



# Biobased Solutions

Volume III, Number 2, Spring 2005

FOR GOVERNMENT



*Dear Reader:*

Hello, I'm Kent Gronlie, a soybean farmer from Northwood, North Dakota, and I was recently reappointed chairman of the United Soybean Board Domestic Marketing

Committee. I am particularly pleased to send you this Biobased Solutions for Government newsletter that is devoted entirely to information about the recent final rule published in the Federal Register that outlines the U.S. Department of Agriculture's procedures for officially designating biobased products. This is an important step forward in carrying out the provision of the 2002 Farm Bill, which established a preferential procurement program for biobased products within the federal government.

The government is now poised for greater use of biobased products that offer benefits to the U.S. environment, energy security and the economy. We want to help you in your efforts to use biobased products. The United Soybean Board has collected many materials about biobased products as well as information about how many government agencies have already succeeded with these products. I hope you will go to our resource center for these materials at [www.soybiobased.org](http://www.soybiobased.org), and please contact us if you have additional needs or questions.

*Sincerely,*  
*Kent Gronlie*  
*Domestic Marketing Committee Chair*

## Biobased Products Entering New 'Preferential' Phase For Federal Government Purchases

**W**hile the use of biobased products has been growing steadily over the last several years, that effort should receive a substantial boost as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued January 11 its final rule establishing Guidelines for Designating Biobased Products for Federal Procurement. It is effective February 10, 2005.

That rule is a part of several steps called for in the 2002 Farm Bill that established a program for preferential purchase of biobased products by all agencies in the federal government. Section 9002 of the

law instructed USDA to consult with other federal agencies—including the General Services Administration, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Office of Management and Budget and the Environmental Protection Agency—to establish a program of preferred procurement of biobased products.



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## Other Agencies Laud USDA Rule To Designate Biobased Products

**K**ey federal decision makers were positive about USDA's final rule published on the designation process for biobased products.

Dana Arnold, Chief of Staff, Office of the Federal Environmental Executive (OFEE), at the White House, said "The OFEE applauds USDA's efforts in creating a solid framework for the Federal

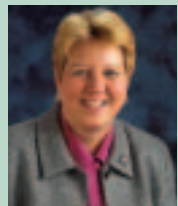
Biobased Products Preferential Purchasing Program and looks forward to continue working with USDA to promote federal agency use of biobased products. OFEE encourages all agencies and individual facilities to purchase and test a variety of biobased products now. Information on federal agencies purchasing biobased products can be found in the Fall 2001,

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## Hear What Government Employees Already Have to Say about Biobased Products:



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# Biobased Products Entering New 'Preferential' Phase For Federal Government Purchases

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## **In the final guidelines, USDA:**

- describes the procedures the Agency will use to designate items (i.e., generic product groupings such as greases, fuel additives, hydraulic fluids, solvents, fertilizers) for preferred procurement and to set the minimum biobased content level for such items;
- establishes the requirements that manufacturers and vendors will need to follow, and information they will need to provide, to obtain preferred procurement status for their products;
- establishes a requirement for each Federal agency to develop by January 11, 2006 an affirmative procurement program for biobased products and a requirement that Federal agencies ensure their product procurement specifications are consistent with the Guidelines; and
- sets forth the criteria the Agency will use to fund product testing for biobased content, life cycle costs, environmental and health benefits, and performance.

In subsequent rulemakings, USDA will designate specific biobased items for preferred procurement. USDA plans to begin this process soon by issuing a series of proposed rules that will list items for program eligibility. After considering public comments, final rules designating these items will be promulgated.

According to Marvin Duncan, Office of the Chief Economist (OCE), "We expect to issue the first rule designating specific products in spring 2005. Others will follow as soon as they can be tested and ready."

USDA expects this process to extend over the next three years. It has already identified 83 items on which it is gathering testing information to support designation. See [www.biobased.oce.usda.gov](http://www.biobased.oce.usda.gov) to view the list under the "Designated Item" link at the top of the page.

