

## **Global Organic Cotton Market Hits \$3.2 Billion in 2008, New Organic Exchange Report Shows**

*Walmart, C&A, Nike, H&M, Zara, Anvil, Coop Switzerland, Pottery Barn, Greensource, Hess Natur are top ten organic cotton-using brands and retailers.*

Lubbock, TX (Vocus) March 31, 2009 -- Global retail sales of organic cotton apparel and home textile products reached an estimated \$3.2 billion in 2008, according to the Organic Cotton Market Report 2007-2008 released by the non-profit organization [Organic Exchange](#) today. This represents a 63% increase from the \$1.9 billion market in 2007.

The top ten organic cotton-using brands and retailers globally were Wal-Mart (USA), C&A (Belgium), Nike (USA), H&M (Sweden), Zara (Spain), Anvil (USA), Coop Switzerland, Pottery Barn (USA), Greensource (USA), and Hess Natur (Germany).

Despite the global retail outlook, most brands and retailers selling organic cotton products remain committed to their sustainability plans and upbeat about market growth with plans to expand their product lines 24 and 33 percent in 2009 and 2010, respectively, to result in an estimated \$4 billion market in 2009 and a \$5.3 billion market in 2010.

"It is a sign of the times that despite ominous financial forecasts, brands and retailers are standing fast to their commitment to making their product lines more sustainable by ever increasing their use of organic cotton and other organic fibers such as wool, linen, and silk," said LaRhea Pepper, Organic Exchange senior director.

The amount of organic cotton farmers grew worldwide in 2007/08 increased 152 percent, according to OE's Organic Cotton Farm and Fiber Report 2008, organic cotton production increased to 145,872 metric tons (MT) (668,581 bales) grown on 161,000 hectares in 22 countries worldwide (from 57,932 MT (265,517 bales) produced in 2006/07).

OE notes that during 2008, certified organic cotton fibre supplies grew by 95 percent, significantly higher than annual growth rates of 45 percent in 2006 and 53 percent in 2007.

"Farmers who planted on speculation or expanded without market partners may have shifted the market into a state of oversupply in 2009," says Pepper, who strongly discourages farmers from taking this kind of risk. "Brands may want to explore opportunities for expanding their organic programs with their business partners," she continued, "as for the first time in many years, supplies of organic fiber, yarns, and fabrics are more available than in previous years."

Organic production is based on a system of farming that maintains and replenishes soil fertility without the use of toxic and persistent pesticides and fertilizers or genetically-modified seeds.



About [Organic Exchange](#)

Founded in 2002, Organic Exchange facilitates expansion of the global organic cotton fiber supply by working closely with the entire value chain, from farmers to retailers, to help develop organic cotton programs. OE has hosted numerous organic cotton conferences and trainings in supply chain centers around the world, including Brazil, China, India, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

David Bennell became the new executive director of Organic Exchange December 1, 2008. Bennell was formerly the director of the Forest Stewardship Council Global Fund and the manager of product research, testing, and environmental affairs at L.L. Bean.

OE's 7th Organic Exchange Global Conference and Marketplace will take place in Seattle, Washington in October, 2009.

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