

Agri Ministry mulls new certification system for organic cotton, derivatives

Subramani Ra Mancombu

Chennai

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare plans to come up with a new certification system for organic cotton and its derivatives as part of its efforts to promote Indian export. The initiative comes after representations from service organisations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the notification of the “Indian Standard for Organic Textiles” to protect Indian organic cotton and the textiles industry. To come up with the new certification system, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has set up a committee to look into the issues of organic certification of cotton and its derivatives.

FEEDBACK

The committee will consider the possibility of launching the new certification system under the Agriculture Ministry

The Agriculture Ministry has set up a panel to look into the issues of organic certification of cotton and its derivatives

with the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies and the Quality Council of India being part of it.

As part of this initiative, the Agriculture Ministry will hold a stakeholders meeting in New Delhi on Tuesday, where the “need and relevance for another certification system with special focus on cotton and textile value chain” will be discussed. The stakeholders have been urged to suggest the scope of the sector to be covered, collect and provide feedback from various stakeholders, including private label operators, a communication sent by the Ministry said.

Last month, a Chennai-based service organisation wrote to Modi on how India remains a raw material supplier to Bangladesh due to the lack of a domestic textile standard for organic cotton.

Currently, private organic textile standards such as Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS) and Textile Exchange control the global market, reducing India to a mere raw material supplier in the organic textile segment, the organisation said. On November 18, 2014, the Directorate-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) issued an order on “Procedure for Export of Certified Organic Products”. The export of organic textiles was brought under Indian Standard for Organic Textiles through the notice. However, the organic textile industry urged the Centre to defer the implementation of the Indian standard to adjust to the new regime. On December 18, 2014, the order was stayed by the DGFT.