Aggregator's Guide

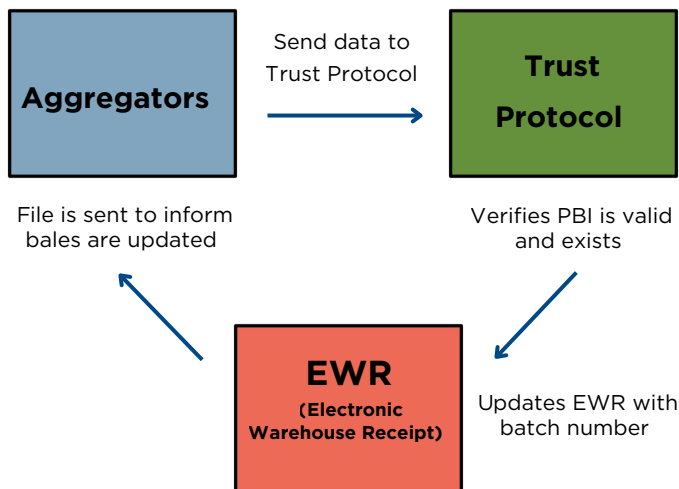## By: The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol

December 2025
Contact: info@TrustUSCotton.org

Trust Protocol Aggregator's Guide

This document provides general process guidance to Trust Protocol Aggregators (merchants, gins, and cooperatives) that register bales and send fiber shipment files to yarn spinners in the Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS). It also defines the proper terminology to be used in all transactions for fiber identification.

Creating Protocol Cotton

1. U.S. cotton grower enrolls in the Protocol Platform.
2. U.S. cotton grower completes all required steps for enrollment.
3. Protocol Cotton is ginned and PBI (Permanent Bale Identification) is assigned to the bales.
4. PBI's uploaded into the Protocol Platform by aggregators.
5. USDA validation completed for PBI's.

Uploading Protocol Cotton - Options

1. **Manual Upload** – via .txt file from aggregator's account in Protocol Platform.
2. **FTP Interface** – into the Protocol Platform.
3. **Automatic Upload via Gin Software (Cotton Host)** – for Trust Protocol member gin:
   a. Protocol Profile ID saved in gin software.
   b. Bale information sent to the Protocol Platform.
4. **Semi-Automatic Upload via Gin Software:**
   a. .txt file generated in software for the grower.
   b. File sent manually into Protocol Platform.

Aggregators — Send data to Trust Protocol → **Trust Protocol**

File is sent to inform bales are updated

Verifies PBI is valid and exists

EWR (Electronic Warehouse Receipt)

Updates EWR with batch number

Example of Electronic Warehouse Receipt to identify a Protocol Bale (V)

Grower Info:
Ginning Charges: 0.0000
Paper Receipt Number: 0
Is Reissue:
World Container Lot ID: 0
Container Status:
Is Electronic: Yes
Trust Protocol Flag: V

U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol bale upload format

Field Name	Start Position	Length	Description
Producer Profile ID	1	8	The producer's 8-character Protocol Profile ID. This can be found on the first page of the producer's enrollment packet, as well as the list of producers available within the application.
Gin Code	9	5	The 5-digit USDA gin code.
Gin Tag	14	7	The tag number assigned to the bale by the gin.
Crop Year	21	4	The crop year in which the bale was ginned. Only bales from the current crop year, or two years prior, will be accepted.
Weight	25	3	The weight of the bale, in pounds. Must be less than 1,000 pounds.

Uploading Shipments Guide
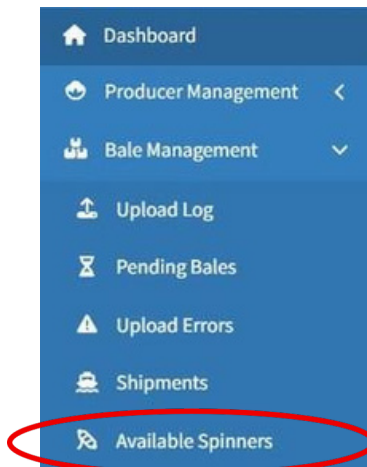
U.S. COTTON TRUST PROTOCOL®

Aggregator Members have the ability to send shipment files to mill and manufacturer members of the Trust Protocol to document the movement of fiber through the supply chain.

Two types of fiber can be uploaded onto the Protocol Platform:

1. **Tracked U.S. Cotton** – Any U.S. Cotton fiber that is recorded in the Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS), which is distinct from Protocol Cotton.

2. **Protocol Cotton** – Defined as fiber grown and harvested in a qualified Protocol Grower's farm and recorded in the PCMS as Protocol Cotton.

An aggregator can upload shipment files to mill and manufacturer members of the Trust Protocol that contain **Tracked U.S. Cotton, Protocol Cotton,** or a combination of both.

Aggregator dashboard

- Dashboard
- Producer Management
- Bale Management
  - Upload Log
  - Pending Bales
  - Upload Errors
  - Shipments
  - Available Spinners

- A shipment file sent to a mill or manufacturer member can only be uploaded to an approved member of the Trust Protocol who has also registered an account with Textile Genesis. The mill or manufacturer members meeting these criteria can be found on the dashboard under Bale Management > Available Spinners.

- A shipment file uploaded to a mill member must contain the Spinner ID (8-digit Protocol ID). Under "Available Spinners," the parent company ID will be used for every shipment upload. If the subsidiary company site is the buyer for the parent company, the shipment .txt file upload must be sent using the parent company's Spinner ID.

U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol fiber shipment upload format

Field Name	Start Position	Length	Description
Spinner Profile ID	1	8	The 8-character Protocol Identifier for the recipient spinning mill.
Gin Code	9	5	The 5-digit USDA gin code.
Gin Tag	14	7	The tag number assigned to the bale by the gin.
Crop Year	21	4	The crop year in which the bale was ginned.
Weight	25	3	The weight of the bale, in pounds. Must be less than 1,000 pounds.

Contract Guidance – Proper Terminology for Fiber Identification

The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol encourages all members to use standard terminology when referring to the two fibers tracked and offered through our program. Using consistent terminology in all quotes, contracts, and documentation helps ensure clarity between members and their customers and prevents discrepancies in later stages of the supply chain and import processes.

When including cotton tracked via the Protocol Consumption Management Solution (PCMS) in your communications or agreements, please ensure the fiber type is correctly labeled using the following standard terminology:

Tracked U.S. Cotton. Any U.S. Cotton fiber that is recorded in the PCMS, which is distinct from Protocol Cotton.

Protocol Cotton. Defined as fiber grown and harvested on a qualified Protocol Grower's farm and recorded in the PCMS as Protocol Cotton.

All Shipments of fibers sold with **Protocol Cotton** and/or **Tracked U.S. Cotton** claims shall be labeled with identification that clearly links them to the relevant invoices or shipping documents. Both fiber types are digitally tracked in the system with documentation meant to reflect what is physically being shipped.

To maintain consistency and integrity in the marketplace, we strongly discourage the use of alternative or non-standard terminology in contracts, invoices, or communications. Examples of consistent and inconsistent terminology listed below:

Consistent Terms

- **Tracked U.S. Cotton**
- **Protocol Cotton**

Inconsistent Terms

- **Protocol Eligible Cotton**
- **Protocol Verified Cotton**
- **Non-Verified USCTP**
- **USCTP Raw Cotton**
- **U.S. Cotton credits to be transferred by merchant to the buyer's USCTP account**

*Not meant to be an exhaustive list