



The Southern India Mills' Association

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NEWS CLIPPINGS –17-05-2018

FOSTTA oppose hike in job charges by textile processors

Times of India

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/surat/fostta-oppose-hike-in-job-charges-by-textile-processors/articleshow/64196292.cms>

Surat: The Federation of Surat Textile Traders Association (FOSTTA) has threatened to challenge the decision of the South Gujarat Textile Processors' Association (SGTPA) before the anti-profiteering and the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for illegally increasing the job charges in the range of Rs 2 to Rs 4 per meter on the finished fabrics on Wednesday.

Two days ago, the SGTPA had announced that the textile processors have unanimously decided to to revise the job charge rates with an increase of 15% on the finished fabrics. The hike was announced due to the increase in the input raw material costs by almost 25% in chemicals, dyes, coal and workers' wages.

FOSTTA office-bearers stated that the textile processors have been enjoying input tax credit (ITC) on the 5% GST on the job work of the finished fabrics. The benefit of ITC is not extended to the powerloom weavers and the traders. Until now, the textile processors have been given ITC refund to the tune of Rs 350 crore. With such huge benefits under GST, the increase in job charges is totally illegal.

"Textile processors have ganged up to increase the job charges, which is against the anti-profiteering standards set by the government. At present, the textile business is down by almost 40%," said secretary of FOSTTA, Champalal Bothra.

He added, "We have urged the textile traders to reject the decision of textile processors and that they should come on the table to discuss the hike in the job charges with valid reasons."

India's apparel exports decline 22.76% in April

Fibre 2 Fashion

<http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/apparel-news/india-s-apparel-exports-decline-22-76-in-april-242244-newsdetails.htm>

India's apparel exports in April 2018 were to the tune of \$1.34 billion, registering a decline of 22.76 per cent against exports of \$1.74 billion in the corresponding month of last year, as per the latest trade data. In rupee terms, exports for the month of April 2018 stood at ₹8,859.67 crore against ₹11,272.24 crore in April 2017, down 21.4 per cent.

"The exports are in a negative territory since October due to a declining trend in the global apparel industry. The high base effect has been due to the release of rebate of state levies (RoSL) amount during April 2017 but the continued backlog in GST and RoSL is affecting the sentiments. We would like the government to address the issue at the earliest to reverse the trend of stagnating exports," said HKL Magu, chairman, Apparel Export Promotion Council

(AEPC). In fiscal 2017-18 that ended on March 31, India's apparel exports fetched \$16.71 billion, a decline of 3.83 per cent compared to exports of \$17.38 billion in the previous financial year.

Demand for eco-friendly fabrics propels organic cotton farming in India

The Quint

<https://www.thequint.com/hotwire-text/demand-for-eco-friendly-fabrics-propels-organic-cotton-farming-in-india>

Bhopal, May 16 (IANS) Barku Jairam, a 55-year-old farmer from Barwani of Madhya Pradesh, has taken up cultivating organic cotton, which he claims, has significantly brought down input costs besides ensuring a decent yield.

The demand for organic cotton from global apparel companies has prompted 1,000-odd farmers in the state to switch to eco-farming to grow cotton using bio-fertilisers and pesticides manufactured from medicinal plants.

The C&A foundation -- the corporate foundation of fashion retail clothing chain C&A -- has tied up with a few non-profits in the country to promote organic cotton farming as a part of its efforts to procure sustainable raw material for its business. Although yields from organic farming are lower than by using Genetically Modified (GM) seed, chemical fertilisers and pesticides, the negligible input cost makes it a profitable business, Jairam said.

"Till three years ago, I would earn up to Rs 27,000 per acre when I used GM hybrid seeds but the input cost would be around Rs 20,000 due to expensive chemical pesticides and fertilisers.

"Now, I earn around Rs 20,000 per acre but the input cost has reduced to just Rs 5,000," Jairam told IANS.

Farmers like Jairam produce bio-fertiliser for free from manure and agricultural waste from their fields and pesticides from extracts of medicinal plants such as neem, karanj (pongamia), ratanjot (alkanet root), besharam (ipomoea) and custard apple leaves along with cow urine.

