When it comes to sustainable cotton...

TRANSPARENCY MATTERS

Where you source materials matters more today than ever before.

Brands have set high standards. They demand quality, consistency, and materials that are ethical and sustainable. U.S.-grown cotton meets that high standard.
Through environmental stewardship, U.S. cotton production has used 79% less water and 54% less energy, reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 40%, all while reducing land use by 42% over the past 35 years.

The adoption of practices such as minimal tillage, GPS and sensor-driven precision agriculture, and the growing of winter cover crops have further improved soil health, reducing loss and erosion by 37% per acre and increasing soil carbon levels. With this record on sustainability, brands and retailers want to ensure what they buy is what they get.

A recent U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol survey revealed that 69% of brands and retailers believe that the pandemic has emphasized the importance of environmentally friendly products to customers - with 61% also noting that there has been an increased demand for sustainable products. Consumers want transparency about the cotton products they buy. Transparency gives shoppers complete assurance that the products they purchase are as sustainable as brands claim.

The research also found that 63% of brands and retailers stated that the pandemic has had a positive impact on their company’s proactive investment in sustainability including 42% who said they’re focused on sourcing raw materials more sustainably.

In this period of ever greater supply chain scrutiny and a growing demand for transparency, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is a system for more responsibly grown cotton that underpins and verifies sustainability progress through sophisticated data collection and independent third-party verification that provides members better transparency about the cotton entering their supply chain. The system is committed to six areas of sustainability in line with the U.N. Sustainability Development Goals including water use, greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, soil carbon and land-use efficiency.

The Trust Protocol provides the transparency necessary to provide members the critical assurances they need about the cotton entering their supply chain.”
“For sustainability to be meaningful, we understand that the textile supply chain must demonstrate continuous improvement and data collection throughout the entire process.”

...said Dr. Gary Adams, President of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. “The Trust Protocol provides the transparency necessary to provide members the critical assurances they need about the cotton entering their supply chain.”

Trust Protocol members will have access to aggregate sustainability metrics based on self-assessment questionnaires of participating growers. In addition, members will receive customized reporting based on national environmental metrics for key sustainability indicators. Longer term, as enrollment in the Trust Protocol grows with multiple years of data, aggregate, year over year Fieldprint data derived from Trust Protocol grower members can be provided to member companies.

This data-based approach, backed up by independent, third-party verification from Control Union Certifications North America, gives brands and retailers the critical assurances that the cotton fiber element of their supply chain is more sustainably grown.

Trust Protocol can provide full transparency from the farm to the laydown, a group of bales that mills process simultaneously. The U.S. cotton industry requires a unique identification number assigned to every bale of cotton. That Permanent Bale Identification (PBI) number provides retailers and brands with the ability to trace U.S. cotton throughout the supply chain.

The Trust Protocol has welcomed over 300 brand, retailer, mill and manufacturer members since it opened enrollment six months ago. This includes Gap Inc. and its purpose-led lifestyle brands Old Navy, Gap, Banana Republic and Athleta as well as UK retailers Next Plc. and Byford. The Trust Protocol also has welcomed its first U.S. mills, its first members in Latin America, and Advance Denim, one of China’s top three denim manufacturers.

“Our members want confidence knowing that the cotton they buy is more sustainable,” said Adams. “That’s why we created a unique system for our standard to help ensure the commitments behind our cotton.”

It is central to the Trust Protocol’s purpose to give its members the ability to source confidently by providing critical assurances about the origins of their cotton. It’s one of the only cotton initiatives that has agreed to measurable, third-party verified sustainability targets, which means more responsible production and consumption. It lets brands, business and consumers trust in the cotton they buy, sell and wear for today and tomorrow.

Become a member today at TrustUSCotton.org