

Sourcing U.S. cotton-rich apparel products from China? Then this year's COTTON USA Buyers Tour to Shanghai in October is an essential date for the diary.

The globalisation of the textile industry has brought many benefits but also made life more complicated for buyers. While they now have unprecedented sourcing options, identifying reliable, quality suppliers in unfamiliar markets can be a tricky and often time-consuming business. That's why the COTTON USA 2008 Buyers Tour to Shanghai, from 15th–20th October, is an absolute must for those interested in sourcing U.S. cotton-rich garments and fabric from Chinese mills.

This is the third apparel tour to China organised by Cotton Council International (CCI), the global marketing arm of the U.S. cotton industry. It will give buyers the chance to meet suppliers at the COTTON USA trade fair at the St Regis Hotel in Shanghai, and also to travel to key cotton textile-producing regions including Hangzhou, Changzhou and Jiangyin to see mills offering U.S. cotton-rich woven and knitted fabrics and garments. The tour will conclude with a visit to China's largest textile show, Intertextile Shanghai.

Build profitable relationships

The COTTON USA tour takes the hard work out of identifying suitable Chinese suppliers, because CCI screens companies to ensure they have the capability to provide quality, export-ready U.S. cotton-rich products. Buyers will have a great opportunity to see first hand the type of merchandise available from China's rapidly expanding textile industry. They can set up profitable, ongoing business relationships with suppliers of 100% cotton textiles, and will also be able to establish links with garment producers.

Retailers who have already been on CCI tours are well aware of their benefits. Tara Young, technical manager of clothing for Tesco, comments: "As a clothing team, we find these trips to be well organised and relevant to Tesco. We have met with a wide range of suppliers and since followed up with them directly. We have particularly enjoyed the flexibility of meeting suppliers in the trade forum and then selecting which ones to visit in the locality, giving us valuable insight into emerging textile markets."

The tours are a significant element of CCI's innovative Supply Chain Marketing Programme. As a non-profit trade association representing the U.S. cotton industry, CCI's aim is to increase the use of American cotton around the world by developing new ways to help build business relationships between buyers and sellers of products containing U.S. cotton. In addition to its China tours, CCI has also taken leading UK, European and global brands to meet suppliers in countries such as Turkey, Vietnam, India and Pakistan.



Dealing direct with the best in China

COTTON USA Buyers Tour makes sourcing U.S. cotton-rich garments from China easy



Feel the quality: CCI's screening means you'll only deal with suitable suppliers

Stephanie Thiers-Ratcliffe, CCI's international marketing manager, says: "The tours bring together key buyers from the brand and retailing sector with mill suppliers to promote sales of quality products made with U.S. cotton."

For any buyer interested in sourcing U.S. cotton-rich textile products from China this year, October's COTTON USA tour is a must.

For more information and to apply for a place on the COTTON USA tour, call +44 (0)20 7297 2042, email sthiers@cotton.org or visit CCI's website at www.cottonusa.org and click on Supply Chain Marketing (SCM) Programme

