



United States Department of Agriculture

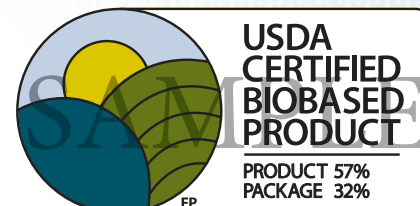


www.biopreferred.gov

THE USDA BIOBASED PRODUCT LABEL AND CERTIFIED “MATURE MARKET” PRODUCTS

► Overview of the USDA Certified Biobased Product Label:

In February 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched a new labeling initiative to help consumers identify biobased products and verify claims of biobased content. As of February 21, 2011, manufacturers and vendors of products can apply for the [USDA Certified Biobased Product label](#). Biobased products already identified within a [BioPreferred product category](#) must meet the minimum biobased content of the product category. Biobased contents of BioPreferred program products vary from 7-100 percent. Products that do not fall under a previously identified category must be at least 25 percent biobased unless the label applicant applies for and receives an alternative minimum biobased content allowance. Mature market products, those that had a significant market share as of 1972, are currently excluded from the program.



► What is a Biobased product?

As defined by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA), biobased products are products determined by the US Secretary of Agriculture to be commercial or industrial products (other than food or feed) that are composed in whole or in significant part of biological materials, including plant, animal or marine materials, renewable domestic agricultural materials, and forestry materials; or an intermediate ingredient or feedstock. A biobased product does not include fossil fuels such as coal or petroleum, motor vehicle fuels, heating oil, electricity produced from biomass (biological material from living or recently living organisms, most commonly used as a renewal energy source) or any “mature market” products.

► What are Mature Market Products?

Mature Market Products are products that had a significant market share as of 1972 and are currently excluded from the program. These products include those made largely from common or unprocessed biotic material such as wood, leather and cotton. For example, cotton T-shirts are biobased, but are considered a mature market product since a significant portion of the T-shirt market, as of 1972, was comprised of cotton-based products. Other examples of mature market products include cotton towels, paper plates and wood furniture.



Are any products made from traditional materials eligible for certification?

Yes. A specific product that might typically be considered a mature market product can be eligible for certification if the product contains other eligible biobased elements or uses traditional materials in an innovative way. Below are a few examples.

Certified Product: Thermally-Modified Lumber by EcoVantage

Product Description: EcoVantage's thermally-modified wood is created using the firm's patented EcoPrem process. This is a proprietary method of combining heat and steam to turn wood into a durable outdoor construction material. EcoVantage states that their EcoPrem wood is resistant to rot because of its lower moisture content and lack of sugars and resins and comes with a 30-year warranty. EcoVantage also states that the thermally-modified wood is dimensionally stable, resisting cupping, twisting, warping and insects.



Image courtesy of www.ecovantagewood.com

Eligibility: EcoVantage's thermally-modified lumber was eligible for and received certification because of the innovative way traditional wood is treated in order to create the final product within U.S. markets. EcoVantage uses a method of combining heat and steam to turn wood into a new outdoor construction material. Incorporating steam into the thermal-modification process makes it possible to heat wood throughout - to an extremely high temperature. This alters the inherent structure of the wood, giving it a resistance to mold, rot, decay and insects.

Certified Product: Planet Plus Cups from Asean Corporation

Product Description: The Planet Plus line of paper cups are designed for use with both hot and cold liquids. Traditionally, disposable paper cups are lined with a thin oil-based plastic coating that prevents them from leaking. This plastic coating also prevents them from breaking down. Planet Plus cups are coated with Ingeo™ biopolymers from NatureWorks LLC, allowing them to quickly break down in professionally managed composting facilities.



Image courtesy of www.weddingenuity.com

Eligibility: Planet Plus cups are coated with Ingeo™ biopolymers also known as PLA made from annually renewable domestic corn. The PLA coating is 100 percent biodegradable and compostable allowing these cups and soup containers to quickly break down in composting facilities. Planet Plus cups received certification because of the biobased coating used on its cups.

Certified Product: Structural Insulated Panels by Ryan Development Company

Product Description: Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) by Ryan Development Company use traditional oriented strand board in combination with compressed wheat straw core material to create SIPs for commercial and residential building construction.

Eligibility: Ryan Development Company's SIPs received certification because of the innovative combination of non-traditional agricultural material with a traditional wood product creating an engineered wood.



Image courtesy of www.soa.utexas.edu