

October, 2017

ORGANIC COTTON IN HAITI

The Smallholder Farmers Alliance (SFA) has teamed up with global outdoor lifestyle brand Timberland, the Vans shoe company, and Haiti's Ministry of Commerce and Industry to bring cotton back to the country after a 30-year absence.

TREES +
COTTON
= HOPE



The goal is to chart new territory for sustainable cotton production by creating a business model that also integrates organic cotton with combating climate change, improving food security and empowering women.

The most important innovation in this model centers on farmers growing and planting trees as a way to earn seed, tools and organic agricultural training for both cotton and food crops. Trees and organic cultivation both address climate change. Increased yields help improve food security. Tree planting also triggers targeted support for women farmers through micro loans, business training and leadership opportunities.

Timberland and Vans are supporting the SFA's cotton initiative through grants. Both companies are also committed to becoming clients, subject to quality and price, once cotton output has achieved sufficient volume. For its part, Timberland has further qualified this commitment to indicate the volume purchased could go as high as one third of their annual global cotton requirement.

Within 5 years, the net impact of this cotton initiative is projected to be 34,000 farmers (husband and wife working together on 17,000 farms) united as owner-operators of a network of new social businesses that will more than double their current income and result in a minimum of 25 million trees being planted.

The announcement of cotton's return was marked this summer by the planting of seeds as part of the SFA cotton trials near Gonaives, Haiti, of varieties from Brazil, India, and the U.S., along with one Haitian type still grown here in garden plots. The varieties that adapt best to local conditions, organic cultivation and result in the highest quality cotton will be introduced next summer for cultivation in volume by smallholder farmers.

The SFA has a partnership with the Swiss-based Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), a global leader in the field of organic agriculture research. Drawing on their expertise in smallholder cotton production, FiBL is advising the SFA on its field trials and will be providing ongoing technical and training assistance.

For further information please visit www.HaitiFarmers.org.



Timberland® 

VANS®



**smallholder
farmers
alliance**

The Smallholder Farmers Alliance (SFA) applies business solutions to help feed and reforest a renewed Haiti by establishing market-based farmer cooperatives, building agricultural export markets, creating rural farm businesses and contributing to community development. This approach recognizes Haiti as an agrarian nation whose short and long-term recovery is irrevocably linked to the fate of its one million smallholder farm families, each with land holdings of less than 2 hectares (5 acres).