

Request for Proposals

Organic Cranberry Cultivation

Ten-Year License

Flax Pond Bog #3, East Falmouth, Massachusetts

The Town of Falmouth seeks proposals **for a ten (10) year** license to operate, manage and maintain an organic cranberry bog:

(a.) Flax 3 Bog, approximately 1.03 acres of existing cranberry bog

A map identifying the bog is attached hereto.

1. Objective - Organic Cranberry Cultivation

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit price and non-price proposals for organically managed and operated cranberry cultivation. The detail of this RFP is not intended to be prohibitive but is provided to give growers a clear outline of issues the Town would like addressed. Please submit any questions or concerns in writing to the Office of the Town Administrator who will make every effort to clarify concerns.

The Flax 3 Bog has been traditionally farmed for cranberries and was licensed for that purpose through 2004. All potential bidders are encouraged to inspect the bog conditions prior to submitting a proposal. A map and directions to the site are included in the appendix. The selected grower will describe his experience as a grower and will fully describe his/her ability to manage the bog in accordance with the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA)/Massachusetts Organic Certification Program. This RFP works in concert with the License Agreement attached detailed restrictions of use are detailed therein.

The non-price proposals will be evaluated using the comparative evaluation criteria and rating system described in the Comparative Evaluation Criteria section of this RFP. The highest scoring, most responsive and responsible grower meeting all minimum requirements will be recommended for consideration by the Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen.

2. Terms and Requirements

A. Proposer Qualifications

Proposals will be accepted from an established individual, corporation, partnership, or proprietorship (Organization), that furnish agricultural services.

B. General Terms and Conditions

1. Five copies and one original of all proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Proposal for Organic Cranberry Cultivation". The Proposal shall include a letter containing the name of the individual or organization submitting the proposal and the date of its presentation. One (1) copy of all Price proposals also shall be submitted on the form provided, under separate cover, in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Price Proposal for Organic Cranberry Cultivation.

2. All proposals shall contain a **Proposed Annual Operating Plan and a Schedule to achieve Organic Certification.**

3. The Town of Falmouth as represented by its Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen and the Conservation Commission (individually or collectively, the Client) first shall review each Proposal to ascertain whether it meets the minimum requirements set forth in this RFP. Any proposal failing to do so may be rejected.

3. Minimum Requirements

Each Proposal first shall be reviewed by the Client to determine whether or not it meets the following Minimum Requirements:

1. The Proposal must be received by the Office of the Administrator before the Opening, each task set forth in Scope of Services must be addressed in the Proposal narrative, and signed original copies of all documentation required (as applicable) in the Appendix and the following:

**Certificate of Insurance – General Liability
Inc. Chemical Application
Coverage (As applicable)
Workers Compensation
Auto Liability**

**Certificate of Non Collusion
State Tax Form**

References

Licenses of All Licensed Applicators to work on bog(s)

2. The Proposal must be from an individual, organization or team that normally provides the services specified in the RFP, and the Proposal must be signed by an agent (or agents) having authority to execute a binding contract at the proposed price on behalf of the proposer. The signature, title, address and phone number of such agent (or agents) must be included in the Proposal.

3. The Proposal must provide: (a) a narrative description of the experience of the Organization or Team in providing the services specified in the RFP; and (b) a listing of at least three (3) references that can confirm your experience and ability to produce a NOFA/Massachusetts Certified Organic Cranberry Crop.

4. The Proposal must identify the individual that will manage the bog as long as he or she works for the company. It will be the identified lead individual's responsibility to organize the work effort to accomplish the tasks set forth in your proposed operating plan. All required pesticide and herbicide applicators licenses will be identified and copies of required licenses must be included as applicable.

5. The Proposal must provide an **Annual Operating plan and Schedule to achieve Organic Certification.**

6. License Fee/Annual Payment.

License Fee/Annual Payment. There shall be no required minimum annual fee for 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, the first four years to be licensed. The licensee shall seek to attain organic certification at the end of year 4.

Annual Fee Payable Beginning December 1, 2008 and each December 1 of the licensed year thereafter. Each proposer will submit a sealed price proposal in accordance with section B of this proposal for years five through ten (2009 – 2014) of the license agreement.

Payment Schedule: Payments shall be made annually in three equal payments on March 1, April 1 and May 1 in the year following crop harvest.

Supporting Materials: Each year on or by December 1, the grower shall provide the Town with Load Delivery Statements and Delivery Tickets for the Flax 3 Bog. The statements and tickets shall be summarized in cover document showing the number of barrels harvested and the market value paid per barrel for the Flax 3 Bog.

4. Narrative Description of Operation

Please provide a narrative response to each of the areas outlined below. Additional back up materials such as forms used, photos, maps, charts, diagrams and technical bulletins may be submitted.

a. Experience and Qualifications

Please describe your agricultural experience, experience producing a marketable organic crop and your experience operating cranberry bogs.

b. Staffing

Describe all individuals that will be assigned to the bog and provide a brief position description, minimum skill requirements and the individual that will be assigned to the bog(s) proposed.

c. Equipment

Please fully describe all equipment that will be used to cultivate cranberries on the bog(s) proposed. Equipment should include all pumps, irrigation, water control, harvest, earth moving equipment, testing, and any other equipment that may be used to cultivate

cranberries. The Flax 3 Bog has an irrigation system including a propane tank and piping already in place. Any underground piping and furnishings are the property of the Town of Falmouth and are included in the license. The above ground pump, tank, sprinkler heads, etc., are the property of Handy Cranberry Trust and arrangements will have to be made by the selected grower to use or install a complete irrigation system.

