



Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) Grows, Celebrates Five Years

New participants, production regions, and GOTS representatives in 2011

For Immediate Release

Washington, D.C. (April 17, 2012) – The [Global Organic Textile Standard](#) (GOTS) turned five years old in 2011, adding 80 new companies and another country (Kyrgyzstan) to the list of those with GOTS-certified facilities, expanding particularly in developed countries, accrediting a 14th certification organization, and receiving formal recognition by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). By year's end, 2,714 facilities in 57 countries around the world were certified to the organic apparel and textile standard including 450 dyeing facilities, more than 220 spinning, knitting, and weaving units, and approximately 160 printing and manufacturing facilities.

The Top Twenty countries in terms of GOTS-certified facilities include India, Turkey, China, Pakistan, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea (South), Bangladesh, United Kingdom, France, United States (U.S.), Hong Kong, Greece, Peru, Switzerland, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal. While the top four countries remained the same, Austria and Switzerland were new to the top rankings. Overall, the ten countries with the greatest increase in facilities gaining GOTS certification in 2011 were: Germany, India, U.S., Austria, Bangladesh, Switzerland, Greece, France, Belgium, and Denmark.

GOTS is the stringent voluntary global standard for the entire post-harvest processing (including spinning, knitting, weaving, dyeing and manufacturing) of apparel and home textiles made with organic fiber (such as organic cotton and organic wool), and includes both environmental and social provisions. Key provisions include a ban on the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), highly hazardous chemicals (such as azo dyes and formaldehyde), and child labor, while requiring strong social compliance management systems and strict waste water treatment practices. As all fiber certified to GOTS must be certified organic, GOTS certification means consumers are purchasing items certified organic from field to finished product.

A milestone in the increasing recognition and acceptance of GOTS was reached on May 20, 2011, when the USDA released a [Policy Memorandum](#) explicitly confirming that textile products produced in accordance with GOTS may be sold as 'organic' in the U.S. It further clarified that the use of U.S. National Organic Program (NOP)-certified fibers and third party certification of the textile products is a prerequisite for use of the term 'organic' in labeling of such products.

The USDA memo will also be useful internationally. "Explicit recognition of GOTS and its labeling system is the best way governments can regulate the organic textile sector," said Herbert Ladwig, GOTS International Working Group (IWG) Coordinator. "The U.S. model is our recommendation and goal in negotiations with regulators in this sector."

The GOTS IWG is made up of the Organic Trade Association (U.S.), Japan Organic Cotton Association, International Association Natural Textile Industry (Germany), and the Soil Association (UK). In addition to the five [regional representatives](#) worldwide appointed in 2010 to drive an increase in the awareness of and certification to GOTS, a new representative, Stuart McDiarmid, was appointed in 2011 to focus on growing awareness of GOTS in Australia and New Zealand. Sumit Gupta was appointed as the representative for India in March, 2012.

For more information on the Global Organic Textile Standard, please see www.global-standard.org. A trailer for the short film “The Global Organic Textile Standard – Ecology and Social Responsibility” is available at <http://global-standard.org/information-centre/gotsfilm.html> and copies in different languages can be ordered there by textile companies, educational institutions, and relevant organizations at no cost.

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