



United States Department of Agriculture



www.biopreferred.gov

HOW TO SELL BIOBASED PRODUCTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

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WELCOME TO THE BIOPREFERRED® BUSINESS GUIDE

The Federal government is required by law to buy USDA-designated biobased products. And with its more than \$500 billion per year appetite for goods and services, the market is huge. But tapping into it is anything but fast or easy. When you finish reading and understanding this guide you will know how to get your “license to sell” to the Federal government. But as with any marketing venture, there are no guarantees or quick fixes. It will take time, smarts and more than a little perseverance to make your business a success.

If you follow the steps and suggestions on the pages ahead, you’ll be ready to start marketing your biobased products. The rest...is up to you.

BIOBASED PRODUCTS DEFINED

The USDA defines biobased products as commercial or industrial products (other than food or feed) that are composed, in whole or in significant part, of biological products. Biobased products also include renewable domestic agricultural materials and forestry materials or an intermediate ingredient or feedstock.

The USDA designates categories of biobased products to receive Federal Procurement preference.

For more information, visit [here](#).

THE BIOPREFERRED® PROGRAM

The BioPreferred® Program is designed to increase the purchase and use of biobased products. It was established by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA) and extended through provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA). In addition, the Presidential Executive Order 13514, further mandates the purchasing of biobased products. It requires that 95 percent of all new government contracts and contract modifications require the use of BioPreferred products.

The BioPreferred program includes two key efforts:

- ▶ A procurement preference program for Federal agencies and their contractors; and
- ▶ A voluntary labeling program to enable the marketing of biobased products to consumers.

For additional information, visit the BioPreferred [website](#), [email](#) BioPreferred, or call 202-205-4008.

TURNING YOUR BUSINESS INTO A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT VENDOR

There are several steps you will need to take in order to become a Federal government vendor.

Obtain a Taxpayer Information Number

If yours is a new business, you will need to apply for a **Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)** [here](#).

The TIN is used by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service to identify a business for tax purposes. The TIN is also required for completing many types of forms and registering in databases associated with the government market.

Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) Number

The Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®), from Dun and Bradstreet (D&B), allows the government to identify contractors and their locations. It is required to do business with the Federal government. There is no charge by D&B for a DUNS number. [Click here](#) to obtain a DUNS number.

Get your Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code

The **Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE)** code is a five-character ID number used extensively within the federal government. The CAGE code is used to support a variety of mechanized systems throughout the government and provide a standardized method of identifying a given facility at a specific location. The code may be used for a facility clearance, a pre-award survey, automated bidders list identification of debarred bidders or fast pay processes.

Create your Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN)

This self-created access code will be shared with authorized partner applications such as the Past Performance Information Retrieval systems (PPIRS) and the Online Representation and Certification Application (ORCA). The MPIN must contain nine characters, at least one alpha and one numeric character each. It should not contain spaces or special characters.

Register within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

Classify your product or service by self-coding within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) [here](#).

NAICS was developed as the standard for use by Federal statistical agencies in classifying businesses. Your unique code will allow NAICS to collect, analyze, and publish statistical data that Federal agencies can use to find the products and services that meet their needs. Government procurement opportunities are often listed by NAICS codes, making targeted online searches quicker and easier.

Other Government-issued codes to be aware of, include:

- ▶ **The Federal Supply Class** (or FSC Code) – A 4-digit number based on end use.
- ▶ **The National Item Identification Number** (NIIN) – A more detailed, 9-digit number used to identify specific items.
- ▶ **The National Stock Numbers** (NSN) – A combination of the NIIN and the FSC Code. An NSN is the official label applied to an item that is repeatedly procured, stocked and used throughout the Federal supply system. The use of NSN's facilitates the standardization of item names, supply language, characteristics, and management data; and it aids in reducing duplicate items in the Federal inventory.

DETERMINE IF YOU QUALIFY AS A SMALL BUSINESS

Small Business Administration (SBA) size standards determine if a business qualifies as a small business. To find out if your business qualifies, visit the Small Business Administration (SBA) website [here](#).

