

CLAIMS FRAMEWORK



U.S. COTTON
TRUST PROTOCOL®

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DEFINITIONS

Aggregator: Supply chain entities, typically cotton merchants, cooperatives or gins, that assist the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol in the administration of the program, including but not limited to the recruitment and enrollment of participating growers, completion of growers' submissions, 2nd-party verifications and the intake of Protocol Verified Cotton volumes.

Data Aggregation: Process of compiling and analyzing a large amount of information and reporting it in a summary format.

Blockchain: Digital database containing information that can be simultaneously used and shared within a large decentralized publicly accessible network.

Protocol Claims: Refers to all marketing and/or communication content that is published externally or internally but which describes a Trust Protocol member's participation or activities related to their participation in the Trust Protocol.

- All Trust Protocol Claims are governed under the rules as established and communicated in the Trust Protocol Claims Framework and are subject to review and approval by the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol in all instances.

Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS): Defined as the technology solutions that record and track the movement of Trust Protocol cotton from participating growers' operations through brand and retailer member supply chains to their finished products.

Protocol Equivalent Cotton (PEC): Defined as any U.S. Cotton fiber that is recorded in the PCMS

Protocol Verified Cotton (PVC): Defined as U.S. cotton fiber grown and harvested on a verified Trust Protocol grower member's farm and recorded in the PCMS as PVC

Protocol Cotton fiber: Defined as both PEC and PVC fiber

Protocol Cotton Consumption Unit: (PCCU):

Defined as the digital representation of each kg of PVC to which a representative environmental metric value is assigned. Claimable by brand and retailer members in volumes equivalent to their consumption of Trust Protocol cotton fiber in their finished products as recorded in the PCMS in any given Trust Protocol Year.

Protocol Cotton Year: Defined as the operating fiscal year under which the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol operates and running from August 1st in any calendar year to July 31st in the following calendar year

Protocol-eligible materials: Defined as any material, including finished product (apparel or home textiles) or any intermediary products (yarns, greige fabrics and finished fabrics) that are recorded in the PCMS and have consumed Protocol Cotton fiber. Protocol-eligible finished products are eligible for brand and retailer members to initiate claims for PCCU's in an equivalent volume to the Protocol Cotton fiber consumed to produce said finished products.

Protocol Cotton Consumption Unit Volumes:

The total Volume of Protocol Cotton Consumption Units, for any given Trust Protocol year, shall equal the total volume of Protocol Cotton fiber certified under the requirements of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol.

- Brand and retailer members can submit claims for Protocol Cotton Consumption Units equivalent in volume to the amount of Trust Protocol cotton consumed in the production of the products against which they are making the claim.

Representative group: Indicates different data source but is comparable to the Trust Protocol due to similar calculation methodology.

01: INTRO- DUCTION

U. S. COTTON TRUST PROTOCOL – OVERVIEW

The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is a voluntary, farm level science-based sustainability program that is setting a new standard for delivering value to all stakeholders across the entire supply chain from farm to finished products.

The Trust Protocol is built on a foundation of robust data capture, aggregation and reporting that drives continuous improvement across six key sustainability metrics; Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Irrigated Water Use, Soil Conservation, Energy Use, Soil Carbon and Land Use Efficiency. The Trust Protocol integrates these sustainability metrics from Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform, enabling enrolled growers to measure the environmental impacts of their operation and identify opportunities for continuous improvement, while empowering brands and retailers to report on aggregate sustainability data which is verified by Control Union Certifications to verify their production, participating U.S. cotton farmers (Trust Protocol grower members) are required to; a) complete a comprehensive

self-assessment questionnaire that captures the practices they have adopted on their farms, b) submit specific values after their harvest into the Field to Market™ Fieldprint Calculator and c) sign a Certificate of Commitment. Each Trust Protocol grower member receives a scorecard of their performance and a comparison to regional and national benchmarks, as well as a report that highlights the practices they could further adopt to improve their sustainability outcomes.

The Trust Protocol aggregates all certified Trust Protocol grower member data and reports annually against the same six environmental metrics, providing a detailed representation of the program's results. This data will also be available in various formats to Trust Protocol members, depending on their membership type and consumption of Protocol Cotton Consumption Units.

Learn more about the Trust Protocol program [here](#).



This document

This document is designed to govern and provide guidance to all members of the Trust Protocol when communicating their commitment to the Trust Protocol mission and vision, their participation, and any results stemming from their involvement in the program.

