



Better Cotton
*Claims
Framework*
v1.1



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Better Cotton Claims Framework

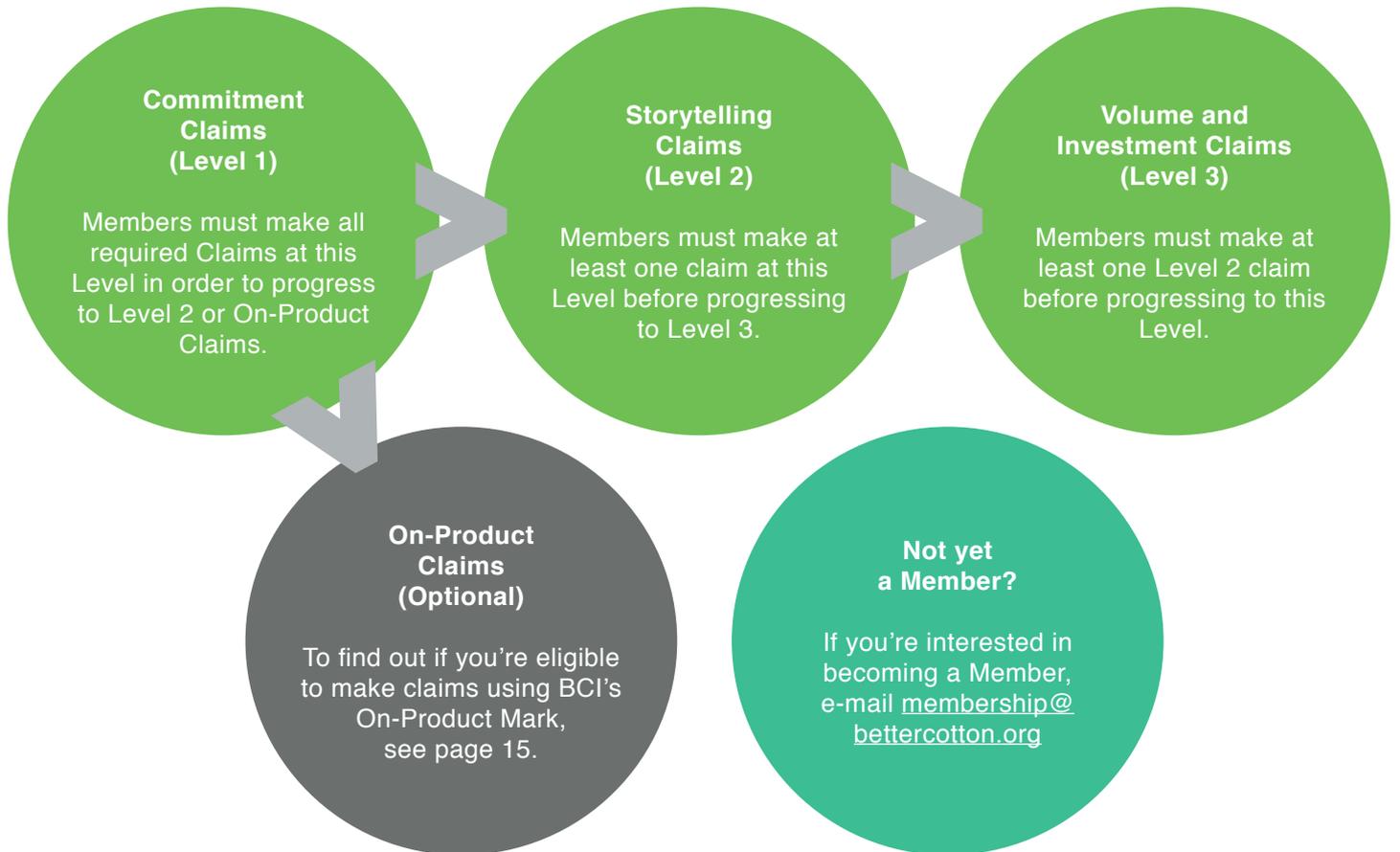
The Better Cotton Claims Framework makes it simple for Members to make credible and positive claims about Better Cotton. It allows flexibility in how to communicate about your commitment to BCI and Better Cotton, whilst removing the potential for inaccurate or misleading claims¹.

Many other communications resources are available, such as quotations, images and Stories from the Field. By combining claims in the framework with these other resources, a Member can articulate a compelling story that is meaningful to them and their customers.

Always refer to the Claims Framework to ensure that the context in which you want to use a claim is not in breach of your agreed conduct as a Member. The Better Cotton Claims Framework forms part of the Better Cotton Standard System and is governed by the BCI Code of Practice, BCI Terms of Membership, and BCI Member Monitoring Protocol.

¹: EU regulation defines misleading claims as 'claims that deceive or are likely to deceive the average consumer, even if the information contained therein is factually correct.' Whilst efforts have been made to ensure the claims outlined within this document are only ever transparent and never misleading, the choice to make claims and the responsibility to ensure claims comply with relevant laws and legislation, is that of the BCI Member.

