

USDA BIOPREFERRED® PROGRAM BRAND AND MARKETING GUIDELINES

How to Display and Promote the USDA
Certified Biobased Product Label



Effective Date: March 2026



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HOW TO GET STARTED

HOW TO GET STARTED

Congratulations on achieving certification for your biobased product!

Now that you're part of the USDA BioPreferred Program, this guide will tell you everything you need to know about:

- How to promote your label
- How to apply your label
- How to reproduce your label

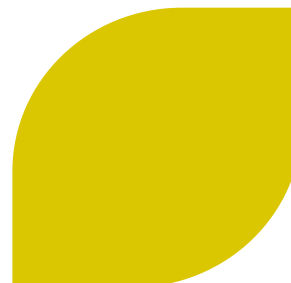
DISPLAYING YOUR LABEL PROUDLY

As a label holder, you can use your USDA Certified Biobased Product label to support your marketing efforts on a product specific website or product specific brochure.

If you haven't already downloaded your label, you can do so here:

<http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/CompanyTools.xhtml>.

The files available for download include black, white, and four-color versions of the USDA Certified Biobased Product label and related art in PNG and SVG formats, for PC and Mac. Hint: Test the formats with your software and printer to find which yields the best results. If you have additional questions, email us at help@usdabiopreferred.net.



QUICK SNAPSHOT

- To maintain the highest standards possible, as well as clarifying the value of your product, you must conform to the FTC “Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims.” Learn more at <https://www.ftc.gov/policy/federal-register-notice/guides-use-environmental-marketing-claims-green-guides>.
- In order to uphold the label and program’s credibility, you should ensure the USDA BioPreferred Program’s name and label are not used in any manner that would imply that the USDA or the Federal government directly endorses your company or product. Learn more at <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/ftcs-endorsement-guides-what-people-are-asking>.
- For your ease, you should obtain and keep all documents and materials to support any marketing, certification, and product claim you make. Learn more [here](#).

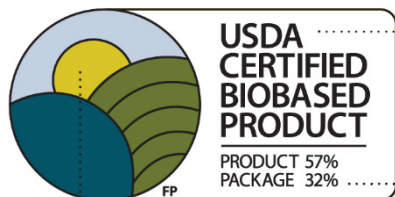
Help uphold the credibility of your USDA Certified Biobased Product label and your biobased product by reviewing and following the guidelines in this document. If you plan on using your label on products sold outside of the United States, it’s your responsibility to make sure you fully understand and follow the laws in those countries.

Adding the USDA BioPreferred Program website, <http://www.biopREFERRED.gov>, is encouraged but not required. When placing the address, please put it in close proximity to your label and use the phrase: “For more information, go to <http://www.biopREFERRED.gov>.”



LABEL OVERVIEW

The official USDA Certified Biobased Product label has been specifically designed to empower consumers to readily identify products with verified biobased content.



The words "USDA Certified Biobased Product" are required to be used for all certified products, whether the certified product is a package or product.

Tells consumers the percent of certified biobased content your product contains.

FP is used to indicate that the product is qualified for preferred Federal procurement.

Symbolizes the sun, the soil, and the aquatic environments.

YOU CAN PROUDLY USE THE LABEL:

- in a certified product or product package;
- in product literature, for a certified product or product package;
- on a website to identify a certified product or product package;
- in advertisements where it is used next to or on a certified product or product package;
- on product point-of-sale displays;
- in collateral materials that feature certified products;
- in product catalogs and user manuals;
- in electronic media (product-specific procurement databases, websites).

Need a promotional mark for off-product education and outreach materials? Acquire one through the 'Additional Documents' tab in the Labels section of the Company Tools.

Please note all elements are required with the exception of the symbol "FP," which is reserved for Mandatory Federal Purchasing participants only:
<http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/AboutBioPreferred.xhtml>

Current list of USDA BioPreferred Program qualified biobased product categories:
<http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/ProductCategories.xhtml>

Terms, definitions, and FAQs about USDA BioPreferred:
<http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/AboutBioPreferred.xhtml>

\$489 BILLION

The amount the U.S. biobased products industry contributed to the U.S. economy in 2023.