Non-profits Aga Khan Foundation and Action for Social Advancement are helping the C&A Foundation in promoting and procuring organic cotton. According to the Union Agriculture Ministry, 30.01 million bales (of 170 kg each) of cotton -- roughly 5.1 billion tonnes -- were produced in the country in 2015-16. The ministry, however, doesn't give out the breakup of organically grown cotton vs other methods.

At 60,184 tonnes, India was the largest organic cotton producer in the world in 2015-16, accounting for 56 per cent of the total production of 107,980 tonnes while Madhya Pradesh accounted for 24 per cent, as per the C&A Foundation. Organic cotton accounted for less than one per cent of cotton produced globally.

Another farmer, Dhansingh Ghana, said hybrid seeds for organic farming were provided for free for first three years by the foundation as incentives to make them self-reliant. "Even if we will have to pay for seeds now, the input cost would not be much as major components such as bio-fertilisers and pesticides are still free," said Ghana.

According to these farmers, who had come to the state's capital Bhopal to attend an event on organic farming, the foundation gave them Rs 200-300 more per quintal when compared with the government rates.

Anita Chester, Head of Sustainable Raw Materials of C&A Foundation, said the negative impact of climate change has

driven brands across the globe to look for sustainable alternatives.

"The way climate change is impacting all of us, the whole industry thinks that the businesses have to be more responsible. "In this inequitable world, there is growing consciousness that there has to be more equity in what we do. This is what drives the brands to push themselves and set targets to source sustainable materials," she said.

Organic cotton production needs 93 per cent less water as compared to the conventional cotton cultivation, according to the foundation. It also said the climate change impact is of 338.5 kg CO2 equivalent by organic cotton as opposed to 680.2 kg CO2 equivalent by conventional cotton.

The brands have sustainability commitment and so the demand for organic material is very strong now, said Chester.

"They are giving clear signal that organic is important and special. So it needs to grow," she said. Chester said her foundation supports the farmers who want to go organic through capacity building and helping them in getting certification, which helps them to link with the markets.

While there are hurdles such as non-availability of seeds, lack of input agencies, poor market links for organic farming, the foundation is bringing all stakeholders, including the government to cross the barriers, she said.

Faiz Kidwai, Managing Director of the Madhya Pradesh Agriculture Marketing Board, sought a fixed price for farmers to promote organic cotton. "There is a huge potential for organic farming in the state but farmers are not keen on doing it because they do not see any benefits due to lack of market, supply chain or value chain.

"We will have to assure fixed market price to bring them on board," Faiz told reporters on the sidelines of the event.

**FICO delegation meets commerce minister
Prabhu**

Tribune India

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/ludhiana/fico-delegation-meets-commerce-minister-prabhu/590502.html>

The Federation of Industrial and Commercial Organisation (FICO) president, Gurmeet Singh Kular, along with secretary Rajeev Jain and other members of the body met the Commerce, Industry and Civil Aviation Minister, Suresh Prabhu, in New Delhi on Wednesday. They apprised minister about China cycle industry entering India through PBS bicycles. Besides, delegates discussed several other industry-related issues with the minister, which included hike in steel prices, upgradation of Ludhiana airport and technology fund scheme among other things.

"The steel prices have risen by Rs 15,000 to 20,000 per tonne, which is totally unjustified for the MSMEs. Micro and small industry is incurring huge losses nationally and internationally," said Kular.

"As previous orders are pending, industry has to purchase steel and iron at new prices, which means incurring losses," he added.

"Ludhiana is the financial capital of Punjab and Manchester of India. The town is hub of textile, hosiery, bicycle and sewing machine industries. Products of all these industries are sold all over India and exported globally," said Kular and Jain.

“Unfortunately, the Ludhiana airport is in miserable condition. The city needs frequent flights to New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore as industry representative have to travel frequently. At least three flights are required to and fro from the city to Delhi,” they added.

“FICO has taken two successful delegations to China for exhibitions ‘China Plas 2018’ and ‘The China International Bicycle and Motor Fair 2018’ in April and May, respectively. Numerous bicycles dumped on road sides in China are now being exported to our country by companies, including Orange, OFO, MoBike, which are into public bike sharing (PBS),” they said. “FICO is not against the PBS, but dumping these Chinese bikes in India will result in closure of indigenous bicycle manufacturers. The government should look into the matter and stop dumping of cheap Chinese PBS bicycles in India,” added Kular and Jain.

