

# BioPreferred® Program



With the goal of increasing the development, purchase, and use of biobased products, USDA's BioPreferred® Program was first introduced in the 2002 Farm Bill. Reauthorized in 2018, it requires Federal agencies and contractors to give purchasing preference to biobased products. The USDA BioPreferred® Program also includes a certification and labeling initiative for biobased products. This is called the USDA Certified Biobased Product Label.

More than 3,000 companies spanning all 50 states participate in the program. From farm and field all the way through the manufacturing process, the expanding market for biobased products creates jobs and helps support rural economic growth in America.

## What is a Biobased Product?

Derived from plants and other agricultural, marine, and forestry materials, examples of biobased products include construction materials, custodial goods, and consumer-based personal care and packaging. Biobased products also include intermediate-use feedstocks such as biopolymers (naturally-occurring materials like wool, silk, and gelatin; and polysaccharides like cellulose and starch drawn from fungi and bacteria) and biobased chemicals used to create commercial, industrial, or consumer goods.

## The Benefits of Biobased Products

In addition to strengthening the economy and supporting rural America, biobased products:

- Help address climate change by offering renewable alternatives to petroleum-based products
- Sequester carbon dioxide, lowering the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that contribute to climate change
- Create new – and expand existing – markets for manufacturers and sellers of biobased products
- Are generally safer for people and the environment than their petroleum-based counterparts
- Perform as well as or better than many non-biobased alternatives
- Represent incredible technological advances and innovations.

## Did you Know?

Biobased products are all around us. From soy-based insulation, to bioplastics made with cornstarch, to sugarcane-derived shopping bags, a wide range of biobased product manufacturers and suppliers can be found in our catalog at [www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/catalog/Catalog.xhtml](http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/catalog/Catalog.xhtml).



## Preferred Federal Purchasing

Federal agencies and contractors are required by law to purchase biobased products. USDA identifies eligible product categories and specifies the minimum biobased content required for each category. There currently are 139 product categories and 14,000 products from which Federal agencies and contractors can choose.

- Last year, construction, groundskeeping, and custodial products accounted for 80 percent of the government's biobased purchases.
- Composite panels, roof coatings, and floor coverings and carpets account for the materials upon which the government spent the most.
- The most frequently purchased products included custodial products such as multipurpose cleaners, bathroom, and glass cleaners.

Available at [www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/TrainingResources\\_1.xhtml](http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/TrainingResources_1.xhtml), the BioPreferred® Program's Training and Resources webpage offers help in understanding:

- Federal requirements for purchasing biobased products
- Categories of biobased products that receive preferred Federal purchasing
- How Federal contractors, contracting officers, acquisition professionals, technical staff, and purchase card holders can easily identify and purchase biobased products
- The Contracting Officer's role and responsibility in reporting biobased product purchases.



The Training and Resources page also offers guidance and support to biobased businesses that want to tap into the Federal marketplace. The Federal Government spends billions of dollars

each year on products and supplies that meet biobased purchasing requirements. If they perform well and are cost-competitive, businesses that sell these in-demand products and supplies can build and strengthen their revenue streams.

## The USDA Certified Biobased Product Label

USDA's goal is to make it easy for consumers to identify biobased products. The USDA Certified Biobased Product label provides useful information



to consumers about the verified amount of renewable biological ingredients contained within a product and / or its packaging. Consumers can trust the USDA Certified Biobased Product label because the biobased content claims are third-party certified and monitored by USDA. There are currently more than 4,500 USDA Certified Biobased Products.

## The BioPreferred® Program Catalog

USDA's BioPreferred Program Catalog is designed to help businesses identify products that qualify for preferred Federal purchasing, have obtained the USDA Certified Biobased Product label, or both. Products cannot be purchased directly through the program, but the catalog provides sourcing information including product details and company websites. If you are purchasing products for the Federal Government, you can also search for biobased products in catalogs such as the Government Services Agency's "GSA Advantage," available at [www.gsaadvantage.gov/advantage/ws/main/start\\_page?store=ADVANTAGE](http://www.gsaadvantage.gov/advantage/ws/main/start_page?store=ADVANTAGE), and the Department of Defense's "DoD FedMall," which can be found at [www.fedmall.mil/index.html](http://www.fedmall.mil/index.html).

## Need More Information? We're here to help!

Contact the BioPreferred® Program:



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