With the USDA Certified Biobased Product label on your product, consumers can easily identify that your company meets the high standards set forth by the USDA Secretary of Agriculture.



SUPPORTED 1.4 JOBS IN OTHER
SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY FOR
EVERY BIOBASED JOB

EMPLOYED 3.94M PEOPLE IN THE U.S.
BIOBASED PRODUCTS SECTOR



HOW TO PROMOTE THE LABEL

HOW TO PROMOTE THE LABEL

Now that you have your label and are part of the USDA BioPreferred Program, you'll want to promote and talk about your label. Before you do, it's important to clearly understand specific uses and terminology related to your label, product, and affiliation with the USDA BioPreferred Program. By fully understanding this information, you can better promote and represent both the label and your product.

PROMOTION TIPS

Consistency is key when promoting your label. Here are a couple tips to get you going:

- BioPreferred is one word and always has an uppercase “B” and “P.”
- The letters “USDA” should be capitalized and precede the word “BioPreferred.”
- Use the registered trademark symbol “®” (superscript) the first time the words “USDA BioPreferred” appear in material. After that, you may omit it if you would like.
- The Program should be referred to as the “USDA BioPreferred Program” or “BioPreferred Program”.
- When using the terms “USDA Certified Biobased Product,” “USDA Certified Biobased Package,” or “USDA Certified Biobased Product and Package” keep them as continuous phrases.

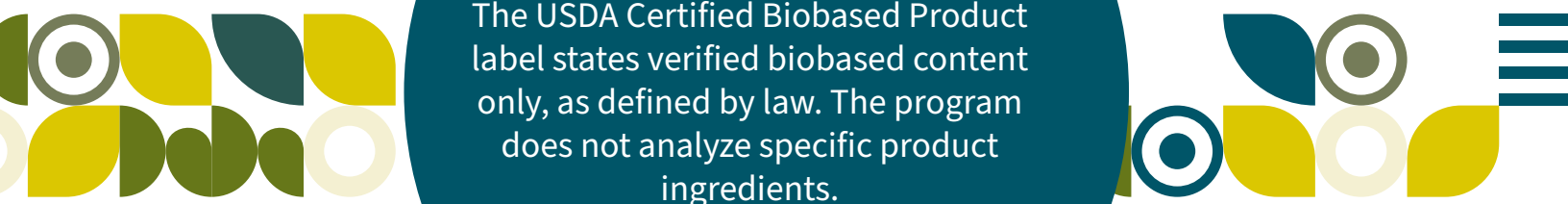


TERMINOLOGY

Biobased contains renewable plant, marine, and forestry-based resources not derived from petroleum.

Biobased Products are derived from plants and other renewable agricultural, marine, and forestry materials. They generally provide an alternative to conventional petroleum derived products and include a diverse range of offerings such as lubricants, detergents, inks, fertilizers, and bioplastics.

The BioPreferred Program refers to the program that manages the USDA Certified Biobased Product label and Mandatory Federal Purchasing Initiative—not the environmental preferability of any product or content, including biobased content. If your product is qualified for the Mandatory Federal Purchasing Initiative, you can publicize that you sell a USDA Certified Biobased Product with specified language, see examples on pages 12-13. If you have questions about how to represent your product correctly contact: help@usdabiopreferred.net.



The USDA Certified Biobased Product label states verified biobased content only, as defined by law. The program does not analyze specific product ingredients.

TERMINOLOGY

Percent Biobased Content refers to the ratio of new organic carbon to total organic carbon in a product. New organic carbon is derived from plants and other renewable agricultural, marine, and forestry materials. Total organic carbon consists of new organic carbon and old organic carbon, which originates from petroleum. Please state the actual percentage of biobased content or tell consumers that your product meets/exceeds minimum USDA certified requirements.

