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April 05, 2011

## USDA Awards 'BioPreferred' Label to 60 Products, Including Biobased Motor Oils



By Cheryl Kafan

[TMcnet Contributor](#)

U.S. Deputy Agriculture Secretary Kathleen Merrigan has [unveiled the first 60 products](#)—produced by 11 North American firms—to receive a prestigious "BioPreferred" label for display on their packaging and marketing materials. The announcement was made at a biobased product meeting held this week in Greenwillow, Ohio.



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When the BioPreferred label is attached to a product, Merrigan stated, it certifies to consumers and purchasing agents that the product or packaging is "composed wholly or significantly of agricultural ingredients—renewable plant, animal, marine, or forestry materials." Biobased products are designated for preferred purchasing by Federal agencies.

Since the January 2011 launch of voluntary biobased product certification, 100 hundred companies have submitted applications to the USDA for about 400 products. Those that were recognized this week are Nutek Green, a division of Hoover, Inc., (Glenwillow, Ohio); Seventh Generation (Burlington, Vermont); Beto Corp. (Toledo, Ohio); Clear Lam Packaging, Inc. (Elk Grove Village, Illinois); DuPont Corporation (Wilmington, Delaware); ElastiKote (Akron, Ohio); Green Earth Technologies (Celebration, Florida); National Industries for the Blind Agencies (Lighthouse for the Blind, (St. Louis, Missouri) and Travis Association for the Blind (Austin, Texas); NatureWorks LLC (Minnetonka, Minnesota); Rochester Midland Corporation (Rochester, New York); and Bio-Lub Canada (Quebec, Canada).

Among the 60 BioPreferred products are hand soaps, hand sanitizers, plant-based plastic packaging for fresh food, cleaning products biobased fiber that can be spun into carpets and clothes—and engine oils and lubricants.

"These companies are proving that innovation and agriculture can grow together to build a foundation for [the] future," said Merrigan. "Consumer cleaning products, containers, and the intermediate materials used to manufacture them—made from agriculturally sourced ingredients—help add value to commodities, create jobs in rural communities, and can reduce our dependence on imported oil."

Green Earth Technologies (GET), one of the 11 companies to receive the special labeling, has shaped its company mission around the four ideologies of being

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green: biodegradable, renewable, recyclable, and environmentally safe. "The USDA's voluntary labeling program is an important and credible benchmark for consumers looking to purchase environmentally friendly products," commented Jeffrey Loch, president and chief marketing officer of GET. "We are very proud to be one of the first companies awarded this prestigious designation for our products, including G-OIL®, our bio-based, fully synthetic, API certified, motor oil."

The USDA BioPreferred program was first created under the 2002 Farm Bill—and then strengthened under the 2008 Farm Bill—in order to increase the purchase of biobased products by the U.S. government. Under the program, the Secretary of Agriculture has designated 5,100 biobased products for preferred purchasing by Federal agencies. The new label makes identification of these products easier for Federal buyers and will increase awareness of these high-value goods in the commercial and consumer markets. The USDA estimates that 20,000 biobased products currently are being manufactured in the United States.

*Cheryl Kaften is an accomplished communicator who has written for consumer and corporate audiences. She has worked extensively for MasterCard Worldwide, Philip Morris USA (Altria), and KPMG, and has consulted for Estee Lauder and the Philadelphia Inquirer Newspapers. To read more of her articles, please visit her [columnist page](#).*

Edited by [Janice McDuffee](#)



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