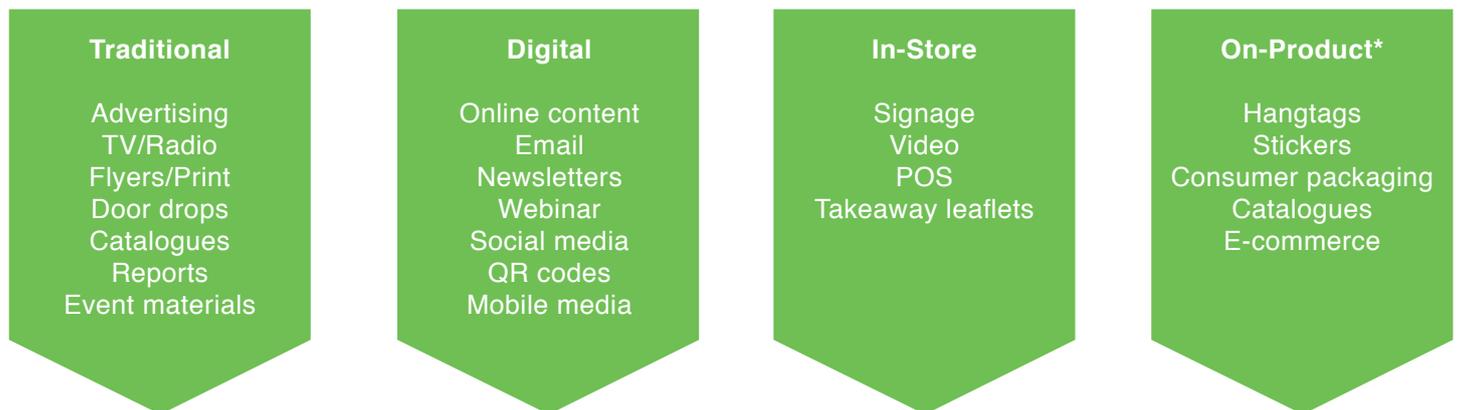
The Framework



Channels

When you're deciding how and where to communicate about BCI, remember, BCI is not an eco-label scheme. Your investment in more sustainable cotton farming practices and your commitment to sector change, are messages that can be used in your brand marketing strategy. These messages enable you to position your brand's actions as more sustainable. Your involvement with BCI should not be used to help you position specific products as more sustainable choices, and should never be used as a 'label.'

The channels available via which Better Cotton claims can be made:



*The BCI On-Product Mark must not be permanently attached to a product. For example, it should never be used on care labels or direct to garment printing.

Logo and URL

Use of the BCI Logo and URL falls into the category of 'Claims level 1 – commitment based claims.' Members wishing to develop their sustainability story further, must first use the logo on their website along with the URL, linking to the BCI website homepage.

Only BCI Members and Partners are authorised to use the BCI logo as marketing collateral.

The BCI logo can only be used on business cards and invoices in conjunction with a 'Membership/Commitment Statement.' See Page 8.

Full guidelines on how to use the logo, trademark information and file downloads can be found here: www.bettercotton.org/resources/logo.

LOGO USE ON-PRODUCT

The logo is an integral part of 'On-Product Claims.' All claims made on product packaging must incorporate the BCI logo. A more mobile friendly, alternative logo is available as an option for e-commerce On-Product Claim use.

To find out if you are eligible to make on product claims see page 15.

Level 1: Commitment Claims

If you're a BCI Retail and Brand Member, you must receive a communications induction before you can start making claims. If your Membership falls into another category, or you're a Partner, or Funder, you are free to make claims under this level (with approval). Alternatively, contact comms@bettercotton.org for an optional induction.

You must be making a claim from each required section under this claims level in order to progress to Level 2 or (in the event of meeting the eligibility criteria) the On-Product Mark. Claims identified with an * are required claims which must be used before a Member can progress to level 2. These must be used as prescribed.

MEMBERSHIP/COMMITMENT STATEMENTS *

A Membership/Commitment Statement is a claim that enables you to promote your work with The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI.

These claims can be used separately or in conjunction with each other.

Option 1:

'We (or name of the organisation) are/is a proud Member of The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI.'

Option 2:

'We (or name of the organisation) partner/s with The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI to improve cotton farming globally.'

Option 3:

'We (or name of the organisation) are/is committed to improving cotton farming practices globally with The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI.'

BCI DEFINITIONS:

Optional Additions (not required)

Ready to use claims describing BCI. These claims may not be re-worded/modified and are available for use in multiple languages.

Option 1:

'The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI aims to transform cotton production worldwide by developing Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity.'

Option 2:

'The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI exists to make global cotton production better for the people who produce it, better for the environment it grows in, and better for the sector's future.'

Option 3:

'The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI connects people and organisations throughout the cotton sector, from field to store, to promote measurable and continuing improvements for the environment, farming communities and the economies of cotton producing areas.'

Option 4:

'By choosing cotton products from XXX [your company's name], you're supporting responsible cotton production through the The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI.'

