

Retailers rake in organic cotton sales

Sales projected to increase to \$3.5 billion in 2008

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Retailers are expanding their product lines to include more organic cotton products to support a burgeoning demand from consumers that want to step more lightly on the planet.

Organic Exchange, a Berkeley, Calif.,-based organization promoting organic cotton production on a global basis, released its second annual report on the global organic cotton market titled, "Organic Exchange Organic Cotton Market Report 2007."

The report showed global retail sales for organic cotton products increased 85 percent to \$1.1 billion last year, and are on track to jump another 83 percent to \$1.9 billion by the end of this year.

Rebecca

Callahan, director of Program Development for OE, cited natural and organic grocer Whole Foods Market Inc. as "actively selling organic cotton apparel," and retail giant Wal-Mart Stores Inc. as also stepping up to deliver organic cotton products to consumers.

"There are many multi-segment retailers selling organic foods, and they are now expanding their selection to consumers beyond organic foods to include organic cotton products," Callahan told **Sustainable Food News**.

The five companies which used the most organic cotton in 2006 were Wal-Mart (U.S.), Nike (U.S.), Coop Switzerland, Patagonia (U.S.) and Otto (Germany), according to the research.