ImpactPPA Partners with Indian Government to Power 50 Million Rural Jobs

Bitcoin Magazine

<https://bitcoinmagazine.com/articles/impactppa-partners-indian-government-power-50-million-rural-jobs/>

Decentralized energy platform ImpactPPA announced at Consensus 2018 in New York City that it has partnered with the Indian government to re-energize India’s cottage industry.

Under the auspice of the Honorable Minister Shri Giriraj Singh, ImpactPPA will be working with India’s Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to carry out the government’s Bhartiya Harit Khadi Gramodaya Sansthan (BHKGS) initiative. Translated roughly as “Indian Green Cotton Textile Village Development Organization,” the initiative will push to introduce some 50 million jobs for female workers in India’s more rural states.

Starting in Khanwan village in Bihar, the program plans to install textile looms in the homes of women workers. Per the partnership, ImpactPPA is charged with delivering renewable energy to power these looms, using the Ethereum blockchain to manage supply-chain logistics for the initiative.

“It’s an honor to work with the government of India to deploy out technology solutions,” Dan Bates, CEO of ImpactPPA, said in a statement. “A project of this scope clearly demonstrates that the use of renewable energy and blockchain technology has reached the mainstream. This partnership perfectly aligns with our fundamental mission to help improve quality of life with energy as the engine for social good and greater economic justice.”

The project estimates that its female workers could generate 8,000–10,000 rupees (~\$115–145 USD) a month right out of their homes. This would mean that some families could experience a 60 percent increase to their monthly incomes, as the joint monthly income for families in some of India’s poorest villages just barely clears 7,000 rupees (~\$100 USD).

Come June, the program expects to unveil the first iteration of its project, ushering in the milestone with a ribbon-cutting ceremony by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The inaugural facility in Khanawa will consume 100 KW of energy provided by ImpactPPA, as well as 2 KW systems to deploy the facility’s solar-powered looms.

“Having worked with the government of India on various solutions and projects for social impact, this alliance is a game-changer,” remarked Aradhana Singh, CEO and managing director of Sarang Services Pvt. Ltd., a company serving as India’s domestic partner for the project. “We are thrilled that ImpactPPA will be the provider of energy

and blockchain technology and services for the project, bringing tangible economic growth opportunities while advocating women's empowerment."

ImpactPPA's Mission and Story

With a history of providing renewable energy to underdeveloped areas for over 10 years, ImpactPPA wants to cut through the bureaucratic processes that it claims keeps clean, reliable energy from circulating in areas that need it most.

ImpactPPA plans to cut through the red tape of centralized NGOs and governments with its distributed platform and token (MPAQ). Through a combination of blockchain technology, smart contracts and its SmartPPA energy protocol, the project will streamline energy financing by allowing anyone to submit a project proposal to the network for consideration. Community members can then vote on which projects should see funding with the MPAQ token. If approved, ImpactPPA can then easily deploy energy to electricity anchors, called smart meters, whose data is connected to the blockchain.

ImpactPPA believes that its tokenized model can free energy innovations and electrical infrastructure projects from outdated financing processes. Most of all, it seeks to serve the underprivileged and destitute, as it envisions a future in which energy projects can easily enter into poorer areas thanks to a decentralized, global approach to funding and approval.

Fixed-Term Employment: Now Open to All Employers in India	India Briefing https://www.india-briefing.com/news/fixed-term-employment-now-open-all-employers-india-16839.html/
<p>India's federal labor department official announced an amendment to the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946 to formalize fixed-term employment.</p> <p>The amended Rules allows all types of firms in India to hire workers for a specific time period in all industries, depending on their requirements. Previously, this option was only available to employers in the apparel manufacturing sector.</p> <p>The law improves working conditions for short-term employees and offers flexibility in hiring for employers, which in turn formalizes human resource (HR) practices in the country. Further, it is hoped that the move will reflect unemployment rates in India more accurately by bringing in more employees in the unorganized sector under the ambit of a formal legal arrangement.</p> <p>This is important as the unorganized sector accounts for more than 80 percent of India's economy, and is often under-regulated. Daily wage and contract workers in this sector are often deprived of decent and secure working conditions due to being outside regulatory purview.</p> <p>To redress these long-standing grievances and the exploitation of temporary labor, the federal government proposed extending the fixed-term labor provision to all sectors in the 2018 Union Budget.</p>	

What is fixed-term employment?

