

Suggested Amendment: State of Vermont Procurement — Preference for Bio-Based Products

Summary: A proposal to mandate State of Vermont procurement policy requiring preference for products that have a high percentage of ingredients derived from natural ingredients. The program apply to all

Rationale: This program is based directly on the USDA-administered BioPreferred program, for Federal procurement, and institutes it in Vermont. See [[USDA Biopreferred Website](#)]

“The goal of the BioPreferred Program is to increase the purchase and use of biobased products. The BioPreferred Program was created by the [2002 Farm Bill](#) and reauthorized and expanded as part of the [Agricultural Act of 2014](#) (the 2014 Farm Bill). The program's purpose is to spur economic development, create new jobs and provide new markets for farm commodities. The increased development, purchase, and use of biobased products reduces our nation's reliance on petroleum, increases the use of renewable agricultural resources, and contributes to reducing adverse environmental and health impacts.”

“Federal law...directs that all federal agencies purchase biobased products in categories identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). To date, USDA has identified [139 categories](#) (e.g. cleaners, carpet, lubricants, paints) of biobased products for which agencies and their contractors have mandatory purchasing requirements. As USDA identifies product categories for mandatory federal purchasing, minimum biobased content is established for the category.”

“Biobased product purchasing requirements are included in solicitations, blanket purchase agreements, contracts, and specifications. Requirements also extend to purchases made through purchase cards, electronic catalogs, and other procurement vehicles.”

Possible jurisdictions: Buildings & General Services, Agency of Natural Resources, VTrans

Suggested Action Steps:

- 1) Conduct research for similar programs offered by other states. Because many State vendors and contractors operate regionally, consult with neighboring states to determine if regional cooperation achieves economies of effort and impact;
- 2) Develop Certification process for new listings. Simplified re-certification for any Vermont-produced products already listed on USDA BioPreferred program.
- 3) Develop workflow for determining if a transaction has no suitable BioPreferred options, creating a valid exception, as described on USDA BioPreferred site.
- 4) Develop web procurement support such as USDA BioPreferred site.
- 5) Promotion through news media, trade fairs, etc. focusing on local businesses benefiting from the program.