



PULSE CANADA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP No. 20260821

Pulse Food and Pet Food Market Development
in Japan and South Korea.

August 21, 2026

Section 1 – General Information

i. Introduction

Pulse Canada is seeking proposals from qualified firms to support a targeted market expansion initiative aimed at building new demand for Canadian pulse crops, including yellow peas, in Japan and South Korea. This initiative will focus on identifying growth opportunities, engaging key market stakeholders and developing strategies that position Canadian pulses for long-term adoption in these markets.

ii. 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 Saskatchewan Pulse Growers) and the processors and exporters of Canadian pulses that are members of the Canadian Pulse and 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 2 – Terms and Conditions

i. 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.

ii. 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.

iii. 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.

iv. Schedule of Events – Critical Dates

Deadline for submission of responses	October 16, 2026 no later than 4:00pm CDT
Anticipated contract start date	October 31, 2026
Project end date (phase 1)*	March 31, 2027

*This project is designed as Phase 1 of a multi-year strategy, and Pulse Canada anticipates continued engagement with a consultant beyond this initial contract period.

v. 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, Quality, Science & Food Innovation at Pulse Canada. The Bidder, if successful, agrees by submitting a proposal to abide by the terms and conditions of the RFP as specified.

vi. 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.

vii. 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.
- Strength of the written proposal with clearly defined objectives, research design and methodology.
- Bidder's reputation and experience.
- Cost competitiveness.

viii. 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.

ix. 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.

x. 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.

xi. Contact

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

Tanya Der, Director, Diversification & Market Insights, Pulse Canada

Email: tder@pulsecanada.com Phone: 204-925-3783

xii. 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 3 – Instructions to Bidders

This section describes the Proposal requirements.

i. Submission of Proposals

All proposals must be submitted via email, be clearly identified and submitted no later than 4:00PM CDT on October 16, 2026 to:

Tanya Der

Director, Diversification & Market Insights, Pulse Canada

tder@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.

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

ii. Responding to RFP Items

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.

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 4 – Statement of Work

Background

Pulse Canada is the national industry association representing Canadian growers, traders, and processors of pulse crops — peas, lentils, chickpeas, and beans. Our mission is to grow a strong and sustainable Canadian pulse industry through market development, technical innovation and international trade advocacy.

Canada is the world's largest producer of peas and lentils. Canadian pulses are exported to more than 100 countries, supported by over 100 companies under the Canadian Pulse and Special Crops Trade Association. Pulse Canada's market development work connects Canadian suppliers with global food manufacturers, ingredient buyers, and research institutions, positioning Canadian pulses as the preferred choice for quality, supply reliability, and sustainability.

More than 60% of yellow peas produced in Canada are exported to Asia, with China and India as the dominant markets. Pulse Canada is actively seeking to diversify into markets with greater price stability, higher value-added opportunity, and strong alignment with sustainability goals. Japan and South Korea represent strategically significant growth opportunities:

Japan

- Demonstrates both traditional and new uses of pea ingredients: noodles, bakery, snacks, and infant food.
- High interest in protein fortification, fibre enrichment, clean-label reformulation, and sustainable procurement.
- Currently subject to tariffs that have limited commercial scale; however, as of April 1, 2028, these tariffs will be eliminated for CPTPP members. Canada has opportunity to establish an early first-mover advantage in Japan before tariffs are eliminated.

South Korea

- Demonstrates both traditional and new uses of pea ingredients: noodles, bakery, snacks, and infant food.
- Growing pea and lentil flour demand in beverage and health product categories; active early-adopter market for pulse-based functional food innovation.

Therefore, this project aims to accelerate market development by directly engaging end users, identifying opportunities and barriers to adoption of pulse ingredients, and facilitating increased incorporation of Canadian pulses into commercial products.

Objectives:

The selected agency will be responsible for developing and executing a campaign that achieves the following objectives:

1. Assess market opportunities, trends, and barriers for incorporating pea ingredients (and, where relevant, lentil and chickpea ingredients) in Japan and Korea's pet food and human food markets.
2. Prioritize and directly engage prospective end users in the food and pet food sectors in both markets.
3. Identify and initiate partnerships with technical institutions and commercial companies to collaboratively address formulation or regulatory challenges.
4. Support long-term adoption of Canadian pulses by building Pulse Canada's market presence, relationships, and technical credibility in both markets.

Scope of Work:

The agency will be responsible for the following:

- **Market Intelligence & Opportunity Mapping:**
 - Packaged food categories: bakery, snacks, noodles/pasta, ready meals, meat, cereal-based foods, beverages, infant food, etc.
 - Premium pet food segments: dry, wet, treats and weight-management formats.
 - Assessment of regulatory frameworks, protein-claim environments, premium positioning dynamics, and cost sensitivity.
 - Competitive ingredient landscape: soy, whey, wheat, rice protein, local flours — and where Canadian pulses are differentiated.
 - Regulatory and labelling intelligence: specific requirements for pulse protein claims, allergen declarations, and novel food status per market.
 - Identification of 3–5 scalable application categories per sector per market
- **Targeted Manufacturer Engagement:**
 - Conduct structured introductory and follow-up meetings with multinational and regional food and pet food manufacturers. E.g. 50 new companies/contacts per market, 10–20 in-depth meetings, etc.
- **Industry Event Participation:**
 - Participate in key regional food or pet food industry events, innovation forums, or trade shows across the two markets. Proposals should identify which events the consultant recommends attending and provide rationale. Registration and travel costs for events are included within the budget scope.
- **Localization & Technical Resource Adaptation**
 - Adapt existing Pulse Canada technical briefs, nutrition summaries, sustainability materials, and ingredient specification sheets for use in Japan and South Korea.
- **Partnerships & Facilitation**
 - Identifying technical institutions or research bodies in Japan or Korea for potential collaborative projects.

Deliverables:

1. Market Intelligence Report – priority application categories, regulatory landscape, competitive positioning and top opportunities per market per sector.
2. Target Companies and Organizations (longlist and rationale for prioritization)
3. Manufacturer Engagement – updated status in Contact Management System.
4. Localized Technical Materials (positioning nutrition, health, sustainability and functionality of Canadian pulses)
5. Final report of all findings and recommendations; include matrix of barriers & opportunities.

Budget:

The funding for this activity will be provided through a cost-shared program with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; however, the exact budget amount is unavailable at this time. Proponents are expected to submit a detailed anticipated budget based on their understanding of the information provided above, allocating costs across professional fees, travel, event registration, translation/localization, and any other anticipated costs.