

AGAR ADVISORY

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
AGAR ADVISORY NO. 97**

USDA Mandatory Sources for Office Supplies

INTRODUCTION : This Agriculture Acquisition Regulation (AGAR) Advisory announces the availability of Government-wide Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA) for office supplies and mandates their usage, and the usage of USDA's AbilityOne store, Paperclips Etc. for all office supply purchases. This AGAR Advisory cancels and replaces AGAR Advisory No. 46, USDA Blanket Purchase Agreement for Office Supplies.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this AGAR Advisory is to inform the Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies that the General Services Administration, through the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (FSSI) has awarded 15 Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) for office supplies. Thirteen of these BPAs were awarded to small business entities. Patronization of these BPAs represents a great opportunity for our agencies to achieve significant savings and meet Department-wide socioeconomic goals. The agreements are estimated to save federal agencies \$48 million per year over the next four years on office supplies and make it easier for agencies to procure their office supplies. By leveraging the buying power of the federal marketplace, the GSA Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative has obtained discounted pricing on all office supplies, including paper and toner. Under these BPAs, discounts increase as the agencies procure more items under the BPAs. **Beginning January 3, 2011, all Department of Agriculture office supply purchases must be made through the GSA Office Supply FSSI BPAs or USDA's AbilityOne Supply Store, Paperclips Etc.**

These new BPAs are easy to use, provide additional discounts to the negotiated prices already available on GSA's Schedule 75 for office supplies, and provide the federal government with a fast and effective way to order, while ensuring prompt, cost-effective delivery and quality customer service. Additional benefits include:

- Ensuring compliance with applicable regulations, including the AbilityOne Program;
- Fostering new markets for sustainable technologies and environmentally preferable products;
- Simplifying data collection and enhancing transparency by enabling agencies to better manage spending and cost savings for office supplies.

WHO MAY USE THE BPA: Any USDA employee with a Contracting Officer's Warrant or the authority to acquire office supplies by purchase card may use the BPA within purchase limits without the need for further authorization.

COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS: No additional competition is required. The GSA Office Supply FSSI BPAs were competed.

HOW TO ORDER UNDER THE BPAs: The BPAs can be accessed via GSA Advantage/USDA Advantage at www.usdaadvantage.gsa.gov. Click on the Strategic Sourcing BPAs link on the left side of the page to access a wide array of office supplies. If you are interested in obtaining green office supplies, you will be able to see all available items under various environmental attributes within this aisle. For more detailed ordering information, please visit www.gsa.gov/fssiofficesupplies.

If you have questions regarding this advisory, please contact Dorothy Lay, Chief, Procurement Policy Division, via email at dorothy.lay@dm.usda.gov or by phone at 202.690.2064. You may also send an email to procurement.policy@dm.usda.gov.

This advisory is available at <http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html>.

EXPIRATION DATE: This Advisory remains in effect until cancelled.

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