

Environmental Choice^M Program

CERTIFICATION CRITERIA DOCUMENT



CCD-097

Product: Clothing made from Certified Organic Cotton

Preamble

Environment Canada's Environmental Choice^M Program is pleased to publish the following national guideline on *clothing made from certified organic cotton*.

The Environmental Choice Program is designed to support a continuing effort to improve and/or maintain environmental quality by reducing energy and materials consumption and by minimizing the impacts of pollution generated by the production, use and disposal of goods and services available to Canadians.

Conventional agriculture has become increasingly dependent upon the substantial use of fertilizers, pesticides and other inputs that are composed of, or derived from, synthetic chemicals. While increasing usable crop yields, such artificial inputs may impose significant ecological impacts. These impacts include both a reduction in the soils' natural capacity for regeneration and damage caused to surrounding ecosystems by the runoff of chemicals that are not locally absorbed. One response to this has been a return to traditional "organic" methods of cultivation, which promotes the use of naturally-occurring inputs and a more holistic approach to cultivation.

The Environmental Choice^M Program does not generally certify organic crops, per se (deferring to several well-established organizations that do so). However, ECP will consider products, such as clothing, that are made from previously certified materials. In addition, other post-harvesting processes, including fabric-dyeing, may contaminate local air or waters, and are thus addressed in this guideline.

Based on a review of currently available life cycle information, the product category requirements will produce an environmental benefit through the **a reduction in toxic emissions to the environment**.

Life cycle review is an ongoing process. As information and technology change, product category requirements will be reviewed and possibly amended.

The Minister of the Environment anticipates that manufacturers or importers of *clothing made from certified organic cotton* which conform to this guideline will apply to the Environmental Choice Program for verification and subsequent authority to label the qualifying products with the Environmental Choice EcoLogo.

Notice

Any reference to a standard means to the latest edition of that standard.

The Environmental Choice Program reserves the right to accept equivalent test data for the test methods specified in this guideline.

Interpretation

1. In this set of requirements, please note the following definitions:

"allowable additives" means those additives listed as being acceptable as cotton fibre processing aids as defined by the Texas Department of Agriculture's *Organic Cotton Certification Program; Harvest, Handling and Processing of Organic Cotton*.

"organic farming" means a production system which avoids the use of synthetically compounded fertilizers, pesticides and growth regulators. To the maximum extent possible, these systems also rely upon crop rotations, crop residues, animal manures, legumes, compost, off-the-farm wastes, mechanical cultivation and, when necessary, botanical or biological controls with minimum adverse effects on health and the environment.

"organically grown cotton" means cotton which is grown under strict organic farming regulations and has satisfied all requirements for certification by a third party organic certification program. Certification programs and guidelines recognized by the ECP include: *Organic Cotton Certification Program*, Texas Department of Agriculture; *Canadian Organic Certification Standards*; and *1995 OCIA Certification Standards for Crops and processing*, Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA).

General Requirements

3. To be authorized to carry the Ecologo^M, the *clothing made from certified organic cotton* must:

(a) meet or exceed all applicable governmental, industrial safety and performance standards; and

(b) be manufactured and transported in such a manner that all steps of the process, including the disposal of waste products arising therefrom, will meet the requirements of all applicable governmental acts, by laws and regulations including, for facilities located in Canada, the *Fisheries Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)*.

Product Specific Requirements

4. To be authorized to carry the Ecologo^M, the *clothing made from certified organic cotton* must:

- (a) be manufactured from 100% organically grown cotton; (A certificate from the Organic Crop Improvement Association, or the pertinent Agricultural Ministry e.g., the Texas Department of Agriculture, shall constitute proof.)
- (b) not contain any dyes; and
- (c) only be manufactured with allowable additives at any point in the manufacturing process (including planting, harvesting, processing of raw cotton, converting to yarn, producing knits and fabric, and manufacturing clothing).

Verification

- 5. To verify a claim that a product meets the criteria listed in this document, the ECP will require access, as is its normal practice, to relevant quality control and production records and the right of access to production facilities on an announced basis.
- 6. Compliance with requirement 3(b) shall be attested to by a signed statement of the Chief Executive Officer or the equivalent officer of the licensee. The ECP shall be advised in writing immediately by the licensee of any noncompliance which may occur during the term of the license. On the occurrence of any noncompliance, the license may be suspended or terminated as stipulated in the license agreement.

Conditions for EcoLogo Use

- 7. The EcoLogo may appear on wholesale or retail packaging, or on the product itself, provided that the product meets the requirements in this guideline.
- 8. It is recommended that a criteria statement appear with the EcoLogo whenever the EcoLogo is used in association with the *clothing made from certified organic cotton*. The intent of this statement is to provide clarification as to why the product was certified and to indicate constraints to which the certification is limited. This is to ensure no ambiguity over, or misrepresentation of, the reason(s) for certification.

ECP suggested criteria statement wording for this product type is “*Clothing made from Certified Organic Cotton*”. The licensee may propose other wording for the criteria statement, but any such proposed wording must be approved by the Environmental Choice Program.

- 9. All licensees and authorized users must comply with the Environmental Choice Program's *Guide to Proper Use of the EcoLogo^M* regarding the format and usage of the EcoLogo.
- 10. Any accompanying advertising must conform with the relevant requirements stipulated in this guideline, the license agreement and the Environmental Choice Program's *Guide to Proper Use of the EcoLogo^M*.



For more information about the EcoLogoTM Program, please direct your inquiry to:
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