

**Max Havelaar – The Label for Fair Trade.
And for cotton too.**

The Max Havelaar Foundation (Switzerland) was founded in 1992 by the six large Swiss charities Brot für alle, Caritas, Fastenopfer, HEKS, Helvetas and Swissaid. It promotes the consumption of products from disadvantaged regions which are fairly traded and produced according to strict social and ecological criteria. These goods then receive the Max Havelaar label. The foundation does not itself engage in trade. The Max Havelaar Foundation belongs to the international association Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) and is a member of Swiss Fairtrade.



Strict Standards, Independent Controls

Products bearing the Max Havelaar label are produced and traded according to the international standards of the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO). These cover terms of trade, social criteria and environmental aspects. The independent, ISO 65 accredited certification organization FLO-CERT checks that these standards are kept.

Transparent Processes

The Fairtrade standards for cotton require proof that the key working standards of the ILO are respected in all stages of processing, from ginning (separating the seeds from the pod) to spinning, dyeing, knitting or weaving, and garment production.

A Wide Collection

Fairly traded textiles and cotton products are available in a wide range of colors and forms, from socks for ladies, men and babies to T-shirts, bed linen, underwear, pajamas and jeans. The collection is being expanded constantly. Ask for fair trade cotton. In the hotel and restaurant industry too.

Fairtrade Cotton and Organic Cotton Combined

More and more frequently, Fairtrade cotton is being combined with organic cotton. Organically produced cotton also receives a label certifying that it is from organically grown crops. This has the following additional advantages:

- Chemical fertilizers and sprays are not permitted
- Groundwater is not polluted
- Soil quality is improved – leading to more stable yields



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Max Havelaar
Foundation (Switzerland)
Malzgasse 25, 4052 Basel
Phone +41 61 271 75 00
Fax +41 61 271 75 62
info@maxhavelaar.ch
www.maxhavelaar.ch

“The women used to be afraid to say anything. Today we women contribute our ideas – and the men listen to us.”

Aïssatou Koné, organic cotton farmer, Mali



Why Fair Trade Cotton?

Cotton is the most important natural textile fiber. Yet its price on the world markets has fallen continuously over the past few years. The industrialized nations support their domestic cotton production with subsidies, which means that small-scale farmers in developing nations, who are not supported by their governments, can barely manage to cover their production costs. They receive less and less money for the hard work they do. Fair trade stops this development and gives small-scale farmers in the South the opportunity to earn a decent living.

The Advantages of Fairtrade

- Higher cotton prices, farming methods which respect the environment and a premium for social and technical investments for small-scale farmers in disadvantaged regions.
- Social action, differentiation and a positive image for the trading partners in the North.
- High-quality products and high levels of satisfaction for consumers.

Fair Trade Strengthens the South

Sales prices which ensure a living wage, a Fairtrade premium for projects the farmers themselves decide upon, long-term trade relations and direct market access are the four key aspects of fair trade. The Fairtrade system enables both small-scale farmers and workers to organize themselves better, formulate their needs and put these into practice. Step by step towards greater development and autonomy in the South.

Examples of Successful Fairtrade Premium Projects

- Storehouses for the cotton
- Construction of wells and rainwater collection tanks
- Educational projects and school materials for children, youths and adults

