

BO WEEVIL

Since 1990 – For the future

30 years ago Bo Weevil was at the start of working with organic cotton. Since then a lot has changed, but not our mission: we remain committed to a more sustainable world, by making fabrics and products made of GOTS-certified organic cotton easily available. Good for people and planet, guaranteed.

Bo Weevil was founded in 1990. An investigation into the possibility of growing cotton organically led to the start of the company. A logical next step was to find a market for the products that could be made from organic cotton. From pleated cotton for medical purposes to T-shirts, Bo Weevil has sold it.

Eco and fair

In the 1990s, attention for the environment was growing as well as the resistance against the consumption society. The demand for organic and fair trade products grew as well. This prompted Bo Weevil to launch the Ecotton brand for a collection of organic cotton products.

Global Organic Textiles Standard (GOTS) certification was introduced in 2006 and Bo Weevil's fabrics and products have been labelled with the GOTS label ever since. This guarantees the entire production chain is controlled. From field to product.

A new focus

Bo Weevil was the company where Iris Komen started to work in 2003 and in 2014 she took over the company from Jan Schrijver. The mission for Bo Weevil was continued: to make it possible for small companies and designers to buy organic cotton fabric at a reasonable price and make smaller quantities easier to process.

This started with online sale of fabrics from stock and gradually grew into the current collection and an enthusiastic team of four people.

And now

Fortunately, sustainability has become more mainstream, but it is certainly not self-evident yet. Especially in the textile chain. That is why we remain committed to a truly sustainable world, in which certified organic cotton is more easily available.

We do this by offering a versatile collection of high-quality fabrics and products to professional buyers - from starting labels to well-known (web) stores at home and abroad. So that they can offer their customers and employees a sustainable alternative for conventional cotton, guaranteed to be good for people and planet.



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From nuts to cotton

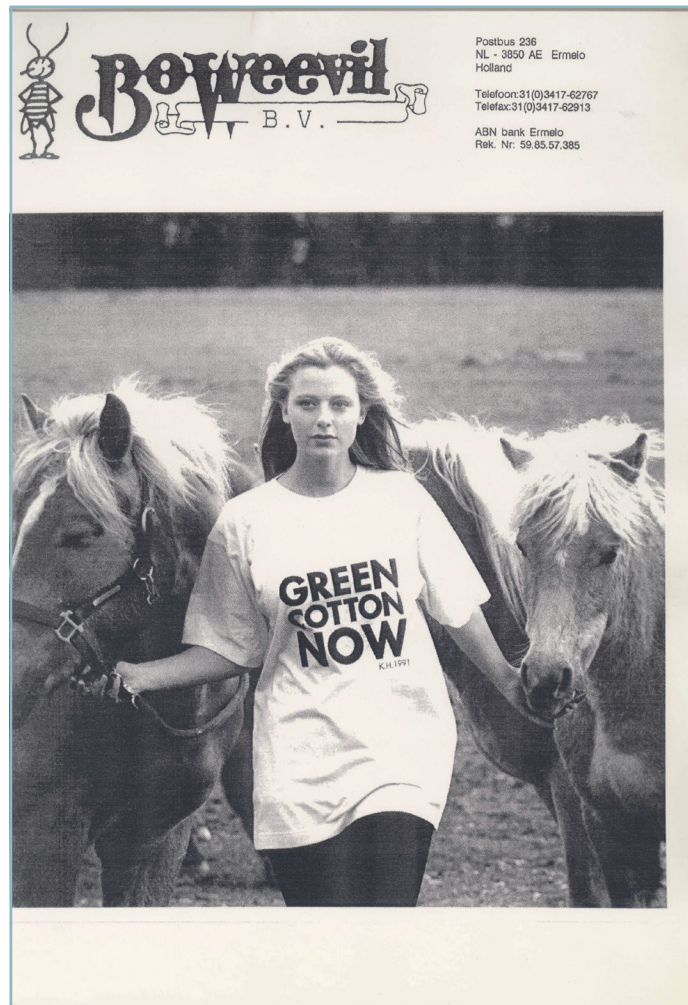
In the eighties of the last century, Jan Schrijver and Michel Willems often visited Turkey for the projects of the Good Food Foundation. The purpose was trade in nuts and dried tropical fruits from organic cultivation. They also noticed all kinds of other crops, including cotton and they realized how bad the situation was: cotton cultivation was increasingly dependent on pesticides and fertilizers. Bad for the people, the animals and the soil.

