



## Taking regenerative agriculture training back to the field

Regenerative agriculture – applying sustainable practices to improve soil health, sequester carbon and reduce the use of pesticides – isn't just kinder to the planet. It's also better for farmers, with clear benefits for their wellbeing, their yields and ultimately their livelihoods.

Balancing the flora and fauna in natural ecosystems can help to mitigate the challenges of climate change. And with consumer demand for sustainably grown cotton continuing to soar, it pushes fashion and retail brands to look at their raw material supplies more responsibly. It is therefore vital that the myriad reasons for applying regenerative agricultural methods reach farmers at grassroots levels.

CottonConnect has already taken the lead in making sustainable agriculture practices part of all our programmes, as we know that the way forward is only through practices that have a positive impact on the environment. Through in-depth, on-the-ground training, we have given farmers the tools, knowledge and capability to implement a range of changes in making agriculture more sustainable and viable in the long term.

Last year, CottonConnect was proud to partner with the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) to deliver a three-day intensive workshop on regenerative agriculture in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India. Representatives from CottonConnect, including the senior management and our local implementation partners, joined ICAC Chief Scientist Dr Keshav Kranthi and independent consultant Dr Sandhya Kranthi to discuss and test new regenerative agricultural practices in theory and in the field.

### FIVE KEY LEARNINGS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

- **Carbon sequestration is effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions – and the methods shared in the workshop can be replicated easily.**
- **Interconnectivity exists. There is a symbiotic relationship between soil health, microbes and crops.**
- **Adding regenerative aspects makes the positive impacts of sustainable and organic farming even more apparent.**
- **Bio-compost and biochar can be extremely effective to improve soil health and sequester carbon.**
- **The time to act is now.**





## A DECADE OF SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Training programmes like this have a vital role to play in ensuring best practice reaches farmers at a grassroots level. At CottonConnect, we make sure that happens by working with local partner organisations to train their trainers. The knowledge and expertise they acquire is then cascaded to smallholder communities and villages, further expanding its reach and results.

Sharing a regenerative approach to protecting and enhancing the environment has been at the core of our sustainable agriculture training programmes for the last decade.

In that time, we have supported hundreds of thousands of cotton farmers with training designed to help them implement changes. Topics included in our programmes range from boosting biodiversity to regenerating topsoil, conserving water and intercropping. We've taught farmers how to use vermicompost and biochar to nourish their land, and introduced ideas such as growing sorghum grain alongside their crops to attract birds. The birds prey on farm pests, in turn reducing the need for chemical pesticides.

Not only are these sustainable steps having a positive environmental impact, they are also improving farmers' income, livelihoods, and resilience to climate change.

We believe that regenerative cotton is about supporting communities to find local solutions, designed by and with local people, so that both farmers and the environment can thrive.

Through a combination of theoretical presentations and field demonstrations, participants were given the knowledge, capability and tools to implement and share changes with farm workers.

Among the topics discussed were global perspectives on cotton sustainability, the impacts of climate change on cotton crops, how to achieve better yields through sustainable farming, and integrated approaches to pest and disease management.

CottonConnect's teams were also given practical demonstrations to show how a farming community can prepare biochar in a conical pit, and make bokashi compost from food waste and organic matter.

*"The ICAC was delighted to partner with CottonConnect in the workshop last year," Dr Kranthi said. "It was an important moment for us both in establishing regenerative agricultural practices in cotton farming. We were impressed with their outstanding team of managers, supervisors, and field staff. With a decade of work driving a transparent and traceable cotton supply chain, CottonConnect has the expertise and insights to drive the increase of regenerative training through their programmes, to the benefit of the sector and the environment."*

## WHAT'S NEXT ON THE JOURNEY TOWARDS REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE?

CottonConnect has already incorporated sustainable and regenerative practices across all our programmes. Given the significance of regenerative agriculture for farmers, fashion brands and retailers, we will continue to incorporate regenerative practices into all our programmes: REEL Cotton, REEL Linen, Organic and REEL Regenerative.

Investing in regenerative agriculture is a crucial move in the race to meet ambitious carbon reduction goals. Empowering, educating and encouraging farmers to use regenerative farming practices will replenish land, boost yields and build climate resilience. We're committed to leading in best practices, helping to drive action for brands and transformational change across the cotton industry.

CottonConnect's Regenerative programmes are formulated on the basis of the [REEL Regenerative Code of Conduct](#).

For more information, or to find out how CottonConnect can support your organisation, contact us today:  
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CottonConnect's purpose is to reimagine cotton supply chains in order to help textile producers and farmers enjoy better livelihoods.

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