In addition, USDA is working with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy to

incorporate the requirements of Section 9002 into the overall federal procurement program framework through an amendment to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).

Finally, USDA plans a separate rule-making to establish a voluntary labeling program to authorize the use of a

"U.S.D.A. Certified Biobased Product" label. In that rulemaking, USDA will propose the eligibility criteria and guidelines for the use of such a label. Duncan said that the labeling rule is almost ready for review by USDA and OMB and it is hoped that it will be published by the end of the government's fiscal year.

## **USDA Creates Model Procurement Program**

In addition to implementing the federal government's overall biobased program, USDA is preparing its own agency-wide preferred procurement program that it will share as model for other agencies. "We believe this model of implementation will put appropriate emphasis on training and communications for existing preferential purchasing programs," said USDA's Marvin Duncan.

The USDA procurement program/model will contain training and outreach programs as well as ways to monitor, track and report on program effectiveness. Mike Green of USDA's Office of Procurement and Property Management is the Program Manager for developing USDA Biobased Product Procurement Preference Model. USDA is willing to discuss and share its efforts to implement the model with any federal agencies. Green can be reached at [mike.green@usda.gov](mailto:mike.green@usda.gov) or at 202-720-7921.

## **Summary of Final Guidelines**

### **Procedures for Designating Items**

Designated items are composed of generic groupings of products. Products are specific products offered for sale by a manufacturer or vendor.

USDA is gathering product data and vendors may voluntarily provide the following: (1) product information on technological and economic feasibility (functional performance, commercial availability, etc.), (2) samples for testing for biobased content, and (3) information that USDA can use to determine environmental and public health benefits and life cycle costs through the Building for Environmental and Economic Sustainability (BEES) analytic tool developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In designating items, USDA will consider the availability of such items and the economic and technological feasibility of using such items, including life cycle costs. USDA will gather information on individual products within an item and extrapolate that product information to the item level for consideration in designating items. In considering these factors, USDA will use life cycle cost information only from tests using the BEES analytical method.

USDA will determine biobased content using the ASTM International Radioisotope Standard Method D6866. The term biobased content is defined in the final rule as the amount of biobased carbon in the material or product as a percent of weight (mass) of the total organic carbon in the material or product. Unless specified otherwise by USDA, the minimum biobased content refers to

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# Hear What Government Employees Already Have to Say about Biobased Products:

**During the last two years, the United Soybean Board has documented a number of case histories of various government agencies' successful use of biobased products. Here is what some of these federal employees had to say about their experience with a wide variety of products:**



**Jim Evanoff, Environmental Specialist  
Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming**

*"When you work at the world's first and most famous national park, it is just incumbent upon you to do everything you can to be innovative in protecting the park's sensitive environment," he says.*

*Each year, the park has nearly 3 million visitors, and virtually all of them arrive by auto or bus. The Park Service alone has a fleet of 700 vehicles. It's no wonder then that Jim Evanoff's first environmental concern centered around vehicular transportation in general, and biodiesel fuel, in particular.*

*Today, all of the park-owned diesel engines ranging from trucks to generators to snow trail groomers are powered by biodiesel. It is also currently available at public stations located just outside the Park's gates, and in the spring of 2005 it is hoped that service stations within the park will begin selling biodiesel. "Not only will this help keep the Park's environment clean, we think it will also introduce diesel car and truck owners to the advantages of biodiesel," he says. "We've offered ethanol blended unleaded fuel for several years so this is just a natural extension for us."*

*Another important, but not so glamorous area of biobased products use in the park is cleaning products. "We have to keep all of our facilities clean and neat and it's a tremendous job," Jim explains. "Harsh cleaning chemicals are hard on those who do that type of work and could pose a threat to our sensitive environment.*

*"A few years ago, our custodial and maintenance crews were using more than 130 different cleaning products. As a result of a NPS study here in the Northwest, we've now switched to biobased products and cut the number of products to around 15, saving money and time while protecting our employees and the environment," he says.*

