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## **ORGANIC COTTON MARKET SEES 10% GROWTH FOLLOWING THREE YEARS OF DECLINE**

Organic Cotton Market Report, Released by Textile Exchange, Shows Promising Turnaround

June 3, 2015 --- (Lubbock, Texas) --- The organic cotton market is again growing according to the Organic Cotton Market Report, an annual study conducted by Textile Exchange, an international nonprofit organization committed to a more sustainable textile industry. The report, released today, encompasses extensive data about organic cotton from seed through finished product on a worldwide level and also takes the opportunity to celebrate those who are building a stronger organic cotton market.

The last several years have been complicated for the organic cotton industry, with three consecutive years of production decline. From 2012/13 to 2013/14 however, production was up 10%, the largest increase in four years. The turnaround can be attributed to increased market demand and improved connections between organic cotton farmers and the textile supply chain. Based on in-conversion data and farmer forecasts, Textile Exchange estimates an additional 15-20% growth in the coming year.

### **Organic Cotton Market Report**

The Organic Cotton Market Report is compiled of survey data from 57 companies across all organic cotton-producing countries. This information is gathered, vetted and best practices are shared with members of the textile industry that are looking to make more sustainable choices. The [Report Overview](#) is available for free and the entire report is free to [Textile Exchange members](#). It can be purchased on by the public for \$1,200 [here](#).

Positioned as an international learning tool, the report features the ongoing work that is happening to build dedicated supply chains including the effort to secure a reliable supply of organic cotton. The report also details organic cotton statistics for all countries under production. This includes information such as the number of farmers (male vs. female), the amount of organic cotton produced and sold in each country, and narrative about influencing elements such as weather, local politics and farmer communication.

Intended to be solution-driven, the Organic Cotton Market Report contains short case studies of companies that are creating unique solutions to incorporate more organic cotton. And in the effort to collaborate with all programs and initiatives that promote the use of more sustainable cotton, TE provides data from several other industry organizations including the Better Cotton Initiative, e3, Fairtrade, Cotton Made in Africa and Cleaner Cotton.

“As a nonprofit organization that has always been committed to organic cotton as an answer to worldwide concerns about textile industry ethics and long-term water and land sustainability, this is news to celebrate,” said La Rhea Pepper, Executive Director for Textile Exchange. “Our member organizations have come together toward a collective solution and we’re seeing the results of that enormous effort. One of the biggest shifts we’ve seen this year is that big brands are

making their sustainability strategy public and setting ambitious targets for organic – so consumers understand how their clothing fibers are grown and their clothes are made. We expect to see more of this through 2015 and beyond.”

## **Brands and Retailers**

The Organic Cotton Market Report features many overarching industry statistics that can influence future organic cotton production decisions. It also recognizes the top 10 companies by organic cotton volume. The total amount of organic cotton used by the top 10 brands has grown 25% since last year.

Top 10 Organic Cotton Users by Volume:

1. C&A
2. H&M
3. Tchibo
4. Decathlon
5. Nike
6. Carrefour
7. Target
8. Lindex
9. Inditex
10. Puma

In addition, Textile Exchange recognizes the top 10 companies in terms of their use of organic cotton over last year. Five brands are named on both the top 10 companies by volume *and* growth, including C&A, H&M, Inditex, Lindex and Tchibo. New to the report this year is the “100% Club” that lists 10 companies using *only* organic cotton in their products. The fourth league “Race to the Top” ranks 10 companies by the rate they are converting conventional to organic cotton.

## **Organic Cotton-Producing and Manufacturing Countries**

India, Bangladesh and China all saw a more than 100% increase in certified organic cotton textile facilities.

Worldwide, there was a 5% increase in land use dedicated to organic cotton growth compared to a growth of 10% in production. This variance in growth can be attributed to the majority of growth occurring amongst the higher yielding producers. India remains the leader responsible for 74% of global supply. Strong growth in Peru (56%) is in response to market demand into Peruvian textile value chains. Turkey is projecting that they will double their organic cotton production over the next three years.

## **Still Work to Do**

While much of the report shows promising data for the market, there are elements of organic cotton that still need significant improvement. The report outlines both the barriers to growth for smallholder farmers as well as the challenges that manufacturers, brands and retailers face.

Non-GMO seed supply is the leading barrier to future growth of the organic cotton market, according to Textile Exchange. Another finding that demonstrates an area for improvement is that 96.7% of the total global organic fiber is produced in the top five organic cotton-producing countries. This indicates a need to spread out production and supply chains to more countries to extend the reach of organic cotton.

In addition, brands are committed to growing their organic cotton use but supply is not able to meet that demand. This could be addressed by improved communication across the supply chain, especially with smallholder farmers, according to Textile Exchange.

Finally, the need for more data about organic cotton is significant. In the current report, TE's new preferred fibers benchmarking tool will enable companies to track their fiber usage and supply chain management which will be a significant help.

[Click here](#) for more information or to purchase the report.

#### **About Textile Exchange**

Textile Exchange (TE), founded in 2002, is a global nonprofit organization that works closely with all sectors of the textile supply chain to find the best ways to minimize and even reverse the negative impacts on water, soil, air, and the human population created by this \$1.7 trillion industry. TE accomplishes this by providing the knowledge and tools this industry needs to make significant improvements in three core areas: Materials, Integrity and Supply Chain. A truly global organization, TE is headquartered in the United States with presence also in Europe, Latin America, India, China and Africa. To learn more about Textile Exchange, visit: [www.TextileExchange.org](http://www.TextileExchange.org). Follow TE on Twitter at @TextileExchange.