

Cotton Sourcing Policy

Cotton is one of the most important raw materials used in textiles, and one of the most commonly used fibres in products sold by NEXT.

Cotton is grown in more than 80 countries and its production provides incomes for over 250 million people globally. NEXT recognises that wherever it is grown, unless it is produced according to sustainable practices, cotton production can create significant challenges, and in some parts of the world may be associated with high social, environmental and economic impacts. We all have a role to play in supporting responsible and sustainable farming practices in cotton production, including efficient water usage and reduction in the use of harmful chemicals. We take the human rights of those working in these supply chains very seriously. You can find out more on our approach to Human rights in in our latest [Modern Slavery Statement](#).

Our commitments, set out in this Policy, are part of our [Responsible Sourcing Strategy](#) which covers the raw materials used in the products we sell. All orders placed by NEXT are conditional on the products containing cotton being sourced to meet the requirements of this Policy.

Scope

- The Policy applies to all NEXT Group companies and our own brand cotton products which contain cotton
- The scope focuses on the raw material sourcing and verification of the origin of cotton
- The Policy focuses on the cultivation of cotton fibre on cotton farms and does not address environmental impacts of cotton processing in fibre, yarn, fabric and product form
- The Policy applies to all products containing cotton. However it does not apply to products with under 5% cotton content by weight, swing tags, cotton threads and trims, embroidery and appliques, accessories and decorative items

N.B. Non cotton fibres derived from cotton waste are outside of the scope of this Policy - see lower impact alternative feedstocks in the [MMCF Policy](#)

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this Policy are to:

- Ensure NEXT reduces the environmental and social impacts of its main raw materials, by sourcing cotton fibre cultivated in a more sustainable way than conventional cotton
- Lay out a set of uniform principles around the inclusion of sustainable cotton into product that all NEXT Group companies will adhere to
- Ensure due diligence is undertaken to confirm the provenance of cotton supplied to Next
- Ensure that any marketing claims for product with sustainably sourced cotton are in accordance with existing standards can be substantiated

NEXT Cotton Sourcing requirements

1. NEXT do not accept cotton from regions with ongoing human rights concerns
2. NEXT requires all cotton to be sourced using known certifications, standards and initiatives which have robust methods in place and transparent methods of verification to ensure human rights and environmental standards are managed correctly
3. NEXT recognises the following listed responsible certifications, standards and initiatives as meeting the requirements of our Policy - see table below
4. NEXT requires suppliers to declare the cotton fibre country and region of origin into NEXT systems for every item number/ contract, and be able to provide chain of custody documents to prove the cotton fibre origin upon request

| Prohibited | Minimum Requirement | Emerging |
|---|--|--|
| <p>NEXT will not source products containing cotton from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Uzbekistan ● Turkmenistan ● Xinjiang region of China <p>This is due to ongoing forced labour and human rights concerns.</p> | No cotton from prohibited sources | <p>Post industrial recycled cotton from segregated garment cutting scraps GRS or RCS Certified</p> <p>Traceable Better Cotton</p> <p>NEXT will consider the inclusion of other certified fully traceable cotton routes which account for social and environmental impacts such as Regenerative Agriculture Standards</p> |
| | Cotton country of origin and region must be declared to NEXT in HIP and NIS | |
| | Plus By AW23: | |
| | Chain of custody documents available upon request to prove the cotton fibre origin | |
| | Plus By 2025: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better Cotton - mass balance ● US Cotton - traceable to Country ● US Cotton Trust Protocol- traceable to farm ● GOTS and OCS organic cotton ● GOTS and OCS organic in conversion cotton ● GRS or RCS Certified post consumer recycled cotton | | |

NEXT will review and update the Cotton Sourcing Policy regularly and make it available on the NEXT plc website: <https://www.nextplc.co.uk/about-next/corporate-governance/policies>

We measure and report on our Policy compliance and improvement at least annually in our Corporate Responsibility Report which can found on the NEXT plc website: <https://www.nextplc.co.uk/corporate-responsibility/cr-reports/2022>

If a product is found to be non-compliant to the policy requirements we will undertake root cause analysis with the relevant supplier, to identify how this non-compliant cotton entered the NEXT supply chain. Corrective action plans will be put in place to ensure the non-compliant origin is removed from the supply chain.

Ongoing Monitoring

NEXT manages compliance to this Policy using the verification processes laid out by each of the certifications, standards and initiatives we recognise (shown above).

NEXT also operates a risk management due diligence programme to confirm the provenance of cotton supplied to Next with:

1. Regular laboratory identity testing being undertaken on finished products to confirm they meet the requirements of this Policy
2. Regular review of complete chain of custody documents held by supplier to prove the cotton fibre origin. Documents must be available to be shared with NEXT within 48 hrs upon request.