# Hear What Government Employees Already



**Dr. Phyllis Johnson**  
Director Beltsville Area  
Agricultural Research Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Beltsville, Maryland

*"We use dozens of biobased products. They work very well and our employees like them because besides doing the job well, they are less irritating to skin, eyes, and respiration. Even if we didn't work for USDA, which supports farmers as part of its mission, I would want my installation to use biobased products because using products made from renewable resources is good for our environment and our future. For us, using biobased products is just obviously the right thing to do. This decision was a no-brainer."*

*The Beltsville Area Research Center twice won a White House Closing the Circle Award for its use of biobased products and other environmental efforts.*



**Gary Cantrell**  
Health Facilities Maintenance Manager  
Cherokee Nation, Oklahoma

*"Too Good To Be True?" That is what Gary Cantrell, thought when he read in a trade magazine about the effectiveness of BEAN•e•doo®, a biobased mastic remover. The reason that product caught his eye was that Gary and his crew needed to take up take up a black mastic from a floor in one of their hospitals.*

*"We have no idea what this black stuff is, but from past experience with it, we knew it was impossible to remove with chemicals so we had to do it by hand scraping. That took hours of hard work," Gary says.*

*And with BEAN•e•doo®? "It took two coats and overnight, but it came up completely. I'm perfectly satisfied with the way it worked. It saved my crew lots of time and some very hard work," he says.*

*In fact, he was so pleased with the mastic remover that he decided to use another of the manufacturer's biobased products, SOYGel™ paint remover. "I budgeted four weeks for my crew to complete the entire job, figuring it would take two work weeks to get the old paint off the walls," he explains. "We put the soy strip on and in 20 minutes that old paint was literally running off the walls. We finished the paint stripping part of the project in just two days. Sure the product cost a little more, but we more than made that cost up in labor savings."*

To learn more about how these and other government employees are using biobased products, go to [www.soybiobased.org/profiles](http://www.soybiobased.org/profiles)

# Have to Say about Biobased Products:



**James Hennessey**  
Albany District Environmental Coordinator  
U.S. Postal Service  
Albany, New York

*When the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) discovered, tested and began using the mastic remover, BEAN•e•doo®, its primary reasons were that it was safe to use and it worked very well. But it has also turned into a big money saver.*

*According to James Hennessey, “This product removes mastic which often contains asbestos. If it didn’t work, we’d have to contract with outside remediation firms that specialize in removing materials containing asbestos. The cost for us to do it is sixty cents a square foot. The cost for an outside contractor to do it is \$1.76 per square foot—that’s a savings of almost 300 percent. In addition, we are now using it to remove floor tiles, too. Just here in our Northeast Region (New England and New York, except New York City) that adds up to big money because we estimate about 40,000 cases per year.”*



**Chris Case**  
Facility Manager  
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Michigan

*For Chris Case there is no need to ask the question, “Why we are doing this?” but rather he says “Why aren’t we doing more?” Those questions apply to almost everything he does whether it’s using a variety of biobased products in the park or it’s making his pitch for these products’ use to outside groups.*

*Chris has been an “early adopter” of biobased products, which the following list used at Pictured Rock demonstrates: hydraulic fluid, biodiesel, transmission fluid, two-cycle engine oil, crankcase oil, engine oil, penetrating oil, parts cleaner, hand cleaner and various cleaning products.*

To learn more about how these and other government employees are using biobased products, go to [www.soybiobased.org/profiles](http://www.soybiobased.org/profiles)

# Hear What Government Employees Already Have to Say about Biobased Products:



**Clarence Hill**  
Press Room Foreman\*  
U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, Virginia

**Kent Bullard**  
Maintenance Supervisor  
Channel Islands National Park, California

*"We have all sorts of Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Environmental Protection Agency regulations and standards to deal with," Clarence says. "Soy ink just makes it easier for us to comply. For example, the soy ink is so much safer and convenient to dispose of than petroleum-based inks. The same is true for the press. The cleaning solvents for soy ink are far less toxic and easier to use than those for oil-based inks."*

