

News Releases

Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) Selected to Manage U.S. Department of Agriculture Biobased Certification Program

Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture selected the Safety Equipment Institute - a subsidiary of ASTM International - to manage the certification program that supports labeling thousands of products as "biobased." The renewal of this five-year contract will mean that more and more people will be able to find and purchase products that are made and packaged using renewable materials.

"This program empowers everyone – from everyday consumers to large customers like the U.S. government – to make environmentally conscious purchases, while also helping manufacturers meet the growing demand for those products," said Pat Gleason, president of SEI and vice president of certification services for ASTM International. "We're thrilled to continue administering this program, which is yet another example of our growing strength in the certification space."

Since 2011, thousands of products have been certified as biobased across an array of industries: personal care products, automotive, construction, cleaning, lubricants, and more. The biobased-content label indicates the percentage of the product and its package derived from plants and other renewable agricultural, marine, and forestry materials. The USDA has established minimum percentages for about 100 product categories. Products in categories where minimum requirements have not yet been established must contain at least 25 percent biobased content.

Products are tested by accredited laboratories using an ASTM International test method (D6866) that determines "biobased content of solid, liquid, and gaseous samples using radiocarbon analysis." This test method was updated in May 2016 by members of ASTM International's committee on plastics (D20). To learn more about D6866 and the USDA program, read today's [new feature story](#) in Standardization News, ASTM International's flagship magazine.

Products with biobased content help reduce the need for petroleum-derived products while also reducing impact on the environment and public health, according to USDA. In addition, manufacturers use this program to help market their products, which helps them create jobs and improve economic development.

To have a product or packaging certified for the biobased program, go to www.biopreferred.gov. Once accepted into the program, manufacturers will be directed to the ASTM Certification Program for Biobased Products: www.astm.org/certification.

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