

# Selling Biobased Products to the Federal Government

## *Introduction and Purpose of this Tool*

This tool is intended for BioPreferred<sup>SM</sup> businesses who wish to position their business as a BioPreferred<sup>SM</sup> vendor in order to sell their product(s) to the Federal government and/or to government contractors.

The Federal government purchases more than \$500 billion per year in goods and services, occupies nearly 500,000 buildings, and operates more than 600,000 vehicles. The Federal government must buy Department of Agriculture (USDA) designated biobased products. So, the market is huge, but it takes effort to position yourself for success in selling to the federal government.

This tool is designed so that you can quickly access information that is useful and allows you to bypass information that is not. A checklist is provided so that you can "check off" steps as you complete them.

## *The Checklist*

To use this checklist, 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 at this time or do not apply to your business. For the remaining items on the checklist, the right hand column provide a quick link within this guide allowing you to learn more about the suggested step. Most of the steps also refer you to an additional resource within the Federal government for more detailed information.

	<b>Step or Process</b>	<b>Link Within This Document</b>
	<b>Become a Federal government vendor</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)	<a href="#">Taxpayer Identification Number</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)	<a href="#">Data Universal Numbering System</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Classify your product within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	<a href="#">North American Industry Classification System</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine if you qualify as a small business	<a href="#">Determine if you Qualify as a Small Business</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Register with the Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR)	<a href="#">Centralized Contractor Registration</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA)	<a href="#">Online Representations and Certifications</a>

	<b>Step or Process</b>	<b>Link Within This Document</b>
	<b>Target Prospective Clients</b>	
☒	Become familiar with FedBizOpps	<a href="#">Explore FedBizOpps</a>
☒	Explore USAspending.gov. Develop a list of 3 or fewer federal agencies as your initial "targets" for marketing purposes.	<a href="#">Target Agencies Most Likely to Need Your Products</a>
☒	Explore the Annual Procurement forecast for agencies you are targeting.	<a href="#">Annual Procurement Forecasts</a>
☒	Explore subcontracting opportunities within agencies you are targeting.	<a href="#">Subcontracting Opportunities</a>
☒	Investigate Ability One as a teaming relationship	<a href="#">Ability One</a>
☒	Investigate Federal Catalogs and Schedules	<a href="#">Federal Catalogs and Schedules</a>
	<b>Become Familiar with Federal Procurement Processes</b>	
☒	Explore the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR)	<a href="#">Federal Acquisition Regulations</a>
☒	For targeted agencies, explore agency specific procurement regulations	<a href="#">Agency Specific Procurement Regulations</a>
☒	Become familiar with the BioPreferred Procurement regulations	<a href="#">BioPreferred Procurement Regulations</a>
	<b>Develop Your Marketing Message</b>	
☒	Prepare to explain the BioPreferred Procurement Preference Program	<a href="#">Prepare Your Message on the BioPreferred Program</a>
☒	Prepare to explain the benefits of your product in terms of price, performance, and availability	<a href="#">Be Able to Explain Your Product Benefits</a>
	<b>For Small Businesses, Explore Small Business Resources</b>	
☒	Investigate Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)	<a href="#">Small Business Development Centers</a>
☒	Investigate the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBUs)	<a href="#">Office of Small and Disadvantaged...</a>
☒	If targeting the Department of Defense, investigate Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAPs)	<a href="#">DoD Procurement Technical.....</a>
☒	Explore other small business resources using www.business.gov	<a href="#">Located Other Small Business Services</a>

## ***The BioPreferred Program<sup>SM</sup>***

BioPreferred<sup>SM</sup> 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) to increase the procurement and use of biobased products by establishing a:

- Procurement preference program for Federal agencies and their contractors,
- Labeling program to enable the marketing of biobased products.

In addition, the Presidential Executive Order 13514, Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance, dated October 5, 2009, further mandates the purchasing of biobased products. It requires that 95% of all new government contracts and contract modifications require the use of BioPreferred Products.

Biobased products are defined 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.

USDA designates categories of biobased products to receive Federal procurement preference.

For additional information: visit [www.biopreferred.gov](http://www.biopreferred.gov) or email [BioPreferred@usda.gov](mailto:BioPreferred@usda.gov) or call 202-205-4008.

## ***Turning Your Business into a Federal Government Vendor***

There are several steps you will need to take to become a federal government vendor.

