

Buy Green

Both Congress and the President have directed Federal agencies to be good stewards of the environment by conserving energy and other precious natural resources. In this regard, Executive Order 13423, "Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management" mandates "green" purchasing, unless the products do not meet your performance needs, are not reasonably available, or are only available at an unreasonable price.

"Buying Green" is easy for USDA cardholders; most of these products are available through the USDA blanket purchase agreement (BPA) at the USDA Advantage! Website: [USDA Advantage! Login](#)

There are six components to the Federal green purchasing program:

- Recycled content products
- Energy Star® and FEMP-designated energy efficient products
- Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)-designated products (computers and monitors)
- Biobased products
- Environmentally preferable products and services
- Non-ozone depleting substances

Recycled content products

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires the purchase of recycled content products designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These products are also known as Comprehensive Procurement Guideline or CPG items, which is EPA's list of designated products. Examples of recycled content products are recycled content copier paper and other paper products, notebook binders, and remanufactured toner cartridges. Refer to <http://www.epa.gov/cpg/> for the list of products, EPA's recommendations, and suppliers.

Energy efficient products

The Energy Policy Act of 2005, as well as DR 5500-001, requires agencies to purchase Energy Star® products or energy-efficient products designated by the Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP), as well as products that use minimal standby power. For products that qualify see www.energystar.gov and <http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/procurement/>. Products that must be energy efficient include scanners, printers, and refrigerators. Additionally, EO 13423 requires USDA to purchase Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)-registered electronics for desktop computers and laptops. Refer to <http://www.epeat.net/> for a list of EPEAT-registered products.

Biobased products

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 requires the purchase of biobased products designated by USDA. These products are typically made from feedstock derived from farm crops and farm residues, but can also contain wood byproducts. Examples of biobased products are various types of lubricants and greases, office and bathroom cleaning products, and hand soaps and other personal cleaning products. Refer to the BioPreferredSM home page <http://www.biobased.oce.usda.gov/fb4p/> for the list of designated products and vendors.

Environmentally preferable products and services

EO 13423 emphasizes the significance of environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP). Products in this category can be viable alternatives to products that contain hazardous materials or toxic chemicals, such as green cleaning products, mercury-free thermometers, or refurbished furniture. Refer to <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp/> for products and services, as well as suppliers, meeting EPP standards.

Non-ozone depleting substances

Although we have been very successful in reducing releases of ozone-depleting substances (ODSs), the ozone hole over the Antarctic is still huge. EPA identifies alternatives to ODSs through its Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) program and provides recommendations for specific products, such as refrigerants and fire extinguishers. Refer to <http://www.epa.gov/Ozone/snap/index.html> for the list of products and alternatives.