



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

APR 11 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

Last year, I sent you a letter in which I discussed the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) BioPreferred Program, a governmentwide initiative to increase the purchase and use of renewable, environmentally-friendly biobased products while creating new green jobs and new markets for farmers, manufacturers, and vendors. Many of you have already taken positive actions to make your procurement professionals aware of their responsibilities to buy biobased products. Additionally, our staff has met with yours to further explain the program. We appreciate your strong support in implementing a provision of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 requiring Federal agencies to give procurement preference to biobased products.

As you are also aware, on October 5, 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13514, "Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance." Section 2(h) establishes Federal government requirements for sustainable acquisition. The purchase of biobased products is expressly cited as one way to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve our environment.

USDA is committed to the success of the Executive Order and the BioPreferred program, for which we have statutory responsibility. President Obama has committed the Federal government to lead by example in demonstrating sustainable practices in our day-to-day operations. One important way to lead by example in the green procurement area is for you to urge your Chief Acquisition Officers to support the BioPreferred program both through direct purchases and in service contracts. I am enclosing a suggested memorandum for you to send to your Chief Acquisition Officer for dissemination. I would greatly appreciate an electronic copy of the final memo you forward to your procurement official. I am also enclosing a copy of the BioPreferred fact sheet I sent to you last year.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack", written over a circular stamp.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosures

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