*Mike Tobin, head of printing at USGS summarizes their use of soy ink as follows: "Yes, soy ink makes us in compliance with the Vegetable Printing Act as well as EPA and OSHA regulations. Soy ink is also technically superior and more efficient, but the bottom line is that we produce a better map."*

*(\*Since this case history was written, the map printing function for USGS was consolidated at a central government printing shop within the Federal Aviation Administration where Mr. Hill now works.)*

*At the bottom of his business card, Kent Bullard has the following descriptor: "Construction, Alternative Energy & Innovation @ One of the World's Greatest National Parks." Kent has made the message of alternative energy use—biodiesel as well as other biobased products—his mission, not only throughout the National Park Service but in communities up and down the West Coast.*

To learn more about how these and other government employees are using biobased products, go to [www.soybiobased.org/profiles](http://www.soybiobased.org/profiles)

# Other Agencies Laud USDA Rule To Designate Biobased Products

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Summer 2003, Spring 2004, and Summer 2004 issues of "Closing the Circle News," which is available on our web site, [www.ofee.gov](http://www.ofee.gov), in the Publications section. In addition, OFEE encourages agencies to incorporate biobased products into their green purchasing programs."

**"Office of Federal Procurement Policy believes that biobased product purchasing complements existing green purchasing programs and encourages agencies to immediately incorporate biobased products into their overall affirmative procurement programs."**

*Cyndi Vallina,  
Office of Federal  
Procurement Policy*

Cyndi Vallina, Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), had this to say about the new rule: "Office of Federal Procurement Policy believes that biobased product purchasing complements existing green purchasing programs and encourages agencies to immediately incorporate biobased products into their overall affirmative procurement programs. Agencies should make performance determinations on which green product best fits their particular needs, whether it be recycled, biobased, energy-efficient and/or environmentally preferable products."

Vallina went on to say, "Agencies

will have to begin mandatory purchasing of designated products after the issuance of biobased product/item requirements by USDA. However, OFPP and the OFEE have been encouraging agencies to begin purchasing biobased products that meet their agencies' performance needs now. For the 2004 RCRA reporting cycle, all agencies were asked to respond to several questions related to their efforts to initiate and incorporate biobased purchasing. Once USDA issues rules on requirements for particular biobased items, OFPP will work with USDA and other Federal agencies to expand our reporting systems to accommodate biobased purchasing and find new and better ways to track it."

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is another key component in the government's effort to increase the use of biobased products to reduce dependence on foreign petroleum sources. As part of the DOE effort in this area, it has an ongoing program called "Buy Bio". Sandra Cannon, of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and DOE technical support person for the Buy Bio program, said, "We are very much looking forward to USDA officially designating products as biobased. It will very much help all of us responsible for preferential purchasing."

In the meantime, Cannon points out that DOE, through Buy Bio, has five pilot projects utilizing biobased products. They include various categories of products ranging from hydraulic fluid for elevators to biodiesel to insulation.

## Biobased Products Entering New 'Preferential' Phase For Federal Government Purchases

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the biobased portion of the product, and not the entire product.

After USDA gathers the necessary information on an item, it will propose a rule to designate the item and a minimum biobased content level for the item, take comments on the proposal, and finalize the rule. Designated items will be posted on website USDA has created for this program.

Manufacturers and vendors may submit recommendations to USDA for item designation at any time, but USDA does not have a formal process for such submission or for responding to such submissions.

Motor vehicle fuels and electricity are not eligible to be designated items and USDA will not designate items that are determined to have mature markets, based on whether the item had significant national market penetration in 1972.

### Federal Agency Requirements

The Guidelines apply to Federal agencies which purchase \$10,000 or more worth of one of the designated items over the course of a fiscal year, or which purchased quantities of designated items, or of functionally equivalent items, worth \$10,000 or more over the preceding fiscal year. The \$10,000 limit applies to federal agencies as a whole, not subgroups such as regional offices or subagencies.

