

Better Cotton Initiative

MEASURING COTTON CONSUMPTION INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS



WHAT IS THE BETTER COTTON INITIATIVE (BCI)?

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), or Better Cotton for short, is the world's leading sustainability program for the fiber and its industry. The not-for-profit's mission is to help cotton communities survive and thrive while protecting and restoring the environment.

Retailers and brand members (RB members) pay membership fees based on their annual cotton fiber consumption, which supports farmers growing cotton according to the BCI requirements. RB members must accurately measure and report their cotton consumption in their processing and supply chain. Depending on their membership status, this includes:

- Conventionally grown cotton
- Cotton sourced as Better Cotton
- Cotton identity programs
- Pre-consumer recycled (including comber noils)
- Post-consumer recycled

RB members should measure cotton consumption based on products purchased and sold to customers. The reporting period is 12 months.

WHAT ARE THE BCI REQUIREMENTS?

Cotton is one of the world's most important renewable natural resources. Safeguarding cotton growing and production is essential.

Independent assessment of RB members' annual cotton fiber consumption measurements is mandatory from January 2024.

RB members must regularly calculate and submit their cotton fiber consumption, following the BCI requirements. They need to include the major and minor components of all products they sell and where data exists. Components include badges, logos, belt loops, neck tapes, candle wicks, packaging, draw cords, pocketing, embellishments, shoe liners, fillings, threads, interlinings, trims, laces and waistbands.

They must also list third-party brands where they control their sourcing practices. Third-party brands not owned or directly controlled are excluded.

WHAT WE OFFER

With decades of sustainability, supply chain and verification experience, our global network of experts independently assesses your cotton fiber consumption measurements, provides end-to-end support and strongly understands environmental compliance and reporting.

WHO IS IT FOR?

Textile retailers and brand members selling cotton goods directly to consumers.

KEY BENEFITS

The independent assessment follows step-by-step support and enables you to:

- Ensure your cotton consumption calculations are consistent and reliable
- Demonstrate your credibility and commitment to sustainability with independent verification
- Establish a solid foundation for your BCI fees
- Showcase continuous improvement in your supply chain
- Meet the requirements for Better Cotton claims
- Minimize the environmental impact of your cotton production
- Enhance livelihoods and economic development in cotton-producing communities

WHAT IS THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

The assessment process has four steps:

1. You submit records (documents, calculations and notes, etc.)
2. We review (audit) your documents
3. We communicate our findings. There are 30 days for corrective actions
4. We make a final decision and declare the outcome

Assessment is:

- Annual for medium, large and very large companies
- Every other year for small companies
- Not obligatory for very small companies (<5,000 MT)

ABOUT SGS

We are SGS – the world's leading testing, inspection and certification company. We are recognized as the global benchmark for sustainability, quality and integrity.

For more information on our BCI services, email: ESG@sgs.com.