The category of fixed-term employees is an addition to the previous categories of workers stated in the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules. They provide the framework for implementing the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, which can be found [here](#).

The Central Rules regulate a company's employment policies for: permanent or temporary workers, apprentices, probationers, or 'badli' workers (temporary worker employed in place of an absent permanent worker).

The rules provide details relating to the classification of workers, periods and hours of work, holidays, paydays, wage rates, and other conditions of employment.

These have to further be in line with all other federal (central) laws in India, such as The Minimum Wage Act of 1948 and state legislation, such as the Maharashtra Shops and Establishments Rules, 2018.

If the number of employees in a company exceeds 100 (this number may differ state-wise), the company may establish their own policies while complying with federal employment and labor rules. This is done through a tripartite agreement (standing order) between the government representative (state labor commission), the employees (labor unions), and the employer (company). The certification of these standing orders is only applicable once all three parties are satisfied.

Impact on India's hiring practices

Seasonality and variation in demand patterns are a cause of concern for most companies in India. Legalizing fixed-term employment thus offers clear scope for flexibility in hiring practices for firms, whereby they can match the number of workers with the actual requirement. Companies can cut costs during lean seasons by employing workers on fixed-term contracts.

Previously, companies would use external contractors to employ short-term labor. Now, they will be able to hire directly from the market, reducing intermediary costs and, more importantly, creating transparency in the employment process. In addition, employers will not be required to pay in lieu of termination for non-renewal of the contract or expiry of the term of employment.

The law is also a positive for employees – it enables workers to be in control of their employment terms and obligations, under regulated conditions.

Formalized fixed-term hires will also ease short-term unemployment in the country. It bears noting that permanent employees will remain protected as the amendment prohibits companies from converting their permanent employees to fixed-term contracts.

Other key features of the reform are:

Fixed-term workers must receive benefits such as the minimum wage, provident fund contributions, and other

statutory benefits and allowances.

These are required to be at par with permanent employees and paid on a proportional (pro-rata) basis, depending on the length of employment.

Labor law compliance in India

Foreign companies, especially those invested in labor-intensive industries, such as the manufacturing of goods, should take particular note of this labor reform.

Organizations planning to expand into India may keep in mind the following best practices for managing their human resources:

Stay updated with laws and amendments – these are expected to change further in 2018-2019 as the federal government aims to organize multiple labor laws into four main legal codes.

HR policies should be updated frequently in line with changes to the law.

Employees must be updated whenever any changes are introduced in the labor law to avoid confusion, strikes, or be exposed to legal challenges.

Periodic HR newsletters introducing and explaining any pertinent company policy changes.

New recruits should be briefed comprehensively on company HR rules, hiring practices, and policies to ensure transparency in the communication between management and personnel.

Formal procedures for communication with labor unions or workmen representatives should be in place.

Legality of all clauses in contracts with employees should be ensured.

Formalizing labor in India, improving working conditions

The change in the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules comes at a time when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led federal government is facing criticism for failing to create enough jobs and improve working conditions, as promised in their 2014 election manifesto.

As India approaches another general election year (in 2019), labor reforms are viewed as a priority to bring down unemployment rates. Whether or not these reforms will improve the ground realities of employment conditions in India remains uncertain.

National labor unions oppose the fixed-term amendment, criticizing the government's arbitrary decision to push through reforms without discussion. Unions fear that the job security of permanent employees could be at risk due to improper execution of the law.

The BJP government instead insists that these amendments will improve the ease of doing business in India and will

incentivize greater foreign investment. Further, it will provide both employers and employees the tools to cope with the complexities of the changing business environment, allowing job seekers to tap into short-term opportunities with greater confidence.

Employment law practitioner Tushar Chowdhary, Kochhar & Co., explains how the latest labor law amendment is a positive development for India.

