



California Prune Board

February 10, 2023

Request for Audit Proposal

The California Prune Board, a California state marketing order (Board) and Prune Marketing Committee, a federal marketing order (Committee), have decided to conduct a selection process for external audit services. We are inviting all qualified CPA firms to participate and to submit a proposal. Success in this process requires that the appointed firm be prepared to perform audit procedures on our financial statements for the fiscal year ended July 31, 2023. **Proposals for remote audit services will not be considered.** The appointed firm would also perform agreed-upon procedures over the Board's compliance with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's *Accounting Guidelines and General Rules*.

With respect to our desire to conduct the selection process for a service provider, we believe it appropriate to share the following:

- The Members of the Board and Committee, Audit Committee and Management believe that it is in the best interest of the Board and Committee to periodically review our external audit relationship. We place the highest emphasis on the integrity of our financial processes and disclosures. We believe that our audits must deliver the optimum levels of assurance to our members.
- Responding firms will be evaluated on the quality of the written proposals and if necessary, oral presentations, as described in detail later in this package. The Board and Committee are not obligated to select any of the firms responding to its request for proposal and may use any criteria it deems appropriate to make its final selection.

Written Proposals

Your proposal is not to exceed twenty pages in length and is to be submitted by close of business on Friday, March 31, 2023. Please send 3 copies to the following address:

California Prune Board
c/o: Jared Ruggles, Controller
3017 Douglas Blvd., Suite 280
Roseville, CA 95661

Phone: (916) 749-3442
Email: jruggles@californiaprunes.org

3017 Douglas Boulevard, Suite 280, Roseville, California 95661 | O: (916) 749-3442 F: (916) 749-3632

Your proposal must address each of the following areas:

1. Qualifications of your firm

- Statement summarizing the benefits of engaging your firm;
- Depth of the firm's practice in serving CA state and federal marketing orders;
- Depth of the firm's practice in auditing in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*;
- Depth of the firm's practice in performing audits of compliance in accordance with Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*;
- Description of relevant industry and technical experience.

2. Experience, dedication, and references of the service team

- Names of the core service team and locations;
- Description of the relevant experience of each member of the engagement team and their respective roles (please specifically include experience level with governmental entities);
- References for each senior member of the engagement team;
- Description of your firm's technical training requirements;
- Description of how your firm's senior members will be involved in the engagement and approach to communication with the Audit Committee and Management.

3. Service process overview

- Processes for delivering audit services that are customized, responsive and aligned with the Company's specific business needs;
- Processes that your firm employs to address matters related to client satisfaction, performance measurement and continuous improvement;
- Description of your approach to transition from the current audit firm, if applicable;
- Description of methods employed by your firm to maximize audit efficiency;
- Address your firm's ability to accommodate specific time frame requirements, which include the following:
 - Interim work to be performed in July or August
 - Audit report to be delivered by December 5, 2023

4. Quality assurance

- Describe the internal processes used for quality assurance;
- Describe the firm's approach to resolving accounting and financial reporting issues.

5. Independence

- Describe internal practices to ensure compliance with independence requirements and freedom from conflicts of interest;
- Confirm that the firm will take all necessary steps to ensure its independence.

6. Fees

- Competitive fee quote, including out-of-pocket costs, to complete the following engagements for fiscal years 2023 through 2025:
 - Audit of financial statements of the Board, including a Single Audit (3 sources of direct

- federal funding)
 - Agreed-upon procedures for the Board's compliance with CDFA guidelines
 - Audit of financial statements of the Committee
- Fees should be stated separately for each and include an estimate of hours;
- General overview of the audit timelines.

Evaluation Criteria

Our evaluation process will focus on the six areas of the proposal, as previously identified.

Dependent upon the Selection Committee's evaluation of the quality of the written proposal, firms may be requested to prepare an oral presentation to the Selection Committee in March/April 2023. The duration of the presentation should be no longer than 45 minutes in length, inclusive of questions noted above and answers should be made by no more than three members of your firm. The Selection Committee will provide sufficient notification to allow the firms to schedule and prepare for the oral presentation.

Background on the California Prune Board

The California Prune Board, an instrumentality of the Department of Food and Agriculture, State of California (CDFA), is a California state marketing order established in 1952. The Board represents the growers and processors of California Prunes. The Board and Committee are jointly administered by a staff of six in Roseville, CA.

The Board is primarily responsible for activities related to consumer public relations, nutrition & crop research and export market development. The Board participates in the USDA Market Access Program, Emerging Markets Program, and Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program (federal funding). Proposing firms are encouraged to visit our website at: www.californiaprunes.org to obtain a thorough overview of the Board. The most recent annual audited financial statements for the Board and Committee and AUP report for the Board are available upon request. Additional information regarding the AUP engagement can be found at www.cdfa.ca.gov/mkt/mkt/pdf/2010_1022ManualForAgreedUponProcedures.pdf, Manual for Agreed Upon Procedures.

Background on the Prune Marketing Committee

The Prune Marketing Committee, an unincorporated instrumentality of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is a federal marketing order established in 1949. The main provisions in the marketing order were suspended in 2005 and the Committee remains active on a limited administrative budget consisting primarily of shared costs with the Board.

Confidentiality

By accepting to take part in this proposal process, you agree to keep in confidence all information imparted to you in relation with the proposal process, not to disclose it to third parties and not to use it for any other purpose other than this proposal.

We are inviting you to participate in this proposal process, and we will schedule sufficient time with

our management team to provide you with the necessary background and information to prepare your proposal submission. Should you require additional information or any clarification as to this proposal request, please feel free to contact Jared Ruggles by email (jruggles@californiaprunes.org) or phone (916-749-3442).

Sincerely,

Jared Ruggles, CPA
Controller

In accordance with USDA, the Board and Committee prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact Becky at (916) 749-3442 or contact us through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.