



Request for Proposal

Tunisia Trade Servicing and Market Representation

RFP #: 2026-RAPP-TU-01

RFP Name: Tunisia Trade Servicing and Market Representation

Date Issued: 9/21/2026

Submission Deadline: 10/14/2025

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Introduction

The Hazelnut Marketing Board (HMB), headquartered in Wilsonville, Oregon, is a participant in U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) grant programs, including but not limited to: the Market Access Program (MAP), Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP), and Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) program.

The HMB is requesting competitive bids for a partner to complete the following objectives:

- Complete an in-depth Tunisia Market Research Report on the current state of hazelnuts and tree nuts, including topics like trends, consumer behavior, consumer awareness of hazelnuts, consumer awareness of U.S. hazelnuts, popular hazelnut products, domestic production levels, major import and export partners, areas of opportunity for HMB.
- This report should provide an extensive analysis of the marketplace and inform whether or not HMB should pursue a market development campaign in Tunisia. If yes, this plan should include a multi-year strategy on recommended best practices HMB should engage in to expand hazelnut exports into Tunisia.

The chosen party will abide by all Regional Ag Promotion Program (RAPP) [rules and regulations](#).

Industry Information

The rare combination of volcanic soils, moderate temperature and ample rainfall in Oregon and Washington makes it the perfect region for growing hazelnuts – which is why over 99% of America's hazelnuts are grown here. For over 100 years, these groves have yielded hazelnuts renowned for their consistent size, quality, and distinct flavor. The United States is the third largest producer of hazelnuts in the world (behind Turkey and Italy), and although America's acreage has tripled over the past decade, our farmers are committed to good stewardship practices to ensure their farms may pass to future generations. Thus, this marquee crop is extremely important to the Pacific Northwest, the United States, and the world.

The Hazelnut Industry is comprised of four unique entities: the Hazelnut Marketing Board (HMB), an instrumentality of the USDA governing hazelnuts grown and processed in Oregon and Washington; the Oregon Hazelnut Commission, a state commodity commission responsible for more than \$1.25 million in research annually and the Industry's stewardship program; the Nut Growers Society, a non-profit member



organization; and the Associated Oregon Hazelnut Industries, a lobbying firm. The Hazelnut Marketing Board is the entity governing USDA FAS grant funding opportunities.

In 2007, the Hazelnut Industry embarked on strategic planning to provide insight into direction and focus for the future. Their key takeaways were:

- ❖ Expand the industry by attracting new, young growers, planting more trees and increasing yield and consumption.
- ❖ Pursue research needed for production and promotion.
- ❖ Promote good stewardship.
- ❖ Build relationships – both foreign and domestic.

Their efforts were hugely successful. The industry grew from a steady 30,000 acres to over 96,000 today; most of this growth occurred in the fertile Willamette Valley region of Oregon. Yields that for years were stable at around 30,000 short tons have grown to more than 120,000 short tons. With new trees being planted yearly and taking five to seven years to reach maturity, the industry expects to top 150,000 tons, annually, in the near future.

The Hazelnut Marketing Board

The HMB represents all hazelnut growers and processors (handlers) in Oregon and Washington – over 1,000 farmers and farm families – with a vision of increasing awareness and use of all forms of Oregon hazelnuts within prioritized market segments and to sustainably expand the American hazelnut industry.

In 2016, after rapid growth in the U.S. Hazelnut Industry, the HMB began assisting local processors by expanding marketing efforts. By 2019, the HMB was awarded grant funds from the USDA Foreign Access Service (FAS). The HMB continues to receive USDA FAS funding for marketing and research purposes. With the infusion of funds, the HMB marketing team has increased their reach across the globe.

Visit OregonHazelnuts.org, instagram.com/oregonhazelnuts or facebook.com/OregonHazelnuts for more information about the Hazelnut Industry and the Hazelnut Marketing Board.

Target Audience and Focus

- ❖ Trade: Importers, Distributors, Wholesalers and Major Buyers
- ❖ Consumers: As a secondary market only to build awareness and demand for US hazelnut preference
- ❖ Format. The main focus is on hazelnut kernels (shelled nuts), especially raw hazelnuts, but including all formats (sliced, diced, paste, etc.). Inshell may be preferable in certain countries due to tariffs, trade relations or regions where shelling nuts is considered an important, standalone industry.

Project Descriptions

The Hazelnut Marketing Board is searching for a highly qualified, in-market partner to manage marketing, promotion and brand awareness activities in Tunisia. HMB's global marketing program is unique and thus requires a customized approach for each market.

The successful company will assist the HMB by acting as the in-country representative for U.S. hazelnuts with trade representatives, consumers, government officials and other stakeholders. Along with marketing planning and execution, the winning applicant may be required to undertake activities which include but are not limited to: liaise with USDA FAS Agricultural Trade Office (ATO); attend FAS meetings, events,



and trade shows on behalf of the HMB; and assist with the development of FAS reports, which requires strong English writing skills.

In addition, the successful agency must demonstrate a high degree of cultural, agricultural trade and diplomatic knowledge in the country and be flexible and adaptable.