He says, “while the reforms are primarily employer friendly, they also extend statutory benefits to fixed-term employees (on a pro-rata basis) when these were previously only offered to permanent employees. Employers can now hire any number of employees based on the duration of the project or for any temporary assignment, and irrespective of the industrial sector, under a fixed-term contract, without fear of legal repercussions. Fixed-term employees will also not be entitled to any retrenchment compensation or notice period, other than that provided in the contract”.

On the nature of labor law compliance in India, Chowdhary puts in a word of caution for foreign investors. He explains, “businesses in India have to comply with a wide variety of labor legislation dealing with wages, health safety and welfare, social security, and employee disputes. While doing business in India, foreign firms must consider the nature of their industry, territory in which the industry is located, and number of employees employed in the industry to ensure full compliance with labor laws”.

FIEO expresses concern over negative growth in labour intensive, MSME sectors	UNN India http://www.uniindia.com/~fieo-expresses-concern-over-negative-growth-in-labour-intensive-msme-sectors/States/news/1232480.html
<p>The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO Southern Region on Wednesday said negative growth in labour intensive and MSME dominated sectors was a deep concern of the economy and needs to be arrested immediately by taking all possible remedial measures.</p> <p>In a statement here, FIEO Southern Region Chairman A Sakthivel, referring to the trade data for April 2018, said MSME faces serious hurdles due to increase in operational costs, which included non-availability of funds in time, cost of funds pending GST claims, etc apart from various hurdles faced in major markets and stiff competition form neighbouring countries.</p> <p>While referring to the alarming negative growth for readymade garment sector which showed a negative growth of 24. 40 compared to same month last year, he urged the government to reinstate ROSL at old rate by including embodied taxes and disburse all pending claims immediately. Dr Sakthivel also said that irrespective of best efforts by the Officials and the department, pending refund claims were a mystery due to GSTN issue and non-integration of data.</p>	

Textile & dyeing projects unwelcome because of environmental risks

Vietnam Posts

<http://vietnamposts.net/science-and-education/environment/336202-textile-dyeing-projects-unwelcome-because-of-environmental-risks.html>

Investors in the textile and garment industry are complaining that local authorities are turning down new textile and dyeing projects for fear of pollution

Only 8.3 percent of FDI capital is used for textile and dyeing factories

One of the biggest problems of the textile and garment industry, as pointed out by analysts, is the imbalance in investments in different links of the production chain. While 90 percent of total FDI (foreign direct investment) into the industry is poured into garment projects, only 8.3 percent of capital is used for textile and dyeing factories.

With the imbalance, Vietnam may not be able to take full advantage of CPTPP and other FTAs (free trade agreement) which all set requirements on the proportion of materials made in Vietnam and FTA-member countries.

Making higher investments in textile and dyeing, therefore, is a solution to help settle the problems of the industry. However, it is difficult to implement the plan.

Local authorities have become 'reluctant' to license textile and dyeing projects because of the concern about pollution. While they compete fiercely with each other to attract investment projects to their localities, they tend to ignore textile and dyeing projects.

Three years ago, Da Nang authorities stirred up the public when refusing a textile, dyeing and garment project registered by a Chinese enterprise, despite huge investment capital of \$200 million.

Dong Nai and Ba Ria-Vung Tau provinces in the south have put textile and dyeing on the list of business fields in which they don't encourage investment.

The Dong Nai provincial authorities disagreed on the registration for production expansion made by J.M Textile in Long Thanh IZ in Long Thanh district.

The waste water treatment system in the Long Thanh IZ runs at nearly full capacity, while the volume of waste water treatment from textile and dyeing factories are very big and it is not easy to treat waste to obtain standard waste water.

Dong Nai authorities decided to reject production expansion to protect rivers and streams in the province.

The \$350 million textile and dyeing project registered by TAL Group is reportedly still on the table of Vinh Phuc high ranking officials.

It is still unclear if the project will get the operation license. Meanwhile, experts and scientists attending a workshop discussing the possible impact of the project on the environment, recommended that local authorities say 'no' to the

project.

The Vietnam Textile & Apparel Association (Vitas) is concerned as more localities are not licensing textile and dyeing projects. "If local authorities continue refusing textile and dyeing projects, Vietnam will have to continue doing outsourcing for foreign partners, because it doesn't have fiber and fabric for export," said Truong Van Cam, deputy chair of Vitas.

