



Request for Proposals
In-Market Representative: Europe
July 22, 2026

I. Overview

The Cranberry Institute (CI), representing the U.S. cranberry industry, is seeking proposals from agencies to provide in-market representation services for its export market development program in Europe, focusing on U.S. cranberry concentrate.

The following countries are currently included in the CI's Europe market definition; however, the CI is looking to the selected agency to recommend which should be prioritized to most effectively expand awareness and exports to the region: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, and the U.K.

Key responsibilities will include, but will not be limited to, trade representation, trade promotion, health education and promotion, and related activities. The selected agency will begin with a four-month, results-based contract running from September 1 through December 31, 2026. Pending satisfactory performance, the contract may be renewed on an annual basis.

All proposals are due by August 7, 2026, at 5 pm Pacific. The CI will schedule finalists for a virtual interview with CI representatives during the week of August 10. A final decision is expected by August 21.

II. Background Information

The Cranberry Institute (CI) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1951 to advance the success of cranberry growers and the industry throughout the Americas. Its work focuses on health, agricultural, and environmental stewardship research, as well as cranberry promotion and education.

Cranberries are available in a variety of forms, including fresh, frozen, juice, juice blends, juice concentrate, sauces, and dried. They are used in a wide range of industrial food applications, including baked goods, dairy products, beverages, cereals, and nutraceutical products.

Exports are increasingly critical to the U.S. cranberry industry, with more than a third of the crop typically sold in international markets. Accordingly, developing high-growth export markets is a key priority. The industry relies on the expertise of in-country representatives to help shape and implement both short- and long-term marketing strategies aimed at driving sustainable growth for U.S. cranberry exports.

Prior to 2024, all generic international promotion for the U.S. cranberry industry was conducted by the Cranberry Marketing Committee (CMC), a federal marketing order that began promoting cranberry products internationally in 1999. Over the years, the CMC supported U.S. cranberry promotions in numerous markets, including China, Southeast Asia, Japan, Mexico, Pan-Europe, South Korea, South America, and more. In 2023, U.S. cranberry growers voted to terminate the federal marketing order, and the CI—now the only national organization representing the majority of the cranberry industry—assumed responsibility for generic international promotion.

The CI now has international marketing programs in India, South America, and Southeast Asia, which are supported primarily with funding from the USDA Market Access Program (MAP) and Regional Agricultural Promotion Program (RAPP). The CI also received America First Trade Promotion Program (AFTPP) funding in 2026 which will be used to launch programming in Europe.

Europe is already the U.S. cranberry industry's largest export market, receiving approximately 38,000 metric tons of product valued at over \$118.7 million in crop year 2024/25. However, sweetened dried cranberries account for 90% of the average volume exported to the region. By contrast, cranberry concentrate remains a relatively unknown product line with massively untapped growth potential. As such, the CI's long-term strategy in Europe centers around expanding demand for U.S. cranberry concentrate, especially among:

- Industrial ingredient users: packaged food manufacturers and processors, beverage producers, confectioners, dairy and yogurt processors, and the nutraceutical industry
- Industrial ingredients trade: importers, wholesalers, and distributors
- The Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution (HRI) sector: hotels, restaurants, cafes, bakeries, schools, hospitals, etc.

This RFP seeks to establish a comprehensive generic market development program in Europe, focused on trade engagement and health positioning. The CI's promotional efforts will highlight the health benefits, versatility, unique taste and flavor, availability, and commercial potential of U.S. cranberries. Anticipated activities include, but are not limited to, trade show participation, trade engagement and education seminars, trade missions, foodservice promotions, outreach to the nutraceutical industry, health education seminars, and advertising.

