

# Global Fairtrade Certified Cotton Composite Products Policy

## 1. Objectives

Fairtrade aims to ensure maximum benefits back to producer organisations and requests all ingredients/components of a product (for which there are Fairtrade standards) carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark should be sourced from Fairtrade-certified producer organisations on Fairtrade terms.

Fairtrade International does however recognise that, for a variety of reasons, this is not always possible (e.g. for technological or supply chain reasons) and so does allow the labelling of composite products where not all components are Fairtrade sourced, in order to:

- Increase market access for Fairtrade producer groups
- Expand the range of Fairtrade labelled products
- Assure the credibility and reputation of Fairtrade

## 2. Scope

This document defines the conditions under which cotton **products can be** labelled with the FAIRTRADE Cotton Mark. This policy applies to the following categories of product:

**A) 100 % cotton fabric products**

**B) Blended textile fibre products**

*i. Blended textile fibre products*

*ii. Blended textile fabrics manufactured for workwear, corporate & institutional wear or uniforms*

**C) Multi-component textile products**

**D) Multi-component textile and non-textile products**

## 3. Definitions

Blended fabrics containing cotton: when blended with other fibres, the cotton must be 50% by weight or more in the finished fabric. We acknowledge for functional reasons, that the composition of the finished fabric can be achieved in different ways, either by blending the fibres and/or mixing yarns of different compositions.

Blended fabrics containing cotton manufactured for workwear, corporate wear or uniforms: workwear or uniforms technically require a high content of foreign fibres to fulfill specific features such as

- tear and wear resistance
- durability through at least 50 industrial washing cycles
- no creasing

The usage of this clothing is either compulsory, i.e. required by employer, institute etc. or a necessity (eg. protection in a manual labour context).

Examples for clothing pieces covered by this definition are: trousers, dungarees, jackets, overalls, shorts, shirts, blouses, skirts, scarves

Fairtrade requires that the cotton content in fabrics manufactured for workwear and uniforms must be 30% by weight or more in the finished fabric. We acknowledge for functional reasons, that the composition of the finished fabric can be achieved in different ways, either by blending the fibres and/or mixing yarns of different compositions.

## 4. Exclusions

Fairtrade's labelling requirements exclude:

- Edgings and trimmings which are not an integral part of the product. Filling is considered to be a component rather than a trim.
- Buttons and buckles which are covered with textile materials
- Accessories, decorations, non-elastic ribbons, elastic threads/bands added at specific/limited points of the product
- Pocket linings and constructed waistbands
- Stitching

Where the lining of a Fairtrade cotton product forms a major part of the final product and the lining is made of cotton, e.g. curtain and clothing linings, then 100% Fairtrade certified cotton must be used. If it can be demonstrated that the functionality of a product will be affected, Fairtrade will accept a blended textile fibre lining (see Category B) where the cotton must comprise at least 50% (by weight) of the finished product.

## 5. Overview Categories, Composition and Statements

Please use the table to determine the category your product belongs to and refer to guidelines;

Category	Is the product composition	Description and examples	Qualifying statements
<b>Category A</b>	100% cotton	Products made with 100% Fairtrade cotton <b>eg. towels</b>	All cotton in this product is Fairtrade cotton
<b>Category B (i)</b>	Blended fibres	Products made with Fairtrade cotton blended with other fibres <b>eg. socks</b>	Fairtrade cotton is 50% or more of the finished weight of the fabric <b>E.g. 60% Fairtrade cotton, 40% Nylon</b>
<b>Category B (ii)</b>	Blended textile fabrics manufactured for workwear, corporate & institutional wear or uniforms	Products made with Fairtrade cotton blended with other fibres <b>eg. overalls</b>	Fairtrade cotton is 30% or more of the finished weight of the fabric Eg. 35% Fairtrade Cotton, 65% Polyester
<b>Category C</b>	Multi component textiles	Product made with Fairtrade cotton parts combined with other textile parts <b>eg. textile filled cushion</b>	A significant part of the product is cotton. The essential nature, character and appearance of the product is cotton. All cotton in this product is Fairtrade cotton
<b>Category D</b>	Multi component textile and non-textile	Product made with Fairtrade cotton parts combined with non-textile parts <b>i.e. cotton canvas trainers</b>	A significant part of the product is cotton. All cotton in this product is Fairtrade cotton

## 6. Guidelines

In order to qualify for the FAIRTRADE Cotton Mark, a cotton product must adhere to the following guidelines:

(i). The European Union Regulation No 1007/201, called the Textile Regulation, applies from 8 May 2012 to sales into every EU country. It is the licensee's responsibility that this regulation is applied correctly, also by traders in the supply chain. Legislation for other regions also applies and the licensee is also responsible for applying each accurately<sup>1</sup>.

(ii) All the cotton used within the product must be sourced from Fairtrade certified producer organisations.

### **Category A: 100 % cotton fabric products:**

This category covers products made entirely with cotton for example 100% cotton towels and T-shirts.

As per guideline (ii) above, all of the cotton used in the finished product must be sourced from a Fairtrade certified producer organisation.

### **Category B (i): Blended textile fibre products:**

This category covers products made of cotton **blended** with other fibres or other yarns; examples are poly-cotton pillowcases or cotton/lycra jeans.

As per guideline (ii) above, all of the cotton used in the finished product must be sourced from a Fairtrade certified producer organisation and the cotton must comprise at least 50% (by weight) of the finished product (see 3. Definitions).

