



## Fairtrade Certified Cotton Composite Products Policy Version: March 2011

### 1. Objectives

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

Fairtrade America does however recognize 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 the Fairtrade labelling system

### 2. Scope

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

- A) 100 % cotton fabric products**
- B) Blended textile fiber products**
- C) Multi-component textile products**
- D) Multi-component textile and non-textile products**

### 3. Definitions

Blended fabrics containing cotton: when blended with other fibers, 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 fibers and/or mixing yarns of different composition.

### Exclusions

Fairtrade America'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

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 America will accept a blended textile fiber lining (see Category B) where the cotton must comprise at least 50% (by weight) of the finished product.

**4. Please use the table to determine the category your product belongs to and refer to the guidelines**

Category	Is the product composition	Description and examples	Qualifying statements
<b>Category A</b>	100% cotton	Products made with 100% Fairtrade cotton <b>i.e. towels.</b>	All cotton in this product is Fairtrade cotton.
<b>Category B</b>	Blended fibers	Products made with Fairtrade cotton blended with other fibers <b>i.e. 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 C</b>	Multi component textiles	Product made with Fairtrade cotton parts combined with other textile parts <b>i.e. 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 nontextile	Product made with Fairtrade cotton parts combined with nontextile parts <b>i.e. cotton canvas runners.</b>	A significant part of the product is cotton. All cotton in this product is Fairtrade cotton.

**5. Guidelines**

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

- (i) All the cotton used within the product must be sourced from Fairtrade certified producer organizations.
- (ii) The licensee must ensure that the product is compliant with all relevant legislation.

**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 (i) above, all of the cotton used in the finished product must be sourced from a Fairtrade certified producer organization

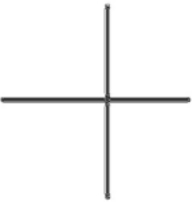
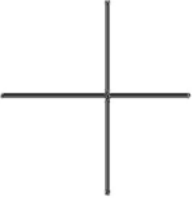
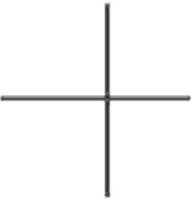
**Category B: Blended textile fiber products:**

This category covers products made of cotton **blended** with other fibers or other yarns; example are polycotton pillowcases or cotton/lycra jeans.

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

We acknowledge for function reasons that the composition of the finished product can be achieved in different ways, either by blending the fibers 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;

Weft 65/35 poly/Fairtrade certified cotton		<b>Fairtrade approved</b>
	Warp 100 Fairtrade certified cotton	
	Weft 50/50 poly/Fairtrade certified cotton	<b>Fairtrade approved</b>
	Warp 50/50 poly/ Fairtrade certified cotton	
	Weft 65/35 poly/Fairtrade certified cotton	<b>Not Fairtrade approved</b>
	Warp 65/35 poly/Fairtrade certified cotton	

**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 nonfilled 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 characterized by being made of cotton. This will be assessed by Fairtrade America, with reference to the Certification Committee if required, using the following criteria as a guide:

- Would the consumer perceive it to be a cotton product?

*Examples:*

- a. Filled products such as duvets and pillows made with 100% cotton cover and hollowfibre 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 fiber 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 runners and garden umbrellas.

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 characterized by being made of cotton. This will be assessed by Fairtrade America, with reference to the FLO-CERT if required, using the following criteria as a guide:

- Are as many components as possible made from cotton?

*Examples:*

- a) Shoes made of leather or synthetic uppers with cotton laces and inner 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 umbrella made with a 100% cotton shade would also 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 Fairtrade component of the product should be clearly identified and described on all labelling and packaging in accordance with the Fairtrade America Packaging Manual.

Where different components are made of different materials, these should be identified separately and must be labelled according to relevant legislation.

## 7. Decision-making

Fairtrade America 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 America 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.



In recognition of the subjective nature of the composite product rules in relation to multi-component products, Fairtrade America will maintain a record of all successful multi-component product-labelling applications together with the rationale underpinning the decision.