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Quality Products for Healthy Soil

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Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority Earns USDA Certified Biobased Product Label

RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA – The Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority (IERCA) recently announced that it has earned the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Certified Biobased Product Label for its premium SoilPro compost.

The USDA BioPreferred Program was created in 2002 and reauthorized in 2018 to promote the increased development, purchase, and use of biobased products. Federal agencies and contractors are required to prioritize purchasing certified biobased products, and the program offers a voluntary certification and labeling initiative to help manufacturers and distributors communicate their commitment to sustainability.

SoilPro, high-quality compost produced by the IERCA from biosolids from the wastewater treatment process, can now display a unique USDA label that highlights its verified biobased content. This third-party verification, administered through the USDA BioPreferred® Program, confirms that SoilPro compost is derived from renewable organic sources and meets the rigorous standards set forth by the USDA.

"Biobased products like SoilPro compost play a vital role in addressing California's extreme weather conditions by sequestering carbon and improving soil health," said Paul Hofer, IERCA Board Vice President. "These products support the circular economy by creating renewable alternatives that are generally safer for people and the environment, while also promoting sustainable agricultural practices and soil regeneration."

The USDA Certified Biobased Product Label specifies the percentage of a product's content that is derived from renewable biological sources such as plant, animal, marine, or forestry feedstocks. According to the latest USDA Economic Impact Report, the biobased products industry supports 4.6 million American jobs, contributes \$470 billion to the U.S. economy, and creates nearly three additional jobs for every biobased job. These products also displace approximately 9.4 million barrels of oil annually and have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.7 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalents each year.

"We applaud the Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority for earning the USDA Certified Biobased Product Label," said Vernell Thompson, USDA BioPreferred Program. "The label is intended to spur economic development, create jobs, and provide new markets for farm commodities. It also helps consumers and federal buyers identify and choose environmentally responsible products. By achieving certification, IERCA joins a growing list of organizations committed to transparency, sustainability, and innovation."

"This certification affirms IERCA's commitment to producing high-quality, sustainable compost that supports our local agriculture, improves soil health, and contributes to a cleaner environment," continued Hofer. "On behalf of the

Inland Empire Utilities Agency and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, we are honored to play our part in protecting our region's resources and are proud to have the quality of our SoilPro products reinforced by such a prestigious title."

To learn more about the USDA's BioPreferred Program, visit www.biopreferred.gov.

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The Inland Empire Regional Composting Authority (IERCA) was created as a public entity on February 27, 2002, by a Joint Powers Agreement between the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) and County Sanitation Districts of LA County (LACSD). This agreement empowered both IEUA and LACSD to acquire, construct, operate and maintain the largest indoor composting facility in North America. United by a shared vision for a cleaner, more sustainable future, IERCA is dedicated to the environment by converting waste products into high-quality compost through sustainable biosolids management, benefiting partnering agencies and communities while setting a new standard for environmental stewardship. IEUA and LACSD have jointly evaluated composting as an economically and environmentally-sound method of beneficially reusing biosolids that are generated from the wastewater treatment facilities operated by each.