

October 30, 2003

AGAR ADVISORY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
AGAR ADVISORY NO. 60

Management of Qualification Requirements for USDA

INTRODUCTION: This Agriculture Acquisition Regulation (AGAR) Advisory has been prepared to list the qualification requirements (QR) created by and managed by USDA.

SUMMARY: USDA activities have a variety of needs for which it is critical that vendors are prepared to provide products of the highest quality and capable of being used reliably with both products in inventory and products supplied by other vendors. Accordingly, USDA activities may define qualification requirements, including systems of application, testing and record keeping, to assure that products, vendors, or manufacturers are tested and qualified prior to contract award. The imposition of a QR acts to restrict competition and, as a result, is strictly managed. If a QR does not appear on this listing; then the requirement has not been approved by USDA and may neither be used nor enforced for USDA actions.

SPECIFIC ISSUES:

“Qualification requirement” means a Government requirement for testing or other quality assurance demonstration that must be completed before award of a contract. QRs include, but are not limited to the submission requirements for listing of qualified products (QPL), bidders (QBL), or manufacturers (QML).

Documentation and approval of qualification requirements: For each contracting activity, the information in FAR 9.2 is to be prepared and submitted to the Head of Contracting Activity Designee for approval in order to establish or change a qualification requirement.

Maintenance of information: For each contracting activity, the Head of Contracting Activity Designee will maintain information on the qualification requirements established by USDA.

Redelegation: The Head of Contracting Activity Designee may not redelegate the authority to establish qualification requirements under Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 9.2.

Posting of QRs, lists of approved products, locations, or vendors, and the associated specifications: QRs and specifications requiring a qualification requirement created by USDA activities and applicable to USDA requirements or to those requirements managed or directed by USDA activities (such as wildfire suppression programs) must be listed in this advisory and posted to the USDA Acquisition Toolkit at <http://www.usda.gov/procurement/toolkit/index.html>. QRs not posted will not be enforceable by a USDA activity for its acquisitions or the acquisitions of others. The data supporting the QR will be made available to the public via the web site using the attached format.

Adding a QR to this listing: The Head of the Contracting Activity (HCAD) is responsible to maintain and make available to the public the data supporting the need for a qualification requirement. It is the responsibility of the HCAD to submit the data to complete the listing matrix in adequate time for the Office of Procurement and Property Management to update the matrix on the Acquisition Toolkit. All data necessary for the update must be submitted together to the Chief, Procurement Policy Division. Approximately 20 calendar days may be needed to accomplish the posting. In the case of deficient data, the HCAD will be notified of the deficiencies and the QR will not be posted.

Periodic Publication in FedBizOpps: If only one vendor (other than a mandatory source) or only one small business concern is qualified to provide a product or service under a QR, the agency shall publish a notice at least annually in FedBizOpps to seek additional sources. Otherwise, the agency shall publish a notice seeking additional sources at least every 24 months.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE FOR THIS LISTING OF USDA QRs

Information on qualification requirements and the associated specifications will be posted on the Acquisition Toolkit (<http://www.usda.gov/procurement/toolkit/index.html>) as soon as data is made available. One hundred and eighty calendar days after the issuance date of this Advisory the information matrix will represent the full listing of approved USDA QRs. After that date, a USDA QR not so posted will not be enforceable.

CANCELLATION OF AGAR ADVISORY NUMBER 38

By inclusion of its terms into this Advisory, AGAR Advisory Number 38 is cancelled.

QUESTIONS:

If you have questions about this advisory, please contact J. R. Holcombe Jr. by telephone at (202) 720-8484, by fax at (202) 720-8972, or by email to Richard.Holcombe@USDA.gov.

This advisory is available at <http://www.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html>.

EXPIRATION DATE: This Advisory will not expire until canceled. The listing of qualification requirements will be maintained and posted on the Acquisition Toolkit at <http://www.usda.gov/procurement/toolkit/index.html>.

[END]

Qualification Requirements in USDA									
(Each QR Consists of the Submission Requirements and List of Approved Vendors, Products or Locations)									
10/22/2003									
USDA Qualification Requirement By Name or Number	QR Submission Procedures for Testing (Location, Contact Person, Office, or URL to View File)	OMB Control Number, Paperwork Reduction Act	Version Date	Expiration Date	Determination of need for a QR (Location, Contact Person, Office, or URL to View File)	Market Research Report Supporting a QR (Location, Contact Person, Office, or URL to View File)	GPE Notice For QR (Location, Contact Person, Office, or URL to View File)	Technical Contact for QR (Name and Number or E-mail Address)	Address for Submittal of Application for Listing on QR (Address Information)
Lists of Approved Vendors, Locations or Products (QR by Name or Number)	Location, Contact Person, Office, or URL to View File		Version Date						
Products Covered by a QR	Specifications by Name and Number for Products Covered by a QR		Version Date	Expiration Date	Technical Contact for Specification (Location, Contact Number or Address)	Agency (A-119) Unique Standard Determination (Location, Contact Number or Address)			
			QR Version Date is the date approved by the HCAD						
			Specification Version Date is the date of approval by the issuing office						
			Expiration Date for a QR is the Version Date plus 7 years						
			Expiration Date for a Specification is the Version Date plus 5 years						
NOTE TO READERS:									
1. The list does not constitute endorsement of the product, manufacturer, or other source by the Government;									
2. The products or sources listed have been qualified under the latest applicable specifications;									
3. The list may be amended without notice;									
4. The listing of a product or source does not release the supplier from compliance with the specifications; and									
5. Use of the list for advertising or publicity is permitted. However, it must not be stated or implied that a particular product or source is the only product or source of that type qualified, or that the Government in any way recommends or endorses the products or services.									
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