

Organic Cotton is Sustainable

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Organic cotton means cotton that is grown without using harmful pesticides, chemicals and synthetic fertilizers. The methods and materials used in organic cotton farming maintain soil fertility and reduce negative impacts on rivers and fresh water sources close to the cotton farms. Further, organic cotton production does not use genetically modified (GM) seeds.

Organic cotton has proven benefits and nothing can beat its claim for sustainability. Farmers, who shift to organic cotton farming, not only make their lives healthy but also benefit the ecosystem. As it eliminates the use of pesticides and fertilizers, organic cotton prevents contamination of groundwater, thus making drinking water clean and safe. It has been found that the impact of water pollution of organic cotton is 98% less compared to the conventional cotton production.

It prevents pests for a long time through advantageous habitat planting. It preserves biodiversity by eliminating the use of toxic chemicals and insecticides on cotton. Organic cotton farming also contributes to the fight against global warming. As synthetic pesticides and fertilizers are not used, it reduces nitrogen emission in the atmosphere. Thus, organic cotton produces 94% less greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, cotton grown organically reduces soil erosion and creates healthy soil. This type of soil has the power to withstand even draught conditions. Organic cultivation changes the soil into a carbon pit, which helps to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It helps the farmers to work within their limits, supporting the planet in a sustainable way.

Besides, environmental benefits, there are other benefits of organic cotton production. It provides healthy working environment to the workers and small scale farmers. Farmers increase their savings by not spending money on pesticides. Organic cotton products are softer and safer for the skin. Also, child or forced labor is not allowed in organic cotton production.



It ensures to reduce the environmental impacts at every step of cotton production, i.e. from not using GM seeds, to methods of cotton production and manufacturing practices used for finished products. Research has played an important role in achieving these targets of sustainability. Genuine cotton certification is necessary to guarantee that the cotton is 100% organic and sustainable. Third party certification organizations have been established to verify whether the cotton is produced by using materials allowed in organic cotton production. The certificate with highest environmental and ethical standards is the "Eco Sustainable Textile" certificate. Organic cotton textiles that are produced under the GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) can only avail this certificate. It not only includes environmental standards but also social standards.

The road to sustainable cotton is not easy. The recent developments in the cotton industry and shift made by the apparel companies towards organic cotton ensure that by making a sustainable choice, the coming generation will get a sustainable environment to live.

References:

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