BCI FARMER DEFINITIONS:

Optional Additions (not required)

Ready to use claims describing the Better Cotton Production Principles. These claims are not to be edited, and are available for use in multiple languages. Pair 'Part 1' and 'Part 2' together for a complete claim.

Part 1:

Option 1:

'The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI Farmers are farmers who':

Option 2:

'By buying cotton products from XXX (your company's name), you're supporting The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI Farmers who':

Option 3:

'The Better Cotton Initiative/BCI trains farmers to':

Part 2:

Option 1:

'use water efficiently, care for the health of the soil and natural habitats, reduce use of the most harmful chemicals and respect the rights and wellbeing of workers'.

Option 2:

'care for the environment and implement the principles of decent work'.

X% DECLARATION AND TARGET *

This claim is a 'Time-bound target for 'more sustainable cotton' sourcing as a X% of total cotton lint use.'

Option 1:

'We (or name of the organisation) are/is committed to sourcing X% (or X MT) of our cotton as Better Cotton by 20XX.'

Option 2:

'We (or name of the organisation) are/is committed to sourcing X% (or X MT) of our cotton as 'more sustainable cotton' by 20XX.' 'More sustainable cotton' includes (list standards covered here: e.g., Better Cotton, recycled cotton and Organic Cotton and Fairtrade Cotton.).

*NOTE: Where option 2 is used, the Member **must** include their definition of 'more sustainable cotton'.*

LOGO AND URL *

Only BCI Members and Partners (this does not include Better Cotton Platform Users) are authorised to use the BCI logo as marketing collateral. Go to www.bettercotton.org/resources/logo to download logo files and guidelines.

PERMISSION PROCESS: As a BCI Member, you do not need to request permission to use claims under Level 1 of the Claims Framework if using this pre-approved copy either internally or in a B2B context. If you wish to develop on the formulas as presented here, please contact the BCI Communications Team. All required claims under Level 1 must be made before progressing onto storytelling claims under Level 2. Claims under Level 1 and some additional requirements ([click here to read criteria](#)) must be met before Members can progress to using the On-Product Mark.*

All consumer-facing claims must be approved by BCI.

Level 2: Storytelling Claims

You must be making all claims under Claims Level 1 of the Claims Framework before you can progress to making claims at this level. At least one claim must be made from Level 2 of the Claims Framework before you can progress to Level 3 Claims.

COUNTRY LEVEL RESULTS

These sentences have been designed to provide an accurate reflection of progress at field level – they are intended as examples of ways in which you can use our results. BCI's results must not be manipulated in any way. Averaging results across different geographies undermines the credibility of the data. Should you wish to use BCI results to support your storytelling, please contact the BCI Communications Team who will help you craft your Better Cotton story in a way that is relevant to your customer.

Global:

Option 1:

In 2015-6, the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) licensed over 1.5 million farmers from 22 countries on five continents.

Optional addition:

Together, these farmers produced 12% of the world's cotton.

Country and indicator:

Example 1: Less wasted water (China):

'In 2015-6, BCI Farmers in China used an average of 26% less water than Comparison Farmers.'

Example 2: Reduced chemical pesticide use (Pakistan):

'In 2015-6, BCI Farmers in Pakistan used an average of 17% less pesticide than Comparison Farmers.'

Example 3: Increased use of organic fertiliser (India):

'In 2015-6, BCI Farmers in India used an average of 8% more organic fertiliser than Comparison Farmers.'

Example 4: Improved profitability (Turkey):

'In 2015-6, BCI Farmers in Turkey were an average of 26% more profitable than Comparison Farmers.'

Example 5: Improved yield (Tajikistan):

'In 2015-6, BCI Farmers in Tajikistan achieved 21% greater yields than those not yet using BCI techniques.'

STORYTELLING CONTENT

Claims under Level 2 also include:

- Farmer quotes
- BCI imagery (credited)
- Stories from the field

Resources and content are available. Please contact the BCI Communications Team for details.

PERMISSION PROCESS: Level 2 Claims must be approved by BCI before use.

Level 3: Volume and Investment Claims

You must be making at least one claim from claims Level 2 of the Claims Framework, before you can make claims at this level.

VOLUME SOURCED

These claims are a calculation of Better Cotton sourced (as a percentage of total estimated cotton lint consumption) by an individual Member:

'We (or name of the organisation) source X% of our cotton as Better Cotton.'

VOLUME SOURCED – REALISED

These claims are a calculation of Better Cotton sourced by an individual Member:

Option 1:

Last year (or specific year to match sourced volume), we sourced XXX metric tonnes of cotton as Better Cotton. That's the equivalent of almost XXX pairs of jeans*.'

Required addition:

- 1: *Better Cotton is sourced via a system of Mass Balance.
- 2: *Better Cotton is sourced via a system of Mass Balance and not physically traceable to end products. See bettercotton.org for details.
- 3: *Better Cotton is not physically traceable to end products, however, BCI Farmers benefit from the demand for Better Cotton in equivalent volumes to those we 'source.'