Required biobased content levels vary by product category. The USDA BioPreferred Program's biobased content levels for products that do not fall into pre-identified categories and participate in the voluntary labeling program must meet a minimum level. Currently, the level is set at 30%.

A list of product categories and their biobased content can be found at:
<http://www.biopREFERRED.gov/BioPreferred/faces/pages/ProductCategories.xhtml>.

Qualified Biobased Product is a product that is eligible for preferred Federal procurement because it meets the definition and Applicable Minimum Biobased Content criteria for one or more Designated Product Categories as specified in the Register of Designated Categories.

Renewable describes a resource that is inexhaustible and readily replaced. In the context of biobased products, renewable resources include agricultural, forestry, and marine resources such as algae, not the product itself.

USDA Certified Biobased Product is a product that has achieved third-party verification of biobased content and has earned USDA certification and approval to display the label. You may promote your label and product as being certified by using the language described in this guide.



Use of the trademarked name “USDA BioPreferred Program” and associated graphics must adhere to guidelines. Also, you should refrain from linking to any environmental or other product attribute claim that may cause consumer confusion. This guidance applies regardless of whether any Federal or other entity requires, specifies, or conditions its acceptance or terms of sale based on a product having been certified as a USDA Certified Biobased Product or qualified for Federal Purchasing.

To help correctly promote your product and uphold the credibility of the USDA BioPreferred Program, please take a moment to review the proper way to speak and write about your product.

USAGE OF “CERTIFIED”:

Correct

- Product (name) is a USDA Certified Biobased Product
- Product (name) is USDA Certified Biobased

Incorrect

- USDA BioPreferred Certified
- USDA Approved Biobased Product
- BioPreferred Designation
- BioPreferred USDA Compliant

USAGE OF “BIOBASED” PRODUCT CONTENT:

Correct

- (Product name) meets/exceeds minimum USDA certified biobased content for “product category”
- (Product name) contains (x%) USDA certified biobased content

Incorrect

- (Product name) meets/exceeds USDA certified biobased content
- (X%) USDA certified biobased content is in (product name)



RULES FOR PROMOTING THE LABEL

1

If the final product is not certified, but does contain an intermediate that is certified, you can promote it by saying, “This product contains % of (intermediate) a USDA Certified Biobased Product.” A final product may not use the label of the certified intermediate product it contains.

2

When promoting your label in text, refer to it by saying “The USDA Certified Biobased Product label is a certification mark of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.”

3

When promoting the USDA BioPreferred Program, “USDA” should be capitalized and precede the words “BioPreferred Program”. Also, BioPreferred must be spelled as one word with the “B” and “P” capitalized.

4

You must use a registered trademark symbol “®” (superscript) the first time “USDA BioPreferred Program” appears in material (title or text). You can omit it in subsequent mentions of USDA BioPreferred Program. Also, there should be no space between “BioPreferred” and the ® symbol (e.g., USDA BioPreferred® Program).





HOW TO APPLY THE LABEL

HOW TO APPLY THE LABEL

The USDA BioPreferred Program's voluntary labeling represents a partnership between the Federal government and Program participants, like you. Applying and using the label correctly helps consumers readily identify your product as biobased. We encourage you to apply the USDA Certified Biobased Product label and/or the USDA BioPreferred Program name across a wide variety of outreach and marketing materials and thank you in advance for following the appropriate usage guidelines outlined throughout this document!

NEED TO ADD A HANGTAG TO YOUR PRODUCT?

No problem. Just include a written description and either item number, stock-keeping unit number, or universal product code number of your product to eliminate confusion if the tag separates from the product.



RULES FOR APPLYING THE LABEL

1

The label cannot be used or associated with a non-certified product.

2

Use of the USDA Certified Biobased Product label, including all graphic elements and the USDA BioPreferred Program name, are prohibited unless they follow the guidelines set forth in this document.

3

Do not use the label on business cards, e-mail signatures, company letterhead, or company stationary. Instead, please download the promo mark and use it to advertise your certified products in off-product locations like these.

