

BioPreferred™

BioBuzzGov

Promoting the use and purchase of biobased products in Federal agencies

## BioPreferred Program “Excellence in Procurement” Awards Nomination Period Now Open!

Through our annual “Excellence in Procurement” Awards, the BioPreferred Program® recognizes outstanding achievements by federal employees and contractors who advance the purchase and use of biobased products and make significant contributions to sustainable acquisitions. All federal employees and contractors procuring biobased products for the Federal Government between FY2020 to FY2021 may be considered for this year’s awards.



### And the nomination period is now open!

Do you know a Contracting Officer, federal contractor, or other federal acquisition professional whose work last year ensured maximum use of biobased products? Please nominate them for an award at [www.biopREFERRED.gov](http://www.biopREFERRED.gov). You can also nominate yourself or a group of individuals.

The deadline for submissions is August 5, 2022.

USDA will evaluate award nominations based on:

- Demonstrable results in the purchase and use of biobased products that drive U.S. economic activity and U.S. job creation.
- Models for acquiring, using, or validating biobased products that replace non-biobased products.
- Process achievements such as including biobased products requirements in contracts resulting in the purchase of biobased products.
- Overcoming barriers that limit opportunities for incorporating biobased products in federal activities such as revising specifications to require biobased products.
- Innovations that can serve as a model or be transferred readily to other processes, facilities, divisions, sub-agencies, or contractors.

The nomination process is easy – simply provide the name(s) of the individual(s) who deserve recognition, a summary of why you are nominating them, and a more detailed

description of why you believe the award is deserved. You may also include photographs or attachments. Nominations can be based on a specific accomplishment or body of work related to the purchase and use of biobased products and/or contracting for the purchase and use of biobased products.

Winners will receive a plaque, have their success stories featured on the BioPreferred Program website and in issues of our BioBuzzGov and BioBuzz newsletters, and be promoted to the media.

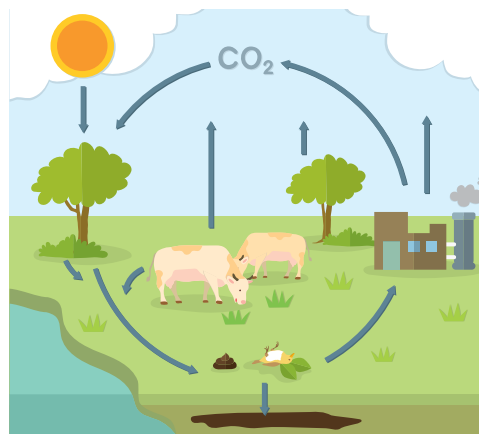
Thank you for your anticipated submissions. We can't wait to read them and celebrate the ways the federal sustainable acquisition community is buying and using biobased products! Have questions about this Awards program? Please contact Vernell Thompson at [Vernell.Thompson@usda.gov](mailto:Vernell.Thompson@usda.gov).



## Does Purchasing Biobased Products Contribute to Net-Zero Emissions? The Answer is YES!

One of the pillars of the Federal Sustainability Plan is to achieve net-zero emissions procurement by 2050, in part by maximizing the procurement of sustainable products. But you may wonder: How does purchasing and using biobased products contribute to net-zero emissions?

To answer that question, let's first look at the carbon cycle. Carbon is the building block of life on Earth. Humans, plants, and animals are all made of carbon. We eat carbon, we burn carbon for fuel, and we use carbon to manufacture products. Through the carbon cycle, carbon flows between land, oceans, and the atmosphere. Carbon is exchanged naturally through photosynthesis, where plants capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and transform it into sugars, which then become plant structures. Once a plant dies and decays, carbon dioxide is either released back into the atmosphere, completing the cycle, or stored in the earth and oceans to become fossil fuels over billions of years.



Humans contribute to the carbon cycle by burning fossil fuels for energy and using them to make consumer goods. These activities and others release more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than can be removed through the normal carbon cycle, leading to an increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Biobased products are composed in whole or in part of biological products such as forestry materials, renewable agricultural materials, or material derived from animals or marine life. When plant material is used to manufacture biobased products, the plant's carbon stays sequestered from the atmosphere throughout the life of the product. Biobased products with a high amount of plant-based material can contribute net-zero carbon emissions into the atmosphere, which is referred to as being carbon neutral. When combined with sustainable agricultural and manufacturing practices, biobased products even have the potential to be carbon negative, in effect emitting less than zero carbon emissions.

## Biobased Products are Popular in Construction Contracts

Many biobased products are used across the Federal Government in construction and renovation projects. Here are the top ten categories of biobased products purchased and reported by contractors in FY2021.

Ranking	Category of Biobased Product
1	Blast media
2	Wood and Concrete Sealers – Membrane Concrete Sealers
3	Roof Coatings
4	Floor Coverings (non-carpet)
5	Wood and Concrete Sealers: Penetrating Liquids
6	Composite Panels: Acoustical
7	Carpets
8	Interior Paints and Coatings: Latex and Waterborne Alkyd
9	Composite Panels: Structural Wall Panels
10	Composite Panels: Interior Panels

Here's how many construction contracts relied on these biobased product categories to get the job done!

Category	Number of Contracts
Blast Media	86
Interior Paints and Coatings: Latex and Waterborne Alkyd	81
Carpets	46
Floor Coverings (non-carpet)	38
Dust Suppressants	28
Wood and Concrete Sealers; Membrane Concrete Sealers	21
Roof Coatings	20

To continue to increase the number of biobased construction products being used in the federal government, detailing the biobased product purchasing requirements at the solicitation and contract stage is key. Updated [sample contract language](#) is available to assist you with your next construction or renovation contract. We know you are busy, so consider cutting and pasting relevant language!