This framework is designed to ensure that only verified, honest and credible Trust Protocol Claims are made, protecting the reputations of all parties involved but also creating strong tools that will enable robust story-telling and communications around the Trust Protocol.

Claims Framework Version 1.0 is predominantly intended to support business to business (B2B) communications. As the Trust Protocol program matures, greater depth and breadth of customer facing (B2C) claims will be made available.

Suggested channels for communication:

Company website and sustainability/CSR pages, Investor and stakeholder communications, Internal employee communications and employee training, Intranet, Social media, Press opportunities, Speaking engagements, CSR Reports.

Suggested audiences:

Employees, Consumers, NGOs, Investors, Governmental Agencies, Board of Directors, Business partners and Suppliers.



How it works

The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol Claims Framework relies on a building block principle which all starts with membership in the program. Protocol Claims of some form are available to all members, with enhanced claims accessible to brand and retail members consuming Protocol Cotton Consumption Units through the program.

Once enrolled and on-boarded into the Trust Protocol, brand and retail members can access a wide variety of verified data related to environmental outcomes of the Protocol and enhanced supply chain transparency. With access to this data, brand and retailer members can more credibly and effectively communicate to their various stakeholders the environmental outcomes associated with their consumed Protocol Cotton, enhanced visibility into their supply chains, their commitment to sustainable practices and products, and their company's alignment with the core principles of the Trust Protocol.



Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS)

The Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS) harnesses blockchain and other digital technologies to record and verify the movement of Trust Protocol Cotton along the entire supply chain, validating for brands and retailers their consumption of Trust Protocol cotton across their entire supply chains and into their finished products. Using the PCMS, brands and retailers can claim data-backed, verified Trust Protocol Cotton Consumption Units based on their consumption of Trust Protocol cotton, which in turn will enable brands and retailers to access enhanced Trust Protocol Claims as the program matures.

Read more about our how our consumption solution works [here](#).



02: HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

A. CLAIM CATEGORIES

General statements

Everyone can use, no membership requirement

Participation claims

All members can use

**Program outcome claims
customer facing claims**

Brand and Retail members consuming Protocol
Fiber (PCCUs) can use

**Volume related impact claims
on product claims**

Not currently available

General statements are publicly available, and are intended to support all stakeholders in describing or making reference to U.S. cotton, and to add context to communications about the Trust Protocol program and practices. Use of these statements does not require Trust Protocol membership.

Participation claims are specific to your category of membership, and are intended to support members in communicating their participation in, and commitment to, the Trust Protocol program.

Program outcome claims are intended to be used to describe the overall program achievements and to reference progress against specific environmental indicators. Making a program outcome claim associates a member's participation with program outcomes, and can only be used by brand and retail members actively consuming Protocol Cotton Consumption Units. Ahead of making a program outcome claim, members must have publicly communicated their participation.

Customer facing claims are claims that are intended to support customer (consumer) facing communication about the Trust Protocol and a member's participation in it through brand and retailer marketing and social media channels, and can only be used by brand and retail members actively consuming Trust Protocol fiber (PCCUs). Ahead of making a customer facing claim, members must have publicly communicated their participation.

Volume-related impact claims are claims that relate a member's specific, volume related, participation in the Trust Protocol program to specific (numeric) outcomes. These claims will become available to Brand-Retail members actively consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs) as the program matures.

On-product claims are claims attached physically or visually to an individual product, for example the use of the Trust Protocol on a label or any web copy implying that the product has been sourced through the Trust Protocol program or from a Trust Protocol farm origin. These claims will become available to Brand-Retail members actively consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs) as the program matures.



B. CLAIMS APPROVAL PROCESS

Members should notify the secretariat of their intention to make public claims, by email to your Trust Protocol account manager. The request should detail:

- The nature of the claim, working within the guidance of this framework
- When it will be used
- Where it will be used - marketing or communication setting, intended audience, geographical reach, connection to any communications campaign
- Any variation to the framework guidance and associated need/rationale

The Trust Protocol secretariat will respond to claims approval requests within 5 working days and reserves the right to:

- Reject claims that do not align to the guidance and program principles
- Make spot checks to ensure claims are executed as planned
- Withdraw claims at any time, in order to protect program and organizational reputation.

C. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DILIGENCE

As a condition of membership and use of the Trust Protocol's PCMS, members must follow all applicable laws, including but not necessarily limited to any representations and claims they make concerning their membership and their use of Trust Protocol cotton. The Trust Protocol does not provide legal advice or counsel to members concerning their compliance with applicable law in the jurisdictions in which they operate, and nothing in this Trust Protocol Claims Framework is intended to serve as nor should be relied upon as providing legal advice or guidance. Members must apply their own due diligence in ensuring

that any claims they make comply with all applicable laws in their particular markets and in the context in which they want to use them, and remain so following language translation.

Please note the Trust Protocol does not link the source of any particular volume of U.S. cotton to a Trust Protocol participating farm. Members should not represent or otherwise imply that the physical cotton in a product has come from a specific Trust Protocol farm.

Members making claims are responsible for verifying that such claims satisfy all applicable laws, including the marketing and labeling laws of the country(ies) in which the relevant products will be available for use or sale.

Example of relevant guidance includes (but are not limited to):

International:

[ISO 14020, ISO 14021, ISO 14024, ISO 14025](#)

U.S.:

[Federal Trade Commission's, 16CFR Part 260, "Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims \(Green Guides\)", 2012](#)

[Federal Trade Commission, 16CFR Part 255, "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising," 2020](#)

[U.S. Textile Fiber Productions Identification Act](#)

EU:

[Guidance on the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive \(environmental claims\), 2017](#)

[Regulation 1007/2011 on Textile names and related marking of the fibre composition of textile goods](#)

UK:

[Green Claims Code, 2021](#)

[The Textile Products \(Labelling and Fibre Composition\) Regulations 2012](#)

Use of data

Brand and retail members applying volume data to their claims must first validate their consumption of Trust Protocol Cotton as recorded in the PCMS against the relevant time frame.

Avoiding misleading claims

By adhering to the approval process, members can be better equipped to make sound claims about the Trust Protocol program and its impacts. Claims should not be disproportionate to member use of U.S. cotton or participation in the program through consumption of Trust Protocol eligible fiber.

Right to withdraw

U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol reserves the right to refuse permission, or to withdraw permission that has already been given, for any claim relating to the program, at any time, in order to protect program and organizational reputation from misrepresentation, misleading or inaccurate claims.

Monitoring

The Trust Protocol Secretariat will monitor the use of member claims in the public domain. False or misleading representations or claims would violate the Trust Protocol's Code of Conduct and, depending on the circumstances of the violation, could warrant termination of membership. A violation of any applicable laws would also warrant termination of membership.

Any member observing an inappropriate representation of the Trust Protocol in the public domain is encouraged to report it to the Secretariat in order that action can be taken to correct it.

D. BRANDING AND LOGO

The Trust Protocol logo maybe applied alongside approved communication claims. A summary is included here, please refer to the Trust Protocol Brand Guidelines provided to all members for full detail.

Primary logo



Logo without tagline



Logomark



Our **primary logo** features the logomark, wordmark and tagline.

The **logo without tagline** is especially useful when reproduced at small sizes or where the tagline text is used prominently elsewhere in a layout.

The **logomark** can be used on its own as a supporting graphic element and as a profile image for social channels.

The **consumer logo** is under further development and will be updated in future versions of this document – refer to your account manager for support in the interim.



03: COMMUNI- CATING

ABOUT **U.S. COTTON** AND
THE **U.S. COTTON**
TRUST PROTOCOL



A. GENERAL STATEMENTS ABOUT U.S. COTTON

These statements are publicly available, and are intended to support all stakeholders in describing or making reference to U.S. cotton, to add context to communications about the Trust Protocol program. Use of these statements does not require Trust Protocol membership.

Example statements

- Cotton grown in the U.S. uses innovative seed varieties scientifically developed for increased efficiency, amongst other aspects that contribute to sustainable agriculture and climate resilience.
- U.S. cotton has a 35-year history of reducing environmental impacts. Reductions in impacts in the U.S. are driven by adoption of precision agriculture technology and advanced analytics that improve yield and fiber quality. Further adoption of technology and best practices will continue to improve cotton production and help meet the 10-year sustainability goals.
- U.S. cotton production is governed by a strict national regulatory system. Environmental and workplace regulations are enforced by federal and state agencies, and the penalties for non-compliance are both civil and criminal.
- Every bale of U.S. cotton has its own Permanent Bale Identification (PBI) tag. As each bale goes through the ginning and classing process, this tag goes along with it, enabling the tracking of where, when and how it was harvested, ginned and classed. The latest computer classing technology is used to make sure every bale of U.S. cotton is fairly and correctly classed, ensuring uniformity and consistency within classes.

