

# BCI Information Sheet

## What Is BCI

### Who We Are

**The Better Cotton Initiative is a non-profit member association. It exists to make global cotton production better for the people who produce it, better for the environment it grows in, and better for the sector's future.**

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) operates the largest cotton sustainability programme in the world. It stewards a farm-level standard and defines a more sustainable way of growing cotton — 'Better Cotton.'

BCI is truly a joint effort, comprising all types of organisations from farms to civil society to fashion retailers and brands. Today, there are more than 1,000 BCI Members who are working together to make cotton production more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

In 2016, we launched the **BCI Growth and Innovation Fund**, a global investment vehicle for supporting Better Cotton projects around the world. The fund invests in field-level training and capacity building necessary for farmers to earn licenses to grow Better Cotton.

BCI Retailer and Brand Members contribute to the BCI Growth and Innovation Fund through a volume-based fee (VBF). The fee is based on volume of Better Cotton they source as a percentage of their total cotton footprint, in line with the Better Cotton Chain of Custody.

Global institutional donors and government agencies match the collective VBF from the private sector to achieve a multiplier effect. In 2017, the fund attracted investment from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, The German Government's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH).

In the 2015/16 season, **2.5 million** metric tonnes of cotton lint were produced by BCI Farmers and programmes recognised as being equivalent to BCI.

By 2020, BCI's aim is that Better Cotton will account for **30%** of global cotton production.

More than half of BCI Retailer and Brand Members have set public targets to source **100%** more sustainable cotton.

## The Better Cotton Standard System

The Better Cotton Standard System consists of six key elements.

1. **Principles & Criteria:** Provides a definition of Better Cotton through six key principles.
2. **Capacity Building:** Supports and trains farmers on growing Better Cotton through BCI's partners.
3. **Assurance Program:** Initiates regular farm assessment and measurement through eight consistent results indicators, encouraging farmers to continuously improve.
4. **Chain of Custody:** Connects demand to Better Cotton supply across the supply chain.
5. **Claims Framework:** Provides guidance on communicating about Better Cotton using powerful data, information and stories from the field.
6. **Results & Impact:** Measures and evaluates progress to ensure that Better Cotton delivers the intended impact.

Better Cotton is produced by farmers who care for the environment, minimise the negative impact of fertilisers and pesticides, and care for water, soil health and natural habitats. Results show consistently that BCI Farmers achieve better yields and higher profitability than comparison farmers, whilst improving the working conditions in their fields. There is no premium given to BCI Farmers. As with conventional cotton or any commodity, the price of Better Cotton is established by the market.



Vist our website to learn more: <https://bettercotton.org/>