

Justification for Other Than Full and Open Competition (FAR 6.3)

Pesticide Use Data 2014 – 2018 PR 0040141280

1. Contracting Agency and Activity. The Department of the Interior (DOI), United States Geological Survey (USGS), plans to contract by means other than full and open competition. This document sets forth the justification and approval for use of one of the exceptions to full and open competition allowed under the Competition in Contracting Act (CICA) of 1984.

2. Nature of Action Being Approved. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program, requests award of a non-competitive, 5-year contract to GfK Kynetec Inc. for data on agricultural pesticide use in the United States.

3. Description of Supplies or Services. Information on the amount and distribution of pesticide usage in the United States, and on the use of genetically modified crops (seed trait data for cotton, corn, and soybeans), is needed in order for the USGS NAWQA Program to study the effects of pesticides on water quality. Annual use estimates are required for major crops and all significant active pesticide ingredients at the geographic level of Crop Reporting Districts (CRDs), including all CRDs in the United States. Annual use statistics are required for 2014-2018, including reliability estimates for each year, and annual seed trait data for cotton, corn, and soybeans for 2014-2018 (also reported at the CRD level).

4. Estimated Dollar Value. [REDACTED]

5. Statutory Authority. The proposed action may be awarded without full and open competition under 41 U.S.C. 253(c)(1) as implemented in FAR 6.302-1.

6. Rationale Supporting Use of Citation in No. 5.

The USGS NAWQA Program produces a national assessment of pesticides in water resources through modeling. Accomplishing this assessment and related modeling requires annual estimates of pesticide use for watersheds that are sampled, as well as all other watersheds in the nation. The use data provided by GfK Kynetec Inc. is the only source of such data on a nation-wide basis for each year. The USGS models and assessment results are provided to the public and other users through publications and web site access. The models are used by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other state and local governments to evaluate the distribution of pesticides in water resources and potential concerns for aquatic life and drinking water.

GfK Kynetec Inc. is the only provider of the required data for USGS NAWQA Program providing use coefficients for 320 active ingredients used on 60 crops grown across the conterminous US, as well as seed trait information. Information is collected annually based on a statistical sample of 432 sub-state CRDs, which represent multi-county areas within a state that share similar crop management practices and growing conditions. GfK Kynetec Inc., also provides estimates of the statistical reliability of use estimates for each active ingredient and crop.

GfK Kynetec Inc. is uniquely qualified because they are the only entity, public or private, that supplies the subject data on an annual basis at the CRD spatial resolution. The data are developed from a proprietary statistical survey employing one-on-one detailed surveys of thousands of growers. No other firm provides this service, nor does any Federal agency.

7. Other Information. N/A

8. The Efforts to Identify Additional Sources Including the Market Research Conducted.

Market research was conducted in accordance with FAR 10, during May 2014. This research was conducted by queries to other agencies such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Industry (The National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy, NCFAP) scientists. USDA, EPA, and NCFAP which provide less frequent and more spatially aggregated data that do not meet needs of USGS NAWQA Program.

A Google web search was performed on the following terms/phrases: (1) “agricultural pesticide use in United States” (22.6 million results); (2) “pesticide sales data in United States” (1.5 million results); and (3) “chemical use on crops in United States” (18.1 million results). Reviewing the top results returned in each of these searches verified that no other sources provide use data that meet the required criteria for the conterminous U.S. by CRD for characterizing pesticide use at a watershed scale.

In the “agricultural pesticide use United States” web search we discovered the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Agricultural Chemical Use database; however, this data is aggregated to the state level and not by county or watersheds. The "agricultural pesticide use United States" search identified the NCFAP National Pesticide Use Database updated for 1997. We have previously used this data; however, this data is not current and NCFAP is no longer maintaining the database. The GfK Kynetec database contains pesticide use estimates for each year from 1992 to 2013 for over 320 active ingredients and 60 crops by crop reporting district (watershed); whereas, the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy contains estimates for only 200 active ingredients and 87 crops for only a typical crop year in the 1991-1993 time period (updated to 1997) by four USDA regions only (Northeastern US, Northcentral US, Southern US, Western US). In the "pesticides sales data United States" Google search, we found USEPA Pesticide Industry Sales and Usage Reports 2000-2001. However, these data are not current and are aggregated to the United States level and not by state, county or watershed.

The vendors and government sources identified in the market research do not meet the USGS NAWQA requirements because they do not provide nationwide coverage for each year for the majority of pesticides used. These deficiencies make the alternative data sources unsuitable for USGS water-quality assessment and modeling requirements.

9. Future Plans to Permit Competition.

The USGS NAWQA Program will continue to conduct market research to identify additional vendors that can meet the Government’s requirements. If additional vendors are identified, the Government will compete future requirements to maximum extent practicable.

10. Recommendation and Certification from Program Office. Based on the information presented above, I recommend this acquisition be conducted on the basis of other than full and open competition. I certify that technical data which form a basis for this justification that are the responsibility of technical or requirements personnel are complete and accurate.



Stephen R. Moulton II, Asst. Chief
USGS National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program

5/28/2014
Date

11. Certifications from the Contracting Officer:

All of the requirements of the Competition in Contracting Act, (41 U.S.C. 253), as implemented in the Federal and Interior Acquisition Regulations, have been considered in preparing this justification. This justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

13. Approvals

Signature: _____
Title: Contracting Officer Date

Signature: _____
Title: Chief, Acquisition Branch Date

Signature: _____
Title: Bureau Competition Advocate Date

The U.S. Geological Survey(USGS) considers employee signatures to be Personal Protected Information, and therefore all employee signatures have been redacted. By posting this document, the Contracting Officer attests all appropriate signatures have been obtained.