Mississippi State University  
Notice of Proposed Sole Source Purchase

189-18

Mississippi State University anticipates purchasing the item(s) listed below as a sole source purchase. Anyone objecting to this purchase shall follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Commodity or commodities to be purchased (make, model, description):

The Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory (MSCL) requests to purchase as a sole source item the Agilent 5110 VDV Inductively Coupled Plasma-Optical Emission Spectrophotometer (ICP-OES). This unit would consist of the detector, autosampler, and chiller.

1. Explanation of the need to be fulfilled by this item(s), how is it unique from all other options, and why it is the only one that can meet the specific needs of the department:

The MSCL is mandated under Mississippi Code, Title 57, Chapter 21-9 to provide analytical, chemical, and bacteriological services for regulatory control, in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. One commodity that falls under this testing authority is that of fertilizers, and ICP-OES is the method used to determine the levels of potassium and phosphorus in fertilizers. This new ICP-OES would replace the existing Varian ICP-OES currently used by the lab that has become not practicable to maintain. Unfortunately, Varian does not exist anymore; therefore, a different provider of this instrumentation is needed. Based upon the MSCL’s research, the Agilent 5110 VDV ICP-OES is the only instrument of this type that has the following characteristics:

* a plasma torch that is a cassette style and is mounted vertically. After mounting the torch, no further manual adjustment of the torch is required for alignment to the RF coil or for axial optical alignment, or for adjustment of the position of the injector tube. Ultimately, this reduces maintenance downtime, which is crucial in a testing facility.
* a CCD detector that is hermetically sealed, and requires no gas consumption for purging reducing argon usage, which provides cost savings as argon is costly.
* has a vertical plasma and has a ‘dual view’ with the capability to read axially and radially sequentially, or to read axial or radial views alone.
* simultaneously performs determinations across the entire spectrum, both UV and visible, in a single measurement on a single detector.

1. Name of company/individual selling the item and why that source is the only possible source that can provide the required item(s):

The company selling the Agilent 5110 VDV ICP-OES is Agilent Technologies. No other instrument manufacturer sells new Agilent 5110 VDV ICP-OES units.

1. Estimated cost of item(s) and an explanation why the amount to be expended is considered reasonable:

The estimated cost of the Agilent 5110 VDV ICP-OES would be $75,000. This amount is reasonable considering that the MSCL analyzes approximately 900 regulatory fertilizer samples for Mississippi each year, which would cost $54,000 (@$60/sample for instrument time) for a private payer and the expected useful lifetime of this instrument is 7 years.

1. Explanation of the efforts taken by the department to determine this is the only source and the efforts used to obtain the best possible price:

MSCL personnel have attended exhibitions at meetings of the American Chemical Society and AOAC International to speak with different instrument manufacturers about their tools available for testing of fertilizers. Taking all the information into account, the MSCL feels that the Agilent VDV ICP-OES is the only viable long-term option. In order to obtain the best possible price, the MSCL has also offered to trade-in the old Varian ICP-OES. Agilent has agreed to do this.

Any person or entity that objects and proposes that the commodity listed is not sole source and can be provided by another person or entity shall submit a written notice to:

Don Buffum, CPPO  
Director of Procurement & Contracts  
[dbuffum@procurement.msstate.edu](mailto:dbuffum@procurement.msstate.edu)  
**Subject Line must read “Sole Source Objection”**

The notice shall contain a detailed explanation of why the commodity is not a sole source procurement. Appropriate documentation shall also be submitted if applicable.

If after a review of the submitted notice and documents, MSU determines that the commodity in the proposed sole source request can be provided by another person or entity, then MSU will withdraw the sole source request publication from the procurement portal website and submit the procurement of the commodity to an advertised competitive bid or selection process.

If MSU determines after review that there is only one (1) source for the required commodity, then MSU will appeal to the Public Procurement Review Board. MSU will have the burden of proving that the commodity is only provided by one (1) source.

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