INVESTMENT/GLOBAL INDICATORS

These claims are intended to demonstrate the value an individual Member contributes to BCI over the course of a year. The claims translate your financial investment directly into the real life reach of BCI; number of farmers reached or number of hectares under cultivation.

These claims are calculated based on an individual Member's investment in one year, against the BCI Growth and Innovation Fund global indicators and BCI Growth and Innovation Fund total field investment in the corresponding year:

Option 1 – Number of BCI Farmers:

'Last year, our investment enabled BCI to reach and train over/almost XXX farmers on more sustainable practices.'

Option 2 – Number of hectares under Better Cotton cultivation:

'Last year, our investment enabled Better Cotton to be produced on over/almost XXX HA of land.'

CUSTOM MESSAGING

As a Member, you are free to build your own narrative and wording or add/amend example claims. The BCI Communications Team are available to support Members in this process. Content must be approved in writing by the BCI Communications Team prior to publication of any custom claims.

PERMISSION PROCESS: Permission is required to use the claims options presented under Level 3 of the Claims Framework. BCI will accept the total cotton consumption as issued by the Member, however, we may ask you to submit documentation to support these numbers periodically. The responsibility for your communications/claims related to your annual cotton consumption remains with you. The data you use to complete the calculation must match data shown on the Better Cotton Platform. Members will be required to clarify any discrepancies, should they occur. Please contact the BCI Communications Team for more information.

Translations

TEXT CLAIM TRANSLATIONS

If you want to make a claim in a language other than English, please send your enquiry to the BCI Communications Team.

Translations of Level 1 Claims and 'On-Product Mark Text claims' are available in French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Swedish, German and Mandarin. For translations to be approved in languages other than those listed, a Member must submit a proposed translation to BCI for review.

The organisation name; 'Better Cotton Initiative' and product; 'Better Cotton' must never be translated.

PERMISSION PROCESS: Please allow 10 working days for approval of translations. Translations must not be published until approval is granted.

Mass Balance

We've created guidelines within the boundaries of the current chain of custody model used by BCI: Mass Balance.

Under this system, no guarantee can be made that there is Better Cotton physically present in the finished product and in what quantity. This is why all claims are carefully worded, and in line with industry-recognised good practice, to ensure that the message focuses on the commitment of the BCI Member to responsibly sourced cotton, and not the content of the product itself. Put another way, BCI, used in your marketing, can help position your brands' actions as more sustainable. BCI should not be used to help you position specific products as more sustainable products. This applies to our On-Product Mark, as well as our off-product claims. It is also important that the users of the On-Product Mark fully understand the systems in place to share responsibility to never be misleading, and to always protect the credibility of the Better Cotton Standard System when communicating about BCI.

The future guidelines for using our On-Product Mark may change if we choose to move towards physical traceability for our Members, and new guidance may be developed which also refers to the content of the product. However, for now, the focus is on commitment-based claims under Mass Balance. As such, no products can be referred to as Better Cotton or BCI products under any circumstances, and no suggestion should be made that this is the case.

We look forward to seeing the On-Product Mark's use by eligible Members, helping to drive demand for Better Cotton worldwide.

To read more about Mass Balance administration, the Better Cotton Online Platform and watch a short animation explaining the two, go to <http://bettercotton.org/supply-chain-and-traceability>.

On-Product Claims

The 'On-Product Mark' (OPM) is one way in which you can communicate your commitment to the Better Cotton Initiative, directly to your customer, via the end product.

'On-Product' is simply one of many channels you can use to reach your customer, enabling you to highlight the commitment your brand has made to BCI. The OPM is not a 'product label', and can never be used to make claims about a product's fabric content, or suggest physically traceable Better Cotton is present in a product. Should a claim be made in direct association with a product or range of products, it is classed as use of the OPM. The majority of our Members who use the OPM do so in the form of a swing tag or sticker, however, an OPM doesn't have to be physically on a product to be classed as such. An OPM could be used on any channel including in a catalogue, on point of sale in store, on shipment packaging or on the e-commerce pages of a website.

