

BioPreferred

BioBuzzGov

Promoting the use and purchase of biobased products in Federal agencies

USDA Recognizes Leaders in Advancing the Use of Biobased Products Across the Nation

BioPreferred Program Awards Recognize Outstanding Efforts for Sustainable Procurement by Federal Employees and Contractors



On November 7, 2024, USDA Rural Development Under Secretary Dr. Basil Gooden recognized five leaders in the Biden-Harris Administration's ongoing efforts to advance the use of biobased products across the nation.

"Sustainable, eco-friendly procurement is a critical component of the Biden-Harris Administration's focus on reducing the federal government's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050," said Under Secretary Gooden. "The awards I'm announcing today not only recognize outstanding achievements to advance the use of biobased products, but also provide practical examples for other agencies to follow."

USDA is awarding **Excellence in Procurement Awards** to three federal employees and two federal contractors, who have made outstanding achievements to ensure the maximum use of biobased products.

These awards are part of USDA Rural Development's [BioPreferred Program](#), which promotes the development, purchase, and use of products derived from plants and other agricultural, marine, and forestry materials.

This year's winners are:

- **Theodore Blume, contracting officer for USDA's Agricultural Research Service.** Blume has consistently included biobased product requirements in solicitations and contracts for the agency. He also has demonstrated to potential contractors the range of opportunities available through the use of biobased products. In his contracts and interactions, Blume pointed people to AbilityOne, an independent federal agency that employs people who are blind or with significant disabilities, to enable procurement professionals to find the products they need more easily. Blume also helped agencies track federal compliance to buy biobased products.
- **Mark Napolitano and Master Sergeant Nicholas Capko of the U.S. Department of Defense.** Napolitano and Capko led a project to evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of biobased cleaner, lubricant, and preservative products for weapons. The results demonstrated that biobased products can be highly effective in combat tactical operations, ensuring the safety and health of soldiers, reducing waste and cost, and improving readiness. The Department of Defense now requires all qualified cleaner, lubricant and preservative products to contain a minimum 33% biobased content.
- **Laurie Snyder, lead policy & assurance analyst for the Berkeley Lab.** Snyder created a robust sustainable acquisition policy to promote the use of biobased products. Snyder also trained staff on how to comply with the policy to significantly elevate their sustainability efforts across the organization.

- **Fercent, a contractor organization for the U.S. Department of the Treasury.** The organization developed new software called DocScout to automate the review of solicitations and contracts. The organization also identified opportunities for contracting officers to include requirements and clauses to purchase and use more biobased products in their contracts. To date, Treasury has used DocScout to inspect more than 2,000 contract documents to maximize the agency's purchase and use of biobased products.

The variety of these milestones illustrate how the federal government can work together and lead by example to tackle the climate crisis.

DOD Evaluates Biobased Cleaner, Lubricant and Preservative Products for Weapons

Since the 1970s, weapons cleaner, lubricant, and preservative (CLP) products have been used at practically all DoD installations to care for small and large caliber weapons; all Military Service members are exposed to CLP products at some point during their service. Until recently, use of petroleum-based CLP products was the norm within DoD, and it was unknown whether a less hazardous biobased alternative could meet demanding performance requirements. As biobased options entered the market, the DoD [Sustainable Technology Evaluation and Demonstration \(STED\)](#) Program initiated a project to evaluate commercially available biobased CLP products.

The U.S. Marine Corps Shooting Team at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico demonstrated the biobased CLP at the Marine Corps Marksmanship Competition to raise awareness among the military's high-performance shooters. User feedback noted several cost, safety, labor, and performance benefits. These included significant performance improvements in carbon removal, lubrication, and weapon function; reductions in CLP product quantity and cleaning time, waste generation, and smoke generated during weapon use; and the elimination of noxious odors. Less lubricant was required than the traditional CLP that Marines have been using for decades, said Reginald M. Mack, deputy director of the STED Program.

The effort validated the high-performance capabilities of biobased products in combat tactical operations and their ability to ensure the safety and health of the warfighter, reduce waste and cost, and improve mission readiness.

Based on the STED Program's successful CLP demonstration, the military now requires all CLP for weapons and weapons systems to contain a minimum of 33% biobased content. This is the first revision of a weapon system military tactical specification to require biobased content, Mack said, adding that when implemented DOD-wide, the transition will save \$1.74 million annually. [Full article](#)



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Biobased Products for Healthy Indoor Environments

Biobased cleaning products are a win-win for federal building occupants and for contractors who hold janitorial contracts. They lead to healthier office spaces, prompt fewer health issues for cleaning staff, and reduce the environmental impact of harsh chemicals. [Traditional cleaning products](#) on the other hand often introduce strong odors and toxic ingredients to an office space, which puts employees, visitors, and cleaning professionals at risk for skin irritations, exposure, and respiratory problems.

