

Request for Proposal for American Pecan Council and American Pecan Promotion Board

Project: Fair Act Study

The American Pecan Council (APC) and American Pecan Promotion Board seek proposals from qualified firms or individuals to conduct separate evaluations of each organization's effectiveness and return on investment for 2020 to 2024. These organizations are issuing the RFP in tandem because some promotional efforts and research led by the APC shifted to the APPB during the time period under consideration, and – together – these organizations collectively represent the industry's national and global marketing efforts.

The primary objective of this evaluation is to assess the economic effectiveness of the promotional efforts funded by these programs, determine their overall benefit to the pecan industry, and ensure their alignment with the Council and Board's strategic goals. This evaluation, known as the Federal Agriculture Improvement & Reform (FAIR) Act Study, is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) every five years under the 1996 Farm Bill.

While it is possible that both the APC and APPB may select the same applicant, should they choose different applicants, each selected applicant will be expected to collaborate to ensure that the unique contributions of each organization are properly evaluated.

This collaboration must be conducted with clear assurance that no research funded by one organization will be used to assess the effectiveness of the other. Additionally, all funding must remain entirely separate and be administered independently by each organization.

Process for Request for Proposals (RFP)

Companies or individuals wishing to apply for the project must complete the Request for Proposals (RFP) application. Proposals will be evaluated in no more than two phases.

All applications should be emailed to Anne Warden, CEO, at awarden@americanpecan.com and Emma Garner, Director of Operations, at egarner@americanpecan.com, and are to be postmarked or emailed on or before June 6, 2025. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted or considered. All written proposals will be evaluated by APC and APPB or its agents in a fair, open, and competitive manner.

Background of the American Pecan Council

The APC is a federal marketing order established in November 2016. The purpose of the order is to assist the American pecan industry with the promotion, research, standardization, and consumer education of American pecans. The order provides the pecan industry with a coordinated program designed to strengthen the American pecan industry's position in the marketplace, with a particular focus on increasing U.S. exports of pecans.

Background on the American Pecan Promotion Board

The APPB is a research and promotion order (or “checkoff) established in October 2021 and funded by U.S. pecan producers and importers. The purpose of the APPB is to increase demand for generic pecans through marketing, research, and partnerships, particularly in the U.S. and Mexico.

Both the APC and APPB are overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), making them governmental programs that have full protection and oversight of the USDA.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should clearly articulate the vision, strategic direction, and execution plan for the proposed research program.

For this submission, the American Pecan Council (APC) and the American Pecan Promotion Board (APPB) are seeking a research proposal that delivers an economic evaluation of pecans and assesses the relationship between pecan market performance and the respective expenditures of the APC and APPB. The analysis must be conducted separately for each organization, resulting in two distinct reports that present findings unique to each entity. The independent evaluation must contain the following sections:

1. **Introduction and Background** - Provide context for the proposed research, including an overview of the organization and the relevance of the study.
2. **Objectives and Scope** - The proposal should clearly define the research objectives and outline the specific areas of focus to be addressed. The intended outcomes should reflect a comprehensive understanding of the industry and provide actionable insights. Key areas of focus include, but are not limited to:
 - The overall economic health of the pecan industry
 - Consumer demand trends in targeted domestic and international markets
 - Dynamics of pecan supply, distribution, and exports
 - Consumer awareness, perceptions, and purchasing behavior in priority markets
 - Impact of the organization’s activities on demand, supply, and industry performance
3. **Data Limitations** - Identify and address any limitations in data availability or quality, and outline strategies to mitigate their impact.
4. **Methodology** – Describe the credible and rigorous methodology that was used to evaluate the returns and benefits of promotional or other authorized activities. The approach should be data-driven, highlight relevant trends, capture structural changes where applicable, and utilize appropriate data sources.
5. **Results** - Present findings in a clear, organized manner, with distinct analysis of the work.
6. **Conclusion** - Summarize key insights, implications, and recommendations based on the research findings.
7. **Non-Technical Presentation** - Provide a concise and accessible summary of the research suitable for a general audience.
8. **Documentation** - Ensure all methodologies, data sources, and assumptions are thoroughly documented for transparency and reproducibility.

Selected applicants will have access to all of APC and APPB’s previously conducted research, marketing metrics, program expenditures, and any other available data. Additional datasets for purchase may be considered if the selected applicant deems them necessary. Any primary research the applicant needs should be included in the proposal with associated costs.

It should be noted that a similar study was conducted in 2020 for the APC and should be considered a baseline. The study for APPB is the first and should establish a baseline.

Each organization has independently budgeted up to \$100,000 for this project. Applicants who propose cost-effective approaches—such as conducting distinct research efforts and delivering separate results reports for each organization—will receive favorable consideration during the evaluation process. Applicants should include an overview of their backgrounds, including experience relevant to this project, list of team members, projected timeline, and a line-item budget. APC and APPB will strongly favor applicants with experience working with U.S. commodities programs.

Proposals are due by June 6, 2025, and are scheduled to be awarded by July 30, 2025, for commencement on October 1, 2025.

Questions

For questions regarding the RFP Process or application, please contact:

Anne Warden
Chief Executive Officer
American Pecan Council
American Pecan Promotion Board
awarden@americanpecan.com
awarden@eatpecans.com