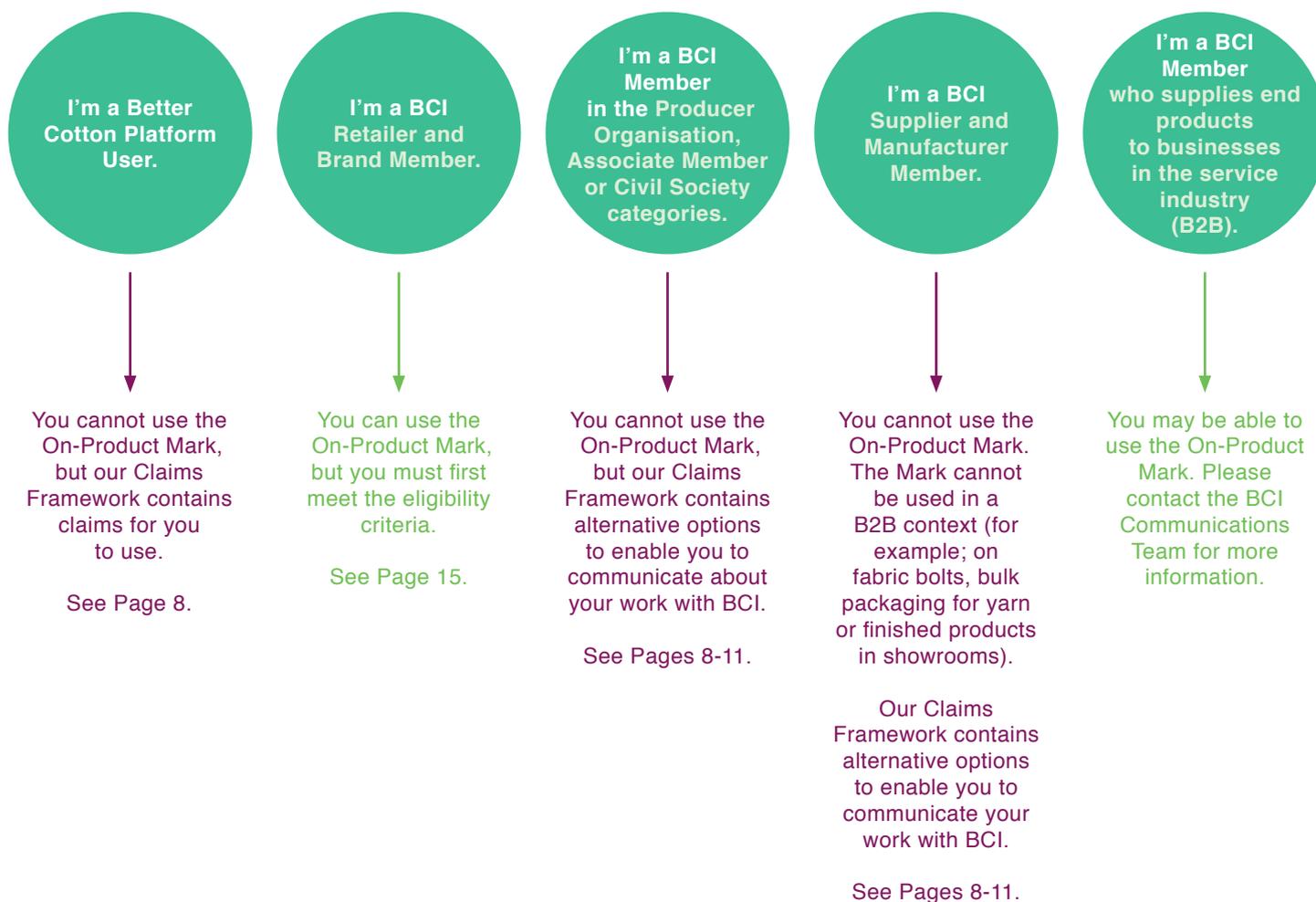
We have created precise guidelines to ensure that Members use the BCI OPM in a way which:

- Protects the credibility of the Standard by never deceiving the consumer, misleading the reader, over-claiming, or leaving a claim open to inaccurate interpretation.
- Incentivises those Members who source meaningful quantities of Better Cotton, and are committed to doing so in the future.
- Unifies the BCI message for readers across diverse products in different regions, creating a more consistent and powerful message, thereby improving consumers understanding of more sustainable cotton.

Review the sub-sections on the following pages to learn more or apply to use the BCI On-Product Mark.

Membership Categories and the On-Product Mark

The diagram below details if your Membership Category is eligible to use the On-Product Mark.



On-Product Mark Eligibility Criteria

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

There are five criteria which determine eligibility to use the On-Product Mark. All five criteria must be met before BCI will approve the use of the mark:

1) PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP

You must have been a BCI Member for at least one year prior to submitting an application for use of the On-Product Mark.

2) MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

You must:

- Belong to the BCI Retailer and Brand (RB) Membership category, OR
- Be a Supplier and Manufacturer (SM) Member who supplies end products to businesses in the service industry (B2B) (e.g. industrial laundries, hotels, hospitals, staff clothing), i.e. not supplying to consumer-facing retailers or brands, OR
- Be a Supplier and Manufacturer (SM) Member already supplying other BCI Retailer and Brand Members who would like to use the OPM in your own retail activities (B2C). In order to qualify under this category, your B2C activity can represent no more than 25% of your textile business turnover.

Please contact BCI for more details on eligibility criteria. BCI reserves the right to establish if a Supplier and Manufacturer Member is eligible to use the On-Product Mark.

NOTE: No other Membership Categories are permitted to use the On-Product Mark. BCI is developing alternative marketing tools to allow these Members to communicate their support of Better Cotton and BCI fully and appropriately.

