United States Department of Agriculture
Decision to Restrict Competition under the Simplified Acquisition Threshold
Identification Number: 1173705 / 1232SA26Q0960

In accordance with the Revolutionary Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Overhaul (RFO) FAR 12.102(a), the following documents the decision to restrict competition for this acquisition.

(1) Mission Area and Contracting Activity.

Requisition Number: 1173705

Requesting Activity Agency: USDA-ARS Roman L. Hurska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (126538)

Contracting Activity: USDA-ARS Acquisition and Property Division (1232SA)

[redacted]

(3) Brief Description of Supplies or Services

The acquisition involves procuring a laboratory-grade blots and gels imaging system and supplies that allow for the use of the imaging system. This is a critical piece of scientific equipment used to capture high-sensitivity images of protein and DNA gels and well as chemiluminescent western blots. This instrument is essential for analyzing samples collected by the Meat Safety and Quality research unit for mission critical research projects. The blots and gels imaging system needs to be purchased to enhance the laboratory's analytical capabilities, ensure accurate and reproducible results, and support ongoing research projects that require precise analysis.

(1) Suggested Source

The suggested contractor is:
Bio-Rad Laboratories Inc
4000 ALFRED NOBEL DR
HERCULES, CA 94547 USA
UEI: KBN4ZDJ47ZB9

(4) Justification for Restricting Competition and the Basis for that Decision.

A. Explain the unique qualifications/characteristics of the proposed contractor or product and why no other contractor or product/service can meet the Government's need.
The acquisition of the blots and gels imaging system must be restricted to the imaging system manufactured by Bio-Rad. This is because the current system utilized by USMARC has proprietary software for databasing and analyzing the blot and gel images. The current system is developing hardware issues that are not repairable and is the reason for replacement. The proposed system utilizes the same proprietary software (Image Lab Software) as the current system, and purchase of the proposed system will allow access to the older images we have databased and the ability to reanalyze those images when needed. Since the software is proprietary to Bio-Rad, the purchase of any other imager would not allow access to the years of older images we have databased for reanalysis. Failure to get equipment that allows for the use of the older images could result in skewed data and a large cost to the government as new images will need to be analyzed. It would be a cost in both samples to analyze and in labor cost.

B. Describe market research conducted and the results or the reason why no market research was conducted.
Market research was conducted to verify if any other manufacturers that utilize the same software are available. Bio-Rad is the only manufacturer with equipment that is available. We also conducted market research to find vendors that Bio-Rad Laboratory equipment is available to be bought from. [redacted]