

## SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

### Introduction

Pulse Canada is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to acquire the goods, services and/or support necessary to establish Canada as a low-risk and low impact supplier of peas and soybeans in regards to deforestation and land use change.

### Background

There is an increasing need in agricultural supply chains to demonstrate the risk of deforestation and/or land use change for commodities. This need is manifesting itself in many ways and is currently affecting market access and environmental performance measurement for Canadian crops such as peas and soybeans.

Deforestation and land use conversion in agricultural supply chains has become a substantial topic in the world of sustainable agriculture. The focus on deforestation and land use change has largely been driven by high-risk commodities which are pressuring the world's remaining rainforests. However, there has been a spillover effect as deforestation and land use change measures, regulations and compliance are being applied to an increasing number of agricultural commodities. Scrutiny is being applied to global supply chains, and therefore all countries and all commodities can be affected.

In reality, the risk of deforestation and land conversion for agricultural commodities in Canada is limited. Deforestation rates are low in Canada, as reported in Natural Resources Canada's State of Canada's Forests Report<sup>5</sup>. Forests cover 367 million ha of Canada's land mass, and since 1990, less than half of 1% of Canada's forests have been deforested. Agriculture is one of the main contributors of this deforestation, along with resource extraction and built-up areas, but the risk of large or even moderate scale land conversion of Canada's forests is minimal. The vast majority of Canada's forests reside on land that is unsuitable for farming due to climate, terrain, hydrologic and soil conditions, with a limited amount of forested land that would be suitable for agricultural use.

The challenge is that the reality of Canadian deforestation risk for agricultural commodities is currently not reflected in international markets and in public databases used for the assessment of environmental performance (e.g. AgriFootprint, the Aquaculture Sustainability Council's Country Scorecard). In essence, Canadian datasets for deforestation due to agriculture are currently not being utilized internationally to determine risk or to measure actual impact.

The challenge of deforestation and land use change is manifesting itself in Canadian markets in multiple ways. From a regulatory market access standpoint, the EU has been active in applying a regulation on deforestation-free products. This regulation will affect 7 key commodities (including soy and beef) and will require companies to prove these commodities are deforestation-free. After a period of review, additional commodities may be added to the regulation. This proposed regulation defines a product as being deforestation free when the product was produced on land that was not subject to deforestation after a cut-off date of December 31, 2020. The Canadian soy industry is already preparing for this regulation in the market, which requires geographic information for all soybeans produced for export to the EU.

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The private sector is also applying compliance criteria for deforestation and land use chains in agricultural supply chains, which are independent of government regulations. For example, companies that have signed onto committing to corporate net-zero targets by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) now must assure all of their supply chains are deforestation free by 2025. As multiple food companies have set SBTi net-zero targets, agricultural supply chains will be under increasing pressure to provide assurance of a low-risk supply chain in regards to deforestation/land use change. Aquaculture markets are also applying compliance criteria for deforestation and land use change, especially for plant proteins that are used for feed use. The Aquaculture Stewardship Council is one such standard which requires an assessment of deforestation risk and utilizes a Country-Score Card approach which does not reflect Canada's actual risk for agricultural commodities.<sup>1,2</sup>

1. [https://asc-aqua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ASC-Feed-Standard-Country-Risk-Score-Cards\\_Methodology-and-Rationale\\_v1.pdf](https://asc-aqua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ASC-Feed-Standard-Country-Risk-Score-Cards_Methodology-and-Rationale_v1.pdf)
2. [https://asc-aqua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ASC-Country-Risk-Scorecard\\_December-2022\\_v1.xlsx](https://asc-aqua.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ASC-Country-Risk-Scorecard_December-2022_v1.xlsx)

Deforestation and land use change is also being used to assess the environmental footprint of agricultural commodities, ingredients and food products. Environmental footprinting (carbon footprinting, biodiversity assessments) rely on databases, which are increasingly accounting for deforestation and land use change impacts of commodities. These databases need to reflect the actual risk of deforestation of Canadian commodities. To date, many of these databases (e.g. AgriFootprint) rely on weak global datasets (e.g. FAOSTAT) which fail to reflect the actual impact of Canadian commodities on deforestation. For this reason, many databases may overestimate the environmental impact of Canadian commodities, and this data can be used to position Canadian products in a poor light.<sup>3</sup>

3. <https://solutions.ussec.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Lowest-Carbon-Footprint-U.S.-Soy-vs.-Other-Plant-Proteins.pdf>

There is an opportunity to position Canadian pulses and soybeans as low risk commodities in terms of deforestation and land use change. This opportunity resides in utilizing Canadian data to reflect the actual impact of Canadian pulse and soybean production on deforestation and land use change, and to ensure that assessments used in the marketplace reflect this data.

In order to maintain and potentially expand market access for Canadian pulses and soybean products, there is a need to develop a representative assessment of the risk and impact of deforestation associated with the production of Canadian pulses and soybeans.

### Pulse Canada Profile

Pulse Canada is the national association representing Canadian growers, processors and exporters of pulse crops – peas, beans, lentils and chickpeas. Pulse Canada works to improve the profitability, and thus the viability, of the industry by enhancing value and reducing costs.

Pulse Canada works under the leadership and direction of four provincial grower associations (Alberta Pulse Growers Commission, Manitoba Pulse & Soybean Growers, Ontario Bean Growers, and

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Saskatchewan Pulse Growers) and the processors and exporters of Canadian pulses that are members of the Canadian Pulse & Special Crops Trade Association (CPSC).

Pulse Canada works to enhance value by developing new market opportunities for Canadian pulses and creating efficiencies for trade and transportation of pulse crops.

