

Why GOTS?

How Consumers Benefit from the Global Organic Textile Standard



➔ What is GOTS?

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is recognized as the world's leading processing standard for textiles (clothing, home textiles, and personal care products) made from certified organically produced raw materials. It includes strict environmental and social criteria for operations along the entire textile supply chain. GOTS is recognized in all markets around the globe and the numbers are growing; in 2013 more than 3080 facilities worldwide were certified to GOTS.

➔ What is the problem with textile processing?

Textile processing results in the often inadequately treated discharge of toxic chemicals into the air and water, as well as hazardous workplace situations. We all “live downstream” and share the same water and air, and workers making products for us deserve our respect. GOTS prohibits the use of the kinds of chemicals commonly used in textile processing that can cause cancer, birth defects and other serious illnesses. Chemicals, like persistent hormone-disrupting substances, also destroy eco-systems and biodiversity on an international scale. GOTS requires that all dyes and auxiliaries assessed to its strict criteria and approved prior to their usage.

➔ Why is certification to GOTS a good idea?

While an important step in the right direction, the use of organic materials alone is not enough. When using organically produced materials, *farm* workers and environment are protected. When manufactured without using hazardous chemicals, *factory* workers and the environment are protected. When there are no harmful residues in the end product, *consumers* are protected.

➔ What are organic raw materials?

Organic is a system of production with national standards for environmental protection and animal welfare. Organic raw materials include organic cotton, silk, flax (linen), and wool.

➔ Can only organic raw materials be used in GOTS-certified products?

As a textile processing standard, GOTS does not set its own criteria for organic farming but rather requires that the materials used must be of certified organic origin according to a recognized farming standard. Only textile products made from at least 70 percent (label grade “made with organic”) or 95 percent (label grade “organic”) certified organic raw materials can become GOTS certified.

➔ If I see the GOTS logo on a product, what does it mean?

To be sure a product really is GOTS-certified you should be able to see reference to the GOTS label grade (‘organic’ or ‘made with organic’), the reference to the independent certification body, and the license number of the

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certified entity. Consumers can trace the certified company by entering the license number (or company name) provided on the GOTS labelling in the 'free text field' of our [public data base](#). Look for the label - don't accept self-claims.

Using 95 – 100 % organic fibres:



Using 70 – 94 % organic fibres:



➔ What about a statement that the yarn (or fabric) in a finished product is GOTS certified?

This is only a self-claim as only finished products may be certified to GOTS (see above). Thus, you cannot be sure this claim is true.

➔ What kinds of worker-oriented provisions are in GOTS?

Workers are not exposed to toxic chemicals when working with GOTS-certified inputs and practices. In addition, the GOTS social criteria are based on the International Labor Organization (ILO) key conventions which include a ban on child and forced labor and include provisions such as having systems in place to prove they are addressing social concerns, such as grievances. Furthermore, GOTS requires fire prevention training and evacuation drills.

➔ How does GOTS address animal husbandry?

As it is a textile processing standard, GOTS does not set its own criteria for organic farming. Rather it requires that at least 70% of the fibers used must be of organically-certified materials that would have had to be managed to organic animal husbandry standards. Those rules can be found in the applicable national standards - the EC Organic Regulation 834/2007 (incl. implementation regulation EC 889/2008), the USDA National Organic Program regulations, and other standards in the IFOAM Family of Standards.

➔ Is GOTS an official standard?

GOTS is a voluntary standard so it is not regulated by a governmental body but rather managed by a nonprofit organization. However, it is supported by the U.S. government which requires that textile products claiming to be organic in the U.S. be certified to the organic food standard or GOTS.

➔ How do products/companies become certified to GOTS?

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GOTS is a product certification meaning that finished products claiming to be GOTS certified must meet all GOTS criteria. In addition, all facilities involved in the production of such goods must be certified. The certification is undertaken by an independent GOTS-approved certification body and facilities are inspected regularly.

➔ **What can I do to improve the problems with textile processing?**

Become a “change agent!” Choose GOTS-certified products when making your purchases. If you can’t find such products at your favourite stores, ask the manager to carry such products, or contact your favourite brands or retailers directly to ask them to “GO GOTS!”

➔ **Watch the new less than 4-minute GOTS Simple Show Clip**