4

Do not use the label in a manner that would disparage the USDA BioPreferred Program, USDA or the Federal government, or mislead consumers.

5

Participants are responsible for ensuring their representatives, such as an ad agency or contractor support, adhere to USDA Certified Biobased Product label brand guidelines.

6

If your USDA Certified Biobased Product is sold in other countries, the label could be subject to product regulations in that country. You are responsible for understanding and following the laws in countries your product is sold.

7

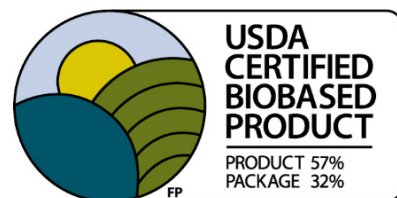
When referring to the USDA BioPreferred Program or USDA Certified Biobased Product label, all claims must be truthful and evidenced based.



HOW TO REPRODUCE THE LABEL

HOW TO REPRODUCE THE LABEL

By using the approved USDA Certified Biobased Product label, you help build brand equity and credibility to your product and the entire USDA BioPreferred Program. The following guidelines must always be followed when reproducing the label.



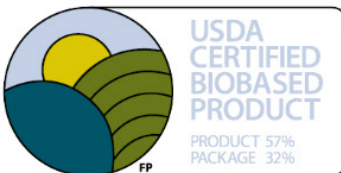
VISUAL GUIDELINES FOR LABEL

Please avoid altering, distorting, re-creating, translating, or misusing in all circumstances:

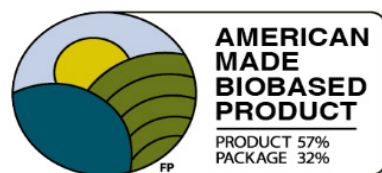
- Never separate elements.
- Never skew or rotate.
- Never substitute or add elements.
- Never change the typeface.
- Never change wording.
- Never translate wording.



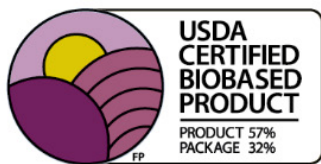
Incorrect



Incorrect



Incorrect



Incorrect



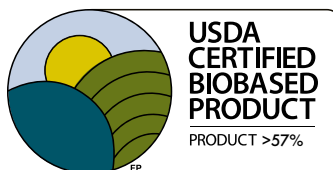
Incorrect



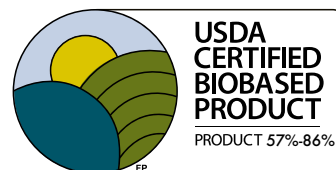
Incorrect



Incorrect



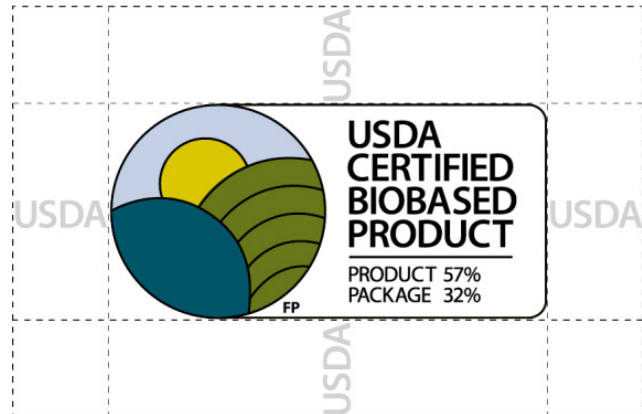
Incorrect



Incorrect

X-Height Guidelines: A clear space should frame the label at all times. No other graphic elements, such as text and images, may appear in this area.

Placement Guidelines: In order to have your label stand out on your product and promotional material, avoid placing it on a busy image or integrated into a larger design.



Resizing Guidelines: The label may be resized to accommodate your needs, but the proportions should be maintained and no smaller than 3/4 inch (high) x 1-1/2 inch (wide) for print. It is important to maintain lettering legibility inside the label at all times and in all mediums. That way consumers can easily read your label.

