



CONSUMER RESEARCH REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

California Prune Board – U.S.

Posted: September 16, 2026

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The California Prune Board (CPB) is a state marketing order representing California prune growers and processors. CPB's U.S. marketing program is focused on building long-term consumer demand by increasing awareness, relevance, usage and perceptions of California Prunes among Food & Cooking Enthusiasts (FCEs).

CPB is seeking a research partner to conduct a consumer tracking study measuring progress against benchmarks established through foundational A&U research conducted in 2023.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of this project is to measure changes in consumer awareness, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors against benchmarks established through CPB's foundational 2023 A&U research and evaluate progress made through the domestic marketing program over the past three years.

The selected agency should recommend an efficient research approach that maintains comparability with key 2023 measures while maximizing value within the available budget.

The tracking study should address:

- **Awareness & perceptions:** Changes in key measures established in 2023.
- **Usage:** Changes in usage occasions and purchase behaviors.
- **Barriers:** Movement in known barriers to consumption and emerging opportunities.
- **Brand attributes:** Changes in perceptions of taste, health, versatility and quality.
- **Program KPIs:** Progress against key consumer KPIs and marketing objectives.
- **Target behaviors:** Changes in FCE behaviors and implications for communications strategy.

SCOPE PHILOSOPHY:

This is primarily a quantitative tracking study. CPB is open to qualitative or other methodologies if the agency believes they would add meaningful value to the research objectives, but they are not required. Agencies should recommend the most efficient approach to achieving the core tracking objectives within the available budget.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, CPB conducted foundational A&U research that established the FCE target, identified key consumer attitudes, behaviors and barriers, and established benchmarks across taste, quality, versatility and health/wellness. The selected agency will receive CPB's 2026 Brand Positioning and Narrative document summarizing the target consumer, messaging framework and key 2023 benchmarks. Proposals should build upon, rather than recreate, this strategic foundation.

Since 2023, CPB has built its domestic marketing and communications program around a taste- and versatility-first approach. In 2024/25, CPB tested marketing messages across brand pillars with target consumers to identify the most effective ways to communicate the value of California Prunes, with findings informing subsequent program communications.

Key 2023 baseline findings:

- FCEs represent ~12% of the U.S. population, with 32.9% of the population aged 41–61.
- Within this segment, 43% are heavy prune users, 28% medium, 8% light and 21% non-users.
- Taste-first messaging was identified as a key opportunity for engaging the target audience.
- Versatility, particularly cooking applications, was identified as a gap, with health messaging becoming more credible when integrated into taste- and versatility-first content.

For proposal development and comparable pricing, the 2023 A&U study included approximately 1,850 U.S. consumers, with an oversample to reach approximately 300 FCEs ages 41–61. Agencies should use this as a general planning benchmark and recommend the sample approach they believe is most appropriate for the tracking objectives.

AVAILABLE BUDGET

Available budget is \$30,000–\$40,000 for a focused tracking study measuring progress against key 2023 benchmarks. Agencies may propose message testing or other enhancements if they add meaningful value and should price optional enhancements separately.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The company to take on this role will be chosen based on the following selection criteria:

- Proven experience conducting online consumer research in food, consumer, wellness/healthcare and female-skewing audiences.
- Demonstrated ability to design efficient, cost-effective tracking studies while maintaining methodological rigor and comparability.
- Strength and rationale of the proposed research approach, including any recommended qualitative or other methodologies.

- Demonstrated ability to provide timely analysis and clearly communicate findings within the proposed budget.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Proposals are due **September 25, 2026**, and should be submitted electronically to Kiaran Locy at klocy@californiaprunes.org.

Questions are due by **September 22, 2026**. CPB may provide additional information to interested agencies as needed.

Proposals should include:

- Agency capabilities, relevant case studies and client references
- Recommended approach and rationale
- Proposed project team
- Budget and timeline, including a base scope and separately priced optional enhancements
- Proposal in PowerPoint or PDF format

Timeline

Deadline to submit questions	Sept. 22
Deadline for interested parties to submit proposals	Sept. 25
CPB to interview potential parties and select research partner	Sept. 30
Unsuccessful applicants will be advised	Oct. 5
Research kickoff	Oct. 6
Target survey fielding	Oct. 13

For complete background information about California Prunes, visit: www.californiaprunes.org

Disclaimer: The California Prune Board reserves the right to modify or withdraw this RFP at any time, and to accept or reject any or all proposals in whole or in part. CPB is not responsible for any costs incurred by the submitting PR agency in connection with this RFP.