**Cotton is Foundation for Re-Shoring American Manufacturing**

An initiative from Field to Closet is making the concept of American grown and made, 100 percent cotton scrubs a reality. To highlight the initiative, a kick-off event will be held April 9th, 2021, at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture in Tifton, Georgia and culminate this summer with 15 hospitals in rural Georgia receiving medical scrubs at no cost.

"Field to Closet was founded to work with brands and retailers to increase the use of cotton in the products, change the economic distribution of the supply chain to include the farmer, and allow people access to sustainably produced, 100 percent natural cotton fiber with traceability to farm where the Deltapine cotton was grown,” said Ed Jernigan, founder and CEO of Field to Closet. “It’s incredible to be part of a process that connects people and brands to the farm, along with increasing awareness of creating garments from beginning to end in the U.S.”

Through innovative, collaborative partnerships, this project utilizes Georgia-grown cotton from Deltapine® seed to re-shore American manufacturing by revitalizing an end-to-end U.S. supply chain. The initiative's foundation is rooted in agriculture and establishes a Farmer GiveBack program to address a fundamental issue in the garment industry, which typically sees the brand or end seller with the most significant profit. The GiveBack program recognizes

the rebirth of a robust cotton garment industry isn't possible without the grower; therefore, this initiative is designed to ensure the grower is included financially by sharing in the profit of the goods sold.

To support Georgia and all U.S. cotton farmers, Field to Closet, America Knits, Deltapine® seed, Helena® Agri-Enterprises, LLC, Nutrien AgSolutions®, Georgia's Rural Center, and HomeTown Health partnered to bring to life an end-to-end U.S. supply chain using cotton and supporting frontline healthcare workers. In addition, this project shines a spotlight on the textile and manufacturing opportunities available in the U.S. using cotton grown in America.

For the initial project, Field to Closet worked with America Knits in Swainsboro, Georgia, to source Deltapine seed cotton grown in Georgia, which is spun into yarn at Parkdale Mills in Rabun Gap, Georgia and woven into fabric in North Carolina at Hornwood, before arriving at America Knits for the final production of the scrubs. An additional benefit for the medical scrubs, this fabric is treated with PROTX2® AV. This antimicrobial technology inhibits the growth of bacteria and has been shown in lab tests to destroy viruses.

“This initiative is exciting and goes to show when people work together, extraordinary things can happen. There was a time when an end-to-end US supply chain for cotton garments would have been considered a pipedream. We’ve shown with hard work, dreams do come true,” said Steve Hawkins, CEO of America Knits. “Working on this project aligns perfectly with our focus on providing prosperity for rural, smaller communities, and creating quality, environmentally sustainable products in the United States.”

“2021 has been called the ‘Year of Green’ and our goal at Field to Closet is for that to mean an intentional switch to natural fibers - lead by cotton, which is much more sustainable for the environment,” said Jernigan.

In contrast to traditional polyester fabrics used to make scrubs, cotton as a natural fiber is biodegradable, and recyclable. When cotton breaks down, it enriches the soil and leaves less of a carbon footprint than synthetic materials. Furthermore, farmers and researchers have worked over the years to reduce water and be more efficient with pesticide usage while producing more cotton on less land. Sustainability improvements such as a 31 percent increase in land use efficiency, 82 percent water reduction, and 30 percent GHG reduction over the last 35 years would not be realized without the research and development investments of Deltapine, the innovation and expertise of companies like Helena Agri-Enterprises LLC and Nutrien AgSolutions, and the commitment of cotton farmers to the betterment of their land and the environment.

Additionally, the cotton industry provides economic prosperity to rural areas where it is grown totaling a $7 billion value to the U.S. In Georgia, the second largest cotton producer in the country, agriculture is the top economic impact industry in the state. Furthermore, UGA Extension recently forecasted the cotton industry as a whole provides an economic impact of over $3 billion and provided approximately 53,000 cotton-related jobs in Georgia.

The rural Georgia hospitals receiving medical cotton scrubs include Brooks County Hospital, Burke Medical Center, Crisp Regional Medical Center, Colquitt Regional Medical Center, East Georgia Regional Medical Center, Emanuel Medical Center, Irwin County Hospital, Jeff Davis Hospital, Jenkins County Medical, LifeBrite Community Hospital of Early, Memorial Hospital and Manor, Mitchell County Hospital, SGMC Berrien Campus, Southwell Medical, and Taylor Regional Hospital.

This initiative's partnerships demonstrate creating a 100 percent U.S. supply chain and crafting products from U.S. grown cotton is more than wishful thinking. Creating a movement toward 100 percent cotton scrubs and other cotton garments creates a positive domino effect, resulting in higher cotton need and demand, fair compensation for farmer's sustainability efforts, and a positive light on an all U.S., end-to-end supply chain. The overarching vision is for this initiative serves as an inspiring example of the possibility and profitability for re-shoring American manufacturing and create a long-lasting impact on rural communities.

For more information about this project or to order the scrubs in bulk, go to AmericaKnits.com.

To learn more about this initiative’s strategic partners, please use the links below:

[America Knits](https://www.americaknits.com/)

[Deltapine® seed](https://www.dekalbasgrowdeltapine.com/en-us/deltapine/varieties.html?utm_campaign=2020-07-01+--+branded+--+deltapine+productcampaign+deltapine+branded&utm_content=deltapine+dad+strongcotton+--+text&utm_medium=cpc&utm_source=google&gclid=CjwKCAjw6fCCBhBNEiwAem5SO1E-eqlZlfuVVO9EZaYKXMKGjofkd0BEFLl364UumOQO1tZruYUzYBoCyp8QAvD_BwE)

[Field to Closet](https://fieldtocloset.com/)

[Georgia’s Rural Center](https://www.ruralga.org/)

[Helena Agri-Enterprises®](https://helenaagri.com/)

[Hometown Health](https://hometownhealthonline.com/)

[Nutrien Ag Solutions®](https://www.nutrienagsolutions.com/)