Run by CottonConnect in partnership with leading brands and retailers, the programme is proven to increase yields and farm profits; while reducing environmental impacts. REEL Cotton can be fully traced from farmer to store.

Since its creation in 2010, the REEL programme has trained more than 20,000 farmers, predominantly in subsistence economies in India, China, Pakistan and Peru. Our goal is to reach 50,000 farmers by 2020.

The REEL Cotton Programme is independently verified by a code of conduct developed with FLOCERT, the organization that provides Fairtrade International certification.

**About the REEL Code**
CottonConnect and FLOCERT have developed a code of conduct that is internationally recognised and verified by FLOCERT www.flocert.net.

The REEL Code verifies that farmers in the REEL Cotton Programme are using sustainable practices, with added elements that ensure traceability and decent work.

The code is based on eight principles:
1. Management skills
2. Plant and field management
3. Soil nutrient management
4. Pest management
5. Water management
6. Ecosystem protection
7. Waste management
8. Institutional grouping

**REEL Cotton Programme - Benefits to farmers**
Evaluation of the impact of the REEL Cotton programme revealed that the training achieved significant positive results globally, compared with a sample of conventional farmers not receiving the training.

Yield increased by +16%
Profit increased by +41%

Water usage reduced by -16%
Chemical pesticide usage reduced by -40%
Chemical fertiliser usage reduced by -20%

*The evaluation conducted by CottonConnect on a 20% sample

“FLOCERT is the global provider for Fairtrade certification services. We also support private institutions to convert their own sustainability programs into Private Codes, and we provide 3rd party verification.

In this function, FLOCERT conducted a co-innovation project with CottonConnect and translated their cotton farmer training program REEL into a Private Code.

We are proud to be an assigned CottonConnect partner for 3rd party verification of REEL.”

Rüdiger Meyer, CEO, FLOCERT

“In a water footprint study in 2016, REEL farms outperformed the conventional farms with 1.5 times as much yield and a reduced water footprint. (Source: Towards sustainable water use in the cotton supply chain. Water Footprint Network, May 2016)

“Thanks to the REEL cotton programme we learnt about the essential nutrients required for healthy cotton growth. For the first time in so many years we received a better quality of cotton with increased yields which resulted in a high market price for our cotton.”

Godiben Vasani, Cotton farmer from Surendranagar, Gujarat, India.
What is CottonConnect?
CottonConnect is an enterprise with a clear mission to transform the cotton industry for good.

We partner with brands and retailers and use our global, multi-stakeholder network and local contacts to help develop more robust and resilient cotton supply chains.

CottonConnect in numbers
Creating economic opportunities for more than 135,000 cotton farmer families in India, China, Pakistan and Peru, and impacting over 675,000 livelihoods.

Our ambition is to improve the livelihoods of more than a million people in cotton farming communities by 2020.

Services from CottonConnect
Supporting the work of REEL, further services from CottonConnect promote sustainable cotton agriculture and develop thriving lives and livelihoods:

WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT - RIGHTS AND LIFE SKILLS
Working with women to increase their knowledge and confidence though an education programme which covers health, rights and enterprise development.

FARMER BUSINESS SCHOOL
By focusing on financial literacy and financial management we encourage farmers to see their farm as a business. We are introducing farmers to new technologies, microfinance and credit.

ORGANIC INTEGRITY AND FARMER TRAINING
Focusing on organic agricultural practices, bio-diversity and improving integrity of cotton through initiatives like seed management.

BETTER COTTON INITIATIVE (BCI)
CottonConnect is an implementation partner helping to train farmers to use more sustainable farming practices and grow BCI cotton.

TRANSPARENCY AND VERIFICATION
End-to-end supply chain mapping and traceability of supply delivers reassurance on sustainable cotton supply. The CottonConnect traceability software tool is called Tracebale.

Call to Action for Brands and Retailers
It is critical for the textile industry to manage reputational risk and address sustainability in the cotton supply chain.

Cotton is a labour and environmentally intensive crop often grown in dry regions, and prone to disease. Over 60% of the world’s cotton is produced in developing countries and by cotton communities of smallholder farmers with limited worker protection, education and gender equality.

Only 12% of the world’s cotton fibre is currently classed as sustainable and of this around 17% is purchased as sustainable cotton. We invite brands and retailers across the cotton industry to join us to work to increase this figure and to transform the world’s cotton for good.

Please get in touch to find out how we can help:
www.cottonconnect.org
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