If the label cannot be used because of size restrictions, a text-only label may be used in place of the regular label. The text must state, “USDA Certified Biobased Product XX%” or “USDA Certified Biobased Packaging XX%” where XX is the certified biobased content of the product or packaging.

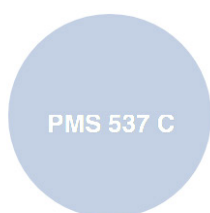
The USDA Certified Biobased Product label must be displayed in English. The text-only version, however, may be translated. The label should be used in conjunction with the translated text-only label.

We tried to ensure this guide contains everything you need. However, if you need more information, visit <http://www.biopREFERRED.gov> or contact us at help@usdabiopREFERRED.net.

Color Guidelines: To maintain consistency, the label needs to always be in the USDA colors.



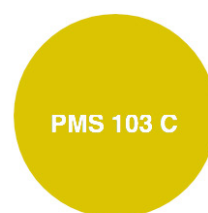
C:88 M:58 Y:47 K:29
R:35 G:80 B:95



C:24 M:16 Y:9 K:0
R:192 G:200 B:214



C:56 M:40 Y:100 K:23
R:107 G:111 B:42



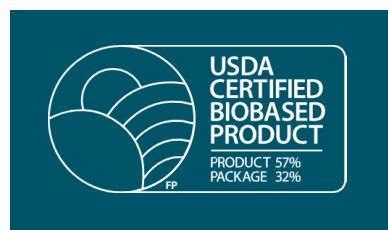
C:26 M:26 Y:100 K:1
R:199 G:172 B:0

The logotype is available in two color options. Black for use on a light or medium background, and white for use on a dark background.

The label can also be used in one of the four Pantone colors used in the approved label (listed above). Printing in other colors will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact the BioPreferred Program at help@usdabiopreferred.net for more information and review of proposed label colors.

The logotype may also be embossed provided the size and proportion requirements are met and the logotype is clearly legible.



For offset printing, only use 100% of the Pantone (PMS) colors or the CMYK equivalent. For web and PowerPoint, please use RGB as indicated.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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About the BioPreferred Program

The BioPreferred Program is a USDA-led initiative that aims to facilitate the development and expansion of markets for biobased products.

The increased development, purchase, and use of biobased products will reduce our Nation's reliance on petroleum and increase the use of renewable agricultural materials.

The USDA BioPreferred Program is transforming the marketplace for biobased products through: 1) mandatory purchasing requirements for federal agencies and federal contractors, and 2) voluntary product certification and labeling. To learn more about the BioPreferred Program visit biopreferred.gov

The Benefits of Biobased Products

Biobased products provide all the benefits as conventional products: they are cost-comparative, readily available (made by small companies and large corporations), and perform as well or better than their petroleum-containing counterparts.

There are also considerable economic benefits from biobased products. According to a report USDA released in 2023, the biobased economy contributes a total \$489 billion to the U.S. economy each year, with 3.94 million jobs supported, directly and indirectly, by the biobased economy.

Certification of Safety

The USDA Certified Biobased Product label is not a guarantee or warranty of safety. The USDA BioPreferred Program does not test or judge product safety. Read the label fully. Precautionary labeling for consumer safety for both products and packaging is highly regulated by Federal law.

Products Containing Water or Inorganic Carbonates

The USDA Certified Biobased Product label reports only organic biobased carbon as a percentage of total organic carbon. In cases where products contain water and inorganic carbonates, particularly when these components comprise a large portion of the total product contents, the reader may incorrectly infer the biobased percentage represents the percentage of all product contents. However, to avoid any implication of overstating the amount of biobased product content, all advertisers should consider qualifying the percentage of product content that is excluded from the USDA certified biobased content percentage.