Federal agencies are required by law to set aside contracts for small businesses and other socially and economically disadvantaged businesses. Those requirements and other information can be found [here](#).

Register with the Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR) System

Registering with the (CCR) System [here](#) makes your company information available to all government procurement professionals and government contractors. This database is a tool that allows the acquisition community to collect information on the type of business and the goods and services provided. It is used for electronic funds transfer (EFT) information, points of contact, and performance history references.

Businesses must be registered in the CCR to do business with the Federal government. You must update the CCR at least once a year.

Complete an Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA)

To submit an offer on solicitations, you must register in ORCA. You can enter your information electronically [here](#). Please allow 48 hours after you have registered a new CCR (or made changes to a current CCR) for your record to become active.

UNDERSTANDING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT PROCESS

An understanding of the regulations and requirements that govern the procurement process is important when selling to the Federal government and its contractors.

The Federal Acquisition Regulations

The Federal government's procurement activities are governed by a standard set of regulations known as **Federal Acquisition Regulations** (FAR). FAR establishes procedures for every step in the procurement process and can be found [here](#). Understanding these regulations can help you conduct business more effectively and efficiently.

Agency Specific Procurement Regulations

In addition to the FAR, Federal departments and agencies have supplemental procurement regulations. These department/agency specific regulations can be found [here](#).

BioPreferred Procurement Requirements

You should also become familiar with the BioPreferred program guidelines and preferred procurement requirements. Learn more about the USDA model procurement program, including requirements for the purchase and use of biobased products, [here](#).

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

One of the most important decisions you make will be how to identify your best prospects for marketing. A large percentage of all Federal government purchases are made through service contracts; and the majority of the biobased products that you sell will not be purchased directly by the government but through these contractors.

Explore FedBizOpps

There are several online systems that can help you identify which agencies purchase the types of products and services you sell.

FedBizOpps is the single required government point-of-entry for Federal government procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Federal solicitations are published online to allow businesses to search, monitor, and retrieve potential business opportunities at no charge. If the typical sale of your product is more than \$25,000 or if your products typically are included in service contracts (e.g., janitorial, construction, etc.) of more than \$25,000, you may want to familiarize yourself with this website. For more information on FedBizOpps, [click here](#).

If the typical sale of your product is less than \$25,000 or if your products are typically included in service contracts of less than \$25,000, you may want to familiarize yourself with individual procurement or program offices that purchase these types of products.

Target Agencies Most Likely to Need Your Products

The “Federal government” is a large and varied market. It is best to concentrate your efforts where the pay-off is likely the greatest. Conducting research and then targeting agencies with a higher likelihood of purchasing your products is a great start.

The government site, www.usaspending.gov, offers a resource for targeting current agency spending. You can use “biobased” as your search item or search using your product category.

Annual Procurement Forecasts

Another method of identifying business opportunities is the **Annual Procurement Forecast**. Each Federal agency maintains an Annual Procurement Forecast that can be found [here](#). Review the procurement forecasts to determine upcoming contracts that may benefit from the addition of biobased products. For contracts that have already been awarded, you may still contact the incumbent contractor and suggest the benefits of incorporating your products.

The USDA forecast has been updated with a search option to identify potential contract opportunities with biobased product requirements; it can be found [here](#).

All Department of Defense contracts valued at \$5 million or more are announced each business day [here](#).

Subcontracting Opportunities

Subcontracting or teaming up with Federal government prime contractors as part of service contracts (e.g., such as janitorial or construction), can often provide the most significant opportunities. Federal government contractors must meet the same requirements

for the purchase and use of biobased products as the agencies themselves. Unfortunately, there is no single point of entry for subcontracting opportunities. Prime contractors may post subcontracting opportunities on SBA’s SUB-Net [here](#) or on FedBizOpps [here](#).