### **Taxpayer Information Number**

If yours is a new business, you will need to apply for a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) at [www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96696,00.html?portlet=1](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96696,00.html?portlet=1). The TIN is used by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service to identify a business entity for tax purposes. The TIN is also required for completing many types of forms and registering in databases associated with the government market.

### **Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S<sup>®</sup>)**

Identify your business by obtaining a Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S<sup>®</sup>) number from Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). This unique identifier for your company is used by 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.

### **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)**

Classify your product or service by self-coding within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) at [www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html](http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html) . NAICS was developed as the standard for use by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the collection, analysis, and publication of statistical data related to the business economy of the United States. Federal agencies use these codes for procurement purposes. Most government product listings are identified by these codes. Government procurement opportunities are often listed by NAICS codes, making targeted online searches by businesses for potential opportunities a real timesaver.

The government also provides other numeric codes which help describe and identify the supplies, products and commodities it purchases. The Federal Supply Class or FSC Code is a 4-digit number that is assigned based on end use. Also, the National Item Identification Number (NIIN), a more detailed number, identifies specific items. It is a 9-digit number. The NIIN when combined with the FSC Code results in National Stock Numbers (NSNs). The NSN is the official label applied to an item of supply that is repeatedly procured, stocked, stored, issued, and used throughout the Federal supply system. The use of NSNs facilitates the standardization of item names, supply language, characteristics and management data, and aids in reducing duplicate items in the Federal inventory.

### **Determine if You Qualify as a Small Business**

Determine if your business qualifies as a small business. You can do this by visiting the Small Business Administration (SBA) website at [www.sba.gov/services/contractingopportunities/sizestandardsttopics](http://www.sba.gov/services/contractingopportunities/sizestandardsttopics) . 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 at [www.sba.gov/services/speciaaudiences](http://www.sba.gov/services/speciaaudiences) .

### **Centralized Contractor Registration**

Register with the Centralized Contractor Registration (CCR) System at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) to make your company information available to all government procurement professionals and government contractors. This database containing hundreds of thousands of registrants is a tool for the acquisition community that collects 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 CCR to do business with the Federal government. You must update CCR at least once a year.

### **Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA)**

Complete Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA) at <https://orca.bpn.gov>. This online application replaces most of the paper based Representations and Certifications in Section K of government solicitations. Accurate and fully completed Representations and Certifications are required in order to respond to government solicitations. You must update ORCA at least once a year.

## ***Understanding the Federal Government Procurement Process***

An understanding of Federal Acquisition Regulations 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 the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The FAR establishes procedures for every step in the procurement process and can be found at [www.acquisition.gov](http://www.acquisition.gov). 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 supplemental regulations can be found at [www.acquisition.gov](http://www.acquisition.gov). It is important to familiarize yourself with the targeted agencies' regulations and procedures.

### **BioPreferred Procurement Requirements**

You should also become familiar with the BioPreferred program guidelines and preferred procurement requirements. This information will you in understanding the Federal requirements and the Federal perspective. Learn more about the USDA model procurement program, including procurement requirements for the purchase and use of biobased products at [www.biopreferred.gov](http://www.biopreferred.gov).

## ***Identifying Potential Business Opportunities***

Your biggest procurement challenge most likely will be identifying your best prospects for marketing. A large percent of all Federal government purchases are through service contracts, and the majority of the biobased products that you sell will not be purchased directly by the government, but through these service contracts.

### **Explore FedBizOpps**

There are several online systems that you may access to identify which agencies purchase the types of products and services that you sell. You will want to investigate service contracts that agencies currently have in place to identify those that might benefit from biobased products.

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. You can search by dates and/or (1) set-aside type; (2) type of notice; (3) solicitation or award notice; (4) place of performance zip code; (5) NAICS/FSC; (6) key words; and (7) selected agencies. 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 visit [www.fedbizopps.gov](http://www.fedbizopps.gov) .

If the typical sale of your product is less than \$25,000, or if your products are typically included in service contracts (e.g., janitorial, construction, etc.) 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 too large an entity when determining the where to focus your marketing efforts. By conducting research and then targeting agencies with a higher likelihood of purchasing your products, you can concentrate your efforts where the pay-off is likely the greatest.

A resources targeting current Agency spending is [usaspending.gov](http://usaspending.gov). 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 which can be found at [www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement\\_forecasts](http://www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts) . 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 in the current contract or future proposals. The USDA forecast has been updated with a search option to identify potential contract opportunities with biobased product requirements. The USDA forecast can be found at <http://www.pforecast.net/>.