## SECTION II – TERMS & CONDITIONS

### 1. Statement of Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

Bidders agree to standard business practice related to the confidential treatment of information provided by the Pulse Canada while this agreement is in effect, and at all times thereafter, the successful Bidder and any officers, employees or agents of the successful Bidder will:

- Treat as confidential all information, data, documents and materials acquired or to which access has been given in the course of, or incidental to, the performance of the agreement,
- Not disclose or permit to be disclosed, to any person, corporation or organization such information, data, documents or materials without first obtaining written permission from Pulse Canada; and
- Comply with any rules or directions made or given by Pulse Canada with respect to safeguarding or ensuring the confidentiality of such information, data, documents or materials.

This document must not be copied in whole or in part for any reason other than in the course of providing the information requested, without the express written permission of Pulse Canada.

### 2. Proposal

The Bidder offers to provide to Pulse Canada, upon the terms and conditions set out in this RFP, the services detailed herein and at the price set out in the proposal (The “Proposal”) or otherwise agreed to by the parties.

### 3. Price Quotation/Evaluation Period

The Bidder agrees that the prices quote in its Proposal are firm and must be valid for acceptance by Pulse Canada for 60 days from the RFP submission closing date. All prices must be quoted in Canadian dollars.

### 4. Schedule of Events – Criteria Dates

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
Deadline for proposal submission	October 2, 2024
Proposal review process completed	October 9, 2024
Notification of proposal acceptance	October 11, 2024

### 5. Proposal Acceptance

Pulse Canada reserves the right to award the RFP in whole or in part to the best interest of Pulse Canada. The successful Bidder’s project team or resource will report to the Director, Sustainability at Pulse Canada. The Bidder, if successful, agrees by submitting a proposal to abide by the terms and conditions of the RFP as specified.

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### 6. Response Disqualification

Proposals received from a Bidder after the closing deadline WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Pulse Canada reserves the right to reject any and all response, and the lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.

### 7. Evaluation of Responses

All responses to this RFP will be evaluated on the basis of the following factors:

- Bidder's understanding of the Statement of Work as stated in Section IV and ability to meet the specifications stated in this section
- Bidder's reputation, experience and proven results in similar outreach work, and overall qualification
- Cost competitiveness

### 8. Proposal Costs and Expense

This RFP does not commit Pulse Canada to pay any cost incurred in the submission of proposals or to contract for any services.

### 9. Publicity and Corporate Identification

A Bidder shall not use Pulse Canada identification or name in any advertisement, promotion or otherwise without the prior written consent of Pulse Canada, which may be delayed or withheld without explanation.

### 10. Governing Laws

This RFP is governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Province of Manitoba and the federal laws of Canada applicable therein.

### 11. Contact

If you have any questions regarding his RFP, please contact:

Denis Tremorin  
Director, Sustainability  
Pulse Canada  
Telephone: 204-510-3781  
Email: [dtremorin@pulsecanada.com](mailto:dtremorin@pulsecanada.com)

### 12. Right to Approve Subcontractors

Pulse Canada reserves the right to approve any subcontractors used by the Bidder and the Bidder must have the prior written approval of Pulse Canada prior to contracting any subcontractor for goods or services related to this RFP or the subsequent agreement.

## SECTION III – INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

This section describes the Proposal requirements.

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### 1. Submission of Proposals

All proposals must be submitted via email, be clearly identified and **submitted no later than 4:00PM CT on October 2, 2024** to:

Denis Tremorin

Email: [dtremorin@pulsecanada.com](mailto:dtremorin@pulsecanada.com)

Bidders should make sure they receive confirmation of the successful receipt of their submission. Bidders must address the requirements described in Section IV – Statement of Work. They must also provide cost information as it is described in Section VI- RFP Response requirements.

All proposals received by Pulse Canada will then be the custody of Pulse Canada. Therefore, proposals shall not be returned to Bidders.

### 2. Responding to RFP Items

#### *2.1 Complete Proposals*

Submissions must propose full specifications for all of the relevant requirements detailed in Section IV – Statement of Work of the RFP. Submissions that do not present complete proposals may be at a disadvantage or may be disqualified.

#### *2.2 Additional Specifications/Alternative Approaches*

Submissions may include additional specifications for items not covered by the RFP that the Bidder considers necessary and integral to its proposal. Please include a detailed rationale as to why these specifications should also be considered for adoption.

## SECTION IV

## STATEMENT OF WORK

### **Project Objectives**

Pulse Canada requires an assessment, in the form of a report, of deforestation risk and impact for the production of Canadian peas and soybeans. This report should also create a model for other Canadian agricultural commodities. In addition, this project will produce a dataset representing the impact that Canadian peas and soybean production have on Canadian deforestation, which will be suitable for use in international databases that use deforestation and land use change as a criteria.

### **Project Description**

This project will be conducted over the course of two phases. The first phase will consist of a feasibility assessment, to be finalized by March 31, 2025. The feasibility phase will take a closer look at existing data available data, technologies and methodologies which can be used to determine the risk of deforestation associated with Canadian peas and soybeans, and how these align with the needs in the market place (e.g. databases and compliance criteria of low risk supply chains). Data sets from the Government of Canada (Environment Canada, AAFC, Natural Resources Canada) as well as the potential

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use of geospatial data should all be considered in this assessment. The outcome of this phase will be a report on the feasibility of assessing Canada's pea and soybean production, as it relates to deforestation risk.

The second phase of this work will be to develop an actual assessment of the deforestation risk of Canadian pea and soybean production. This work will be finalized by March 31, 2026 and will consist of a report determining the level of deforestation and land use change risk and impact associated with pea and soybean production in Canada in Canada.

### Timelines

Project kick-off: October 23, 2024

Major progress report: March 31, 2025

Final product: March 31, 2026