

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
For the development of a Sweet Potato Electronic Ordering System

Date of EOI: April 25, 2025	Closing Date for Receipt of EOI: May 26, 2025
EOI Reference: CARC/JM -078/25	

1. Preamble

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) Delegation in Jamaica is implementing the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and European Union co-funded Next Generation Sweet Potato Production in the Caribbean project in Antigua & Barbuda, Jamaica, and St. Lucia to improve food security and nutrition. IICA hereby solicits Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from a suitable service provider to **develop an electronic ordering platform for the sale of sweet potato slips.**

2. Background

Sweet potato plays a significant role in the CARICOM food security agenda, particularly considering the region's commitment to reducing its \$5 billion food import bill by 25% by 2025 through the '25 in 5' initiative. As a highly nutritious, climate-resilient crop with multiple uses, including fresh consumption, processing into flour, and as an animal feed ingredient, sweet potato is vital for ensuring food sovereignty and strengthening local food systems. Its full potential is constrained by limited access to high-quality planting materials, the prevalence of pests and diseases, and fragmented seed systems. Addressing these challenges is critical to meeting regional food security goals, enhancing farmer livelihoods, and fostering a sustainable agricultural economy. To meet local and international demands for sweet potato and its by-products, a shift from the current production system to a more organized and streamlined commercial type system is required.

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the sweet potato value chain in the Caribbean, a commercialized approach to the supply of sweet potato slips is being advanced. This strategy aims to expand the production base through the adoption of higher-yielding varieties, the cultivation of additional acreage, and the improvement of growers' agronomic competencies. Together, these actions are vital to building a more resilient and market-responsive industry. However, a major constraint to realizing these objectives is the inefficient coordination between the demand for and supply of planting materials. The Next Generation Sweet Potato Production in the Caribbean project directly addresses this challenge by enhancing the availability,

accessibility, and adoption of high-quality planting materials. This consultancy forms a critical component of the project, which is guided by three strategic pillars: improving access to quality planting material, increasing productivity through variety trials, and advancing value chain development to ensure the effective utilization of sweet potato genetic resources across the region.

In this context, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is seeking to engage the services of a qualified Information Technology Specialist to design and develop a robust, user-oriented online system to facilitate the pre-ordering of sweet potato slips. The system should be scalable, secure, and responsive to the operational requirements of stakeholders across the region.

1. Objective of the Consultancy

To design, develop, test, and deploy an online ordering system that facilitates the efficient pre-ordering, tracking, and management of sweet potato planting materials, thereby aligning farmer demand with supplier capacity and reducing inefficiencies in the supply chain.

2. Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for delivering the following key outputs:

A. Needs Assessment and System Planning

- Conduct consultations with stakeholders (farmers, producers, extension officers, and IICA team) to determine system requirements.
- Develop a detailed user requirement specification (URS) document.
- Define user roles and access levels (e.g., farmers, suppliers, administrators).

B. System Design and Development

- Design a web-based platform with mobile responsiveness.
- Key system functionalities to include:
 - User registration and profile management.
 - Real-time product availability and ordering dashboard.
 - Scheduling for order fulfilment and distribution.
 - Inventory and supply management tools for seed producers.
 - Notifications (email/SMS) for order updates and confirmations.
 - Multi-language support (patois if needed).

C. Testing and Quality Assurance

- Conduct internal and user acceptance testing (UAT).
- Address bugs and refine system performance based on feedback.
- Ensure compliance with security, privacy, and data protection standards.

D. Hosting and Maintenance Recommendations

- Provide recommendations for secure, scalable, and cost-effective hosting solutions.
- Propose a plan for routine system maintenance and updates.

E. Documentation and Training

- Deliver system documentation, including user manuals and technical guidelines.
- Conduct training sessions (virtual or in-person) for system users and administrators.

6. Deliverables

1. **Requirement Analysis Report:** A detailed document outlining the system architecture and functionality based on confirmed user specification requirements (USR).
2. **System Design Document:** A blueprint or wireframe of the system
3. **Ordering System:** Fully functional online ordering system
4. **Software Code:** The executable code for the online ordering system.
5. **User Manual(s):** Guidance document for end-users on how to use the system.
6. **Technical Specifications:** Detailed information about the system's technical aspects.
7. **End-user Training:** Materials and user training conducted.
8. **Post System Development:** Hosting and maintenance plan
9. **Final report:** Detailing the development process, challenges, and recommendations

7. Duration and Timeline

The consultancy is expected to be completed within four (4) months from the date of contract signing. The following is a tentative timeline:

- Month 1: Consultations, systems specifications, design and preliminary development
- Months 2-3: Full system development and testing
- Month 4: Deployment, End-User training and handing over

8. Required Expertise:

Technical Skills: The consultant should have at least 10 years of software development experience and be adept with the selected programming language(s) that best align with the assignment. Demonstrated ability to work with diverse stakeholders in a development context

Project Management: Strong communication and project management skills and its application in the timely delivery of project deliverables.

Experience with Similar Systems: Proven experience in developing online ordering systems or e-commerce platforms. Familiarity with agricultural or supply chain systems is an asset.

9.0 Interested persons may submit the following:

- A detailed technical proposal, including their approach and methodology.
- A financial proposal outlining the estimated budget.
- Curriculum vitae highlighting relevant experience.
- At least two references from previous similar assignments

9.1 The Proposal is to be written in Standard English and include the following information:

- A. Legal Name of Individual(s)
- B. Full address
- C. Telephone and Fax numbers
- D. Email address

9.2 Applications should be submitted to the address below no later than 12:00pm **May 26, 2025**, either:

- i. In hard copy by mail in sealed envelope containing the submissions to include the name and address of the applicant and should be clearly marked with the relevant position for which the application is submitted to:

ATTN:
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
P.O Box 349
Hope Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica

OR

- ii. by **e-mail**, to the address under subject caption: Application: **NextGen SP** Project to:
Ainsworth.Riley@iica.int copied to IICA: iica.jm@iica.int

Important Note: IICA will be the Contracting Party. IICA's policy requires that vendors provide professional, objective, impartial advice and always hold IICA's interest paramount without any consideration for future work and strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own corporate interests. Vendors shall not be hired for any assignment that would conflict with their prior or current position of not being able to conduct the assignment in the best interest of IICA.