Together with Agro Eco, an agricultural consultancy, they investigated if organic cotton cultivation was possible. In 1989, the first field of organic cotton was grown entirely at their own expense in Kahramanmaras, Turkey, certified by SKAL and supervised by Agro Eco. And that was the start of Bo Weevil. It was a leap of faith, because there was no solid business case yet. All kind of products were made with the first harvest: yarns, fabrics and clothing, but also pleated cotton wool and cotton wool pads.



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Slogan shirt

In 1991 the very first T-shirt of certified organic cotton was made together with the Danish company Novotex and British fashion designer Katharine Hamnet, who was known for her activist slogan T-shirts. She designed the T-shirt, Bo Weevil delivered the fabric and Novotex produced the T-shirt.



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'Mister Bo Weevil'

The name Bo Weevil is derived from 'cotton boll weevil': a cotton weevil that feeds itself with the cotton seeds and cotton flowers. When the ecosystem is in balance, the presence of these weevils is not a problem since other insects eat the weevils and as a result the harm caused by the weevil is within reason. This way no chemical insecticide is needed.

The cotton pickers in the US discovered this insect during harvesting and called it Mister Bo Weevil. This is how the Bo Weevil song came about and it is performed by many blues- and country singers.



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Ecotton

T-shirts, sweaters and hoodies for adults and children were sold under the Ecotton brand name. In addition, towels, bathrobes, bags and cotton wool pads were part of the collection. All made of 100% organic cotton, certified according to EU standards and the EKO quality mark for sustainable textiles.



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A global standard

The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) was launched during the trade fair Biofach in Germany in 2002. During a workshop with representatives from organic cotton production, the textile industry, certification organizations and consumers, it became clear that there was a need for a globally acknowledged and recognizable standard for organic textiles.

In 2004, four organizations agreed: IVN (Germany), OTA (USA), Soil Association (UK) and JOCA (Japan) signed an agreement on their joint approach. The GOTS certification system was launched in October 2006.



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In the production of organic cotton Bo Weevil worked as much as possible with the local population. Not only in various places in Turkey, but also in Uganda, where a cotton project had been started with 5000 farming families. The cotton farmers received guidance and support during the growing season and were guaranteed to purchase their harvest at a fair price. As a result, their living conditions improved significantly. The project was a great success: In five years 20,000 farming families had become involved.

Unfortunately, the project got destroyed by an attempt of the Uganda government to fight malaria by using DDT in and around houses. These chemicals also soiled the cotton. The harvest was unusable: it could not be sold as organic cotton anymore and the project came to an end.



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Good for people and the planet. Guaranteed

All Bo Weevil fabrics and products are made of organic cotton and certified since 2006 according to the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS). Unlike many other labels and initiatives, this certification guarantees that the entire production chain is genuinely sustainable: no pesticides or fertilizers during cultivation, only approved substances for dyeing and printing and decent working conditions in every production step. Both our producers and our own company are checked for this by the independent organization Control Union.

The benefits of organic

- No harmful substances -> safe for people and the environment
- No GMO or mono cultivation -> better for land, farmers and biodiversity
- Less water and energy consumption -> better for the climate

Yet only 1% of global cotton production today is organic. Still a world to win.



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In the early years of Bo Weevil good contacts were established with Indian producers of organic cotton textile products. Bo Weevil is still working very closely together with one of them, for both production and product design.

We work closely with the factories and workshops that produce for Bo Weevil. Just like with our partner Pure Fabricz, Gifts with Impact, trade agents and importers in various countries. To make even more impact, we are affiliated with Clean & Unique, Common Objective, Conscious Fashion Fair and Slow Fashion Next.



