

## **As Cotton Prices Reach a Record High, Recycled Fiber and Yarns from Martex Fiber Provide a Cost-Effective Alternative**

Recently, prices for cotton have reached record heights, underscoring the value proposition of recycled fiber and yarn. In this volatile market, Martex Fiber's offerings can help producers lower their costs, while further supporting their sustainability efforts.

To date, many companies have been reluctant to do the product development required in order to implement recycled fibers in their finished products. However, these organizations now face historic price increases on raw materials and have a more compelling reason than ever to consider what recycled fibers and yarns have to offer.

In February, market prices for cotton eclipsed \$2.00 per pound for the first time since the Civil War. In comparison, the January 2010 prices for cotton registered below \$0.70 cents per pound. With analysts fearing that \$1.50-\$2.00 per pound may become the norm; many organizations have begun looking to suppliers of alternative textiles, such as Martex Fiber.

Retailers are further escalating the need for cost-effective alternatives by indicating they will reduce consumption if product costs continue to escalate. "With the spike in the price of cotton due to a combination of geopolitical threats, policy changes, the onset of the emerging market consumer and severe weather, our organizations are keenly focused on the strategies they need to employ for this year and beyond," reports The Hosiery Association trade market organization. Continuing on, the Association asks, "Is the price appreciation in cotton a short term bubble or a long term trend? The rising costs of labor and synthetic fibers are squeezing suppliers and their retail customers...ultimately, the end consumer is going to feel the pinch."

Jimmy Jarrett, President of Spartanburg, SC-headquartered Martex Fiber Southern Corp. proclaims confidently that his company can help lower material costs significantly. In the industrial fiber sector, for instance, Jarrett notes that "blending in just a portion of recycled fiber can help bring costs back to what companies were used to paying, even one year ago." Considered to be one of the most foremost pioneers in the U.S. recycled fibers marketplace for more than 35 years, Jarrett explains that MFSC recycled fibers create value because they are mechanically generated from the shredding of textile waste and clippings that result from the manufacture of new apparel and industrial fabrics. These fibers are premium, finished materials that get sorted by color and fiber quality, ultimately perfect for garneting as well as many blow and airway and even spunlace applications.

Marc Williamson, the COO of Martex Fiber, estimates that custom-engineered fiber can cost substantially less than virgin materials. "Some processes need to adapt to take advantage of the recycled raw material," he explains. "The spread between the cost of virgin materials and

recycled is a key factor driving companies to embark on the product development needed to adapt their products.”

Williamson says another growing trend is for “360 recycling” where manufacturers seek out companies like Martex Fiber to recycle their scraps, oftentimes getting the regenerated fiber back for their own application.

MFSC’s Jimtex Yarn division utilizes the recycled cotton under the brand ECO2cotton® to spin yarns which offer as much as 100% certified recycled content. Stefanie Zeldin, marketing director for Martex Fiber, points out that the high prices for yarn dyed cotton and cotton novelty yarns are motivating designers and brands to seek out less expensive and more environmentally-friendly alternatives: “Recycled cotton yarns, while offered in a specific color line and mostly the coarser counts, can provide an affordable alternative for many upholstery and apparel manufacturers.”

Adds Jarrett: “Designers may be eyeing the lower price of recycled cotton and fiber. But they’re also getting the value-added benefit of tapping into the green story associated with materials that are re-engineered and use fewer resources. In these volatile times, that’s a winning proposition that any brand—and its eco-conscious consumers, can appreciate.”

### **About Martex Fiber:**

Martex fiber, the South Carolina based firm, with partner facilities in Central America, offers waste removal services for cut and sew operations as well as knitters, weavers, spinners, nonwoven manufacturers and fiber producers. As a global importer and exporter of textile waste grades and reprocessed fiber, Martex Fiber offers products which are suitable for yarn spinning, garneting, blowing, carding and air-lay operations, as well as serves many industries including papermaking, flocking and remelt operations.

Materials handled by Martex Fiber include cotton, polyester, polypropylene, rayon, acrylic, nylon and aramid fibers. Specialty divisions offer open-end recycled Jimtex Yarns® and wiping rags by Eco-wipers™. With the growing interest in environmental responsibility and sustainability, many of Martex Fiber’s cotton products are marketed using the brand name ECO2Cotton® and ECO2Fiber™. Martex Fiber offers a wide line of custom-engineered recycled fiber blends that are suitable for automotive products, green building materials, home furnishings and fill products. For more information, visit [www.martexfiber.com](http://www.martexfiber.com)

### **About Jimtex Yarns:**

Jimtex Yarns, based in Lincolnton, GA, supplies eco-friendly yarn that is created by blending pre-colored new recycled ECO2Cotton® Fiber. The Yarns are offered in more than 50 stock colors,

each with unique colorations due to a blend rather than dye process. To find out more, visit [www.jimtexyarns.com](http://www.jimtexyarns.com) or [www.eco2cotton.com](http://www.eco2cotton.com)

### **About related SCS Certification:**

The SCS Recycled Content certification ([www.scs-certified.com/gbc/recycled-materials.php](http://www.scs-certified.com/gbc/recycled-materials.php)) is designed to help manufacturers make credible claims about their products by increasing the use of recycled materials, which reduces solid waste and natural resource consumption. All SCS claims are certified in accordance with U.S. Federal Trade Commission's *Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims* and ISO-14021 standards. ([www.scs-certified.com](http://www.scs-certified.com))

### **Photos:**

Additional photos are available upon request.

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