



Case Study: Maggie's Organics

Standing out from the crowd

Maggie's Organics has been making apparel items with certified organic fibers and responsible labor practices since 1992. The company has been a



leader in socially responsible sourcing practices. Since the beginning, the company has worked hard to produce high quality products without sacrificing fair treatment or wages for any of the workers involved in its supply chain.

Maggie's Organics was doing the right thing by respecting the contributions of the workers, but these efforts could only succeed if they resonated with their customers.

Connecting with Customers

Maggie's decided that getting certified to a global labor standard by an independent third-party would allow them credibility and transparency in sharing their story. More importantly, consumers would be able to trust Maggie's claims and be more likely to connect to the brand.

After a lengthy evaluation process, Maggie's chose Scientific Certification Systems. The Fair Labor Practices Certification was the perfect fit for their needs.

Issues Addressed:

- Needed a way to prove dedication of social responsibility to consumers.
- Needed a cost-effective, credible way to tell their story.

The Certification Solution:

- The "Fair Labor Certified" logo makes Maggie's products stand out in crowded retail environments.
- Consumers can be confident that Maggie's supply chain uses 100% fair labor.
- The certification is a source of pride for Maggie's employees.

"Our customers will no longer have to guess what went on behind the scenes in the production of Maggie's products."

– Jeremiah McElwee,
Senior Whole Body Coordinator for Whole Foods Market



The Fair Labor Audit Process

Maggie's cotton is ginned and spun in Nicaragua. Fabric is knitted, dyed, cut and sewn in Costa Rica. Their screen-printing is done in Michigan at another supplier, and the products all flow through the company's warehouse in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

The Fair Labor standard requires audits of every stage in the supply chain to ensure the product is entirely made with socially responsible practices.



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"We have always taken the high road when it comes to making sure all who are involved with producing our products are treated fairly and that somehow we have helped sustain their lives in the process."

– Bená Burda
President, Maggie's Organics

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Community Benefits

Maggie's became the first apparel company ever to receive the Fair Labor Certification. Maggie's launched its Fair Labor Certified Apparel Line in the spring of 2010, using Fair Labor Practices hang-tags and labels printed in the neckline of each garment to highlight the certification.

The Fair Labor logo on Maggie's products helps them stand out to consumers, retailers and suppliers. They have found that sharing their unique story has helped them connect with their customers. Jeremiah McElwee, Senior Whole Body Coordinator for Whole Foods Market, a longtime retailer of Maggie's products said, "We are excited to be able to offer these apparel items that not only look and feel great but they also have quite a story behind them. Our customers will no longer have to guess what went on behind the scenes in the production of Maggie's products."

Maggie's can now proudly and confidently boast that their supply chain uses 100% fair labor.

Global Change

The certification has also benefitted Maggie's supply chain partners. Maggie's suppliers are now ready to participate in Fair Labor Practices certification. El Porvenir cooperative, one of Maggie's suppliers of organic cotton which also



harvests organic coffee, is a key example. They are now positioned to work with coffee companies pursuing Fair Labor Certification.

Companies that were certified as part of Maggie's supply chain, like El Porvenir, now have an incentive to spread the word about implementing Fair Labor practices to their buyers and partners, thereby getting even more value from certification.

Enhanced Validation

Having their efforts validated by Scientific Certification Systems brought Maggie's employees a sense of pride because it showed that they had been successful in their own efforts, but it also helped them improve. Following the certification, Maggie's improved their employee training on social responsibility. Seeing these benefits, Bená Burda said "We've always taken pride in how we treat our planet and the people we work with, so this certification means a lot to us," says Burda. "Based on the feedback we're getting, it means a lot to our customers as well."



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