

Our commitment to EARTH FRIENDLY clothing:

The making of a t-shirt....

loudnclearla cares about the environment and is conscious at all levels of production in bringing you safe and eco-friendly apparel. Garments you purchase and proudly wear will either be organic, organic in conversion, or a combination of bamboo/organic cotton. (see below for more details) Our Spring '08 t-shirts will reflect this commitment to you, our customers who care, and to the sustainability of our planet for future generations!

### **OUR ORGANIC APPAREL**

100% certified organic cotton, produced under the Global Organic Textile Standard.

Organic farming does not use petroleum based chemical fertilizers, chemical pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides, and so is less reliant on fossil fuels. Organic farming often has better water management, in particular better irrigation, one of the primary environmental concerns of cotton farming. Most organic cotton projects in irrigated areas are often pioneering the best water management practices such as drip-irrigation. Organic cotton projects around the world often go beyond organic standards, and demonstrate that cotton can be grown in an environmentally sustainable manner.

loudnclearla ensures that the production of our organic products is kept quarantined at all times throughout manufacture, so that it does not become contaminated by non-organic fibers. This even extends to the warehouses, where organic garments are kept isolated, and are picked, boxed and shipped independently of non-organic garments. All staff receive training in organic standards and environmental issues, in order to help us become a genuinely sustainable company.

### **THE PROCESSING AND MANUFACTURING OF ORGANIC COTTON**

*What happens from harvesting cotton to the finished garment?*

There are many stages required to process cotton from fibers to fabrics. The fibers are cleaned, carded (combed), spun into yarn, coated with starches or chemicals, woven into fabric (or knitted in the case of a T-shirt), cleaned up from their coating and their natural wax, bleached, immersed in concentrated caustic soda, dyed or printed, and chemically treated for easy care and other properties. All these stages require a large number of chemicals of various toxicity and hazards. Some of these chemicals threaten the health of workers, while others cause environmental pollution from the mills' waste water. Finally, many of these chemicals are found as residues in the finished product, and some of them may affect the health of consumers, and are suspected to cause allergies, eczema, and even cancers.

In order to address those processing and manufacturing stages, a handful of organizations, mostly organic certification agencies, have developed their own private voluntary "organic" or "sustainable" standards for textile, and are certifying finished products according to those standards. The certification agency then authorizes the manufacturer to add its logo (or mark, or symbol) on the T-shirt's label or their marketing literature. This is essential in order to recognize an Organic T-shirt. What those standards aim to achieve is to maintain the integrity of the organic nature of the fiber as much as possible. This is achieved by using as much organic material as possible, and by adopting alternative chemicals and processing practices that minimize the impact on the environment, and protect the health of consumers, while insuring textiles of high quality that are economically viable. The Oeko-Tex Standard 100 Mark is one such standard.

We are Oeko-Tex licensed.

The Oeko-Tex Standard 100 Mark is probably the most widely recognized standard in textiles, which sets strict limits on the amount of substances harmful to consumers which can be found in the finished textile product. Criteria are even more stringent for baby clothes than any other textiles. Most of the criteria for residues in the baby clothes category are comparable to health criteria of the organic textile standards.

## **ORGANIC IN CONVERSION**

It takes three years for a farmer to convert his land from traditional farming to certified organic.

The cotton produced while converting from conventional farming to organic farming is called 'organic in conversion'. This is a necessary but difficult stage for any organic farmer, as the cotton may cost more to produce, but cannot be sold at the premium that certified organic cotton can achieve. We incorporate this cotton into our conventional cotton production, as an indication to consumers of our support for, and understanding of organic issues, and forward thinking business ethics.

This important step in conversion helps move farmers through the changeover from chemically-dependent to more biological sound approaches. Composted manures and cover crops replace synthetic fertilizers; innovative weeding strategies are used instead of herbicides; beneficial insects and trap crops control insect pests; and alternatives to toxic defoliants prepare plants for harvest.

## **BAMBOO**

Our company manufactures bamboo fiber strictly according to ISO9000 and ISO 14000. It produces natural and eco-friendly fiber without any chemical additives.

