

Request for Proposal

High Country Kill and Chill Slaughter Plant Management and Operation

Overview

Watauga County is seeking proposals from qualified individuals or organizations to manage and operate a new slaughter plant that will be built and owned by the county, to be leased to an operator to manage. The slaughter plant is to be used for slaughter of cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats under USDA inspection, for further processing offsite. The ideal candidate will have experience and expertise in processing meat under USDA inspection, will have been operating in meat processing and production for at least two years prior, and demonstrate capability to produce the following outcomes:

- Ensure county producer access to slaughter/processing
- Have capacity to slaughter/process up to 100 beef equivalent per week
- Familiarity with and compliance to USDA regulatory standards for commercial meat production
- Have equipment and capability to safely handle, transport, and manage raw perishable food product under temperature control

Submission Requirements*

Proposals should be submitted in writing and should include the following information:

- A cover letter that provides an overview of the applicant's qualifications and experience
- A narrative of the applicant's proposed management and operation plan for the slaughter plant (see instructions for narrative below)
- A list of the applicant's key personnel and their qualifications & hiring, recruitment, and training capacity
- Budget and revenue projections
- Reference or support letters from customers, producers, and/or others that evidence the applicant's qualifications and commitment to the project
- Copy of applicant's HACCP plan

Note: submission of project plans, budgets, and/or support letters **in any format may be submitted, so long as the completed application addresses all relevant questions and required information.*

Instructions for Narrative

Narrative should answer, at a minimum, the following questions:

1. Applicant Information
 - a. Business name, address, legal structure, state of incorporation, and tax ID
 - b. USDA establishment number
 - c. Schedule of owners with percentage ownership
 - d. Number of years in business
2. Facility Plan
 - a. What resources does the applicant offer in aiding with the design, development, engineering, and construction of the facility?
 - b. What type of plan or design, generally, for the facility does the applicant envision?
3. Operations and Services
 - a. Does the applicant propose to assume full and exclusive management and operation of the facility, or partial or shared access? If partial or shared access is proposed, what measures does the applicant propose to facilitate shared management and with whom/what entities would management be shared?
 - b. How will the applicant ensure humane and low stress livestock handling practices are in place?
 - c. How will the applicant ensure that Watauga area farmers will not be excluded from slaughter and processing services?
 - d. How will the applicant price services, and can the applicant demonstrate sustainable profitability at the intended price points?
 - e. How does the applicant propose to handle waste from the facility? Are there any plans to process or repurpose byproduct?
4. Capacity
 - a. Recognizing that the planned facility is intended, currently, to have space for slaughter only - describe applicant's capacity for further processing, packaging, and labeling offsite
 - b. Include a description of estimated total capacity in pounds processed, and in beef equivalent number of head processed per year
 - c. What capacity does the applicant have for safely handling and transporting fresh meat to other facilities under temperature control?

5. USDA and Regulatory Compliance

- a. Describe the applicant's experience operating in meat processing under USDA inspection?

6. Staffing

How will the applicant recruit and staff the facility? Describe proposed pay scale, benefits, & training.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Experience and expertise in slaughter & processing of red meat under USDA inspection
- Proposed management and operation plan for the slaughter plant
- Qualifications of key personnel
- Financial proposal
- References

Timeline

Proposals must be submitted to Watauga County by July 15, 2024. The county government will review the proposals and select a candidate (or candidates) to manage and operate the slaughter plant.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this RFP or the slaughter plant project, please contact Watauga County Extension Director Jim Hamilton at jim_hamilton@ncsu.edu or County Manager Deron Geouque at deron.geouque@watgov.org