Objective 1: Market Research Report

Complete an in-depth Tunisia Market Research Report on the current state of hazelnuts and tree nuts, including topics like trends, consumer behavior, consumer awareness of hazelnuts, consumer awareness of U.S. hazelnuts, popular hazelnut products, domestic production levels, major import and export partners, areas of opportunity for HMB.

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Specifications

1. Conduct market research to determine:
 - a. Viability of the market for U.S. hazelnuts
 - b. Barriers to entry for the HMB
 - c. Current hazelnut landscape (e.g., are they well known and used and if so how; is this a pass-through country, consumer or value-added producer; are there competitors in the region already and details; importers and exporters; producers (if any); inshell vs. kernel market; etc.)
 - d. Country demographics in general and specific, ideal target audience and secondary audience(s)
 - e. Competition demographics, strengths and weaknesses
2. Perform initial consumer Usage and Attitude study
3. If U.S. hazelnuts are deemed a viable export crop: Create a plan for recommended marketing and promotional tactics that would generate buyer and consumer awareness of U.S. hazelnuts and ultimately lead to expanded exports. This plan should be designed to begin January 1, 2027. This proposal should include a full budget breakdown (descriptions, fees and programmatic costs clearly and separately identified) for the recommended activities.
4. If U.S. hazelnuts are NOT deemed a viable export crop: Provide a thorough explanation of the obstacles and why we would likely not see growth in the market throughout the next decade.

Skills Required

- ❖ Knowledge of and connection to the Tunisian target audiences as detailed herein
- ❖ Understand imported food distribution channels in the market
- ❖ Experience marketing agricultural food products (preferably U.S. origin)
- ❖ Familiarity with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and their regulations
- ❖ Working knowledge of development of documentation required by FAS under the MAP, RAPP TASC and/or other grant programs



- ❖ Fluency in English (both written and oral)
- ❖ Fluency in other market languages
- ❖ Detailed activity reporting
- ❖ Adhere to the HMB's strict financial management and fraud prevention policies and procedures
- ❖ Work with other in-market agencies and stakeholders as required
- ❖ Participate in regular phone calls, video calls and meetings with HMB staff and agencies, as needed
- ❖ Provide monthly invoices including detailed invoice backup
- ❖ Sufficient staff and administrative resources to conduct required activities to reach stated goals

Proposal Details

Submission and Timelines

Hazelnut Marketing Board issues Request for Proposals	9/21/26
Applicants submit questions via email Email must include submitting company's name, contact name and REP number	10/5/26
HMB reviews and responds to questions	10/7/26
<u>Submission deadline</u> including: full marketing proposal, agency credentials, and proposed budget.	10/14/26
Confirmation of successful applicant and notification to other applicants	10/23/26
Contract development	10/26/26
Successful applicant commences work	11/1/26
Market research activities completed	12/11/26
Presentation of Findings to HMB	12/18/26
Final invoice submitted to HMB	12/18/26
Payment remitted by HMB	12/23/26

Timeline subject to change.

Please submit all questions and completed documents to Hazelnut@OregonHazelnuts.org

Components of proposal must include, but need not be limited to:

- ❖ An outline of the proposed project to demonstrate your understanding
- ❖ Experience and background of the applicant and key contacts
- ❖ Work approach and strategy
- ❖ Suggested potential activities (to demonstrate understanding)

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- ❖ Description of deliverables
- ❖ Suggested credible and realistic goals
- ❖ Proposed budget (including all fees) with line items as applicable. This is a total budget for all activities.
- ❖ Timeline illustrating development and activation of proposed activities
- ❖ The presentation should be in PDF format

Evaluation Scoring

1. **Understanding of the Market (40%)** – Demonstrated comprehensive industry knowledge.
 - a. Market, trends, and trade landscape
 - b. Imported food distribution channels in the market
 - c. Target audience(s)
 - d. Quality and content of full marketing proposal
2. **Staff Qualifications (25%)** – Credentials, skills, and industry connections.
 - a. Experience creating and executing marketing and communications plans
 - b. Strategic thinking
 - c. English fluency (written and oral)
 - d. Fluency in other market languages
 - e. Experience building and fostering relationships with tree nut importers, distributors, wholesalers and major buyers
3. **Cost Effective (25%)** – Budget is complete, competitive and effective.
4. **Completeness of Workplan (10%)** – Proposal is complete and meets the expectations and goals described herein.

Questions

Questions must be submitted in writing to Hazelnut@OregonHazelnuts.org and include:

- ❖ RFP number and name
- ❖ Submitting company name and contact
- ❖ Contact email and phone

Questions and answers will posted at OregonHazelnuts.org/RFP by the date outlined in the Submission table.

Review of Credentials and Proposals

A selection committee will review all submissions. The basis of the review will be scored on the list above. Consideration of the proposal may include background and reference checks, content contained within the presentations, and feasibility of proposed ideas.



Equal Opportunity Employer

The Hazelnut Marketing Board is an equal opportunity employer and does not tolerate discrimination and/or harassment of any type regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, genetics, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.