The BioPreferred® Program [Catalog](#) contains hundreds of products capable of not only meeting the cleaning needs of federal facilities but also the statutory requirements to give preference to biobased products.

Of course, not all janitorial contractors are aware of these mandates. That's where you come in! No matter your role, you can take steps to create healthier office spaces by promoting the use of biobased cleaning products in federal facilities.

What can you do to improve this situation?

- **Procurement Professionals** can ensure that clauses 52.223-2 and 52.223-23 are included in the contract and remind the Contracting Officer Representative to work with the contractor on meeting the requirement. Also, take advantage of [sample contract language](#) posted on the BioPreferred Program website.
- **Facility Managers** can ensure that all janitorial contract specifications include biobased purchasing requirements and eliminate any barriers to adopting biobased products.
- **Janitorial Contractors** can use the BioPreferred Program [Catalog](#) to identify potential products to acquire, and educate your janitorial staff on the benefits and proper use of biobased products.
- **Building Occupants** can request the use of biobased products in the office to limit the exposure to harsh chemicals and strong odors as well as to reduce their impact on the environment.

Both AbilityOne and GSAAAdvantage! Offer Biobased Cleaning Products



Skilcraft All Purpose Cleaner



Skilcraft Disinfectant Detergent

Required Clauses for Service and Construction Contracts

To inform contractors to give preference to biobased products, two contract clauses are now required:

- Clause 52.223-23 – Sustainable Products and Services (which informs the contractor of the statutory requirement to give a purchasing preference to biobased products).
- Clause 52.223-2 – Reporting of Biobased Products Under Service and Construction Contracts (which requires reporting of biobased product purchasing in the System for Award Management)

Required Clauses for Supply Contracts

If the supplies being purchased fall within [categories designated for federal procurement](#), two clauses are required:

- Clause 52.223-1 – Biobased Product Certification
- Clause 52.223-23 – Sustainable Products and Services (which informs the contractor of the statutory requirement to give a purchasing preference to biobased products).

BioPreferred Program Offers Custom Virtual Training for Federal Agencies



Struggling to keep up with annual training requirements for procurement staff? Take advantage of our free training options. We offer one-to-two-hour virtual training courses that can be tailored to your agency’s needs, where we focus on exploring specific buying areas and providing comprehensive reviews of requirements and resources. Attendees consistently provide positive, “outstanding” feedback of our training!

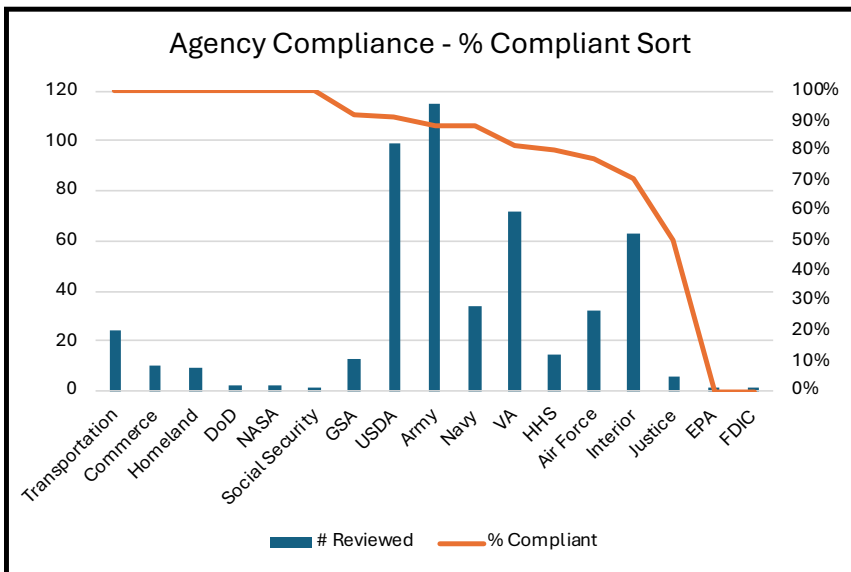
Email vernell.thompson@usda.gov to discuss your training needs and potential dates.

Results for FY2024 Service and Construction Solicitations

The BioPreferred Program reviews current service and construction solicitations to ensure they include Clause 52.223-2. In our FY2024 review, we found 85.4% of solicitations were compliant across federal agencies. The following two charts provide some detail.

Type	# Reviewed	% Compliant
Construction	260	93%
Janitorial	95	61%
Roads, Bridges, Parking Lot Construction	73	96%
Operations and Maintenance	33	76%
Groundskeeping	31	71%
Food Service	3	0%
Fleet	2	100%
Other	2	100%
Laundry	1	100%

Compliance by Type of Solicitation



Compliance by Agency: # Reviewed and % Compliant

The FY2025 review of service and construction solicitations has begun. In order to be considered compliant, a solicitation must contain two clauses: 52.223-23 Sustainable Products and Service and 52.223-2 Reporting of Biobased Products in Service and Construction Contracts.