Refer to further public sources of information on U.S. cotton and on [worker well-being](#).

Refer to further public sources of information on U.S. cotton production in the Field to Market: Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture [National Indicators Report](#).

B. STATEMENTS ABOUT THE TRUST PROTOCOL PROGRAM

I. Describing the program

These statements are intended to support members and stakeholders in describing or making reference to the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol program. Use of these statements does not require Trust Protocol membership.

Example statements

- The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol sets a new standard that brings quantifiable and verifiable goals and measurement to more sustainable cotton production that drives continuous improvement in key sustainability metrics.
- Trust Protocol grower members are committed to continuously reducing their environmental footprint, including water usage, soil diversity and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Launched in 2020, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is a farm level, science-based program recognized by Textile Exchange as a source of preferred fiber that supports the Cotton 2025 Sustainable Cotton Challenge.
- The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol integrates the sustainability metrics of Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform, enabling enrolled producers to measure the environmental impacts of their operation and identify opportunities for continuous improvement, while empowering brands and retailers to report on aggregate sustainability data which is verified by Control Union Certifications.
- The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, through its digitally enabled solution, tracks cotton supply chain orders and inventories from yarn spinning to finished goods, ensuring only Trust Protocol eligible materials are used. Supply chain transactions are assured through double verification, providing authentication of U.S. cotton origin.

- The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol delivers full supply-chain transparency – from finished goods back to bales of U.S. cotton lint - by collecting transaction and production data directly from each organization involved in the end-to-end process. The data are collected and stored in the Protocol Consumption Management Solution and verified against the USDA/AMS database.

ii. Describing the on-farm practices

These statements describe the on-farm practices that support positive environmental outcomes in line with the Trust Protocol impact indicators.

Example statements

- Trust Protocol growers deploy a range of farm management practises shown to reduce **greenhouse gas emissions** including reduced tillage, reduced use of plant nutrients, energy efficient harvesting and drying, and conservation agriculture.
- Trust Protocol growers deploy a range of farm management practices shown to improve **energy efficiency** across a range of activities including crop applications, irrigation, drying and transportation.
- The Trust Protocol helps growers to increase **water use efficiency** by providing evidence based analysis on how their local conditions and farm management practices are impacting water use. By promoting water use efficiency opportunities relevant to the specific crop type, climate conditions, economic conditions, and regional water management rules enables growers are able to prioritize the practises that will have the greatest impact on increasing their water use efficiency.
- The Trust Protocol supports growers to reduce **soil loss** by providing evidence based analysis on how their local conditions and farm management practices are impacting soil conservation. By promoting soil conservation opportunities relevant to the specific crop type, soil type, crop applications, irrigation system and local climate conditions growers are able to prioritize the practises that will have the greatest impact on reducing soil loss.
- The Trust Protocol supports growers to increase **soil carbon**, an important indicator linked to water filtration, water and nutrient holding, crop productivity and carbon storage. Providing evidence based analysis on the grower's adoption of conservation practices, use of cover crops, tillage and crop rotation, and the resulting impact on soil carbon, all contribute to the growers ability to improve soil carbon year on year.
- The Trust Protocol supports growers to maximize **land use efficiency**, ensuring the greatest production output (or yield) on the minimum area of land. Providing evidence based analysis on the factors contributing to yield, including plant genetics, crop management practices and environmental factors like temperature, radiation, humidity, water availability all support the grower in making decisions that enhance their land use efficiency.

Further resources

Visit [our website](#) for further resources on the program detail, including principles & criteria for farmers.



04: CLAIMS

A. MEMBER PARTICIPATION CLAIMS

These claims are specific to your category of membership, and are intended to support members in communicating their participation in, and commitment to, the program.

i. Brands and retailers

- As a member of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol [Name] is committed to helping set a new standard in more sustainable cotton production by building full transparency of our cotton supply chain and supporting best practice in cotton production.
- [Name] participates in the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol in order to achieve our materials sourcing goal(s) – supporting growers that are committed to continuous improvement in line with climate science.

ii. Brands and Retailers consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs)

- [Name] is committed to reducing cotton production impacts and is using measurable and verified data from the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol to demonstrate improved sustainability outcomes in line with our goals.
- [Name] is committed to sourcing [X] % (or Y tonnes) of our cotton through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol by [date] as part of our commitment to the continuous reduction in the environmental impacts of our products.
- [NAME] has achieved article-level transparency across the supply chain for U.S. Cotton by leveraging the Trust Protocol Platform and the TextileGenesis platform.

