



## **USDA Forest Service Employees and USDA Contractor, Human Potential Consultants, Drive BioPreferred Results**

WASHINGTON, August 29, 2017 - Two United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service Acquisition Management staff received the Fiscal Year 2017 USDA Excellence in BioPreferred Procurement Award. Erin Hollenshead, Contracting Officer, and Cele Aguirre-Bravo, Agency Small Business Coordinator, received this year's Award based on their leadership in driving USDA's commitment to purchase and use biobased products throughout its operations. According to George Sears, Director of Acquisition Management for the Forest Service, "Both Erin Hollenshead and Cele Aguirre-Bravo employ a strategy anchored in continuous training, monitoring and assessing results, and providing feedback throughout the acquisition cycle. They understand the complexities involved in these processes and generate win-win solutions to make biobased product purchasing operationally feasible within the agency's acquisition planning and decisional contexts."

In 2016, Hollenshead and Aguirre-Bravo's combined leadership helped USDA achieve over \$160 million dollars in contract obligations toward the purchase of biobased products. Their leadership also resulted in the Forest Service meeting USDA's goal that 95% of applicable contracts require the use of biobased products during the performance of the contract.

Human Potential Consultants (HPC) received the Fiscal Year 2017 USDA Excellence in BioPreferred Procurement Award for USDA Contractors. Human Potential Consultants, LLC (HPC) is a small business based in Torrance, California. In their janitorial contract with the USDA's Forest Service in Jamez Springs, New Mexico, HPC utilized biobased multipurpose cleaners, bathroom and spa cleaners, and glass cleaners. Beginning in 2015, when HPC was first awarded a federal contract requiring the use of biobased products, HPC proactively tested and adopted biobased products using the USDA BioPreferred catalog to identify products to test. According to Tiffini Clagg at HPC, "When HPC first started the transition to biobased products, we had to first test biobased products. We wanted to be sure we could continue to uphold our high standards of providing the best quality service to our customers when utilizing biobased products. We chose biobased products that performed well and met our high standards."

Created by the 2002 Farm Bill and reauthorized and expanded as part of the 2014 Farm Bill, the USDA BioPreferred program spurs economic development, creates new jobs, and provides new markets for farm commodities. The Program works to increase the purchase and use of designated biobased products through a preferred procurement program and the USDA Certified Biobased Product voluntary label. To date, the BioPreferred Program has designated 97 product categories that federal procurement officials give buying preference to, representing more than 15,000 products. In addition, the program has certified more than 3,000 products to carry the USDA Certified Biobased Product label. Visit the online product catalog at [www.biopreferred.gov](http://www.biopreferred.gov) to learn more.