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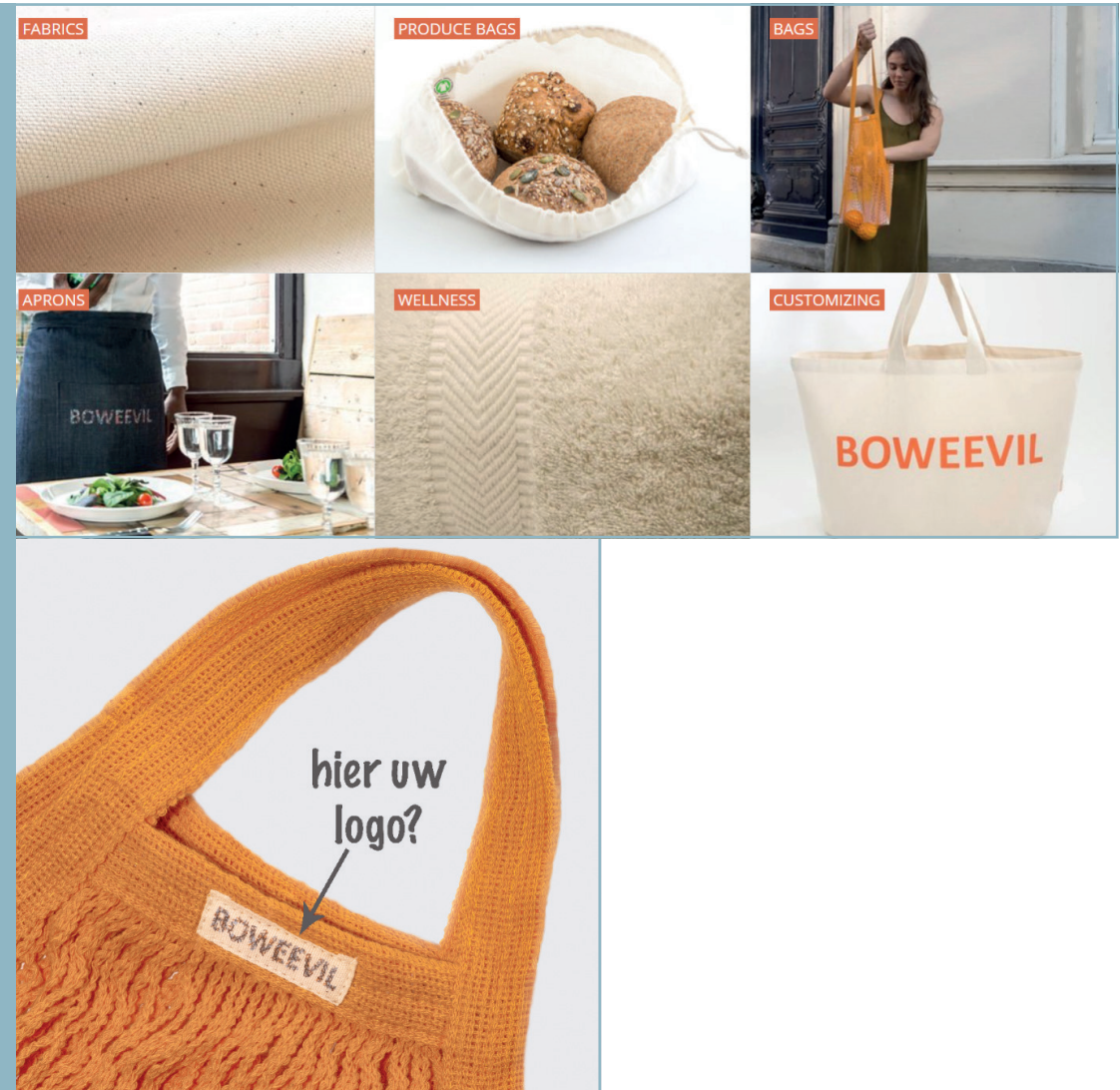
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Bo Weevil's offer

- Fabrics: More than 80 basic fabrics, from fine poplin to heavy canvas
- Bags: reusable bread & vegetable bags, net bags, carrier bags and canvas bags
- Bathroom textiles: a selection of towels, bathrobes and toiletry bags in different sizes
- Aprons: for people working in shops, catering and at home

Customizing

All products can be provided with a personalized logo, print or label on request. In this way companies and organizations can realize their own image. This is done with a lot of personal service and of course sustainable.



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Always personal

Personal meetings are good for mutual understanding and smooth cooperation. That is why Iris visits one of our producers in Turkey and India every year.

We also like to have personal contact with our customers. Whether it is about developing ideas for customizing or choosing the right fabric, Bo Weevil will provide information and advice based on in-depth knowledge of organic cotton and the technical knowledge of textiles.



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In the future...

... we will continue to realize Bo Weevil's mission: to contribute to the sustainability of the textile industry and the use of sustainable raw materials, by making high-quality organic cotton fabrics available and increasing the range of organic cotton products for small and medium-sized businesses.

International demand for organic cotton products and fabrics is growing and that is why we are recruiting agents in more countries. We are also in contact with other social enterprises to increase the impact on social and environmental level and to investigate how Bo Weevil can be part of a circular and regenerative economy.