- By sourcing U.S. cotton through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol [NAME] is building transparency of our value chain from yarn production to finished products, ensuring we can accurately report the total volume of U.S. cotton used in our products and communicate authentically about its environmental impact.

iii. Mills and manufacturers

- As a member of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol [Name] is committed to helping set a new standard in more sustainable cotton production by building full transparency of our cotton supply chain and supporting best practice in cotton production.
- [Name] participates in the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol in order to support industry goals on more sustainable materials – supporting farmers that are committed to continuous improvement in line with climate science.
- [Name] partners with our suppliers to source U.S. cotton through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol as part of our commitment to positively influencing the environmental impacts of our products (or services).

iv. Aggregators

- Through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, [NAME] can secure a stable supply of responsibly grown cotton to support the fashion and textile industries in meeting their corporate environmental and social responsibility goals.
- As aggregators, [NAME] encourages our growers to partner with us in the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol and the journey to continuous improvement. By adopting the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol principles, we can secure a more resilient cotton supply in a changing climate and meet future market demands.

v. Growers

- As growers we know how important sustainability is in cotton production, and the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is providing growers like me the opportunity to share with consumers, brands and retailers how we grow cotton more sustainably.
- I am proud to be among the first growers to commit to the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, which sets a standard for responsibly grown cotton. I am using the tools and insights provided by the Trust Protocol to ensure our farm is supporting the national goals and science-based targets.
- With the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol I can track, record, and verify our farming system is continuously improving while seeking novel approaches to improve on our efforts in responsible growing practice.
- Like other U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol growers, I am applying a range of practices across my farm to ensure my crop is grown responsibly, for instance rotating cotton with other crops.

vi. Supporters

(any members not participating in the Trust Protocol value chain, including donors, foundations, investors, non-consuming brands)

- [Name], as a supporter of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is committed to a smarter future for cotton, enabling full transparency of the cotton supply chain and supporting best practice in cotton production.
- [Name], as a supporter of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol is committed to helping growers adopt the principles and continuous improvement practices of the Trust Protocol to increase soil health and carbon storage, increase biodiversity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Like other U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol growers, I am applying a range of practices across my farm to ensure my crop is grown responsibly, for instance rotating cotton with other crops.

B. PROGRAM OUTCOME CLAIMS

Program outcome claims are intended to be used to describe the overall program achievements and to reference progress against specific environmental indicators. Making a program outcome claim associates a member's participation with program outcomes, and can only be used by brand and retail members actively consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs). Ahead of making a program outcome claim, members must have publicly communicated their participation.

These claims are available to brand and retailer members consuming PCCUs

Where to obtain the latest program results

The annual report is published to Trust Protocol members, with aggregated program results available to all members and additional impact insights provided to brand and retailer members consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs). The report details data collection and analysis, the baseline or reference point for comparison and detailed explanation of the results.

Example claims

- In [2020] a total of [300] growers participated in the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol program, delivering [360,000 tonnes or 1.6m bales] of Trust Protocol verified fiber to market, which is [10%] of total U.S. cotton production. The program aim is to triple this achievement in 2021 and scale to 50% of U.S. cotton production by 2025.
- As a member of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, which aims to set a new standard in more sustainable cotton production, we are proud that growers in the [2020] program achieved an aggregate;
 - A % water efficiency improvement
 - B % GHG emissions reduction
 - C % energy use reduction
 - D % soil conservation improvement
 - E % land use efficiency improvement

Compared to a 2015 representative group¹

- iii. With the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, which integrates sustainability metrics from Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform, we are now able to monitor and track sustainability improvements and inform our understanding of a range of cotton production metrics, including greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. cotton industry aims to reduce greenhouse gases for each kilogram of cotton by 39% by 2025, versus a 2015 baseline, which is aligned with [NAME's] (goals/targets/SBTs) to reduce emissions by [X% by 20XX].
- iv. With the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, and sustainability metrics from Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform, we now have year-on-year data to show progress against several cotton production metrics, including energy use. The Trust Protocol measures the U.S. cotton industry's efforts to reduce the energy used to produce each kilogram of U.S. cotton by 15% by 2025, which supports [NAME]'s target to reduce energy usage by [insert goal].
- v. Continuous improvement of our water footprint is important to [NAME], which is why we have decided to source more sustainable fiber through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. Water is a precious resource and our Trust Protocol growers use precision irrigation techniques to minimize the amount of water used. The Trust Protocol supports efforts to reduce the water used to grow each bale of U.S. cotton by 18% by 2025 versus a 2015 representative group and verifies U.S. cotton's sustainability progress through yearly data tracking.
- vi. Protecting the soil for future generations is important to [NAME]. Conserving soil is a critical element of sustainable agriculture, helping to improve water ecosystems and biodiversity. On a yearly basis, U.S. Trust Protocol growers document and monitor their growing practices through integration of sustainability metrics from Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform. [NAME] is proud to support U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol growers in their efforts to improve soil health

