



## MEETING MINUTES

**Sustainable Office Practices Working Group  
NIH Environmental Management System (NEMS)  
Wednesday, November 12, 2008  
10:00 – 11:00 am**

### Meeting Objective(s):

- USDA Presentation on Biobased Products
- Report on GDC Warehouse and Self-Service Stores Greening Efforts

### Attendees:

Nicholas Baker (ORF)	Melvin Rascoe (OD)
Danita Broadnax (ORF)	Rhonda Sapp (NIDDK)
John Crawford (OD)	Candace Scott (NINR)
Marale Damirjian (NIDDK)	Erin Williams (NIA)
Ray Dillon (OD)	Don Wilson (ORF)
Iggy Francis (NIA)	Richard Trott (OD)
Bill Ketner (ORF)	Lashonda Wooten (NIGMS)
Emily Lawrence (Booz Allen)	

### Minutes:

#### USDA Presentation ob Biobased Products

- Don Wilson began the meeting by introducing Shana Love, from the USDA's BioPreferred Program who is attending today's meeting to present on green purchasing and biobased products.
- Ms. Love stated that the presentation will focus on an overview of federal green purchasing and USDA's BioPreferred Program, USDA's role and strategy, and what federal agencies can do to procure green products, particularly biobased products.
- Ms. Love described the federal green purchasing requirements including Executive Order (E.O.) 13423. She explained that as a result of this E.O., the USDA created internally a Sustainable Operations Council which includes a working group that focuses on green purchasing. This structure is similar to NIH's NEMS structure.
- Ms. Love also explained the types of green products that are procured including biobased products. Biobased products are defined by the 2002 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act and biobased products are looked at as replacements to petroleum-based products. Ray Dillon asked whether USDA considers the lifecycle of biobased products and if it has been determined if petroleum-based fertilizers are used to produce biobased products. Ms. Love stated that the USDA is currently

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conducting lifecycle testing from cradle to grave on biobased products. Mr. Dillon also asked if biobased products are made from the raw resources or if waste from raw resources are used to create them. Ms. Love stated that several of the products are made from the waste materials of products and USDA is currently working on a report that discusses the use of biobased resources to make these products and how it relates to the food supply.

- Mr. Wilson asked whether there is a correlation between Green Seal and biobased products. Ms. Love stated that USDA is looking to coordinate between Green Seal products, specifically the janitorial products and biobased products.
- The discussion moved to the use of biobased products in cafeterias. Ms. Love explained that USDA has been able to replace 50% of their cafeteria items with a biobased version that includes trays and cups. John Crawford explained within the NIH cafeterias, they are replacing the Styrofoam cold cups with a single size 100% compostable cup beginning December 1<sup>st</sup>. Styrofoam trays have already been replaced within the NIH cafeterias.
- Ms. Love explained that there are over 14,000 biobased products that are commercially available. Many of the products can be used in: construction and grounds maintenance, cafeteria/food service, custodial services, vehicle maintenance, and operations and maintenance. Ms. Love stated that 33 items have been designated by USDA. The designated items to date represent: 2541 products and 649 manufacturers/vendors, which is one-fifth of the known market.
- In conclusion, Ms. Love stated there are several tools on USDA's BioPreferred Web site including sample contract language, training materials, technical fact sheets, life cycle assessments overview, and designation process. There is also a BioPreferred Product Catalogs, and information from USDA partners including GSA, DLA, and Ability 1.
- Lastly, Ms. Love stated the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual BioPreferred Showcase and Training will be held June 8-11, 2009. At this event there will be over 50 vendors with biobased product information.

### **Report on Greening Efforts of GDC Warehouse and Self-Service Stores**

- Melvin Rascoe stated that 280 items have been identified as green products within the GDC Warehouse inventory. The new GDC Warehouse catalog is currently available and these green products are denoted as such within the catalog. Mr. Rascoe explained that they are currently working on creating a green section of the self services stores and estimate that this will be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Wilson suggested that the GDC Warehouse work with Ms. Love to identify other opportunities to incorporate biobased products into NIH's inventory.

### **Other Updates**

- Mr. Wilson stated that NIH has officially enrolled in the Federal Electronics Challenge (FEC). Any computer purchased by the federal government has to be

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EPEAT compliant. Mr. Wilson is continuing to work on getting a meeting with NITAAC to ensure all new computers purchased through the GWAC contract are EPEAT compliant.

**Next Meeting:**

Information on the next meeting is forthcoming.