

Ban on cotton from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan

Warehouse has banned cotton fibre and fabric from both Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. This is due to ongoing concerns of forced labour and, in some cases, child labour. Suppliers of either samples or bulk product, whether 100% cotton or a cotton blend, must ensure they can trace the raw material to the country of origin to ensure no cotton from Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan is used in our products.

We recognise that there may be complexities in identifying the country of origin but, as responsible companies, we believe it is necessary to take proactive steps to ensure neither Uzbek nor Turkmen cotton is used. We therefore ask suppliers for their co-operation and support in this endeavour.

Suppliers are required to:

1. Communicate this policy to senior teams of your direct suppliers and require them to communicate to senior teams of their direct suppliers and so forth along the supply chain until it reaches the supplier partner that directly purchases raw cotton.
2. Keep documentation on the source of raw cotton and disclose to Warehouse as requested (e.g. country of origin certification).
3. Declare to buying (technologists copied in on communication) the country of origin of the cotton raw material.
4. Complete the information below to confirm you are able to comply with this policy.

Cotton from these countries will only be allowed to be used when independent and credible reports verify that no forced adult or child labour is used in the production of cotton.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan is major producer of cotton and with over two-million people mobilised in the annual harvest of cotton, it represents a principle export crop. The cotton sector has been described as a state-ordered system and the World Bank states it is compulsory for many farmers to grow cotton who are required to sell their crop to the government at a price fixed by the government. It has been reported over many years that involuntary labour is often used in harvesting cotton.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan is a neighbouring country to Uzbekistan and, like its neighbour, ranks as a major cotton producer, although its overall share of production is less than Uzbekistan. Those involved in the harvest are estimated to be in the tens of thousands. There is widespread use of government-compelled forced labour in the cotton sector where mandated quotas are applied.