On or before January 16, 2006, each Federal agency covered by the rule shall develop a procurement program to assure that items composed of biobased products will be purchased. Each procurement program shall contain: (1) A preference program for purchasing designated items; (2) A promotion program to promote the preference program; and (3) Provisions for the annual review and monitoring of the effectiveness of the procurement program.

Purchasing exceptions can be made for products that: (1) are not available within a reasonable time; (2) fail to meet performance standards or (3) are available only at an unreasonable price.

After the publication of each designated item, Federal agencies that have the responsibility for drafting or reviewing specifications for items procured shall ensure that within a specified time their specifications require the use of designated items composed of biobased products, consistent with the USDA Guidelines. ■

# Biobased Product Information Kits Available for Government Purchasers

A wide array of biobased products are available for use today. To respond to inquiries about them, the United Soybean Board (USB) has compiled informational kits for government users in four different areas:

- **Facility, Building, and Equipment Maintenance**
- **Building Construction and Renovation**
- **Janitorial and Cleaning**
- **Printing**

The kits are intended to make it easier for interested buyers to identify products that can meet their needs.

Each package contains product-specific information provided by manufacturers interested in pursuing federal procurement opportunities. These packages are provided for information only. The USB does not endorse, promote or make any representations regarding any specific product mentioned therein.

To view and download electronic copies of these informational packages go to: [www.soybiobased.org/products](http://www.soybiobased.org/products).

To obtain a hard copy of one or more of these informational packages, please e-mail [unitedsoybean@pfifferling.com](mailto:unitedsoybean@pfifferling.com).



## *Making Biobased Product Purchasing Easier* Yes, You Can Purchase Through Government Buying Agencies

Many have asked if biobased products can be purchased through government buying agencies such as the General Services Administration (GSA) Multiple Awards Supply Schedule or the Department of Defense (DoD) E-Mall. The answer is yes. Some biobased products are already available through these sources and more are being added as manufacturers complete the listing process.

Based upon information available to the United Soybean Board, (at right) a list of soy-based products can be purchased through GSA Advantage<sup>®</sup> or the DoD E-Mall. This is not intended to be a complete list. This list is provided for information only. USB does not endorse, promote or make any representations regarding any specific product mentioned therein.

**GSA Advantage<sup>®</sup>** ([www.gsaadvantage.gov/advgsa/advantage/main/start\\_page.do](http://www.gsaadvantage.gov/advgsa/advantage/main/start_page.do))

### **Paint, Adhesive, Graffiti and Mastic Removers**

- Franmar Chemical, Inc. – #GS-06F-0034N

### **Cleaning Products**

- The Clean Environment Company – #GS-07F-0098K

### **Soy-Backed Carpet**

*The following companies have carpet on GSA Schedule that is available with polyurethane backings containing a soy-based polyol:*

- Mohawk – #GS-27F-8440A
- Designweave (through Commercial Carpets of America) – #GS-27F-0053A
- Patcraft – (through Commercial Carpets of America) – #GS-27F-0053A
- Masland (The Dixie Group) – #GS-27F-5049C

**DoD E-Mall** (<https://emall.prod.dodonline.net/scripts/emLogon.asp>)

### **Lubricants**

- Cargill, Inc.
- Renewable Lubricants, Inc.
- Terresolve Technologies, Ltd

As USB becomes aware of other soy-based products that are listed on the GSA Schedule, DoD E-Mall, or through the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) program, we will update this information. If you are aware of other listed products, please let us know by sending an e-mail with the relevant information to [unitedsoybean@pfifferling.com](mailto:unitedsoybean@pfifferling.com).

For more information write:

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"Biobased Solutions for Government" is a quarterly newsletter published by the United Soybean Board (USB) for those involved in government purchasing. This newsletter is provided for information only. The USB does not endorse, promote or make any representations regarding any specific suppliers mentioned herein.

Because of the potential for biobased products to create new markets for soybeans, U.S. soybean farmers have invested more than \$50 million to research, test and promote biobased products. Much of this work was done through the United Soybean Board (USB), which is composed of 64 U.S. soybean farmers appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to invest soybean checkoff funds.

