

RECEIVED  
NORTON TOWN CLERK

2024 MAY -2 AM 9:06

**TOWN OF NORTON**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)**  
**ROSE FARM**



**The RFQ Submittal Date:**

**May 9, 2024 – May 23, 2024 or until filled**

**70 East Main Street Norton, MA 02766 Attn: John Thomas**

**A. Introduction and Scope**

Issued in accordance with Massachusetts General Law chapter 40 section 3, this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) sets forth the procedures and requirements to lease Rose Farm, a property owned by the Town of Norton Conservation Commission. The lessee must meet the requirements listed below. The Town reserves the right to provide the selected contracted lessee with exclusive rights for the length of the lease agreement, and potential subsequent agreements. The Town also reserves the right to reject any proposal not in the Town's best interest.

**B. Background**

The Town has a parcel of land under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission, also known as Rose Farm, that is located off of North Worcester Street, Assessors Map 26, Parcel 79-01. The property was purchased in 1966 and is approximately 25 acres, with the Wading River bordering one side.

Proposed use for the property:

- Agricultural
- Husbandry
- Hydroponics
- Gardening

**C. Submittal Process**

All applications must be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes:

- 1.) Sealed Bid/Application
- 2.) Sealed Price Proposal

**D. Requirements**

1. The identity of the individual, partnership or corporation applying for the lease. If the applicant is a partnership or joint venture, the proposal should specify who will act as the primary contact for purposes of assuming contractual responsibility. If the Respondent intends to subcontract any work required in the scope of proposed use of the property, the subcontractor must be identified.

2. A description of the potential Lessee's approach to use of the land: methodology, demonstrated understanding of the community's needs, and clearly stated expectations of assistance and services from the Town of Norton.

3. Lessee must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Recent experience with at least five (5) years of agriculture background. Additional emphasis placed on farming in Massachusetts.
- Previous experience with leasing land for farming.
- Prior business knowledge.

4. A reference list, with names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers for properties the potential lessee has worked for, managed or owned as point of reference for experience.

5. Evidence of the required insurances.

6. Submission of all required forms. Any submission that fails to include all the above information will be rejected as unresponsive and will not be afforded a complete review.

**E. Selection Criteria**

The selection process will include an evaluation procedure based on the criteria identified below. Finalists will be required to appear for an interview. Submissions shall be evaluated using the following criteria by the Form Review Committee. Following the rating of all fully responsive submissions, Town Manager will interview the finalist.

Submissions should include the following additional information:

- 1.) Provide at least one (1) reference (name, current telephone number and current email)
- 2.) Provide a list and a brief description of a similar size and scope of farming project completed within the past five years period, include the primary contact of the owner, farm name and telephone number.
- 3.) Execute and comply with non-collusion statement (See Attachment A)
- 4.) Execute and comply with state tax compliance certification (if applicable) (See Attachment B)
- 5.) Provide a copy of a certificate of insurance indicating the insurance coverage detailed in this RFQ.

Additional information to include in the submission:

- 1.) Training/educational background appropriate to the project as described in the Request for Qualifications, including professional experience above and beyond the minimum qualifications, including sustainability experience.
- 2.) Demonstrated understanding of the tasks to be performed.
- 3.) Completeness of submission.
- 4.) Desirability of approach to land use and demonstrated understanding of the community's needs.
- 5.) Communication skills.

- 6.) Willingness and availability to participate in community outreach as determined to be necessary by the Town.
- 7.) Familiarity with the area.
- 8.) Any other information deemed relevant.

F. Comparative Evaluation Criteria

Comparative Evaluation Criteria will be applied uniformly to all proposals. Each criterion shall be rated as follows:

- 1) "Unacceptable" 0 points - submission does not address the elements of this criterion
- 2) "Not Advantageous" 1 point - submission does not fully meet the evaluation criterion or leaves a question or issue not fully addressed
- 3) "Advantageous" 2 points - submission meets evaluation standard for the criterion
- 4) "Highly Advantageous" 3 points - submission excels on the specific criterion, to include:

1: Training/Experience

Training/educational background appropriate to the project as described in the Request for Qualifications, including professional experience above and beyond the minimum qualifications, including sustainability experience.

Points	Rating	Description
0	Unacceptable	The applicant indicates no evidence of training or education in agriculture.
1	Not Advantageous	The applicant indicates some evidence of training or education in agriculture.
2	Advantageous	The applicant indicates evidence of training or education in agriculture, with five years' experience.
3	Highly Advantageous	The applicant indicates evidence of training or education in agriculture, with five or more years' experience, and a background in managing a productive business.

## 2: Long-Term Experience

Depth of experience with similar projects, and prior experience with farming, land management, and running a business, including professional experience above and beyond the minimum qualifications outlined in this RFQ.

Points	Rating	Description
0	Unacceptable	The proposal indicated no evidence that the applicant has had prior experience leasing agricultural land.
1	Not Advantageous	The proposal indicated some evidence that the applicant has had prior experience leasing land.
2	Advantageous	The proposal indicated evidence that the applicant has had the prior experience leasing land and starting and maintaining an agricultural project within the last 3 to 8 years.
3	Highly Advantageous	The proposal indicated evidence that the applicant has had the extensive experience leasing land and self-starting and maintaining an agricultural project within the last 3 to 8 years.

## 3: Understanding

Desirability of approach to project and demonstrated understanding of the community.

Points	Rating	Description
0	Unacceptable	The applicant does not provide understanding of the requirements to lease the property.
1	Not Advantageous	The applicant provides a vague understanding of the requirements to lease the property.
2	Advantageous	The applicant indicated a thorough review and understanding of the requirements and provides necessary documents.
3	Highly Advantageous	The applicant has indicated a thorough review and understanding of the requirements and provides necessary documents, and proposes a clear and comprehensive approach.

#### 4: Quality of Past Work

Prior successful experience with farming. Quality of past farming practices as evidenced by pictures, public review, or awards won.

Points	Rating	Description
0	Unacceptable	None of the submissions presented by applicant have relevance to the services being solicited under RFQ
1	Not Advantageous	One or two of the submissions presented by the applicant are unclear, or have little relevance to the services being solicited.
2	Advantageous	All submissions presented are written clearly and fully show the relevant subject matter being solicited under RFQ.
3	Highly Advantageous	All submissions presented are written clearly, fully cover the relevant subject matter, and excel with respect to quality, graphics, formats, and/or writing style.