

## Telling the Stories of GroupGAP

Request for Proposals

Wallace Center at Winrock International – November 6, 2017

### Background

Demand for fresh food that is healthy, local, and sustainably-produced is growing all over the country. To capitalize on this opportunity, many family farms are trying to scale up from selling at local farmers markets to selling into larger wholesale markets such as grocery stores, restaurants, and institutions.

For many farmers, scaling up means navigating food safety regulations and requirements for the first time. Federal mandates like the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act and wholesale buyer requirements like Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification create barrier that threatens to box out small-scale farmers from accessing the lion's share of the market for food.

To overcome this challenge, new collaborative approaches to food safety certification such as the USDA GroupGAP Audit Program (GGAP) have emerged to provide a method for farmers to work together with supply chain partners to develop food safety and product quality systems that enable food safety certification and access to wholesale markets.

Today, the Wallace Center at Winrock International (Wallace Center) works closely with USDA, farmers, food hubs, industry groups, regulators, and the buying community to increase understanding, farmer utilization, and buyer acceptance of GGAP.

### Opportunity Overview

Through this opportunity, Wallace Center aims to tell the story of the GroupGAP program through a set of **five buyer-facing promotional features** that share successes, challenges, and opportunities through the eyes of participating farmers, food safety professionals, wholesale buyers, and USDA administrators.

We are requesting proposals from experienced **marketing, writing, and media development professionals** interested in researching and producing these features and communicating the relationships between farmers, wholesale buyers, and consumers in regions across the country. These promotional features will be published and disseminated online and in print and will be used as tools to increase awareness and acceptance of the GroupGAP program among leading organizations in the wholesale grocery and foodservice sector as well as food safety stakeholders nationwide.

This opportunity is made possible with funding provided by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Local Food Promotion Program.

### Project Description

The selected marketing professional(s) will work closely with Wallace Center's Food Enterprise Development (FED) team to articulate the theme and key concepts behind each of the five features. We will facilitate introductions and communications with each organization highlighted in these features. After these introductions, the marketing professional(s) will conduct independent research and interviews to gather background information and inform content development.

Using background information provided by Wallace Center and additional information gathered during research, the marketing professional(s) will create a narrative that shows how and why buyers and other food safety stakeholders are using and supporting the GroupGAP program and other approaches to collaborative food safety certification. These narratives will also explore how certification is important to supporting regional food businesses, local farmers, and the everyday people that benefit from having fresh, local food that is held to the highest standards of quality and safety.

## Deliverables

The selected marketing professional(s) will complete the following activities for **each** of the five promotional features developed through this project:

- Work with the FED team to understand the key concepts and themes;
- Conduct any research needed to develop the narrative, including interviews with featured businesses, organizations, and FED team technical resources;
- Develop 1200-1500 words of publication-ready narrative, incorporating feedback and suggested edits from the FED team;
- Produce or collect 3-5 new and existing photos, infographics, and other media to support the narrative;
- Provide substantive input as necessary on the final graphic design and layout for each feature in both digital and print formats.

The anticipated timetable for project deliverables is as follows:

1. First feature produced and ready for publication in February 2018
2. Second feature produced and ready for publication in April 2018
3. Third feature produced and ready for publication in June 2018
4. Fourth feature produced and ready for publication in August 2018
5. Fifth feature produced and ready for publication in October 2018

The period of performance for this project will run from January 2018 through December 2018. The themes for the first three features have been identified, and the remaining two have yet to be determined. All features will be completed by or before December 2018.

## Budget

The proposed budget for this project should not exceed **\$12,500**, inclusive of all costs.

## Proposal Instructions

Proposals must be submitted by email to Elizabeth Atwell ([elizabeth.atwell@winrock.org](mailto:elizabeth.atwell@winrock.org)) by 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time on Monday, November 20, 2017. The Wallace Center will acknowledge receipt of all applications within one business day. Interviews will occur the week of November 27, 2017 and final decisions will be made by December 4, 2017.

Proposals should include the following components:

- Cover page including the following: complete business/marketing professional's name and address, including all primary contact information
- A resume outlining relevant experience and qualifications
- Examples and samples of past projects, preferably of a similar size and scope
- Proposed workplan, inclusive of project stages and milestones
- Proposed project budget inclusive of fees for professional services, hours, administrative services, and any relevant supplies.

## Contractor Requirements

We are seeking experienced marketing, writing, and media development professionals. Experience marketing to food retailers, foodservice providers, and the produce industry is preferred. Technical understanding of farm food safety certification programs is preferred but not required.

If selected, the marketing professional(s) will be expected to be in communication with the FED team throughout all phases of the project. The marketing professional(s) is/are expected to produce all elements of all features, which may include but are not limited to, content and format drafts, photographs (which may be sourced if properly credited, and with appropriate rights of use), infographics, and final narrative. The marketing professional(s) is/are expected to provide content in formats suitable for both print and online publication.

The marketing professional(s) will be required to secure his/her own facilities and equipment. Any assignment or subcontracting by the selected professional(s) for the work performed, or goods and/or services to be provided, in whole or in part, and any other interest in conjunction with this request for proposal, shall not be permitted without the express written consent of the Wallace Center.

## About the Wallace Center

The Wallace Center at Winrock International supports entrepreneurs and communities as they build a new, 21st century food system that is healthier for people, the environment, and the economy by providing targeted training and technical assistance, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, highlighting successful models, and creating learning networks.

The Food Enterprise Development (FED) initiative of the Wallace Center works to develop thriving local farms and food businesses that satisfy the demands of a growing customer base while remaining committed to triple-bottom-line values: generating profit and supporting regional economic development while sustaining the environment and contributing to local communities.