

Europe designs a sustainable future

WITH EUROPEAN COTTON

Press Release - European Cotton Alliance (ECA)

Renewed interest in European cotton: major European brands visit Greece to inform about local production

- Major foreign companies show their interest in European cotton, supporting the local production and supply chain of raw material
- A group of international brands recently visited production sites and ginning plants in Greece, in order to be informed about the quality and safety of the product
- The European Cotton Alliance and the entire cotton production and processing industry in Greece and Spain support the creation of a strong brand for European cotton
- Increased interest from the fashion industry for the new traceability platform launched by EUCOTTON

Larissa, 4/10/2023 - Last week, representatives of **major international brands** visited Greece, guests of the **European Cotton Alliance** in the framework of the **EUCOTTON** project. Representatives from **France, Spain, Germany, Germany, Italy, as well as domestic guests from Greece**, participated in a working visit from **26 to 29 September in Thessaloniki, Serres, Trikala Imathia and Farsala**.

The delegation, consisting of **Louis Vuitton Group, Diesel, Intercot, Tedijos Royo, Seidensticker, Vogue Hellas, Orsalia Parthenis and Konstantinos Tsigaros**, visited experimental cotton fields, ginning and spinning mills, and participated in discussions with producers, representatives of collective bodies, entrepreneurs and public institutions. They also participated in a round table to present the EUCOTTON initiative and the **traceability platform developed under it**, showing particular interest in this innovative effort which has a pan-European character.

The EUCOTTON traceability platform is accessible through the website www.eucotton.eu and allows producers/ginners, spinners and processors to register free of charge in order to certify the origin of the raw material and to have the possibility to use the EUCOTTON trademark, which has been registered with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).

Mr. Antonis Siarkos, President of the European Cotton Alliance (ECA), **Mr. Mr. Vasilis Markou, Apostolos Dontas, Charalambos Karagiorgos**, members of ECA, **Mr. Efthimios Foteinos**, President of the Interprofessional Organization of Cotton (IOB), **Mr. Sercos Haroutounian**, President of ELGO Demetra, **Mr. Sercos Haroutounian**, President of ELGO Demetra, **Mr. Sercos Haroutounian**, President of ELGO Demetra, **Mr. Sercos Haroutounian**, President of ELGO Demetra, **Mr. Sercos Haroutounian**, President of ELGO Demetra, **Mr. Theofilos Aslanidis**, President of the Association of Knitting Ready Made Garment Enterprises of Greece, **Mr.**

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Dimitris Polychronos, Managing Director of Nafpaktos Spinning Mills and other businessmen.

The President of the European Cotton Alliance Mr. Antonis Siarkos said: *"The current visit is the fruit of a multi-year effort to promote European, i.e. Greek and Spanish, cotton. In addition to the brands visiting us now, there are many other extremely high profile brands that are already planning to participate in the next working visit. We are promoting the product of our producers and processors, which must receive the recognition it deserves at European level and beyond. Although our production does not exceed 2% of world production, European cotton has one of the best qualities, enjoys a high profile on international markets and also provides guarantees of modern and safe production methods. Now is the time to communicate to the entire textile production chain, and to the fashion industry in particular, that with the EUCOTTON traceability protocol we also have the means to prove to the final consumer that the cotton he chooses is 100% European."*

According to the President of the Interprofessional Organization of Cotton Mr. Fotinos, *"The IOB, which is a founding member and pioneer of the European Cotton Alliance, fully supports such initiatives to promote and promote our excellent product. As I stated to our guests, now that they have seen first-hand the high quality of Greek cotton and the strict control framework at every stage of production, they have no reason to prefer cotton of dubious quality, produced outside Europe, without traceability and without any way of ensuring the working conditions of producers"*.

The fashion industry's interest in EUCOTTON's invitation for a closer "acquaintance" with European cotton is proving to be great as more and more international brands respond to the actions being implemented and declare their support for the initiatives of the European cotton sector. Their support for the local value chain is also due to another important reason: the growing interest of consumers in the origin of the clothes and clothing products they choose, the safety of their production and their environmental footprint.

European cotton is a sustainable and high quality raw material, which - although it accounts for less than 2% of world production - is highly recognised and in high demand in the textile production and processing chain. Greece and Spain, the two countries that concentrate cotton production in Europe, export most of their production to third countries. Cotton is then re-imported into Europe as a finished, processed product which is often contaminated with other, lower quality fibres.

At the same time, cotton production is often attacked for its environmental footprint, despite the fact that cotton, compared to synthetic fibres, requires significantly less energy to produce. Moreover, as a natural product it is a renewable resource which is more easily recycled-biodegradable than synthetic products and has a much longer life span as a garment or other fabric.

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The EUCOTTON initiative

EUCOTTON, an EU co-funded initiative, has at its core the message: "*Europe designs a sustainable future with European cotton*". It seeks to educate professionals and consumers about the social and environmental sustainability of European cotton and to provide full traceability ("*from farm to fashion*") of the product.

It is implemented by the European Cotton Alliance (ECA) with the aim of enhancing the visibility of European cotton and is co-funded by the European Union under Regulation (EC) 1144/2014 - Enjoy it's from Europe.

For more information: www.eucotton.eu

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