

**ADVANCE CONTRACT AWARD NOTICE**

**AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA – No. 01B68-23-0206**

The Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has a requirement to continue operating the Canada Fair e-commerce marketplace on Rakuten Ichiba in Japan. The Canada Fair features a curated list of nearly 300 Canadian food products on the Rakuten platform.

The purpose of this Advance Contract Award Notice (ACAN) is to signal the government's intention to award a contract for these services to:

**Rakuten Group Inc.  
Rakuten Crimson House  
1-14-1 Tamagawa, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, Japan  
158-0094**

Before awarding the contract, however, the government would like to provide other suppliers with the opportunity to demonstrate that they are capable of satisfying the requirements set out in this Notice, by submitting a statement of capabilities during the 15 calendar day posting period.

If other potential suppliers submit a statement of capabilities during the 15 calendar day posting period that meet the requirements set out in the ACAN, the government will proceed to a full tendering process on either the government's electronic tendering service or through traditional means, in order to award the contract.

If no other supplier submits, on or before the closing date, a statement of capabilities meeting the requirements set out in the ACAN, the contract will be awarded to the pre-selected supplier, as referenced above.

**Project Title:**

E-commerce Canada Fair Maintenance on Rakuten Ichiba in Japan

**Background:**

The Canada Brand was launched in 2006 by AAFC and has supported the success of Canadian agri-food businesses and associations in global markets by building recognition for the quality of Canadian products worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic led to an increased consumer presence online, supporting the need for an updated Canada Brand.

In 2023, AAFC launched the refreshed Canada Brand equipping industry, partners and AAFC with new graphics and tools optimized for today's digital environment.

To leverage the refreshed Canada Brand, AAFC has undertaken a 12-month targeted consumer campaign in Japan that features a Canada Fair showcase on the country's largest e-commerce platform to drive consumer demand by showcasing Canadian products and creating purchase opportunities in a high-traffic digital space. The campaign is supported by social media collaborations, digital marketing and a consumer-facing website. The campaign concludes February 29, 2024.

Rakuten was awarded the contract for the design and execution of the e-commerce Canada Fair showcase. AAFC seeks to continue operating the showcase on Rakuten in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 with an updated scope and deliverables.

**Objective:**

For Rakuten Group Inc. to host, maintain and update, as needed, the Canada Fair e-commerce marketplace on the Rakuten platform through February 28, 2025.

**Scope of Work:**

Rakuten will provide the following:

- Host (and update, as needed) the Canada Fair showcase page comprising Canada Brand content to increase Canada Brand recognition and awareness of Canadian food in Japan;
- Maintain (and update, as needed) the availability of Canadian food on the Canada Fair showcase;
- Aid in increasing the number of Canadian food products and vendors/sellers of Canadian food products in the Canada Fair showcase; and
- Drive product purchases and recognition of a variety of Canadian food.

Potential Metrics:

- Showcase Capability – Rakuten is widely available to Japanese consumers and is capable of showcasing (and updating, as needed) the curated list of Canadian food (frozen, fresh and shelf-stable).
- Integrated Promotional Tools – Including but not limited to emails, coupons and points. These must be able to effectively drive traffic to the Canada Fair showcase, particularly during scheduled seasonal promotions.
- Performance Data – Ability to provide the Project Authority with bimonthly detailed performance reports, including statistics demonstrating baseline sales, increased sales, traffic etc.

**Deliverables And Schedule:**

Rakuten will provide AAFC with the hosting and maintenance of the Canada Fair on the Rakuten platform as described in the scope of work.

**Location of Work:**

There will be no travel involved for this project or any related expenses. The contractor is expected to conduct this work from their chosen workspace/location and using their own resources.

**Minimum Essential Qualifications:**

To fulfill the requirements of the contract, any interested supplier must demonstrate by way of a statement of capabilities that it has the capacity to provide the same information that is listed above.

**Government of Canada Regulations Exception:**

The Treasury Board’s Government Contract Regulations, Part 10.2.1 Section 6 states there are four exceptions that permit the contracting authority to set aside the requirement to solicit bids. The exception for related to this ACAN includes:

- d. “only one supplier person or firm is capable of performing the contract.”

**Limited Tendering Provisions In Accordance With The Trade Agreements:**

The North American Free Trade Agreement, the World Trade Organization - Agreement on Government Procurement, and the Agreement on Internal Trade permit the contracting authority to set aside the requirement to solicit bids under the following condition:

- b) “For works of art, reasons connected with protecting patents, copyrights, other exclusive rights, or proprietary information or where there is an absence for technical reasons, the goods or services can be supplied by a particular supplier and no reasonable alternative or substitute exists”

**Justification for the Pre-Selected Supplier:**

Rakuten designed and built the Canada Fair solely for its own e-commerce platform. It is not transferrable to other e-commerce platforms.

Rakuten remains the only efficient and cost-effective solution to continue operating the Canada Fair to maintain a significant Canada Brand and Canadian food presence in the Japanese e-commerce marketplace.

**Contract Period:**

The contract period is from March 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025.

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026</b>
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027</b>
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>April 1, 2027 to March 31, 2028</b>

**Estimate of Costs:**

It is intended to award a service contract to the supplier for an amount of:

CAD \$115,000, including, if applicable, taxes and fees

**Project Authority:**

Jeffrey Lang  
Canada Brand  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
1341 Baseline Road,  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5  
Email Address: [Jeffrey.Lang@AGR.GC.CA](mailto:Jeffrey.Lang@AGR.GC.CA)

**Contracting Authority:**

Kyle Harrington  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Professional Services Contracting Unit  
1341 Baseline Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5  
Email: [kyle.harrington@agr.gc.ca](mailto:kyle.harrington@agr.gc.ca)

**Suppliers Right to Submit a Statement of Capabilities:**

Suppliers who consider themselves fully qualified and available to meet the specified requirements, may submit a Statement of Capabilities in writing to the Contracting Authority identified in this Notice on or before the closing date of this notice.

The Statement of Capabilities must clearly demonstrate how the supplier meets the advertised requirements.

The closing date and time for accepting Statements of Capabilities is: **February 8, 2024 at 12:00 PM** Inquiries and Statements of Capabilities are to be delivered via email to:

Email: [kyle.harrington@agr.gc.ca](mailto:kyle.harrington@agr.gc.ca)

**Requisition Number: ACAN no. 01B68-23-0206**

Statements of Capabilities must be sent on or before the closing date. Statement of Capabilities received on or before the closing date will be considered solely for the purpose of deciding whether or not to conduct a more extensive tendering process. Information provided will be used by the Crown for technical evaluation purposes only with respect to a decision to proceed to a further competitive process. Suppliers that have submitted a Statement of Capabilities will be notified in writing of AAFC's decision to proceed to award the contract without a further additional tendering process.

Should you have any questions concerning this requirement, contact the Contracting Officer identified above stating the AAFC Solicitation Number (01B68-23-0206) and the closing date of the ACAN.

The Crown retains the right to negotiate with suppliers on any procurement. Documents may be submitted in either official language of Canada.