3) CLAIMS

You must be making all required claims from Level 1 (Commitment Claims) of the Claims Framework as follows:

- **Membership Statement visible on a consumer-facing website.** This must be the e-commerce website (where this exists), not alternative sustainability or micro-site, of the BCI Member and, if applicable, the specific brand under that Member wishing to use the On-Product Mark.
- **Logo and URL** (see 'logo use guidelines') visible on a consumer-facing website. This must be the e-commerce website (where this exists), not alternative sustainability or micro-site, of the BCI Member and, if applicable, the specific brand under that Member wishing to use the On-Product Mark.
- **Time-bound target for 'more sustainable cotton sourcing' as a X% of total cotton lint use visible on consumer-facing website of the BCI Member.** This must be the e-commerce website (where this exists) not an alternative sustainability or micro-site. Where applicable, it is encouraged that public-facing targets are also shared by the individual brand (under the Member/Group) that plans to use the On-Product Mark.

4) SOURCING THRESHOLDS

You must be sourcing your cotton as Better Cotton, and over time meet the below thresholds (at Membership level):

- Minimum criteria for On-Product Mark use: >5%
- End of Year 3: >25%
- End of Year 5: >50%

A Member's sourcing threshold is measured using the volumes declared on the Better Cotton Platform, against your organisation's total annual cotton lint consumption, as declared by you. BCI verifies the amount of lint sourced as Better Cotton via the Better Cotton Platform.

Year 3 and Year 5 thresholds are defined as being the end of the third and fifth year following approval of the first On-Product Mark.

After Year 5, you must maintain a sourcing level of above 50% in order to continue using the On-Product Mark.

5) VOLUME-BASED FEE

You must be up to date in paying the Volume-Based Fee. The current Volume-Based Fee calculation methodology is available in Member Applications. Please contact the BCI Membership Team for more details.

NOTE: A Member must meet all criteria before On-Product Mark artwork will be reviewed or approved by BCI. This includes Criteria 1, 'Period of Membership.'

Use of the On-Product Mark

ELEMENTS OF THE MARK

- Logo: this shape forms the graphic part of the mark and is the BCI corporate logo. A secondary logo is also available for e-commerce use.
- URL bettercotton.org: The BCI website address must always be displayed in the form included in the mark.
- TM: the mark must be directly accompanied by a TM mark. The letters TM indicate that this is a trademark. Registration of the trademark is pre-approved in a number of countries.
- Text Claim: the mark must be directly accompanied by an approved, On-Product Text Claim.

NOTE: The BCI logo cannot be used without a text claims however, there may be occasions when the text claim and URL can be used without the logo.

BACKGROUNDS

The BCI On-Product Mark can be used on hangtags, stickers, consumer packaging, catalogues, online product pages etc. The BCI On-Product Mark must not be permanently attached to a product (e.g. care labels or direct-to-garment printing).

If you are a Supplier and Manufacturer (SM) Member who supplies end products to businesses in the service industry (B2B) (e.g. industrial laundries, hotels, hospitals, staff clothing), i.e. not supplying to consumer facing retailers or brands, exceptions to the above may apply. Please contact the BCI Communications Team for further details.

LOCATION

Where the packaging or product description (catalogue), details the fabric composition, the mark must not be used adjacent to this information.

COLOURWAYS

The mark can be used in:

- BCI green: R141 G198 B64, or C50 M1 Y98 K0, or Hex #8DC640, or Pantone Solid Coated 368 C.
- Black: when the mark is printed in black it must be clearly visible, i.e. not used on an existing dark background.
- White: for use on dark backgrounds.

Use of the colour green as a background or design feature:

Whilst we do not, under every circumstance, enforce the use of BCI green on Members' communications, we reserve the right to request its use where the use of another, similar green causes brand confusion. This decision will be made at BCI's discretion.

SIZE AND PROPORTIONS

The minimum size for on-product applications of the mark is 25mm, measured from the left to the right hand side of the URL. There is no maximum size restriction for display of the mark. The logo should be enlarged or reduced proportionally, without distortion, and used in its entirety.

CLEARANCE

The minimum clearance around every edge of the mark is the width of the letter 'l' in 'BCI' excluding the TM mark and the tail of the letter 'g' in 'www.bettercotton.org'.

ON-PRODUCT TEXT CLAIMS

One or more text claim from the below list must accompany the BCI logo. These claims must not be edited, and are currently available in seven languages. Further languages will be approved on request.

Option 1

"Supporting more responsibly grown cotton."

Option 2

"Thanks for supporting more responsibly grown cotton."

Option 3

"Thanks for supporting more responsibly grown cotton, together with XXX [your company's name]."

Option 4

"Supporting BCI Farmers, protecting the environment, and working for global change."

Option 5

"By buying cotton products from XXX [your company's name], you're supporting more responsibly grown cotton through the Better Cotton Initiative."

Option 6

"We partner with the Better Cotton Initiative to improve cotton farming globally."

Option 7

"We partner with the Better Cotton Initiative to create a brighter future for cotton and the people whose livelihoods depend on it."

PRODUCT ELIGIBILITY

The On-Product Mark can be used on any product where the fabric component contains at least 50% cotton.

NO ADDITIONAL CLAIMS

The BCI On-Product Mark must not be used in conjunction with other sustainability standard logos or marks, that reference (or could be perceived to reference) the cotton.