EPA Safer Choice

The USDA BioPreferred Program works closely with EPA Safer Choice, a multi-attribute certification program, to increase public understanding and awareness of both programs. Products that qualify for the Safer Choice label are safer for workers, families, pets, and the environment-- EPA scientists review every ingredient. Safer Choice-labeled products must also meet performance, packaging, and ingredient disclosure requirements. Products may be developed to meet both programs' criteria and co-brand with Safer Choice and the USDA BioPreferred Program. For more information on qualifying and applying for the Safer Choice label visit: <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/resources-safer-choice-product-manufacturers>.

EPA Regulated Pesticides

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) requires that all pesticides sold or distributed in the United States (including imported pesticides) be registered with EPA. Learn more about FIFRA by visiting <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-federal-insecticide-fungicide-and-rodenticide-act>.

Pesticides are defined very broadly in FIFRA and include such things as wood preservatives, animal repellents, and some cleaners and disinfectants if they claim to kill or mitigate pathogens. If in doubt, consult the Office of Pesticide Programs <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/pesticide-labeling-questions-answers>.

Certain minimal risk pesticides are exempt under section 25(b) of FIFRA from the requirement for registration if they contain certain specified ingredients. However, many states continue to register these minimal risk products under state pesticide laws. Manufacturers of products that have any pesticide function should specify in their application whether the product is registered with EPA or exempt from registration. EPA pesticide registrants that wish to add the certification mark to a product can only do so by applying to amend their EPA registration.

EPA pesticide registrants are obligated to continue to meet all FIFRA requirements on product labels, including the prohibition of false or misleading claims. Questions and answers about pesticide labeling policy are available at this website <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/pesticide-labeling-questions-answers>.

Advertising, Labeling, and Marketing Claims and Endorsements

Manufacturers and vendors are reminded that their advertising, labeling, and other marketing claims, including claims regarding health and environmental benefits of the product, must conform to the FTC “Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims,” 16 CFR part 260. Under Federal law, any product that displays the USDA Certified Biobased label and makes an advertising claim in concert with the label is required to support that claim and not make it in a misleading way. FTC and the USDA BioPreferred Program work together to prevent misleading use of environmental marketing claims within both mandatory federal purchasing and voluntary labeling. Learn more by visiting <https://www.ftc.gov/policy/federal-register-notices/guides-use-environmental-marketing-claims-green-guides>.

Participants that make environmental marketing claims that include the USDA, the USDA BioPreferred Program, or the USDA Certified Biobased Product label need to strictly adhere to these Federal regulations:

- **FTC Green Guides** – U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 16 – Part 260. FTC issued its Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims and Proposed Revisions, commonly known as the “Green Guides,” to help marketers avoid making environmental claims that are unfair or deceptive under Section 5 of the FTC Act. Also relevant are sections 6 and 9. For businesses, the FTC has issued a brochure, “Complying with the Environmental Marketing Guides.”
- **USDA Marketing Claims Substantiation** – U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7 -- Part 4270 Under USDA BioPreferred Program regulation (Title 7 Part 4270), participants must support any environmental marketing and other product claims. Per the law, manufacturers and vendors shall maintain records documenting compliance with this part for each product that has received certification to use the label, including documentation of analyses performed by manufacturers to support claims of environmental or human health benefits, life cycle cost, sustainability benefits, and product performance made by the manufacturer.
- **Endorsements** – U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 16 – Part 255. The USDA BioPreferred Program name and marks may never be used in any manner that would directly imply that the USDA or the Federal government directly endorses a company, its products or services, or specific product attributes. Participants in the USDA BioPreferred Program’s voluntary labeling initiative are subject to the Federal Trade Commission’s Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising. Learn more by visiting: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title16/16cfr255_main_02.tpl.
- **Audits, Violations, Enforcement, and Penalties.** In order to uphold our high standards, the USDA BioPreferred Program monitors and audits proper use of the USDA BioPreferred Program name and marks. Anyone who misuses the marks will be contacted and, at the USDA BioPreferred Program Director’s discretion, be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the violation. Failure to do so may result in termination from the program or legal action.