## AbilityOne Can Help You Do Good – for the Planet and for People!

As one of the largest sources of employment in the U.S. for individuals who are blind or have other significant disabilities, AbilityOne manufactures and delivers products and services to the Federal Government — including biobased products.



Federal buyers are required by law to purchase products (and that means biobased products!) from AbilityOne whenever possible (FAR 8.704). And AbilityOne makes it easy to do so. Simply use the keyword “biobased” in the search bar on this [page](#). Once you find products you want to buy, AbilityOne has links to online platforms like GSA Global Supply, GSA Advantage!, and DoD FedMall where you can complete the transaction.

With AbilityOne employing approximately 40,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities and more than 2,500 veterans, including wounded warriors, your procurement of biobased products not only helps the planet, it benefits thousands of their employees in need.

Visit AbilityOne [here](#) to boost your procurement of biobased products today!

## What are Biobased Products Made From?

From acacia and aloe to witch hazel and yams, there are more than 500 different types of raw materials across 6,000+ USDA Certified Biobased Products. Biobased content percentages (as shown on USDA Certified Biobased Product label) indicate the amount of renewable “new” organic carbon in a product, which is estimated using the ratio of new organic carbon to total organic carbon (“new” + “old” or petroleum-based carbon).



[Check out our new infographic to learn more.](#)

But where does the “new” organic carbon come from?

Common materials include corn, sugarcane, soybeans, wheat, and rice. Many biobased products do not use agriculture products intended for food, but other parts of the plant that remain after harvesting, like stalks, straw, husks, and chaff. Wheat is a prime example of how an entire plant can benefit people and the planet. In addition to the grain being a key ingredient in breads, cereals, and flour, the fibrous parts of the wheat plant are used to make disposable biobased food containers to replace plastic ones. You’ll also find wheat in toothbrush handles, straws, socks, pillows, paints, cosmetics, and baby lotions.

When you buy biobased products, you help U.S. farmers to use all aspects of the crops they’ve worked hard to grow.

## The BioPreferred Program Audit is Underway

The BioPreferred Program is now conducting our 2022 audit. As of April 18th, all companies with products in our [Catalog](#) must complete the audit to ensure their product and contact information is up-to-date. This allows federal agencies and contractors to explore the Catalog’s product listings with confidence, knowing details are valid and current. Our Catalog’s search results display verified product listings first.

## Biobased Category Spotlight: Office Supplies

Are you interested in making your office space more eco-friendly? Whether you work from home or are back in the office, it’s easy to buy office supplies that can help to reduce carbon emissions and our reliance on petroleum-based products.



Start now by exploring the [BioPreferred Program Catalog](#), where you’ll find a variety of office supply categories, including printer paper, notebooks, folders, binders, printer ink, packing materials, and more. Each time you stock up, you’ll make your workspace more planet-friendly and help your agency meet biobased product procurement requirements.

## Meet Our Sustainability Superstars!



In reviewing new service and construction solicitations for FY2022, we want to recognize and thank Contracting Officers and Contracting Specialists who are achieving high standards by including biobased product purchasing requirements in their solicitations.

Brooke Barker – USDA  
Theodore Blume – USDA

Ann Dobie - USDA  
Robert Hall – Interior

Jeffrey Pruett – VA  
John Scola - Army

We applaud their important efforts to create a more sustainable government!



## In Case You Missed It

In April, on Earth Day, we used Twitter to launch [BioBites](#), our new series of 30-second videos explaining facts about the BioPreferred Program and biobased products. Follow [@BioPreferred](#) to learn more about the Program, one bite at a time!

## Program Certifies 200+ Products in Past Two Months

The BioPreferred Program certified more than 200 products in the past two months. Below are a few of the products we've added to our [Catalog](#).

- Bio Bike Wash
- DEWALT® Bar & Chain Biodegradable Oil
- DEWALT® Degreaser Bio-based Cleaner
- HD-100 (Dust Suppressant)
- HempWool® (Insulation)
- Protek Wrap® PW32 (Packaging with Corrosion Preventatives)
- Sand Micro™ (Acoustical Panels)
- Surgical Skin Stapler (Medical Supplies)

## NEW Web-Based Course Available!

Incorporating Biobased Purchasing and Reporting Requirements in Federal Service and Construction Contracts.

We recently launched a new web-based training course titled: [Incorporating Biobased Purchasing and Reporting Requirements in Federal Service and Construction Contracts](#). This 1.5-hour online course is designed to help Contracting Officers, Procurement Professionals and Contracting Officer Representatives boost sustainable acquisition efforts. Through engaging video, narration, and interactive elements, attendees will learn how to incorporate biobased requirements into their solicitations, oversee contractor reporting of their purchases in SAM, and boost their overall sustainable acquisition efforts. (1.5 CLPs recommended for this course.)

## Headed to NCMA World Congress?



Mark your calendar: The BioPreferred Program will be exhibiting virtually at the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) World Congress from July 17th to July 20th. The NCMA World Congress connects contractors, including federal contractors, and organizations that work closely with them. When you stop by our virtual booth, you can explore a variety of materials to learn more about our Program. You'll also be able to chat live via text or video with BioPreferred Program representatives.

[Check out the World Congress Agenda and learn more about how to use its virtual platform.](#)

## Do you have a success story you'd like to share?

Or content you'd find helpful in BioBuzzGov? Send an email to: [Vernell Thompson](#)

## Share BioBuzzGov with a Fed Gov Friend!

Know a colleague or teammate who wants to learn more about purchasing biobased products? Share this issue and let them know they can [subscribe](#) to BioBuzzGov!