

Textile Exchange eNewsletter - November 17, 2011

**Vision:**

We envision a global textile industry that protects and restores the environment and enhances lives.

Mission:

Textile Exchange inspires and equips people to accelerate sustainable practices in the textile value chain. We focus on minimizing the harmful impacts and maximizing the positive effects of the global textile industry.

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Textile Exchange Members:

Email us details about your newest sustainability products or services, we'll gladly share it with the world on Facebook and Twitter. Follow us today!

**Note from LaRhea****Organic Cotton is More Alive than Ever**

I'd like to respond to the *Business Standard* Q&A: Terry P. Townsend, International Cotton Advisory Committee India can overtake China in cotton output article on November 8, 2011, which quotes Terry Townsend, executive director of the International Cotton Advisory Committee as saying, "Bt cotton has been successfully managed in India and it is a subset of biotechnology. Organic cotton production is a public relations gimmick; it is dead."



As many farmers of food and textile products know, organic is good for health, ecology, and business. Working with nature to maximize crop yield and quality, healthier waterways, biodiversity, soil fertility and moisture levels, organic farming creates a sustainable business model for our future. Organic agriculture has been shown to improve human health, food security, income diversification and gender equality. Once the transition from conventional production systems occurs, organic cotton systems generate higher yields than conventional counterparts, higher incomes, and can help farmers break the poverty cycle.

We believe that genetically modified (GM) cotton such as Bt cotton is not sustainable.

One of the primary genetic modifications is Bt cotton, which contains genes from the soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt, which kill some insects, such as the bollworm. However, research by Monsanto, one of the major producers of GM seed, shows that after several years, resistance is reduced and yields begin to fall. Pesticide use begins to rise again. The same is

proving to be true for another popular genetic modification, the 'Round-Up™ Ready" cotton seed, which allows Round Up™ to be sprayed over the entire field for weed control. This has actually increased the use of Round-Up™ from an isolated spray directed only at the weed to a spray that is applied across the entire field, and now, weed resistance to Round-Up™ is becoming an issue.

Special interest groups have tried to promote Bt cotton as a success story that has cut insecticide use and boosted productivity. Now leading entomologists, among them the acting director of India's Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR), have said the rapid adoption of GM cotton has coincided with the rise of hitherto unknown insect pests, increased need for pesticides, and declining productivity. Pesticide applications on Bt cotton have increased, significantly overtaking those on conventional cotton. Other recent findings show that pesticide costs for Bt cotton farmers were similar to non-GM growers, despite the extra expenditure the Bt farmers were making on GM seeds.

A June 2010 report from Greenpeace found that costs are almost twice as high for Bt cotton farmers than their organic counterparts. Bt farmers continue to use a large amount of chemical pesticides and suffer more pest damage. Moreover, net income from cotton was higher for organic farmers.

Although organic cotton farmers make up only a small number of the world's 200 million cotton producers, we are a growing voice. Companies such as NIKE, C&A, H&M, Otto, Williams Sonoma, Zara, Target, Patagonia and Disney are investing millions, and choosing organic cotton for their products. Unlike global production of conventional cotton, organic levels have continued to grow. In five years, production has spiked from 37,000 to 240,000 metric tons, a jump of 539 percent.

Because sustainable businesses need to be long on knowledge (instead of resources) from production to consumption, I ask that readers think about the impact organic cotton can have on their lives and the lives of those who share our planet.



Comments? Please share them with us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or send us an email at heidi@textileexchange.org.

Support Textile Exchange

As a US based nonprofit and 501(C)(3) organization, Textile Exchange is a great cause to remember when making your end of the year charitable gifts. You can also honor an outstanding colleague by giving to Textile Exchange. Make your check payable to Textile Exchange or [donate online](#) and we will send a personalized card anywhere in the world. Your tax-deductible donation supports our ongoing work towards a more sustainable textile industry.

Please mail your donations to:
Textile Exchange
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USA

Or visit TextileExchange.org to make a donation today.

Please call or email [Heather Hocker](mailto:Heather.Hocker@TextileExchange.org), Director of Development & Special Projects at +1.806.787.0948 if you have any questions. Our work is only possible with your support. Thank you for considering Textile Exchange!

Save the Date - NYC Workshop

Thursday, March 1, 2012 Textile Exchange will be in NYC hosting a ***Sustainable Apparel Workshop!*** The workshop, geared toward brands & retailers, will offer hands-on exercises for a comprehensive working knowledge of sustainability in the entire textile supply chain.

Online registration for this workshop will open in December 15; the full agenda with additional speaker, content and logistical details are online at: <http://textileexchange.org/event/sustainable-apparel-workshop-nyc-2012>.

Thanks to TE members, Arvind Denim Lab and Lenzing for making the workshop possible.



GRS Working Group



Textile Exchange is hard at work to updating the Global Recycle Standard (GRS), originally produced by Control Union. We're working with a dynamic group of professionals from brands, certifying bodies, accreditation bodies, and other groups.

We encourage everyone to look for draft sections of the new standard at: <http://textileexchange.org/content/global-recycle-standard> for updates.

If you would like more information about this process, please let us know; we would be grateful to hear your contributions. Send an email to Integrity@TextileExchange.org.

Subscribe to Engage



The Textile Exchange Farm Engagement team newsletter *Engage* is now published bimonthly. [Email Hanna](#) and subscribe to receive regular, well researched and comprehensive articles from across the organic cotton growing world. Be sure to tell Hanna if you want to receive the English, French or Spanish edition.

Past editions are online now: <http://farmhub.textileexchange.org/farm-library/newsletters>.

Knowledge Bank for Universities & Students



Textile Exchange (TE) is incredibly excited about beginning a project that will create a valuable sustainability resource for learning institutions and their students. With the help of universities and students, we will create a Knowledge Bank on Sustainability that will allow learning institutions and their students to have access to tools for success in studies involving sustainability, in projects, or in developing course curricula. [Read more here.](#)

TE Members - Half Price Website Advertising

All TE Members can now advertise on the TE homepage for half price. www.TextileExchange.org is one of the most utilized resources in the sustainable textile industry. Based on 2011 traffic numbers, the TE homepage receives nearly 7,000 unique visitors per month, with over 20,000 returning hits per month.



[Click here](#) for complete details.

Continuum Show



The Continuum Show is gearing up for its January debut, and if anyone is still interested in exhibiting at this boutique sustainability show, please contact anne@continuumtextiles.com immediately.

For more information about the show, please see www.thecontinuumshow.com.