AGAR ADVISORY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
AGAR ADVISORY NO. 60, Revision 01.

Management of Qualification Requirements for USDA

INTRODUCTION: This Agriculture Acquisition Regulation (AGAR) Advisory supersedes AGAR Advisory 60, dated October 30, 2003 and updates information concerning the posting of qualification requirements (QRs) to the USDA website, as well as contact information for questions on this Advisory. This AGAR Advisory has been prepared to list the QRs created by and managed by USDA.

SUMMARY: USDA activities have a variety of needs for which it is critical that vendors provide products of the highest quality and reliability. These products must be capable of being used with products already in USDA's inventory, and with products supplied by other vendors. Accordingly, qualification requirements may be defined for USDA Activities including systems of application, testing and record keeping, to assure that products, vendors, or manufacturers are tested and qualified prior to contract award. The imposition of a QR can restrict competition and as a result is strictly managed. If a QR does not appear on this listing, the requirement has not been approved by USDA and may neither be used nor enforced for USDA actions.

SPECIFIC ISSUES:

"Qualification requirement" (QR) means a Government requirement for testing or other quality assurance demonstration that must be completed before award of a contract. QRs include, but are not limited to, the submission requirements for a qualified products list (QPL), qualified bidders list (QBL), or qualified manufacturers list (QML).

Documentation and approval of QRs: For each contracting activity, the information in Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 9.2 is to be prepared and submitted to the Head of Contracting Activity Designee (HCAD) for approval to establish or change a QR.

Maintenance of information: For each contracting activity, the HCAD will maintain information on the QRs established by USDA.

Redelegation: The HCAD may not redelegate the authority to establish QRs under FAR Subpart 9.2.

Posting of QRs, lists of approved products, locations, or vendors, and the associated specifications: QRs, and specifications requiring a QR that are created by USDA activities and are applicable to USDA requirements or are applicable to requirements managed or directed by USDA activities (such as wildfire suppression programs) must be listed in this advisory and posted to http://www.usda.gov/procurement//business/qualifications.html. QRs not posted will not be enforceable by a USDA activity for its acquisitions or the acquisitions of others.

Adding a QR to this listing: The HCAD is responsible for maintaining data that supports the need for a QR, and is also responsible for making this data available to the public. The HCAD must submit the data to complete the listing matrix in adequate time for the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) to update the matrix on the Acquisition Toolkit. All data necessary for the update must be submitted at one time to the Chief, Procurement Policy Division (PPD) The posting will require approximately 20 calendar days to accomplish. In the case of deficient data, the HCAD will be notified of the deficiencies and the QR will not be posted.

Periodic Publication in FedBizOpps: If only one vendor (other than a mandatory source) or only one small business concern is qualified to provide a product or service under a QR, the agency shall publish a notice annually, at a minimum, in FedBizOpps to seek additional sources. Otherwise, the agency shall publish a notice seeking additional sources at least every 24 months.

QUESTIONS:

If you have questions about this advisory, please contact Todd Repass by telephone at (202) 690-1060, or by email at *todd.repass@usda.gov*.

This advisory is available at *http://www.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html*.

EXPIRATION DATE: This Advisory will not expire until canceled.

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