Additionally, some prime contractors search the CCR when seeking subcontractors. Most Federal agencies maintain subcontracting directories that are usually published annually and are generally available on their websites. The purpose of subcontracting directories is to provide businesses with information about prime contractors that could lead to potential subcontracting opportunities.

USDA’s Subcontracting Directory is located [here](#).

The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Subcontracting Directory is located [here](#).

Do not expect information in the directories to be biobased product specific. Locate contract opportunities that could potentially include biobased products and contact major contractors directly to discuss or propose the use of biobased products.

Ability One

AbilityOne, formerly the Javits-Wagner-O’Day (JWOD) Program, is a mandatory source for selected products and services. This unique Federal procurement program generates employment and training opportunities for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities. Teaming with AbilityOne could provide opportunities to generate employment and to support both the AbilityOne and BioPreferred procurement programs. For more information on Ability One [click here](#).

FEDERAL CATALOGS AND SCHEDULES

Consider marketing and selling your products through a government-wide purchasing vehicle.

General Services Administration Schedules

With the **General Services Administration’s** (GSA) Schedules Program – also referred to as **Multiple Award Schedules** (MAS) and **Federal Supply Schedules** (FSS) – you can establish long-term government-wide contracts with vendors.

Federal agencies often use MAS and FSS contracts to buy commonly used products. These opportunities are not usually announced in FedBizOpps but are competed for by qualified vendors with current GSA contracts. Investigate if getting on the GSA Schedule would be an appropriate avenue for your product. You should carefully assess your individual business situation and goals when deciding whether to obtain a GSA Schedule contract.

Vendors should be aware that obtaining a GSA Schedule contract is not a guarantee of sales. Vendors awarded GSA Schedule contracts will still need to market their supplies and services to government customers. Also, if your company falls below \$25,000 in sales for any given year, your listing will be removed.

To become a GSA Schedule contractor, a vendor must first submit an offer in response to the applicable GSA Schedule solicitation. Information on GSA, MAS and FSS contracts can be found [here](#). Click on “GSA Schedules.”

Department of Defense EMALL

Another way to investigate potential opportunities for your business is the **Department of Defense Electronic Mall (DOD EMALL)**. The DOD EMALL is a web-based electronic catalog system operated by the Defense Logistics Agency. The DOD EMALL strives to be the single entry point for purchasers to find and acquire off-the-shelf, finished goods and services from the commercial marketplace and government sources.

EMALL includes replacement parts and supply support items traditionally procured and inventoried by the DOD as well as a variety of common products available from private industry. The DOD EMALL brings together government buyers (military and civilian agencies) who need common and military-specific products and the vendors who supply them. [Click here](#) for more information.

MARKETING YOUR PRODUCT

Be prepared to do business the way the Federal government does business. This includes understanding the Federal Acquisition Regulations and being prepared to conduct electronic commerce.

Prepare Your Message on the BioPreferred Program

Understand the BioPreferred program and register your qualifying products in the online catalog. Make sure that you have done your homework on the program. For more information on the BioPreferred program, [click here](#).

Be Able to Explain Your Product Benefits

You should be prepared to explain the procurement preference for your biobased products and the benefits of your products. You should be able to discuss price, performance, and availability of your products to potential buyers.

Explore Federal Resources that offer assistance to Small Businesses

The government site, www.sba.gov, helps small businesses understand and locate services that include training and information on government contracts. Some key small business services include:

► The Small Business Administration (SBA)

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has district and regional offices, as well as Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), throughout the United States. SBDCs have small-business experts who can help you identify procurement opportunities both locally and nationally. More information about SBA can be found [here](#).

► The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBUs)

The **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)** was established by Law to foster the use of small businesses as Federal Contractors. Each government agency is required to have an OSDBU where you can obtain expert advice and assistance on doing business with the Federal government. More information about the OSDBU can be found [here](#).

► The Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP)

The Defense Logistics Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, administers the **Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP)**. **Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs)** provide technical assistance by offering confidential counseling to businesses on selling products to the appropriate local, state, and Federal government entities. PTACs are located throughout the United States. More information about PTACs can be found [here](#).