All Department of Defense contracts valued at \$5 million or over are announced each business day on [www.defense.gov/contracts](http://www.defense.gov/contracts) .

### **Subcontracting Opportunities**

Subcontracting or teaming with Federal government prime contractors as part of service contracts (e.g., such as janitorial or construction) will provide the most significant opportunities compared to directly contracting with the Federal government. 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 at [www.sba.gov/subnet](http://www.sba.gov/subnet) or on [www.FedBizOpps.gov](http://www.FedBizOpps.gov) .

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 which could lead to potential subcontracting opportunities. USDA's Subcontracting Directory is located at [www.usda.gov/da/smallbus/subcontracting.htm](http://www.usda.gov/da/smallbus/subcontracting.htm). The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Subcontracting Directory is located at [www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing\\_business](http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business). Do not expect information in the directories to be biobased product specific. Locate contract opportunities that potentially could include biobased products and contact major contractors directly to discuss or propose the use of biobased products.

## **Ability One**

AbilityOne (formally the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program) is a mandatory source for selected products and services. This is a unique Federal procurement program that 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 visit [www.abilityone.gov/jwod](http://www.abilityone.gov/jwod).

## ***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), GSA establishes 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 among 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 in making your decision to obtain or not obtain a GSA Schedule contract. Vendors should be aware that obtaining a GSA Schedule contract ("Getting on Schedule") is not a guarantee of sales. Vendors awarded GSA Schedule contracts will need to market their supplies and services to government customers.

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 at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Click on "GSA Schedules."

## **Department of Defense EMALL**

Investigate potential opportunities for your business through 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 DoD and 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. Go to <http://www.dlis.dla.mil/emall.asp> 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 visit [www.biopreferred.gov](http://www.biopreferred.gov).

## **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 to Help Small Businesses**

### **Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs)**

If your business qualifies as a small business, contact the Small Business Administration (SBA) or visit their website for assistance. SBA has district and regional offices, as well as Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) throughout the United States. SBDCs have small business experts that can help small businesses identify procurement opportunities both locally and nationally. More information about SBA can be found at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

### **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBUs)**

Investigate the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Offices (OSDBU) 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 OSDBUs can be found at [www.osdbu.gov](http://www.osdbu.gov) .

### **DoD Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP)**

The Defense Logistics Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, administers the DoD Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP). Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) provide procurement 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 at [www.dla.mil/db/procurem.htm](http://www.dla.mil/db/procurem.htm) .

### **Locate Other Small Business Services**

A new government web site, <http://www.business.gov> helps small businesses understand and locate government services that include training and information on government contracts.

### **Quick Links**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Link to Website</b>
<b>The USDA BioPreferred website</b>	<a href="http://www.biopreferred.gov">www.biopreferred.gov</a>
<b>Taxpayer Identification Number</b>	<a href="http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96696,00.html?portlet=1">www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96696,00.html?portlet=1</a> .
<b>Data Universal Numbering System D-U-N-S</b>	<a href="http://www.dnb.com">www.dnb.com</a> .
<b>North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)</b>	<a href="http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html">www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html</a> .
<b>Small Business Administration</b>	<a href="http://www.sba.gov/">www.sba.gov/</a>
<b>Central Contractor Registration</b>	<a href="http://www.ccr.gov">www.ccr.gov</a>
<b>Online Representations and Certifications</b>	<a href="https://orca.bpn.gov/">https://orca.bpn.gov/</a>
<b>Federal Acquisition Regulations</b>	<a href="http://www.acquisition.gov">www.acquisition.gov</a>
<b>Federal Business Opportunities</b>	<a href="http://www.fedbizopps.gov">www.fedbizopps.gov</a> .
<b>Current Federal Agency spending</b>	<a href="http://usaspending.gov">usaspending.gov</a>

Topic	Link to Website
<b>Annual Federal Agency procurement forecasts</b>	<a href="http://www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts">www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts</a>
<b>USDA's procurement spending forecast</b>	<a href="http://www.pforecast.net/">http://www.pforecast.net/.</a>
<b>Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization</b>	<a href="http://www.osdbu.gov">www.osdbu.gov</a>
<b>DoD's Procurement Technical Assistance Program</b>	<a href="http://www.dla.mil/db/procurem.htm">www.dla.mil/db/procurem.htm</a>
<b>Information for Small Businesses</b>	<a href="http://www.business.gov">http://www.business.gov</a>