

Primark launches jeans from 100% sustainable cotton



Primark has launched its first ever range of jeans made from 100 per cent sustainable cotton. Produced in three different washes (indigo, black and light blue), the women's skinny jeans will be sold in stores across all markets in the UK and Europe. The launch is an important step as it moves towards using sustainably sourced cotton across its products.

Primark's sustainable cotton uses more natural farming methods, including minimising the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers and reducing water consumption, as well as increasing the income of cotton farmers to improve their livelihoods. The new range follows the introduction of sustainably sourced cotton into one of Primark's most popular product lines – women's pyjamas – which have sold over 11.2 million pairs since launch, Primark said in a press release.

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The jeans are made with cotton from Primark's Sustainable Cotton Programme, which launched in India in 2013. The programme helps farmers grow cotton using more natural farming methods, including minimising the use of chemical pesticides and reducing water consumption, whilst also increasing their incomes. Following the expansion of the programme into Pakistan last year, Primark has announced that more than 28,000 farmers¹ across both markets have now enrolled in the training. Early year one results recorded in Pakistan are promising, with farmers' profits already increasing. They are also starting to see average reductions of more than 20% in chemical pesticide and fertiliser use and more than 15% in water use.

The jeans – launched under the Primark Cares initiative – are Primark's latest sustainable staples following its recent, in-demand collaboration with Alice Liveing, which featured a top and leggings set made from recycled polyester, as well as two biodegradable water bottles. More sustainable cotton products will be released in the coming year, including homeware.

"Following the successful introduction of sustainable cotton pyjamas into store, we are so proud to introduce this range. From harvesting the sustainable cotton from fields in India and Pakistan, right through to using recycled paper for our Primark Cares labels, sustainability has been at the heart of every stage of developing and designing these jeans," Paula Dumont Lopez, trading director at Primark, who leads buying, merchandising and design of Primark's womenswear, said.

Developed in partnership with agricultural experts CottonConnect, and local NGOs SEWA (the Self- Employed Women's Association) in India and REEDS (the Rural Education and Economic Development Society) in Pakistan, the programme trains farmers in the most appropriate farming techniques for their land. This ranges from seed selection, sowing, soil, water, pesticide and pest management, to picking, fibre quality, grading and storage of the harvested cotton.

"Our Sustainable Cotton Programme is not only good for the planet, but it is also changing lives in India and Pakistan. That's why I was so passionate about using the cotton in jeans, one of our most popular product ranges," explained Lopez. (RR)

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