THE CHECKLIST

This checklist will give you step-by-step directions to follow as you work to become a BioPreferred vendor. Begin by checking off any steps that you have already completed. You may also want to check off those items that you choose not to do or that do not apply to your business.

For the remaining items on the checklist, the right hand column provides a quick link within this guide, allowing you to learn more about each suggested step. Most of the steps also refer you to an additional resource within the Federal government, which you can use to get more detailed information.

STEP OR PROCESS:	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEC:
Become a Federal Government Vendor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)	Taxpayer Identification Number
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)	Data Universal Numbering System
<input type="checkbox"/> Classify your product within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	North American Industry Classification System
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine if you qualify as a small business	Determine if you Qualify as a Small Business
<input type="checkbox"/> Register with the Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR)	Centralized Contractor Registration
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Online Representation and Certifications (ORCA)	Online Representations and Certifications

Target Prospective Clients	
<input type="checkbox"/> Become familiar with FedBizOpps	Explore FedBizOpps
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore USAspending.gov and develop a list of 3 or fewer federal agencies as your initial "targets" for marketing purposes.	Target Agencies Most Likely to Need Your Products
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the Annual Procurement forecast for agencies you are targeting	Annual Procurement Forecast
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore subcontracting opportunities within agencies you are targeting	Subcontracting Opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate Ability One as a teaming relationship	Ability One
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate Federal Catalogs and Schedules	Federal Catalogs and Schedules

Become Familiar with Federal Procurement Processes	
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)	Federal Acquisition Regulations
<input type="checkbox"/> For targeted agencies, explore agency specific procurement regulations	Agency Specific Procurement Regulations
<input type="checkbox"/> Become familiar with the BioPreferred procurement regulations	BioPreferred Procurement Regulations

Develop Your Marketing Message	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to explain the BioPreferred Procurement Preference Program	Prepare Your Message on the BioPreferred Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare to explain the benefits of your product in terms of price, performance, and availability	Be Able to Explain Your Product Benefits

For Small Businesses, Explore Small Business Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)	Small Business Development Centers
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBUs)	Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices
<input type="checkbox"/> If targeting the Department of Defense, investigate Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAPs)	DoD Procurement Technical Assistance Centers
<input type="checkbox"/> Explore other small business resources using www.business.gov	Locate other Small Business Services

QUICK LINKS

TOPIC	WEBSITE ADDRESS
BioPreferred website	www.biopREFERRED.gov
BioPreferred email	BioPreferred@usda.gov
Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)	www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96696,00.html?portlet=1
Data Universal Numbering System Number (D-U-N-S®)	www.dnb.com
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html
Determine if you Qualify as a Small Business	www.sba.gov/content/determining-business-size
Special Audiences	www.sba.gov/about-sba-services
Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR) System	www.ccr.gov
Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA)	https://orca.bpn.gov
Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)	www.acquisition.gov
FedBizOpps	www.fedbizopps.gov
Current Agency Spending	www.usaspending.gov
Annual Procurement Forecasts	www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts
Potential Contract Opportunities with Biobased Product Requirements	http://www.pforecast.net
Department of Defense (DOD) Contracts	www.defense.gov/contracts
Subcontracting Opportunities	www.sba.gov/subnet or www.fedbizopps.gov
USDA Subcontracting Directory	www.usda.gov/da/smallbus/subcontracting.htm
Department of Defense (DOD) Subcontracting Directory	www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business
Ability One	www.abilityone.gov
General Services Administration (GSA)	www.gsa.gov
Department of Defense EMALL	http://www.dlis.dla.mil/emall.asp
Small Business Administration (SBA)	www.sba.gov
Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBUs)	www.osdbu.gov
Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP)	www.aptac-us.org

Please visit www.biopREFERRED.gov/guide_resources.aspx for easy access to all links in this guide.

BioPreferred[®]

BioPreferred[®] Program
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