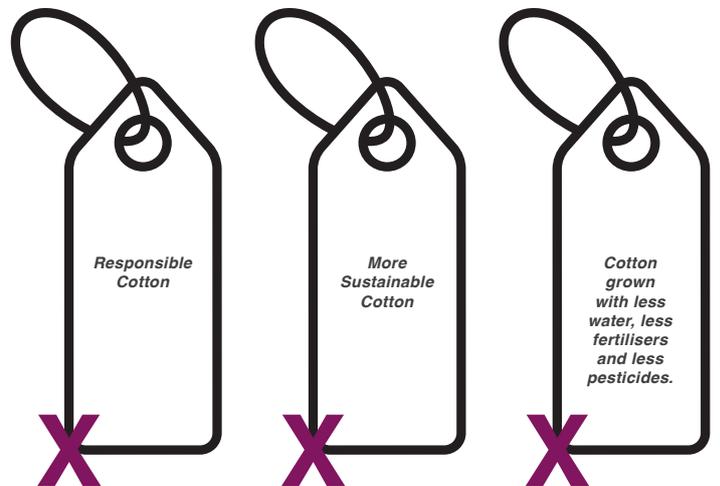
Example:



GENERAL SUSTAINABLE COTTON CLAIMS - GUIDANCE

Whilst BCI is unable to enforce appropriate use of claims where there is no mention of BCI or Better Cotton, we strongly advise against making claims, on or in association with products, which suggest physical content of 'more sustainable/responsible/responsibly sourced cotton.' In the view of BCI, such claims are misleading when the intended message is that the product is made of Better Cotton. These claims are not in the spirit of the BCI/Member relationship, and widespread use of such misleading claims risk causing damage to BCI's credibility, working against our mission, and in turn, devaluing claims for the wider BCI Membership.

Examples include:



E-Commerce Use

Should a claim be made in direct association with a product or range of products, it is classed as use of the On-Product Mark (OPM).

The majority of our Members that use the OPM do so in the form of a swing tag or sticker, however, an OPM doesn't have to be physically on a product to be classed as such. An OPM may be in a catalogue, on point-of-sale in store, on shipment packaging or, in this case, on a website.

ELIGIBILITY FOR E-COMMERCE USE

There are five criteria to be met which establish whether you are eligible to use the On-Product Mark. The same criteria applies for its use in an e-commerce context. See page 15 'Eligibility Criteria'.

LOGO USE FOR E-COMMERCE

The logo and text claims are both elements of the mark, and wherever possible, must be used together. The only exception for this exists should your website not have the capabilities to display a logo. In this case, the text claim and URL can be used without the logo. In this case, the text claim and URL can be used without the logo.

The BCI logo cannot be used without a text claim.

A more mobile-friendly, alternative logo is available as an option for e-commerce On-Product Claim use. Logo downloads and guidelines for use are available here: www.bettercotton.org/resources/logo.

Minimum sizing and logo legibility are dependent on the layout of your website. Please contact the BCI Communications Team for more details regarding logo usage for e-commerce.

TEXT CLAIMS FOR E-COMMERCE USE

Claims made in association with a product or range of products in an online context, must be selected from the pre-approved list of 'On-Product Text Claims.' Custom-built claims are not allowed in this context.

LOCATION OF THE ON-PRODUCT MARK

The Logo component of the On-Product Mark can be located:

- In the product title/description
- In the product details (expandable, roll-over or hidden tab)

The Logo component of the On-Product Mark must not be located:

- In the product details where this could suggest Better Cotton is part of the fabric composition.

The Text Claim component of the On-Product Mark can be located:

- Adjacent to the logo component of the On-Product Mark
- Separate from the logo component of the On-Product Mark either:
 - In the product title/description
 - In the product details (expandable, roll-over or hidden tab)
 - On the sustainability pages of the same website. In this case, the logo must contain a link to these pages

DIRECTING THE CONSUMER TO LEARN MORE

When the On-Product Mark is used in an e-commerce context, it is crucial that the customer is able to learn more about BCI's work and the Member's relationship with BCI. There are two ways in which this information can be displayed. Either:

- A link, directly from the logo itself or in the form of a hyperlink in the product description, connecting the consumer with the BCI website homepage.
- A link, directly from the logo itself or in the form of a hyperlink in the product description, connecting the consumer with the Member's own sustainability webpages where they will find approved copy explaining more about BCI. These sustainability pages must also contain an obviously accessible link to the BCI website homepage.

Approval Process

If you wish to use the BCI On-Product Mark, please contact the BCI Communications Team.

