

SUSTAINABLE TEXTILES – PART XVII

REF: TT/ AUG 2022/ WK 4

Fairtrade cotton

Fairtrade is an innovative model of responsible business and shared value to eliminate poverty and enable sustainable development for farmers, workers, their families, and communities around the world.

Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers. By requiring companies to pay sustainable prices, Fairtrade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the poorest, weakest producers. It enables them to improve their position and have more control over their lives. Fair Trade empowers people in the poorest communities of the world to work their way out of poverty and look forward to a more positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Fairtrade is to increase standards of living and reduce risk of both farmers and workers. The Fairtrade minimum price provides safety to the farmers, reducing their vulnerability to price fluctuations. Fairtrade encourages sustainable cotton production and is the only standard to provide economic benefits, through a guaranteed Fairtrade Minimum Price and additional Fairtrade Premium for seed cotton farmers.

Many workers in the textile industry earn below living wage level, which would not allow running the house themselves decently. The Fairtrade Textile Standard requires that workers are paid living wages.

Textile workers are often kept from organizing collectively or unaware of their legal rights. The Fairtrade Textile Standard includes criteria for training workers on their rights, democratic representation in the company, internal communication and complaints management.

Certified textile facilities must have a compliance committee of elected worker representatives in place. The idea is that workers can play an active part in standard implementation, audits, and risk assessments and share the results their fellow workers. This way, the company's positions are transparent for everyone.

Safety continues to be a challenge in fashion industry. The Fairtrade Textile Standard sets criteria for safe workplaces and buildings, as well as for the use of protective equipment and safe handling of chemicals. It also specifies which chemicals to avoid and how to dispose of them in an environmentally



friendly way. Excessive overtime is a well-known issue in the sector which compromises workers' safety and their ability to rest. Under the Fairtrade Textile Standard, working hours are regulated, and so are employment contracts and temporary work.

Fairtrade works with the small-scale cotton farmers and helps build stronger farmer-owned organizations. This is important because farmers can achieve a lot more together as a group in negotiations with ginneries and traders or in supporting the local community. Through Fairtrade, cotton farmers can have improved their lives. Cotton co-operatives have become better organized, farmers are more productive and women farmers are receiving the same rewards as male farmers, from voting rights to equal pay.

Fairtrade works with farmers who have formed small producer organizations, as well as contract production organizations in the process of forming independent cooperatives. Fairtrade encourages and empowers cotton farmers to protect the natural environment as an integral part of their farm management. Cotton production is linked to several environmental issues such as extensive usage of chemicals and excessive use of water put fresh water supplies for local populations at risk. Unpredictable weather conditions also endanger the livelihoods of small-scale farmers.

Fairtrade works with farmers to stop or reduce the usage of chemicals and supports them to adapt to changing climate patterns. Fairtrade cotton fields are rain-fed, reducing the region's water footprint.

Requirements in the Fairtrade Standards also protect farmers' health and safety, and ban genetically modified cotton seeds.

BETTER COTTON INITIATIVES (BCI)	FAIRTRADE COTTON
BCI aims to improve farmers' outcomes by educating around water and pesticide use, and by promoting soil and biodiversity conservation. It aims to improve the quality of the cotton fiber and to provide minimum standards of work for farmers and their workers. It does not have a price premium for farmers.	Fairtrade cotton is sold by farmers at a guaranteed minimum price and with an additional premium for investment in community development projects, such as drilling wells and building schools. The key benefits of Fairtrade cotton are that farmers receive incomes calibrated to the cost of production and that cotton farming communities are funded and supported to implement their own development projects



References:

1. <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>
2. <https://info.fairtrade.net/>
3. <https://www.the-sustainable-fashion-collective.com/>
4. <https://www.triplepundit.com/>
5. <https://www.fespa.com/>

.....To be continued.....

UNSCRAMBLE THE JUMBLE WORDS
AIRRATDEF
TIESMUNICOM
SERVANTNOICO
MATEILC

Last week`s Answers: 1) PLUCKING 2) ORANGE 3) ELIMINATES 4) HARMING

Wishing you a great week ahead!

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