Spinning sector greatly contributes to textile export

The Voice of Vietnam

<http://english.vov.vn/trade/spinning-sector-greatly-contributes-to-textile-export-374798.vov>

In 2017, Vietnam earned US\$31 billion from exporting textiles and garment products, fibre, cotton and materials, of which exports of fibre contributed US\$3.59 billion, up 22.7% year-on-year.

Nguyen Thi Tuyet Mai, vice general secretary and chief representative of the Vietnam Textile and Garment Association (VITAS) in HCM City said in addition to traditional textiles products, high value-added items such as fabrics, fibre and yarn and textiles and garments accessories have grown well in the first months of 2018.

Notably, Vietnam's fibre and yarn export alone reached US\$906 million in the first quarter of 2018, up 16.5% year-on-year.

Nguyen Binh An, General Secretary of the Vietnam Cotton and Spinning Association, said prior to 2000, the spinning sector's production scale reached only 1 million spindles but its capacity was raised to 3.7 million spindles in 2007 and 7 million spindles at present.

Two thirds of yarn produced in Vietnam is for export now, with the main importers being China, Turkey and European and American countries.

Mai said the production scale of Vietnam's spinning industry would become bigger in the future thanks to advantages brought by free trade agreements the country has joined.

Vietnam is seen as an ideal destination for foreign-invested spinning projects. The Republic of Korea, China and Hong Kong (China) are leading investors of spinning factories in Vietnam. Japan also outsources yarn products to Vietnam.

In 2017, Vietnam exported 700,000 tonnes of fibre and yarn to China.

Experts said many foreign enterprises have invested in Vietnam's garment and textile industry to exploit opportunities after the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement was signed.

The prospects for exhibitors and visitors at Techtextil 2019 are good: some twelve months before the start of the leading international trade fair for technical textiles and nonwovens (14 to 17 May 2019), the number of registrations is already significantly higher than the figure for a comparable stage in the run-up to the last show.

“Every two years, Techtextil in Frankfurt becomes the focal point of all the pioneering thinkers, manufacturers and users in the field of high-tech textile products. Our trade mark is the sheer variety of textile solutions that find uses way beyond sector boundaries. The outstanding figures for registrations underscores the value that the international community places on Techtextil,” says Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textiles and Textile Technologies at Messe Frankfurt.

Currently, exhibitors from 44 different countries have opted to take part in Techtextil. Twelve countries have already registered joint / national stands: Belgium, China, Czech Republic, France, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey and USA. The manufacturers represent the entire spectrum of technical textiles and nonwovens. There is particularly strong representation in fields relating to fibre-based products for industry, architecture and construction, apparel, vehicles and transport, medicine, sport and hazard protection. Exhibitors already include, amongst others, AG Cilander, Freudenberg, Hyosung, Iben Textilverke, Kordsa, Lenzing, Olbo & Mehler Tex, Porcher, Peppermint Holding, PHP Fibres, Sandler, Sattler Pro-Tex, Schoeller, Sioen and Tenowo.

Visitors will also be offered a broad product range in the field of textile machinery, where all international market leaders such as Dilo, Groz-Beckert, Huntsman, Karl Mayer, Lindauer Dornier, Monforts and Trützschler, will be present. Additionally, the joint stands organised by the professional associations ACIMIT (Italy) and the BTMA (Great Britain), will again be showcasing an extensive spectrum of technologies, processes and accessories

Held in parallel to Techtextil, Texprocess, the leading trade fair for the processing of technical textiles and apparel fabrics, will provide in-depth insights into all stages of textile processing. Texprocess, too, continues to grow and also reports outstanding registration figures. Techtextil 2017 was visited by 33,670 trade visitors from 104 countries. In addition, at least another 7,091 such visitors came across from the concurrently held Texprocess.

