

With Cotton LEADS™ Program Cotton Inc. Charts A Path We'll Follow

At Barnhardt Natural Fibers Group, we're excited to announce that we've joined the Cotton LEADS™ program. In October of last year, [Cotton Australia](#) and [Cotton Incorporated](#) released a press release announcing a joint program "to raise awareness of the responsible growing practices among cotton producers in Australia and the United States."

Called Cotton LEADS™, the program is aimed at textile brands, retailers, and manufacturers committed to sourcing cotton that is grown in a responsible and transparent manner. Validating the Cotton LEADS™ program are the national-level oversight, regulatory enforcement, and transparency of practices common to both countries. Combined, Australia and the United States account for roughly 17% of global cotton production.

As a company we support this foundation that the program has started with, and we're proud to be a valued partner. Obviously, this is a program we can get behind 110%. With our [TCF practices](#) and cotton's inherent [sustainability](#), we're committed to ensuring consumers receive only the purest cotton possible. That's why the decision to throw our support behind this initiative was one that took all of two seconds.

Here's a little more from the king of cotton at the time of that October press release:

"Cotton LEADS™ is designed to assist businesses along the cotton supply chain with their sustainability goals," says Berrye Worsham, President and CEO of Cotton Incorporated.

“Apparel brands, retailers, and manufacturers require large volumes and a reliable supply of responsibly-produced fiber, as well as proof of responsible production. Through Cotton LEADS we demonstrate how cotton grown in the United States and Australia can help meet these requirements,” adds Worsham.

The program also shared five core principles, all of which came with considerable detail:

COMMITMENT: to the social, environmental, economic, and regulatory factors to produce world-class cotton.

RECOGNITION: that sustainable and responsible cotton production requires continual improvement, investment, research, and sharing of best practices information among growers and industry.

UNDERSTANDING: that leading change in responsible and sustainable cotton practices will have the most positive impact when implemented in collaboration with farm, regional, national and international programs.

BELIEF: in the benefit of working cooperatively with similar programs that seek to advance responsible and sustainable cotton production in an effort to keep global cotton competitive in world fiber markets.

CONFIDENCE: in a cotton identification system that ensures traceability from farm to manufacturer.

As of now, Cotton LEADS™ currently has two member nations: Australia and the United States. A committee comprised of three members from each member nation, and two members from partnering industry organizations, will guide activities and the use of program funds. To learn more, visit the program’s [official website](#).