



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# Press Release

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## **Agriculture Deputy Secretary Merrigan Unveils First Products that Consumers Can Purchase With New BioPreferred Label**

### ***Label Will Help Boost Demand for Products Made From Renewable Commodities and Support Rural Jobs***

GLENWILLOW, Ohio, March 31, 2011 – Deputy Agriculture Secretary Kathleen Merrigan today unveiled the first 60 products that consumers will soon see in stores throughout the country bearing the new USDA BioPreferred product label for certified biobased products.

The new BioPreferred label designates biobased products that are composed wholly or significantly of agricultural ingredients – renewable plant, animal, marine or forestry materials. This new label indicates that the product has been independently certified to meet USDA BioPreferred program standards for biobased content. Biobased products help add value to commodities, create jobs in rural communities, increase U.S. energy independence by reducing the use of petroleum in manufactured products and may also reduce the introduction of fossil carbon into the atmosphere, thus mitigating potential climate change impacts.

"When consumers see the BioPreferred label in a store, they'll know that the product or its packaging is made from renewable plant, animal, marine, or forestry materials," said Deputy Secretary Merrigan. "From bioplastics to plant-based cleaners, from industrial lubricants and construction products to personal care items, this ever-growing list of biobased products helps create jobs in rural communities by adding value to agricultural commodities and can reduce our dependence on imported oil."



Merrigan made the announcement during a biobased product meeting held at Hoover, Inc. in Glenwillow, Ohio. Just a few of the BioPreferred labeled products unveiled today include hand soaps and hand sanitizers, plant-based plastic food packaging used to package fresh food, an array of biobased cleaning products, engine oils and lubricants, as well as biobased fiber spun into carpet and clothes.

Companies recognized today include: Nutek Green, a division of Hoover, Inc., (Glenwillow, Ohio); Seventh Generation (Burlington, Vermont); Betco Corp. (Toledo, Ohio); Clear Lam Packaging, Inc. (Elk Grove Village, Illinois); DuPont Corporation (Wilmington, Delaware); ElastiKote (Akron, Ohio); Green Earth Technologies (Celebration, Florida); National Industries for the Blind Agencies (Lighthouse for the Blind, St. Louis, Missouri and Travis Association for the Blind, Austin, Texas); NatureWorks LLC (Minnetonka, Minnesota); Rochester Midland Corporation (Rochester, New York); Bio-Lub Canada (Quebec, Canada).

Today's announcement follows the January 2011 launch of voluntary biobased product certification and labeling from USDA. One hundred companies have submitted applications for

about 400 products for certification since the effort began two months ago.

Through implementation of the BioPreferred program, USDA has identified 5,100 biobased products for preferred purchasing by Federal agencies. The new label will make identification of these products easier for Federal buyers and will increase awareness of these high-value products for consumers. USDA estimates that there are 20,000 biobased products currently being manufactured in the United States.

USDA's BioPreferred program was created by the 2002 Farm Bill to increase the purchase and use of biobased products within the Federal government and the commercial market. Congress reauthorized and strengthened the program in the 2008 Farm Bill to further promote the sale of biobased products. With the launch of this new biobased product label, USDA's BioPreferred program is now comprised of two parts: a biobased product procurement preference program for Federal agencies, and a voluntary labeling initiative for the broad-scale marketing of biobased products. To learn more, please visit [www.biopreferred.gov](http://www.biopreferred.gov).