



Request for Proposal

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Master Contract #: _____
Vendor Contract #: _____
VISION Vendor #: _____

Release Date: 3/15/2024

Response Due: 4/22/2024

PROJECT DETAILS

Best Practices to Support Dairy Farms Hosting Summer Camp Programs

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM), seeks a contractor to conduct research of existing farm camp programs offered by dairy farms and develop guidance to assist other dairy farms in launching or expanding dairy farm camp programs. The guidance document will serve as a how-to guide for dairy farms to start or expand summer farm camp programs. The how-to guide will include sample dairy-focused curriculum and activities, budget templates, and an accounting of the labor, infrastructure, and insurance requirements for starting summer camp programs at dairy farms.

Agency/Department

Name: Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets

Contact: Gina Clithero, Farm to Institution Program Manager

Address: 116 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620

Contact Phone: (802) 585-6225

Contact Email: gina.clithero@vermont.gov

Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document via email to the contact above.

TIMELINE*

RFP Release Date: **3/15/2024**

RFP Responses Due: **4/22/2024**

Contract Start Date: **6/1/2024**

Contract End Date: **12/30/2024**

**To be finalized after proposals are received and negotiated*



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BUDGET

Maximum budget for project: \$20,000

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Farm camps build agricultural literacy, connect farms with local families, generate farm revenue, and provide needed summer childcare options for families. There are a handful of Vermont dairy farms that host vibrant and highly sought-after farm camp programs. This project aims to explore the benefits and impacts of these camps for dairy farm viability, community connection, and the reasons why dairy farmers offer camp programs. This project also aims to develop new knowledge and resources to help dairy farms launch these programs.

In 2020, the University of Vermont Extension released the [How To Host Summer Camp on Your Farm](#) guide, as part of their Agritourism Best Practices Series. This guide covers many important considerations for starting a farm camp but is not specific to dairy farms. Best practices and how to guides designed specifically for the challenges and opportunities of dairy farms are needed to support the creation and expansion of dairy farm camps.

This project is funded by the Vermont Dairy Promotion Council. The purpose of the Vermont Dairy Promotion Council funding is to promote the sale of milk and milk products through marketing, education, and research initiatives. This project will be overseen by the Farm to Institution Program of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, which aims to increase agricultural literacy, strengthen markets for Vermont grown and produced products, improve equitable access to nutritious food, and celebrate Vermont's agricultural identity through facilitating connections between farms and local institutions such as schools, early childhood programs, colleges, hospitals, and correctional facilities.

STATEMENT OF WORK

VAAFAM seeks a contractor with previous experience in conducting research and outreach to farms to assess the existing resources to help farms host farm camps and identify where new knowledge or resources are needed. The contracted firm will work directly with Agency of Agriculture staff to understand the factors that lead to successful farm camp models and identify and develop a best practices document that will help dairy farms create or expand farm camp programs.

This project can include, but is not limited to, the following elements to be conducted in two phases:

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1. Phase One – Discovery:

The contractor should value the discovery phase to gain a variety of perspectives and opinions from dairy farms that currently host farm camp programs, interested dairy farms, and service providers that support agritourism, farm to school, and on-farm educational experiences. VAAFAM staff will work with the selected contractor to identify organizations and businesses that should be engaged in this process to complete the following:

- a. Contractor will gather information about farm camp programs hosted by Vermont dairy farms.
- b. Review existing resources for farm camp development for farmers, such as [Operating a Summer Camp](#) and [Host Summer Camp on Your Farm](#) by UVM Extension and determine what additional resources are needed to specifically support dairy farms in launching summer camp programs.
- c. Conduct at least 4 interviews of existing dairy farm camp programs to understand: (1) what resources (funding, people, information, guidance documents, technical assistance, etc.) were most useful to them when starting their dairy farm camp (2) what do they wish they knew when they started their camp, (3) types of activities and curriculum that they utilize (4) on-farm infrastructure that is critical for hosting dairy farm camps (5) operating costs for their camp and the extent to which offering the summer camp has improved farm viability and community connection.
- d. Contractor will capture qualitative and/or quantitative data to demonstrate the extent to which farm camps support farm viability, agricultural literacy, and community connection.
- e. Contractor will engage with tax and liability professionals, UVM Extension personnel, and service providers that support Vermont farms with on-farm education to gather constraints and considerations for liability, insurance, and example financials for running a profitable farm camp.

2. Phase Two – Best Practices Guide and Recommendations:

The contractor and VAAFAM staff will jointly determine Phase II focus areas as a direct result of research and identified areas of development from Phase I. Phase II may include the following:

- a. Contractor will develop a best practice guide to assist dairy farms in launching or expanding dairy farm camp programs.
- b. The best practices document will be designed and formatted by the contractor, with advisement from the program manager to align with [State of Vermont Brand Standards and Guidelines](#).
- c. The best practices guide will include at a minimum:
 - o Tips and considerations for planning and launching a new farm camp.

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- Identifying key individuals and resources that can support farms in launching camp programs.
 - Example budget and financial worksheets for launching and operating a farm camp.
 - At least two pre-packaged dairy-focused activities or curriculum programs designed for on-farm experiences.
 - An assessment of key facility and infrastructure needs
 - Considerations for hiring and finding staff to run the camp
 - Assessment of the types of insurance needed for these types of operations
- d. Contractor will present an outreach plan to the program manager for how to disseminate the best practices document most effectively to dairy farms that might be interested in starting a farm camp.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The guide will be provided to VAAFM, and dairy industry producers, business planning service providers, agritourism specialists, farm to school practitioners, and partners. Contractors will be expected to hold at least one virtual presentation for dairy producers and service providers. The guide will be made available online for free download.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES & DELIVERABLES

- The Contractor will conduct a planning meeting with Agency Staff during June 2024.
- Contractor will draft a guide and incorporate two rounds of edits and feedback from the VAAFM.
- Contractor will incorporate edits and provide a finalized best practice guide suitable for public dissemination.
- Contractor will have a final package due December 30, 2024.
- Contractor will host at least one online webinar, open to interested stakeholders, to discuss and share research findings prior to contract end date.

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SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please include the following with your response to this bid:

1. **Project approach, background, and experience:** Please provide a history of your firm, a list of current and/or notable clients, a description of your firm's experience with research and outreach to Vermont farms, notable examples of successful outcomes, and what makes your firm the right fit for this project.
2. **Resumes of project team leader and other team members.**
3. **Proposed work plan, activities, associated deliverables, reporting measures, and timeline**
4. **Project budget:** Please submit a budget, not to exceed \$20,000 that is both realistic and reasonable to complete the scope of services. Budget must tie specific activities to deliverables, with clear cost associated with each component of the proposal. Proposal shall include an hourly rate for services and any related expenses to be billed. Proposals should include all relevant costs to complete the work as detailed in PERFORMANCE MEASURES & DELIVERABLES, should note any travel requirements, and all proposals should include necessary costs to meet requirements of [Attachment C](#).
5. **3 samples of similar research projects (links to download are appropriate)**
6. **Certificate of Insurance** which meets the criteria as outlined in Attachment C
7. A **W9** signed within the last 6 months