

# **CDG ARABLE CROPS**

## **LABELING OF EUROPEAN COTTON**

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Our main purpose for “European Cotton” is a better added value – and there’s no doubt that its characteristics can lead to the aforementioned conclusion.

Moreover, the whole production chain (producer - scientific support – ginning factory – trade & logistic), both in Greece and Spain, fulfills the terms and conditions that are required in order to have our Cotton ranked among the best products of its class as well as to be recognized as a product of higher value. As a result, we should make it clear both to the direct buyers of cotton as raw material and the consumers of final products.

Except of the excellent quality characteristics of European Cotton (staple, strength, micronaire and low contamination), there are also three other characteristics that should be attached with European Cotton all along the production chain. To be more specific:

### **I. Cotton which is produced in European Union.**

The exact quantity of cotton produced in European Union is 350.000 metric tones, which corresponds to 1,5 % of the global production. Only 25% of this amount is processed by spinning mills in Europe and the rest 75% is exported to other – third countries in order to return as final product in Europe and be purchased by European consumers. After all, it’s a general truth that the final consumer will prefer a product that

contains at least some percent of cotton produced in European Union. Furthermore, this acceptance can exist not only for European consumers but also for third countries consumers. That is why, they know that the European products are among the best and are produced under strict regulations concerning the environment as well as the farmers' and consumers' protection.

## II. Cotton that meets the ecological criteria for the award of the EU Ecolabel for textile products.

According to the decision of Commission - see document C(2014) 3677- of the 5<sup>th</sup> June of 2014, about the criteria for the textile fibers, cotton complies with the condition 1(b) "*Cotton production according to IPM principles*". The verification is that "*the applicant shall provide evidence that the Cotton has been grown by farmers that have participated in formal training Government IPM and ICM programs*".

The Greek farmers have the possibility to participate in a certified national program called Agro-2. This is an integrated pest management (IPM) program that can meet the E.U. regulations in order to have the award of the E.U. Ecolabel. This program (Agro-2) also covers all the stages of cotton production – from planting until harvesting-. The issue of ginning process has not been clarified yet, but has to be totally covered.

As far as I know, there is a similar (IPM) program in Spain, too. In this case, an extremely useful common program can be created under the auspices of European Union.

## III. Cotton that is GMO free.

The cotton which is produced in European countries can be named as a GMO free product. As far as the cultivation of genetically modified varieties – in contrast with the majority of the countries allover the world-

is restricted in Europe, it's obvious that the produced cotton is GMO free product. A lot of consumers will prefer to buy this product since lately, consumers' habits have changed. As a result, more and more consumers avoid the genetically modified products, even if this is not food.

Thank you for your attention!