

U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol – Theory of change

Mission: To bring quantifiable and verifiable goals and measurement to the key sustainability metrics of U.S. cotton production.

Vision: To set a new standard in sustainable cotton production where full transparency is a reality and continuous improvement to reduce our environmental footprint is the central goal.

Core values: A commitment to U.S. cotton’s legacy of authenticity, innovation and excellence, environmental stewardship, caring of people, and personal and corporate integrity.

Farm to Fabric

Our Theory of Change is based on **science based** measurement and feedback

Member and Stakeholder contribution

- Adopting continuous improvement measures to reduce environmental footprint on the field
- Implementing regenerative practices in cotton production
- Sharing farm data to validate progress toward quantifiable and verifiable goals
- Validating supply chain transactions by each member of the value chain
- Consumption of Protocol Equivalent Cotton by brands and retailers

Grower adoption of production principles and criteria

- Soil health
- Nutrient management
- Crop health management
- Water management
- Biodiversity
- Farm management
- Worker well-being

Trust Protocol contribution

- Measuring and validating environmental impact shared with farmers and stakeholders
- Setting and tracking progress against environmental indicators
- Facilitating supply chain transparency for U.S. cotton
- Sharing sustainable crop growing practices
- Ensuring compliance with responsible labor practices

Impacts

- Increased environmental sustainability of U.S. cotton production, in line with climate goals and the development of resilient ecosystems
- Sustainable livelihoods are maintained for growers and their communities, protecting and preserving the fields and farms for generations to come
- Securing the future of U.S. cotton by building market trust in transparent, evidence based, responsible practice

Outcomes

- Scaling sustainable agriculture and adaptation to climate change
- Worker well-being is promoted and supported
- Cotton supply chain map available to brands and retailers
- Increased consumer awareness, market reach and uptake of U.S. by brands and retailers
- Increased demand for fiber supports farmer enrollment at scale
- Greater alignment, integration and comparability of cotton sustainability programs

Outputs

- Robust field level data linked to farming practices is available for both farmer and stakeholder analysis
- Regulatory protection for worker well-being is enhanced with additional assurance
- Adoption of farm practices aligned to continuous improvement opportunities
- A transparent supply chain for cotton is demonstrated
- Collaboration across the sector to align on common definitions and measurement of cotton impact metrics and interventions
- Brands and retailers up-taking and promoting U.S. cotton as a more sustainable source

Interventions

- Engaging farmers in regular, data assured, reporting of field practices
- Obtaining farmer commitment to continuous improvement and adoption of innovative approaches
- Facilitating systemic flow of information through the value-chain
- Aligning of cotton production benchmarking and analysis with industry needs
- Engagement of all stakeholders in creating demand across the supply-chain
- Building industry awareness of environmental impact and improvement opportunities for cotton

Membership Journey