Changed Exhibition Centre Layout

Because of the building work being undertaken at Messe Frankfurt’s Trade Fair and Exhibition Centre, there will be a slight change to the exhibition layout of Techtextil and Texprocess. Related to this is the fact that there will, for the first time, be a shared hall that includes Techtextil exhibitors with a focus on functional apparel fabrics and exhibitors at Texprocess involved in fabric treatment and finishing. This hall will also house the ‘Digital Textile Micro Factory’, which will showcase a completely integrated and networked production line for apparel, as well as – for the first time – for technical textiles in other applications, too. In this hall, then, visitors will have an insight into the entire production process, from material to finished product.

Zimbabwe: 10% Export Incentive for Cotton Growers

All of Africa

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201805150603.html>

Cotton growers will be paid an export incentive of 10 percent as Government moves to boost production of the crop.

In a statement yesterday Reserve Bank governor, Dr John Mangudya, said farmers will also get \$40 cash per each bale sold with the balance being deposited into the grower's account or mobile wallet account. "In preparation of the impending cotton marketing season, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe wishes to advise cotton growers, cotton merchants and other stakeholders on the financing arrangements for the 2018 season. "Cotton growers shall be paid an export incentive of 10 percent which shall be paid on a monthly basis through bank accounts or mobile money services. "In this regard, cotton merchants are asked to submit to the Reserve Bank, the list of growers and their respective account details by the 7th of each month for which the incentive is being claimed," he said Cotton growers will be paid an export incentive of 10 percent as Government moves to boost production of the crop.

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Cotton is an important crop and farmers require sufficient funding. It provides raw materials for the textile industry, cooking oil and stock feeds manufacturers. Cotton production has for the past season been funded under the Presidential Inputs Scheme. The scheme was meant to go for three years, but cotton growers have appealed to Government to extend it.

Over 1 mn cotton bales produced by US farms under BCI

Fibre 2 Fashion

<http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/over-1-mn-cotton-bales-produced-by-us-farms-under-bci-242238-newsdetails.htm>

More than one million bales of cotton (236,000 metric tonnes) were produced by farms in the Better Cotton licensing programme under the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) in 2017. This marked the end of BCI's fourth season in the US. Key to BCI's rapid growth has been an innovative 'group assurance' approach to managing the requirements for participating farms.

BCI, a global not-for-profit organisation, is the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world.

"We launched in the United States in 2014, in response to our retailer and brand members, who wanted to source US grown cotton that meets the Better Cotton Standard for social and environmental performance," said Scott Exo, BCI USA country manager. "Since then, along with our industry partners, we've now grown to include 366 farmers in 14 states, who now grow five per cent of US cotton."

Key to BCI's rapid growth in the US has been an innovative 'group assurance' approach to managing the requirements for participating farms. Growers participate as a part of a grower group, joining together with other growers in their area. A BCI Group Assurance Implementing Partner — typically from a coop, merchant, gin or grower association — provides farm-level support, helps growers understand licensing requirements, gathers data, conducts farm monitoring and coordinates third-party verification. BCI provides training and support to the partners.

Among the partners now managing BCI assurance groups are US offices of all the major global cotton trading companies, as well as several regional merchants, marketing coops and one Texas gin. And several local gin managers are helping with data-gathering and verification visits.

Exo said, "The group approach has enabled merchants and others to respond to this demand by helping farmers participate, but it also holds great potential to advance a fundamental goal of the BCI programme - continuous improvement.

"Nearly all US farms meet the core requirements for licensing. But unlike many other certification programmes, which merely emphasise compliance, the Better Cotton Standard System also measures and encourages ongoing improvements, in things like water stewardship, soil health, and worker well-being. BCI participation creates a framework to assess and accelerate improvement, with the active encouragement of our partners."

Cheryl Luther, manager at Black Oak Gin in NE Arkansas, has been working with the BCI programme since its first year in the US. She said, "I've encouraged our farmers to participate as a way to benchmark themselves against globally recognised standards, set goals for ongoing improvements, and meet growing expectations from brands, retailers and their customers—not just about where their cotton comes from, but how it's grown. And it adds the increasingly important layer of independent verification."

Rapid growth in the number of US BCI partners, farms and bales is in direct response to parallel growth in BCI retailers and brand members, many of whom are setting aggressive targets for their use of Better Cotton. In the last three years, North American brands like Target, Gap, Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Guess, Williams-Sonoma and others have joined earlier BCI members like Nike, American Eagle Outfitters, ANN, VF Group and Levi Strauss.