and their ambitious goal of 50% reduction in soil erosion – meaning no net soil loss by 2025.

- vii. Cotton is a key raw material for [NAME] which is why we have decided to source more sustainable fiber through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. The Trust Protocol tracks practices that U.S. cotton growers use to increase the amount of carbon stored in the soil. Increased soil carbon leads to healthier soil and less carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and can help to reduce global climate change. The Trust Protocol integrates sustainability metrics from Field to Market's Fieldprint® Platform to provide us with important annualized data on soil carbon and other metrics that align with our commitments towards continuous climate impact improvements.
- viii. Efficient land use is a priority for [NAME], which is why we are sourcing cotton through the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. As part of our more sustainable fiber sourcing strategy we are supporting U.S. cotton growers in their work to reduce the land needed to produce a bale of cotton by 13% by 2025.

Guidance on using and comparing environmental impact data:

Lifecycle Assessment (LCA): The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol recognizes the Global Cotton Life Cycle Assessment, Cotton Incorporated 2017 as the most recent and relevant source of LCA data for cotton. The study was conducted according to the principles of the ISO 14040 standard, with critical review. LCAs from different analysts and studies should not generally be compared due to inconsistencies in goal, scope, system boundaries, methodologies, data quality and other factors. Read more about life cycle assessment for cotton [here](#).

International alignment: Whilst comparing cotton impact data from different sources and production systems is complex, the Trust Protocol is committed to collaborating with expert groups to align on environmental indicators, reference data and modeling for cotton.

¹ Refer to most recent Impact Report for full detail on the baseline

The Trust Protocol collaborates on this work through active participation in the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, the Textile Exchange, Cotton 2040 initiative, and others – sharing data and expertise from U.S. cotton production to support better understanding of cotton production globally.

Global goals: The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol program supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals, read more about our contribution to the SDGs [here](#).

The Trust Protocol does not support comparative LCA based impact claims that do not follow the best available science and [ISO LCA](#) standards, to avoid inappropriate use of data or misleading sustainability statements.

C. CUSTOMER FACING CLAIMS

Customer facing claims are claims are intended to support consumer (consumer) facing communication about the Trust Protocol and a member's participation in it through brand and retailer marketing and social media channels, and can only be used by brand and retail members actively consuming Protocol Fiber (PCCUs). Ahead of making a customer facing claim, members must have publicly communicated their participation.

These claims are intended to support consumer facing communication through brand and retailer marketing, e-commerce (banner ads) and social media channels.

Please note the Trust Protocol does not link the source of any particular volume of U.S. cotton to a Trust Protocol participating farm. Members should not represent or otherwise imply that the physical cotton in a specific product has come from a specific Trust Protocol farm.

Customer facing claims may not be applied within a product description on an e-commerce site, POS in physical retail locations (stores), hang tags or physical labels applied to product.

Example claims available to Brand & Retailer members consuming PCCUs

- We understand that the choices we make today impact the world that we are creating for tomorrow. One of those choices is in the clothes we buy and wear for ourselves and for our families.
- When you choose cotton products from [brand] – whether it's t-shirts, towels, dresses or dress shirts – you can feel confident that you are choosing fabric grown by family farms in the U.S. who are committed to improving the sustainability of your product.
- That's because [brand] buys U.S. cotton verified by the Trust Protocol. With Trust Protocol cotton, growers are committed to reducing their environmental footprint, including water usage, soil diversity and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Thanks to Trust Protocol growers, the cotton you buy and wear is more sustainably grown, high quality and feels great.

To support customers in understanding the Trust Protocol, it is good practice to include a link or URL for them to follow for further information: <https://trustuscotton.org/>

Refer to section 2 of this document for Trust Protocol logo use and brand guidelines.

