

## COTTON USA Sourcing Fair Connects the U.S.-Central America-Andean Textile and Apparel Supply Chain



The COTTON USA Western Hemisphere Sourcing Fair, held June 15-17 in Mexico, developed business for increased U.S. cotton yarn and fabric exports to the Western Hemisphere.

The COTTON USA Sourcing Program event brought together different parts of the cotton supply chain, from raw materials to processor to finished product buyers. Over 700 individual meetings were arranged between buyers and sellers in the U.S.-Central America-Andean textile and apparel supply chain.

These meetings created additional business opportunities for exports of U.S. cotton yarn and fabric to the Western Hemisphere, as uniform companies and retailers were encouraged to look for quick response and cost competitive alternatives to Asian suppliers

Textile and apparel manufacturing representatives from 44 companies in the Andean Region, Central America, Caribbean, and Mexico attended along with representatives from 11 U.S. textile mills. Ten U.S. uniform companies also participated, along with seven fashion retailers/brands from the U.S. and Mexico. All of the participants came to the event to meet potential suppliers and/or customers and each group indicated they had met their objectives.

In a post-tour survey, around 85 percent of the Western Hemisphere garment manufacturer respondents said they anticipate increasing their sales to the uniform companies, brands and retailers as a result of the Sourcing Fair. Total estimated future sales were reported at \$3.5 million.

Additionally, 100 percent of the fashion brands/retailers and 75 percent of the uniform companies anticipate increasing purchases from the Western Hemisphere. One company indicated prior to the Fair they had no sourcing in the Western Hemisphere and came with the intention of increasing it to 5 percent. Following the Fair, they decided to try to move 15 percent. Another company indicated that as a result of the Fair, they hoped to increase their sourcing from 5 to 30 percent over the next two years.

U.S. mills indicated making 118 new contacts during the Sourcing Fair between the Western Hemisphere participants and the uniform/retailer/brand sourcing executives. During the fair, 25 sample orders were placed in addition to \$100,000 in new orders. Of the Western Hemisphere participants, 92 percent said they intended to sample U.S. yarns or fabrics as a result of the fair.

### SOURCING CONNECTIONS

The COTTON USA Sourcing Fair in Mexico provided business opportunities for the Western Hemisphere cotton supply chain.

