

# Printing on a certified organic product?



## What does Soil Association certified to GOTS mean?

If the Soil Association or Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) symbol are on a product, it means production of the fibre and every step of the processing supply chain has been certified to and inspected against organic standards meeting environmental and social criteria. Each processor (including weavers, dyers, CMT and printers) must meet the organic standards and have a licence to market products with either symbol.

## Why get certified?

*Soil Association certified businesses saw their sales grow 35% in 2010, and there are now around 3000 businesses worldwide certified to GOTS, using over 6000 approved chemical inputs manufactured by over 300 chemical manufacturers. This demonstrates that certified organic textiles represent an exciting and buoyant market sector. It is increasingly clear that it is possible to produce modern, fashionable textiles in a way that is kinder, cleaner and better for people and planet.*

If you're processing and trading in products featuring the Soil Association or GOTS symbol you need to get certified. Certification to GOTS with the Soil Association offers you:

- The use of our trusted symbol to market approved products
- The optional use of the GOTS logo
- Access to lists of over 6000 low impact chemical inputs approved for use in organic processing (including Soil Association Approved plastisol, discharge and waterbased printing inks)
- Marketing and promotional opportunities
- Unrivalled service and your own dedicated Certification Officer
- Support Organics: as we are not for profit any surplus income is gift aided to the Soil Association charity to promote and develop the organic sector.

## What if I don't want to be certified?

You will need to remove any reference to the Soil Association or GOTS from your products (hang tags/sewn in labels etc) and marketing. Both symbols are registered trademarks which offer assurance to consumers that all the requirements of the standards have been met throughout the entire supply chain, including for printing.

## What are the key requirements for Printers?

Using approved inks and other chemical inputs	We can provide you with lists of over 6000 approved chemicals <i>Or we can assess the inputs you are currently using</i>
Wastewater treatment (UK)	You will need a trade effluent permit from your local water authority/ environment agency if discharging through the public sewer <i>Or monitor and treat your waste water yourself</i>
Environmental management	You will need an environmental policy detailing procedures/monitoring of waste and discharges, staff training, record keeping for chemical use and a programme for improvement
Colour fastness	Your print will need to be colour fast

In addition to the above, the GOTS organic standards cover composition, labelling, social criteria, record keeping and quality assurance. For the full standards go to [www.soilassociation.org/standards](http://www.soilassociation.org/standards) and follow the textiles link.

## What are "Approved Inputs"?



Any chemical inputs used in processing/printing certified products must be approved to GOTS. There are over 6000 inputs already approved. Soil Association Certification can work directly with chemical manufacturers to approve products on their behalf. These products can then be marketed using the approved symbol. If your chemical input supplier is interested in hearing more about this scheme, ask them to contact us.

## How do I apply?

There are just 3 steps to become Soil Association certified:

1. **Application:** We can talk you through the process and send you an application pack (which includes a fee sheet and contract) so you can tell us about your business and products.
2. **Inspection:** When we've received your application, we'll arrange an inspection of your operation. You'll be given an inspection report which will detail any areas where standards have yet to be met.
3. **Certification:** Once we have agreed any corrective actions needed to meet the standards, you will be issued your first organic certificate and schedule listing approved products.

## What are the fees?

If your sales of certified organic products are under £180000 or you only contract print your application and then annual fee is £548 plus VAT. This includes your annual inspection. If certified sales go above this amount and you are not contract printing a levy fee applies. Contact us for a full fee sheet.

## About the Soil Association

The Soil Association has been working in organic textiles for over 10 years, and played a leading role in the development of the Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS) which Soil Association Certification now certifies to.

Soil Association Certification is the largest organic certification body in the UK, with almost 30 years experience. We operate a rigorous system, and our trusted symbol ensures high confidence in the integrity of products approved by us. Today, we certify over 80% of organic farming and food processing in the UK. As a not-for-profit business, any surplus income we make is gift-aided to the Soil Association charity to raise awareness, develop and safeguard the entire organic sector.

For more information contact [goorganic@soilassociation.org](mailto:goorganic@soilassociation.org) or visit [www.sacert.org](http://www.sacert.org)