III. Agency Responsibilities

The CI is seeking an agency to manage all components of its program in Europe. The selected agency will be responsible for handling all aspects of an approved program from September 1 through December 31, 2026, with the option to renew on an annual basis pending satisfactory performance. This will include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Serving as the first point of in-market communication for trade and media
- Fostering a network of trade contacts and identifying promising trade leads that can be issued to U.S. cranberry handlers
- Developing the CI's regional marketing plan for Europe from September 1 through December 31, 2026, including:
 - Exhibiting at and participating in trade shows, industry summits, and health summits
 - Note: The CI has secured booth space for SIAL Paris and The Juice Summit in Belgium in October 2026, and the agency will be responsible for coordinating the remaining logistics/arrangements for the CI's participation (i.e., production of marketing materials/booth displays, coordinating samples, scheduling meetings with targeted trade/stakeholders for CI representatives traveling to the shows, etc.)
 - Producing and distributing promotional and educational materials with information about cranberry concentrate's unique characteristics and health benefits
- Developing the CI's annual marketing plan for Europe beginning in 2027, which is expected to include:
 - Exhibiting at and participating in trade shows, industry summits, and health summits
 - Producing and distributing promotional and educational materials with information about cranberry concentrate's unique characteristics and health benefits
 - Conducting technical and educational seminars for trade, including the HRI sector and industrial ingredient users
 - Partnering with chefs, restaurants, cafes, tea shops, ice cream stores, and others to develop new U.S. cranberry menu items and implement U.S. cranberry-themed menu promotions
- Managing all promotional and educational activities and securing CI approval for any adjustments that prove necessary or beneficial for the U.S. cranberry industry
- Managing budgets as allocated by the CI, including providing corresponding receipts and backup documentation as required by the CI and USDA's export market development program requirements
- Regularly communicating with regional USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) staff to participate in collaborative opportunities and provide updates on CI activities
- Coordinating market visits by CI staff/representatives and industry members, including arranging meetings with key trade members

- Submitting reports on a monthly basis, detailing activity summaries, results, market conditions and new product developments, an upcoming activities calendar, and other topics of interest to the U.S. cranberry industry
- Submitting reports for CI board meetings detailing program developments and impact, financials, and performance measure results
- Other duties that advance the interests of the U.S. cranberry industry in the European market

IV. Proposal Requirements

There is no required format for the proposal; however, proposals should be limited to 15 pages and must include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Marketing Strategy:
 - A short-term marketing plan (September to December 2026) outlining the proposed strategy for initial entry into Europe. Please explain how this short-term approach aligns with your long-term vision for the CI's presence in the region in subsequent years.
 - An example of a full-year marketing plan covering January 1 to December 31, 2027.
- Proposed Budget: A detailed budget, including program management fees. The CI's preliminary budget for Europe in 2026 is \$150,000 (including approx. \$75,000 already committed to SIAL and Juice Summit participation). For future years, the CI anticipates targeting an annual spend of approximately \$300,000 USD.
- Market Prioritization: Recommendations for how countries in the region should be prioritized for market development activities.
- Relevant Experience:
 - Work history with agricultural, food, or related organizations or companies.
 - Company background, including prior experience with comparable projects and relevant staff capabilities and qualifications.
 - A list of countries in the region where you are currently conducting or have previously conducted marketing activities.
- Challenges and Solutions: Assessment of the greatest challenges impeding sales of cranberry concentrate in Europe, along with proposed solutions. Please include specific strategies and tactics for addressing these barriers through generic promotional activities.
- USDA Program Knowledge: Familiarity/prior experience with USDA's export market development programs (e.g., MAP, RAPP, etc.) and their regulations.

The CI will independently review and evaluate each proposal, and a selection will be made based on the following criteria:

- Ability to meet or exceed all requirements
- Adequacy and availability of professional-level staffing
- Credentials and related experience
- Project approach

V. Authority

The agency will work under the direct supervision and with the prior approval of the CI and its export program consultants, Bryant Christie Inc., for all program activities. All expenditures must fall within the program budget pre-approved by the CI.

VI. Non-Discrimination Clause

The CI is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital/familial status. CI complies with all provisions of the U.S. government's Executive Order 11246 dated September 24, 1965 and the rules, regulations and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor.

VII. Instructions for Submitting Proposals

Proposals should be submitted electronically to:

Becky Reilly, CI Export Program Consultant
becky.reilly@bryantchristie.com

Rachel Brown, CI Export Program Consultant
rachel.brown@bryantchristie.com

Questions regarding this RFP or the CI's activities in Europe should be directed to Becky Reilly and Rachel Brown by email.

VIII. Timeline

The anticipated timeline for proposal submission, review, and selection is as follows:

- August 7, 2026, 5 pm Pacific: Deadline for submitting proposals
- Week of August 10, 2026: Interviews with finalists will be conducted
- August 21, 2026: The CI expects to make a final decision on a contractor, but reserves the right to reach a decision and/or notify applicants at a later date.

Thank you very much for your interest in working with the U.S. cranberry industry.