For functional reasons we acknowledge that the composition of the finished product can be achieved in different ways, either by blending the fibres and/or mixing the yarns of different compositions. These standards are set based on the finished composition of the fabric.

Examples of various ways of blending;

	<b>approved as 67.5% Fairtrade cotton</b>
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	<b>approved as 50% Fairtrade cotton</b>
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<sup>1</sup> See Fairtrade Co

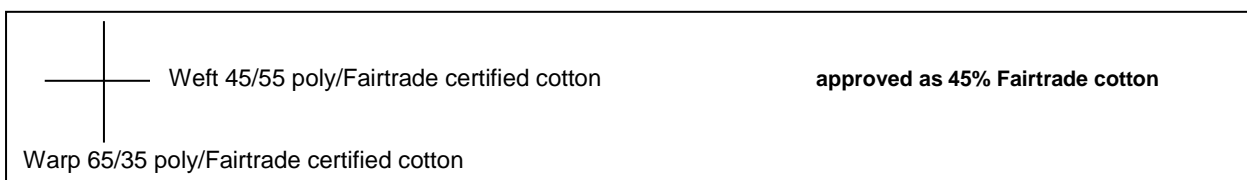
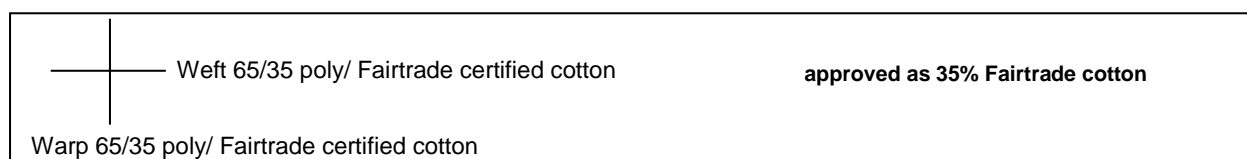
**Category B (ii):**

This category covers fabrics made of cotton blended with other fibres or other yarns for workwear, corporate & institutional wear or uniforms; (see 3. Definitions).

As per guideline (ii) above, all of the cotton used in the finished product must be sourced from a Fairtrade certified producer organisation. The cotton must comprise at least 30% (by weight) of the finished product (see 3. Definitions).

We acknowledge for function reasons that the composition of the finished product can be achieved in different ways, either by blending the fibres and/or mixing the yarns of different composition. These standards are set based on the finished composition of the fabric.

Examples of various ways of blending



**Category C: For Multi-component textile products:**

This category covers products made up of cotton fabrics with fabrics of other compositions and includes filled products, for example pillows and duvets (with a 100% cotton cover and polyester filling) and non-filled products for example cotton T-shirts with silk panels/appliqués.

Our guiding principle is that a significant part of the product must contain cotton and the essential nature, appearance and performance of the product must be characterised by being made of cotton. This will be assessed by Fairtrade on the basis of consumer perception of the product as being made of cotton or not.

*Examples:*

- a. Filled products such as duvets and pillows made with 100% cotton cover and hollow fibre filling would be acceptable, as the consumer would reasonably understand the cotton component of the product.
- b. Oven gloves would be acceptable where the outer cover is 100% cotton with polyester wadding and lining.

The cotton part of the product must be 100% cotton (i.e. we will not allow blended cotton to be used in a multi-component product. Please refer to the definition in **a) Single textile fibre products (100 % cotton products) section above.**

**Category D: Multi-component textile and non-textile products:**

This category encompasses products made up of cotton parts **combined** with non-textile parts such as leather, wood, feathers or metal. Examples of such products include cotton canvas trainers and garden parasols.

Our guiding principle is that a significant part of the product must contain cotton and the essential nature, appearance and performance of the product must be characterised by being made of cotton. This will be assessed by Fairtrade on the basis of the product content which should include as many components as possible made from cotton

*Examples:*

- a. Trainers made of leather or synthetic uppers with cotton laces and inner lining would NOT be accepted as a consumer would reasonably expect the defining part of the product to be associated with the FAIRTRADE Mark
- b. A garden parasol made with a 100% cotton shade would be deemed acceptable.
- c. Filled products such as duvets and pillows made with a 100% cotton cover and feather filling would be acceptable, as the consumer would reasonably understand the cotton component of the product.

As above, the cotton part of the product must be 100% cotton (i.e. we will not allow blended cotton to be used in a multi-component product. Please refer to the definition in **Category A) 100 % cotton fabric products) section above.**

## **6. Labelling**

The use of the FAIRTRADE Cotton Mark and its accompanying statements must be in compliance with the FAIRTRADE Cotton Mark Guidelines.

## **7. Decision-making**

Fairtrade reserves the right to judge whether the nature/type of a product may present additional risks to the credibility of the FAIRTRADE Mark. In these cases, risk will need to be discussed, managed and addressed with the applicant if necessary before a product can be approved. The purpose of this discussion will be to ensure that the FAIRTRADE Mark is used to deliver substantive and proportionate benefits to the producers involved.

If Fairtrade deems that a product is not suitable to carry the FAIRTRADE Mark, the rationale will be provided to the applicant explaining how the decision was reached within eight weeks of the initial application.

In recognition of the subjective nature of the composite product rules in relation to multi-component products, Fairtrade NFOs will maintain a record of all successful multi-component product-labelling applications together with the rationale underpinning the decision. These records can be drawn upon by Fairtrade International in order to demonstrate consistent decision making, and provide a guide for future decisions taken on related products.