

Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins

Version	Effective Date	Description
1.0	27 January 2025	First version
1.1	22 January 2026	Re-brand

1. Introduction

Typically, the Better Cotton Chain of Custody (CoC) Standard begins with any organisation and/or site that receives seed cotton, which in most cases is the gin. However, in some contexts, the gin acts as subcontractor, providing a ginning service to the farm; the gin does not take ownership of the seed cotton.

To manage the Chain of Custody in this context, the Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins covers Chain of Custody requirements until Better Cotton is purchased from the farm and then managed under the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard (live). The term '(live)' refers to the Chain of Custody Standard in force at the time of this agreement.

This document is applicable to all Large Farms (LFs) or Producer Units (PUs), as defined within Better Cotton's Principles and Criteria and hereinafter referred to as 'Producer', that maintain ownership of Better Cotton as it is processed by a ginning facility prior to sale.

The Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins is included within the scope of the 'Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard Monitoring and Certification Requirements (live)' document. All requirements of the Better Cotton Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins are written in the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard Monitoring and Certification Requirements. Any differences in the text are to ensure consistency with the structure of the Better Cotton Chain of Custody Standard Monitoring and Certification Requirements.

Where a Certification Body is approved for Better Cotton Principles and Criteria (live) and the Chain of Custody (live) assessments, an assessment of the Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins can be done in combination with a Producer's Better Cotton Principles and Criteria assessment (or recognised equivalent standard).

Where a site assessment of a subcontracted gin occurs, the associated Producer that triggered the assessment shall be responsible for the accompanying costs. The results will be shared with Better Cotton and/or Certification Body. Non-conformities shall be closed out as per the 'Better

Cotton Chain of Custody Standard Monitoring and Certification Requirements' (live). Failure to provide and implement corrective actions and corrections will impact the Producer's ability to trade Better Cotton.

The official language of this document is English. In case of any inconsistency between versions due to translation, please refer to the English version. While translations to other languages will be provided, Better Cotton assumes no liability for errors or misunderstandings due to translation.

2. General Requirements

- 2.1. The Producer shall appoint a person responsible for implementing the Protocol for Producers with Subcontracted Gins requirements
- 2.2. The Producer shall be certified according to the Better Cotton Principles and Criteria Standard (or recognised equivalent standard).
- 2.3. The Producer shall provide Better Cotton (or Benchmarking Standard) with the names and locations of each ginning site when registering/ agreeing to sell their cotton as Better Cotton. During this process the Producer shall agree to follow the requirements of this document.
- 2.4. The Producer shall ensure the identification of Better Cotton is maintained and is kept physically separate from conventional cotton at all stages of handling.
- 2.5. The Producer shall notify Better Cotton of any changes affecting where physical Better Cotton is processed or stored. This may include the addition of new subcontracted gins.

3. Subcontracting

- 3.1. Throughout all stages of outsourcing, the Producer shall maintain legal ownership of the Better Cotton.
- 3.2. The Producer shall provide sufficient information and training to subcontractors to ensure that no mixing of Better Cotton and conventional cotton occurs.
- 3.3. The Producer shall establish a signed agreement with each subcontractor, defining the scope of the outsourced activity, and specifying that the subcontractor shall:
 - i. Follow all applicable verification requirements covered by scope of this document.
 - ii. Ensure the segregation and identification of Better Cotton is maintained at all times.
 - iii. Maintain accurate records of Better Cotton product covered by the scope of this document.

- iv. Utilise national, standardised, automated bale identification systems to maintain identity of the Better Cotton bales produced.
- v. Allow Better Cotton, Certification Bodies, and/or an Accreditation Bodies full access to their operations to conduct assessments in relation to Better Cotton.
- vi. Not further outsource the activity covered by the scope of the document.

3.4. The Producer shall maintain an up-to-date list of all subcontractors, which includes:

- i. Name, address, and contact details of each subcontractor.
- ii. Outsourced activity being performed
- iii. Frequency of the outsourced activity being performed.

4. Documentation and Record Keeping

4.1. All transactions relating to the sale of Better Cotton by the Producer shall be recorded on the BCP. The transaction should be declared by the buyer and, where required, acknowledged by the Producer.

4.2. The Producer shall maintain records that quantify volumes of input (seed), production records, output material (lint) at each ginning site to ensure that the amount of Better Cotton produced is not oversold. The Producer shall investigate deviations from expected conversion factor ranges during lint production, when requested to do so by Better Cotton.

4.3. The Producer shall ensure that there is no double selling of lint volumes. Lint sold as conventional cotton or cotton sold under another initiative shall not also be sold as Better Cotton.

4.4. For every sale and delivery of Better Cotton, the Producer shall provide the customer with a document or set of documents that includes the following information:

- i. Buyer and seller identification.
- ii. Product description or specification, including quality parameters.
- iii. Quantity of product(s).
- iv. Date of delivery/sale.
- v. Sales invoices and contracts.
- vi. Transport/shipping documents