

Federal Contractors Required to Report Biobased Purchases

In Mid-October, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack and Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Joe Jordan sent a message to all Federal procurement officials and contractors who use biobased products in performance of Federal Service contracts. Vilsack and Jordan announced a new web portal for contractor reporting on biobased product purchase and use. Contractors are required to report product types and dollar value of any USDA-designated biobased products purchased by the contractor and used under federal service and construction contracts.

The web portal is contained in the General Services Administration System for Award Management or SAM -- www.sam.gov. The initial Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Clause, which requires contractor reporting, went into effect May 2012. The FAR Clause was amended and the amendments became effective September 3, 2013, the same time the web reporting portal opened. The clause applies to service and construction contractors where such contracts have a clause requiring the reporting of biobased product purchases.

The reporting requirement is based on the 2008 Farm Bill and FAR Clause 52.223-2, Affirmative Procurement of Biobased Products Under Service and Construction Contracts (http://www.acquisition.gov/Far/current/html/52_223_226.html)

"Since this is the first full year of reporting under the new amended FAR clause and the Federal government and many contractors lost the first two weeks in October because of the partial Federal government shutdown, we are not sure how robust the reporting will be," said Ron Buckhalt BioPreferred program manager. The reporting web portal closed on October 31, 2013.

He continued, "During 2014 the BioPreferred program will do continued outreach to the procurement and contacting community to help ensure complete contractor reporting in 2014."