



Regenerative Agriculture

Takes Sustainable
Fashion to the
Next Level



U.S. COTTON
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61%

of brands and retailers
see increased demand
for sustainable products
from consumers

Today more than ever before, consumers across the globe want to know that the clothes in their closets are sustainably sourced.

So much so, that research conducted by the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, a farm level, science-based initiative that is setting a new standard in more sustainably grown cotton, found that 61% of brands and retailers have witnessed increased demand for sustainable products from consumers.

While consumer demand for more sustainable fashion is pushing global brands and retailers to provide transparency and evidence that sustainable practices are being implemented and followed throughout the supply chain—we're left wondering, is it enough?

Land use
efficiency

↑ 49%

Soil loss

↓ 37%

Water

↓ 79%

Energy

↓ 54%

GHG

↓ 40%

Regenerative agriculture aims for more.

Sustainability has been a focus of U.S. cotton growers for generations. Case in point, just over the past 35 years, U.S. cotton producers have used 79% less water and 54% less energy, reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 40%, all while reducing land use by 49%. The adoption of practices such as minimal tillage, GPS and sensor-driven precision agriculture, and the growing of winter cover crops have further improved soil health, reducing loss and erosion by 37% per acre and increasing soil carbon levels.

Yet, U.S. cotton growers understand that they must constantly improve in order to protect and preserve the planet—to ultimately help create more sustainable clothing.

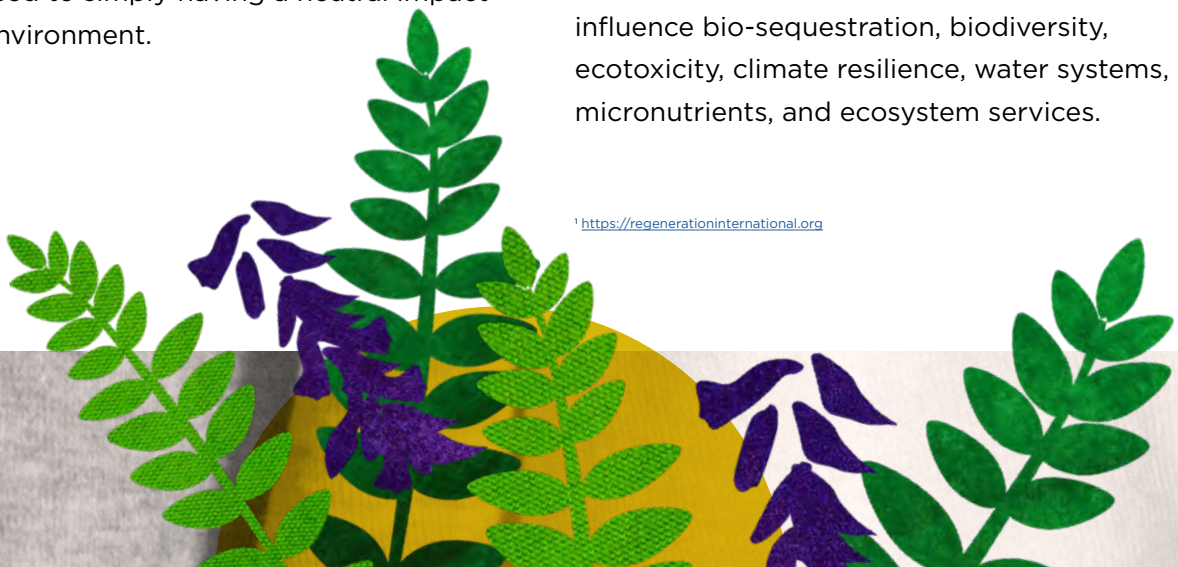
That's where regenerative agriculture comes in. It goes a step further and aims for net positives, as opposed to simply having a neutral impact on the environment.

Regenerative agriculture practices aim to better the land.

U.S. cotton growers' efforts towards continuous improvement are central to the Trust Protocol and the U.S. cotton industry taking sustainability to the next level. Practices such as **conservation tillage** and **growing cover crops** have helped soil health and increased soil carbon levels. Although U.S. cotton growers have been implementing these techniques for decades, these practices have recently been grouped into a manner of farming called regenerative agriculture.

Regenerative agriculture describes farming and grazing practices that, among other benefits, have a net positive impact by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity – resulting in both carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle¹. It is a holistic philosophy that aims to positively influence bio-sequestration, biodiversity, ecotoxicity, climate resilience, water systems, micronutrients, and ecosystem services.

¹ <https://regenerationinternational.org>



Regenerative agriculture builds upon the positive environmental impacts of sustainable practices, aiming for a whole systems approach to positive sustainability practices.

U.S. cotton growers are already implementing impactful regenerative agriculture practices, including using production practices that conserve and protect soil health to **increase biodiversity and capture carbon in the soil**. They're also focused on **nutrient management**, to maintain healthy plants and targeted replacement of nutrients whilst minimizing leaching and run-off. They practice water stewardship and **water use efficiency** to increase soil water holding capacity.

Biodiversity is an important part of the mix, and they employ practices that promote plant, animal and microorganism biodiversity for more efficient use of the land. Regenerative agriculture is not a one size fits all manner of farming. Instead, it looks at a combination of practices that support resilience, as well as building and nourishing our ecosystem.

When these regenerative practices are implemented successfully, the health of the agriculture ecosystem and farmer economic stability are improved. And ultimately brands,retailers, mills and manufacturers can provide consumers with the verified, data based sustainable clothing they desire.

There is no finish line when it comes to sustainable practices or regenerative agriculture. Individuals and organizations continue to develop new technologies, processes and research that aid growers in further implementing new and innovative sustainable practices. Now more than ever, people care about the environment and how their clothes are made. And, while the distance from U.S. cotton fields, to the runways of global fashion brands, and consumer closets may seem far, the focus on regenerative agriculture has never been more impactful.

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