

Mr. Edwin M. Vargas  
1111 Westchester Ave.  
Apt. 5B  
Bronx, N.Y. 10459-2543

Dear Mr. Vargas:

I am writing in response to your March 13, 1999 letter to the President in which you expressed support for "tree-free" paper and encouraged the President to take actions to promote the use of paper products made from agricultural or bio-based wastes.

Let me begin by stating that President Clinton has and continues to support recycling and the use of bio-based products and energy. The President has taken significant actions to ensure that the federal government leads by example in these areas. On September 14, 1998, the President issued Executive Order 13101 which directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture to issue a list and designate bio-based products for federal government procurement. Once designated, federal agencies will be required to modify their procurement programs to consider purchasing these products.

More recently, on August 12, 1999, the President signed a new Executive Order, entitled "Developing and Promoting Bio-based Products and Energy." This Order establishes a Council to coordinate government research and development programs for bio-based products and establishes a goal of tripling the use of bio-based products and energy by the year 2010. In addition, the Order establishes a National Bio-based Products and Bio-energy Coordination Office to be overseen jointly by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Energy. These Executive Orders should have a significant impact on advancing the use of bio-based products, including paper products, in this country and serve to create and sustain end-use markets for these products. More information on

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these Orders is available from the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive at (202) 260-9317. Copies of the Orders can be obtained on their website @ [www.ofee.gov](http://www.ofee.gov).

Resource conservation remains an integral part of this Administration's overall strategy for protecting our environment and many of the initiatives started under the President can have a long lasting influence on the use of bio-based products well into the future. I appreciate your interest in this matter and I hope this letter addresses your concerns.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director  
Office of Solid Waste