

# NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS & PROPOSALS

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**Issue Date:** November 6, 2015

**Due Date:** 3:00 PM December 10, 2015

**Project:** Upper Peninsula Multi-species Processing Feasibility Study

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The Upper Peninsula Multi-species Processing Feasibility Study Project is a cooperative venture between several stakeholders including Marquette County, Upper Peninsula Food Exchange, Farm Bureau, and regional planning organizations.

MDARD awarded Marquette County an \$127,300 Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) grant aimed to address the lack of USDA multi-species processing in the Upper Peninsula. The grant will be managed and administered by the County of Marquette with a substantial portion of it to be used to fund a study to assess the feasibility of an USDA inspected multi-species processing facility(s) in the Upper Peninsula.

As part of this process, Marquette County is issuing this Request For Qualifications & Proposals (RFQP) from qualified firms to conduct a substantial portion of the work scope of MDARD SGI Grant. All proposals will be reviewed by a review committee. The committee will rank the proposals submitted by the firms and recommend a firm for selection to the Marquette County Board of Commissioners. Marquette County reserves the right to reject or waive any irregularities in the proposals.

**Project Background:** Project objectives include determining the number, scale, and type of facilities that could be supported in the Upper Peninsula. The U.P. Food Exchange has identified many retail outlets, restaurants and institutions with an interest in purchasing more local meat. Farmers have expressed an interest in supplying this market if they had better access to processing. There is only one USDA meat processing facility in the Upper Peninsula. This facility has limited hours, continues to change or reduce its hours, and has recently announced that it will no longer process poultry.

Limited access to USDA processing makes it difficult for U.P. farmers to supply institutional purchasers in the U.P. and beyond with meat. This challenge has been identified as an issue that needs further investigation. Marquette County has an interest in determining if the former KI Sawyer Air Force Base is a suitable location for such a facility. However, the feasibility study will focus on the entire U.P. and look at other opportunities or locations for a facility as well.

The RFQP packet, including instructions can be found at [http://www.co.marquette.mi.us/rfps\\_bids](http://www.co.marquette.mi.us/rfps_bids)