- \* Bamboo grows rapidly and naturally without any pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers.
  - \* Bamboo clothing is 100% biodegradable and can be completely decomposed in the soil by micro-organisms and sunlight without decomposing into any pollutants such as methane gas which is commonly produced as a by-product of decomposition in landfills and dumps.
  - \* Growing bamboo improves soil quality and helps rebuild eroded soil. The extensive root system of bamboo holds soil together, prevents soil erosion, and retains water in the watershed.
  - \* Bamboo grows naturally without the need for agricultural tending and large diesel exhaust-spewing tractors to plant seeds and cultivate the soil.
  - \* Bamboo plantations are large factories for photosynthesis which reduces greenhouse gases. Bamboo plants absorb about 5 times the amount of carbon dioxide (a primary greenhouse gas) and produces about 35% more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees.
  - \* Bamboo fabric has a natural sheen and softness that feels and drapes like silk but is less expensive and more durable.
  - \* Bamboo clothing is easy to launder in a clothes washer and dryer.
  - \* Because of the smooth and round structure of its fibers, bamboo clothing is soft and non-irritating, even to sensitive skin.
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- \* Bamboo is naturally anti-bacterial and anti-fungal supposedly because of a bacteriostatic agent unique to bamboo plants called "bamboo kun" which also helps bamboo resist harboring odors. The bamboo kun in bamboo fabric stops odor-producing bacteria from growing and spreading in the bamboo cloth allowing bamboo clothing to be more hygienic and to remain fresher smelling.
  - \* Bamboo clothing is hypoallergenic.
  - \* Bamboo is highly absorbent and wicks water away from the body 3 to 4 times faster than cotton. In warm, humid and sweaty weather, bamboo clothing helps keep the wearer drier, cooler and more comfortable and doesn't stick to the skin.
  - \* The structure of bamboo fibers make bamboo fabrics more breathable and thermal regulating than cotton, hemp, wool or synthetic fabrics.
  - \* Bamboo clothing is naturally more wrinkle-resistant than cotton, and while it might still require ironing after washing, bamboo fabric can be ironed at a lower temperature than cotton. Shrinkage during washing and drying is minimal at warm temperatures.
  - \* Bamboo fabrics and clothing can be manufactured and produced without any chemical additives although eco-certification such as Oeko-Tex is necessary to insure that the manufacturing and finishing processes are healthy.
  - \* Currently, there are no known genetically modified organisms (GMO) variants of bamboo. Let's hope it stays that way.

## **FAIR AND ETHICAL TRADE**

The textile industry has tremendous negative impacts on the environment, health and livelihood of cotton farmers and workers. Evidence suggests that it may also be detrimental to the health of consumers.

Pressure to produce quickly increasing quantities of cheap textiles has led the industry to adopt some of the most unethical trade practices on the planet. Sweatshop practices have been denounced very successfully in the past 10 years, and you are probably aware of the unacceptable working conditions which have been the norm in many manufacturing mills in the developing world, such as long working hours, low wages, and child labor. As a result, your expectations as a consumer have forced popular brands to look into the conditions in which their products are manufactured.

On the other hand, the negative environmental and social impact of fiber production and fiber processing are only starting to be addressed. Most consumers are still unaware of how severe and wide-ranging are the problems. Those who do have contributed to the growth of the organic movement. And while it is true that cotton can be produced in an environmentally friendly way (ORGANIC), while contributing to alleviate poverty in some of the least developed countries (FAIR TRADE), in practice, this is not what we mostly observe today.

Our supply chain is audited by the Fair Wear Foundation. The FWF exists to promote fair labor conditions in the garment industry world wide. Fair trade is a worldwide movement which aims to ensure that producers in developing countries receive a fair price for their work, benefit from acceptable working conditions, and improve their livelihood. In contrast to organic agriculture, there are no public regulations for fair trade, and the fair trade movement is not formally unified.

We DO NOT import our cotton from Uzbekistan, the world's second largest exporter of raw cotton. Our supplier has begun a major initiative, in collaboration with the Environmental Justice Foundation to help stop child slavery in Uzbekistan (amongst other environmental and social disasters that are happening on an unimaginable scale). We hope this education causes consumers to question the t-shirts they buy and insist on cotton shirts/garments which guarantee that certain positive social and environmental conditions are met. There are many charities and individuals raising awareness of these critical issues, but they are all outside of our industry looking in; it takes the people personally and intimately involved in the cotton industry to make a stand, and it is us who can make the difference.

## **INKS**

When screen-printing our garments, we use all water-based inks with the highest standards for waste management and disposal. We are looking forward to converting to soy and herb-based inks in the near future!!