- BCI will arrange a meeting with you to ensure understanding of the On-Product Mark's purpose and the process for its approval, and confirm you are meeting the Eligibility Criteria.
- You can then start developing the relevant artwork (the BCI Communications Team is available to support, if needed). Once you have finalised your designs, please send all your complete digital artwork files carrying BCI On-Product Mark – including details of the background material(s), sizing, and colour specs – to the BCI Communications Team for approval.
- You will receive confirmation within a maximum of 10 working days (2 weeks) after we receive the finished artwork. We will advise if amendments are needed. The mark must not be printed, published, or displayed until approval is granted.
- You will need to be able to inform BCI of the planned launch date of the On-Product Mark along with the planned distribution of its use (across the relevant product areas and geographical locations).
- Each individual artwork must be approved by BCI.

Ensuring Credible Claims and Monitoring (Overview)

MONITORING MEMBERS' BETTER COTTON COMMUNICATIONS

Why do we monitor claims?

We monitor Members' claims in their communications about their commitment and involvement with BCI. This allows us to:

- Advise Members how to continuously improve their communications in order to support our mission.
- Address any breaches of BCI guidelines in a standardised way, thereby reassuring all Members that the credibility of the community remains intact.

Activities to implement our Monitoring Protocol for claims:

- All web content is checked by BCI at least once per year for a calculated sample from each Membership category.
- Members' communications are actively and regularly monitored by BCI.
- Other Members notify BCI where any false or questionable claims are suspected.
- For On-Product claims, Retailer and Brand declarations on the Better Cotton Platform are also monitored.

Incorrect or misleading claims:

Our Monitoring Protocol includes resolution procedures for suspensions and withdrawals for misuse:

Warning: If the communication is in breach of the Better Cotton Claims Framework.

Suspension: When the communication is not removed or corrected by the Member within 30 days of receiving the formal warning.

Expulsion: When the communication is not removed or corrected by the Member within 60 days of the suspension.

The Better Cotton Claims Framework is governed by:

The BCI Code of Practice
The BCI Terms of Membership
The BCI Monitoring Protocol

NOTE: When a Member receives a warning in relation to incorrect or misleading use of claims, this warning remains live, on a Members record, for one year (even if corrected). Should the same Member be in breach of the Claims Framework on a second occasion during that period, a suspension or expulsion may be issued.

CLAIMS MONITORING PROTOCOL

BCI monitors the steps to be followed by Members prior to approval claims, and once claims are published. Members are obliged to request approval for all consumer-facing claims.

BCI has resolution procedures to address the use of any misleading claims, On-Product or otherwise.

Should Members publish claims in breach of the Claims Framework, or no longer fulfil the On-Product Mark eligibility criteria they will receive an official warning and Corrective Action Plan from the BCI Secretariat. The warning will state in what respect the Member has breached our requirements, and will outline corrective actions or consequences, depending on the nature of the breach.

Examples of potential breaches and BCI responses include but are not limited to:

Incorrect or Misleading Usage	BC Response and Next Steps
A Member is not sourcing Better Cotton as per minimum sourcing requirements to make the desired claim.	<p>BCI revokes the right to make consumer-facing claims or use the On-Product Mark.</p> <p>In the event of this relating to use of the On-Product Mark, the Member is allowed to keep the products carrying the claim in stores until they run out of stock. Members wishing to continue using the On-Product Mark will need to submit a new request once they have achieved the next Sourcing Threshold.</p>
A Member is not publishing the BCI logo or URL on its website.	BCI proposes a timeline of 30 days to display the logo or URL.
A Member is not stating its public commitment to source a defined percentage of more sustainable cotton as part of its total cotton lint consumption on its website.	BCI proposes a timeline of 30 days to display the commitment.
A Member is not paying Volume-Based Fees.	BCI proposes a timeline of 30 days to pay the fees.
<p>A Member has published incorrect or misleading claims, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unapproved and incorrect use of the On-Product Mark ➤ Claims that suggest physical Better Cotton content in products ➤ Unapproved and misleading language with regards to the BCI Standard. 	<p>The Member is required to remove or correct misleading BCI communications within 30 days.</p> <p>A Corrective Action Plan will be put in place, also to be completed within 30 days. Corrective actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Claims Framework Training ➤ Issue of Corrective Statements ➤ Removal of packaging and/or goods when the breach is an unapproved, misleading On-Product Mark ➤ Removal of in-store communications material when the breach is an unapproved, misleading claim. <p>No further claims will be made by a Member/brand, until the Corrective Action Plan has been implemented in full. Failure to complete the Corrective Action Plan within the agreed time-frame may result in Suspension or Expulsion from BCI.</p> <p>Members wishing to continue making consumer-facing claims, will need to first complete the corrective action plan and then gain re-approval from BCI. In serious cases of misleading, unapproved communications (such as content claims or repeats breaches of the Claims Framework), BCI reserves the right to ban the use of BCI's trademark or name in consumer facing marketing.</p>

NOTE: Once the claims are live, BCI reserves the right to use imagery in appropriate external communications (including but not limited to: Newsfeed posts, Members Newsflashes, Outreach Presentations and the Communications Showcase).



The Better Cotton Initiative exists to make global cotton production better for the people who produce it, better for the environment it grows in and better for the sector's future, by developing Better Cotton as a sustainable mainstream commodity.

Learn more at [BetterCotton.org](https://www.bettercotton.org)