d. Best Management Practices - ORGANIC CRANBERRY CULTIVATION

The Licensee shall utilize only the methods and procedures for growing, cultivating and harvesting Certified Organic cranberries and shall use all relevant methods described in the most current edition of the **NOFA/Massachusetts Organic Certification Program Manual, and as it applies, of the BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES GUIDE FOR MASSACHUSETTS CRANBERRY PRODUCTION** written by the University of Massachusetts Cranberry Experiment Station. These manuals are incorporated herein by reference.

e. Notification: Advance notice of any pesticide application, as applicable, must be submitted to the Bog Manager and the Board of Selectmen, Board of Health, **Advanced Notification will include:**

- **The pesticide to be used**
- **Scheduled Date or Dates of Application**

As applicable, Copies of signed records of chemical use must to be sent to the Pesticide Bureau and the Bog Manager.

f. Irrigation Management/Water Control

Please describe irrigation plan, schedule and annual flooding schedule. In addition please provide an oversight and maintenance plan to ensure pumps and sub-surface and surface water management systems are operating as proposed. Please describe any sub-surface irrigation, pumps and water management you propose to operate the bog(s). If known, please describe the schedule, duration of irrigation, and volumes of water to be redirected to flood bogs and to irrigate.

g. Method of Harvest

Please describe the harvest method(s) you intend to use and provide a monthly schedule of harvest activity.

h. Upland Management- Please describe your plans to maintain bog upland.

i. Sanding

Please include an annual sanding plan in your proposal in accordance with the following license term. The License does not grant any sanding rights to Licensee on Town owned land or property.

j. Wildlife Management. Please describe your plan to maintain and improve wildlife habitat Please refer to the License for limitations for pest control.

5. Annual Operating Plan

The primary measure of a grower's ability will be proposed in an Annual Operating Plan and **schedule to achieve a certified organic crop/harvest**. The Town understands that growing activities are highly influenced by weather and natural conditions and that the Annual Operating Plan will provide a monthly and seasonal target for activities. An additional monthly report required by the grower will detail the actual activities during the previous month.

The selected grower will submit an Annual Operating Plan each year by December 31 for approval by the Town for the subsequent growing season. The monthly reports will be submitted on the fifteenth of each month describing activities of the previous month, for example, the November 15th report shall document the activities for the October 1 – October 31 reporting period.

6. Oversight

The Town of Falmouth has a Bog Manager to oversee cranberry production and the management of related town property. The Bog Manager will report quarterly to the Town Administrator based on scheduled and unscheduled visits the bog and will follow up on any complaints of the public or the town and its agents. The consultant will use the Annual Operating Plan and monthly activity reports as a basis for regular, scheduled and unscheduled visits, water quality tests, and inspection of resource area and review of monthly growers reports.

7. Minimum Evaluation Criteria

1. Has the Proposer conformed in all material respects to the submission requirements as set forth in this RFP?
2. Has the proposer successfully managed and operated similar agricultural production?
3. Does the proposer have three references?
4. Does the proposer articulate knowledge, experience and ability to harvest a NOFA/Massachusetts Organic Certified crop?

8. Comparative Evaluation Criteria

The following section contains an explanation of the comparative evaluation criteria which will be used to measure the relative merits of each proposal which has met the minimum criteria established.

11- 20 Points - Highly Advantageous – Proposal excels on specified criteria

6 – 10 Points - Advantageous- Proposal fully meets the evaluation standard which has been specified

1-5 Points - Not Advantageous-Proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard, is incomplete or unclear, or both.

0 Points - Unacceptable. Proposal does not meet the specified criteria.

Following the individual ranking for each of the individual comparative criterion, proposal shall receive a composite rating corresponding to the rating scale described above.

1. The grower has experience in commercial agriculture.

Highly Advantageous- Grower has 5 or more consecutive years of experience

Advantageous-Grower has at least 3 and up to 5 consecutive years of experience

Not Advantageous- Grower has up to 3 years of consecutive experience.

Unacceptable-Grower has does not have any experience

2. The grower exhibits a strong knowledge of and ability to harvest a NOFA/Massachusetts Organic Certified Crop.

Highly Advantageous – Proposal excels on specified criteria

Advantageous- Proposal fully meets the evaluation standard which has been specified

Not Advantageous-Proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard, is incomplete or unclear, or both.

Unacceptable. Proposal does not meet the specified criteria.

3. The grower exhibits ability and commitment to provide environmental stewardship to improve and maintain water quality, habitat and wildlife while maintaining active cranberry agriculture.

Highly Advantageous – Proposal excels on specified criteria

Advantageous- Proposal fully meets the evaluation standard which has been specified

Not Advantageous-Proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard, is incomplete or unclear, or both.

Unacceptable. Proposal does not meet the specified criteria.

4. The Annual Report and Monthly Operating Schedule is clear and provides a detailed description of month-by-month activities that can be easily interpreted by a representative of the Town.

Highly Advantageous – Proposal excels on specified criteria

Advantageous- Proposal fully meets the evaluation standard which has been specified

Not Advantageous-Proposal does not fully meet the evaluation standard, is incomplete or unclear, or both.

Unacceptable. Proposal does not meet the specified criteria.

5. The Grower has presented an achievable plan to harvest a certified organic cranberry harvest.

Highly Advantageous – The grower has submitted a clear achievable plan to harvest an organic crop with the time frames requested.

Advantageous- It is clear from the narrative, Annual Plan and Schedule that the grower understands what is necessary to cultivate and harvest an organic cranberry crop and the schedule appears achievable.

Not Advantageous- It is unclear from the proposal that the methods and schedule proposed will achieve an organic harvest within the time-frame requested.

Unacceptable. The Proposal does not include a phased plan to achieve a certified crop.