

# Europe designs a sustainable future

WITH EUROPEAN COTTON

*Press Release - European Cotton Alliance (ECA)*

## Prestigious representatives of cotton and the fashion sector visit the Andalusian cotton fields thanks to EUCOTTON

- A delegation of 20 professionals from the cotton and fashion sectors had the opportunity to approach the reality of Andalusian cotton in the framework of European initiative that unites the cotton sectors of Greece and Spain.
- Over 3 days, they visited cotton fields and ginneries in the provinces of Seville and Cadiz.

30/9/2024: For three days this week, the eyes of the European fashion and textile world have been on Andalusia. In the framework of the **EUCOTTON** initiative, which brings together the sectors of Greece and Spain -the countries that account for almost 100% of production in Europe-, 20 cotton, fashion and textile professionals from Germany, Italy, France, Greece and Spain have been able to discover on the ground the sustainability and quality that distinguish European cotton.

This European mission is part of the EUCOTTON campaign, promoted by the **European Cotton Alliance (ECA)**, which encompasses the entire cotton chain in Europe to guarantee the quality and traceability of this natural fiber. In this spirit of transparency, the Spanish cotton producers and processors wanted to open their doors to some of the most renowned professionals in the sector, so that they could see first-hand what the production process, based on the demanding European legislation, is like.

All this, under the auspices of two of the founding members of the ECA, the **Spanish Cotton Interprofessional Organisation (Espalgodón)** and **National Cotton Center (Centro Algodonero Nacional -CAN)**. According to the president of this Espalgodon, **Enrique González**, “the main objective of this action is for large fashion and textile groups to become more familiar with the sustainable cultivation, and with the production methods focused on excellence, which are the backbone of European cotton”.

Specifically, the representatives of the European textile and fashion industry **visited the fields and facilities of two benchmarks in the Andalusian cotton sector**: Algosur (Algodonera del Sur), in the province of Seville, and the Las Lomas Agricultural Complex (Cadiz), which has the oldest active ginning mill in Spain. These two farms carry out many of the **best practices** that make European cotton special, such as 100% mechanised harvesting, the use of non-GMO seeds, highly professionalised employees and the implementation of water management and Integrated Pest Management plans. These actions make it one of the most sustainable in the world. According to

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

# Europe designs a sustainable future

WITH EUROPEAN COTTON

**Josep Artigas**, president of the National Cotton Centre, "this visit has allowed them to understand the efforts made by the Spanish cotton sector from 1979 to the present day in terms of sustainability. With water management at the highest level, we have managed to reduce the consumption of this precious resource by more than 50%".

## The great social impact of cotton

This 'European cotton summit' in the fields of Andalusia is a unique opportunity to show European producers the good work of the Spanish sector, as well as the social reality behind the figures. **Cotton provides quality employment for more than 5,500 families in Andalusia**, as well as a significant number of skilled workers in the ginning mills that process the raw material.

This traditional crop is the main source of income for many Andalusian areas and villages. In fact, **Spain produces around 50,000 tonnes of cotton fibre a year**. It is worth noting that global exports of European cotton amount to more than 700 million, and that the EU is among the world's leading exporters, making the product important not only for the producing regions, but also for the European economy as a whole.

## Bringing European cotton to the forefront of the industry

In recent times, the European Cotton Alliance has intensified its activities related to the EUCOTTON initiative, to present to the European professional public the advantages of cotton of European origin. On 2 and 3 June, EUCOTTON took centre stage in Rome at the **Phyigital Sustainability Expo**, Italy's largest sustainability event. And on 10 July, the focus shifted to Milan, the Italian fashion capital, where **an exclusive event brought together 80 professionals** from major Italian brands.

In Germany, EUCOTTON became one of the most talked-about novelties at the latest edition of **Munich Fabric Start (3-4 September)**, with a booth and a round table where its quality and sustainability features were highlighted to over 50 fashion professionals.

To find out more, visit: [eucotton.eu](http://eucotton.eu).

## ABOUT THE EUROPEAN COTTON ALLIANCE

**The European Cotton Alliance (ECA)** is a European-level association formed by the active collaboration of cotton producers and industry associations in the European producing countries. Founding members of the Alliance are the Inter-professional Organizations, the Industry and the Manufacturers' Associations in Greece and Spain, accumulating 100% of the cotton sector in Europe.

The **EUCOTTON campaign** is implemented by ECA with the aim of increasing the visibility of European cotton and raising awareness of its sustainable and quality characteristics in several European target-markets. Campaign co-funded by the European Union under Regulation (EC) 1144/2014 – Enjoy it's from Europe.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.