new information from USDA AMS pre-bid conference due to the project's potential for growth.

7. Is there a specific time that proposals must be submitted by?

November 12, 2024, no later than 3:00pm.

8. With the growth of the project are these projected numbers for SY 25–26 equal, larger, or about the same compared to the previous year?

The numbers in the RFP are from the current SY 24–25 pre order survey conducted in February 2024 and data from the 2023-24 project when foods were offered at no cost. ~~and~~ There are many unknowns regarding new information from USDA AMS about the additional funds. It is unclear what kind of potential the project could have and the funds available.

9. Are there any consequences if you are unable to supply as much product as submitted in your bid?

No, it's always great to be able to supply Local Food for Schools. Even in the USDA commodities orders there are times when products are short. Knowing that this project comes in phases we will work through it. Vendors should not foresee any ramifications.

10. Can you clearly define what local is?

For the purposes of this RFP, fish and seafood are deemed local if they are caught or harvested within 400 miles of OSPI contract warehouses specifically frozen food warehouses in Grandview and Algona.

From the definitions in the RFP:

Locally and regionally produced food means a food that is raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed in the locality or region where the final product is marketed to consumers, so that the distance that the product travels between the farm or ranch where the product originates and the point of sale to the end consumer is at most 400 miles, or both the final market and the original of the product are within the same state or territory. This RFP uses the contracted Spokane, Grandview, and Algona Warehouses as the final destination.

11. Is this a new request, or are you replacing a current vendor?

All contracts will end this school year. This RFP is for contracts beginning 25–26.

12. Clearly define what is minimally processed

Located in the RFP. We define minimally processed means that the product was processed in a manner that does not fundamentally change the item. We recommend proposing items that would be kid friendly for ages K-12. Schools may not prefer foods that require more processing and preparation before it can be served.

From the RFP:

Minimally Processed Food - Minimal processing means that the product was processed in a manner that does not fundamentally alter the product. Examples of allowable food products that OSPI will procure include fruits and vegetables; grain products like flour; meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats); meat alternates such as beans or legumes. Foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are also allowable.

13. What does it mean that OSPI may be looking for multiple vendors?

This depends on the amount the vendor can propose based on what we think the school will use and need. For example, last year we were unable to obtain enough products from a singular vendor and needed to obtain additional product from others. It is much easier for us to work with the same product due to the differences vendors may have in case sizes and serving amounts. But this next year we intend to secure enough food for the interested sponsors.

14. Do you prefer bone in or boneless products?

All meat/fish products received have been boneless.

15. Please elaborate the references on the RFP. Are you looking for food that children like, or the quantity of people served?

References that come from K-12 are great, but we are happy to accept any type that you do have.

16. Is there a preference for wild or farmed seafood?

We are open to both options. For example, salmon is not a typical school item but, in this case, we were able to procure seafood at a central level. The salmon came predominantly from tribal sources, and this allowed for some great education. Schools did report that it was better received at the secondary level.

17. Are you specifically looking for tribal sourced seafood and are you looking to replace this relationship?

Our current contracts end this school year. All responsive proposals will be evaluated/scored.

18. How are you weighing sources that are not vs sources that are socially disadvantaged?

This RFP does not score on food sourced from socially disadvantaged farmers/ranchers/producers/fishers.

19. Do you have a top three most important things you would like to see?

We don't necessarily have a top three. All the contents in the RFP are scored. With federal funds we have to weight cost/price the heaviest.

20. Who reviews the final submitted RFPs?

The committee is made up of OSPI staff from the Food Distribution Program and Farm to School team.

21. Are the warehouses outlined in the RFP?

Yes, please find it on page 12–13.

22. Would you prefer individual or bulk packaged seafood?

Schools follow USDA meal pattern requirements for the School Meals Program (National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program). There are requirements for portion size. This is measured after cooking. We developed product fact sheets based on the size and how many servings are given per child. Previously, salmon fillets were cooked whole and then portioned. Also, flaked for use in products like chowder, salmon patties or fish tacos.

23. Can you please specify if you are looking for 3 or 2.5 million in funding, both numbers are listed in the RFP?

2.5 million is the aggregate amount for all contracts from this RFP.

24. What is the likelihood that samples will be requested?

Unlikely since we do not have a taste test in the evaluation.

25. What are the payment terms?

Payment will be completed after we have received the product and invoices.

26. What is the page maximum for responses?

Please write a maximum of three (3) pages for both the management and technical proposal. It is important to address all key points. This can be brief depending on your operations.

27. Is there an expectation that there will be a negotiation for the cost proposal?

No, we score based on the proposed price.

28. Is there anything we can do to prepare this proposal to make it easier on the committee?

We have seen photography added in the past. We are focusing on the key points outlined in the RFP, are addressed.

29. Is there a revenue cap that would cause applications not to qualify? Is it gross or net?

There is no revenue cap. The vendor questionnaire should be answered based on gross income.

30. Do processors have to be SQF (Safe Quality Food) certified to be eligible for this opportunity? I didn't see SQF certification mentioned in the RFP but want to confirm.

SQF certification is not required. Bidders should include any pertinent food safety certifications in the Management Proposal. Food safety practices are a scored part of the application. We recommend including any and all information related to food safety practices and certifications.

31. I saw that OSPI is making a request for bids for Frozen Shaved or Sliced Beef. I was curious what exact cuts that is requesting. I also didn't see any requests for Ground Beef but if there is a need for that please let me know!

Beef stew meat and shaved beef were popular items previously. But there may be other items well suited for schools that we are not aware of. Ground beef is a U.S. Department of Agriculture commodity food item that schools can receive using their entitlement funds. We have intentionally tried to stay away from duplication, especially for items that schools can receive using entitlement.