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Photo: FIN

O~Wool® Organic Wool Highlighted by Top Fashion Designers

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Middlebury, VT – Cutting-edge U.S. and European designers who emphasize sustainable fashion are increasingly choosing O~Wool® fabrics made with organic wool by [Vermont Organic Fiber Company](#) (VTOF). VTOF is the nation's leading provider of Merino wool fabrics made with wool grown and certified to the [U.S. Department of Agriculture's](#) (USDA) national organic program standard.

Popular New York City-based design house [Bodkin](#) used the "O~Wool by Jasco" interlock fabric for a dress, utility vest, slouchy pants, and gloves, and O~Wool melton fabric for a parka at its February 16, 2009, presentation at The Horticultural Society of New York during the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in New York City, NY. On January 5, 2009, Bodkin was granted the first Ecco Domani Sustainable Design Award.

Norwegian fashion design house [FIN](#) is showing its fall/winter line which includes melton O~Wool coats at the Coterie show in New York City February 22-24, 2009. The Norwegian company February 9, 2008 won the Naloyet 2009 award, the country's most prestigious fashion award.

"O~Wool has everything we like - fantastic quality, happy sheep, and sustainable pasture practices," said Nicolai (Nic) Herlofson, partner at FIN.

"The use of O~Wool by these top designers showed their understanding that fashion can be visually striking, aesthetically pleasing, and environmentally sustainable," said Matthew Mole, president of Vermont Organic Fiber Company.

On January 25, 2009, stylish, lightweight, yet warm leggings made with VTOF's new "O~Wool® Washable fabrics," were a key element in [Outdoor Retailer's](#) (OR) "Project OR" People's Choice-winning design at the Salt Lake City, UT, show. Designer Curt Sousa, who graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in Los Angeles, CA, used the washable wool fabric in his design.

About Vermont Organic Fiber Company

O~Wool yarns and fabrics are made from certified organic Merino wool spun, knit, woven, and finished at facilities in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. Woolen spinning in the U.S. is certified to the new [Global Organic Textile Standard](#) (GOTS) as is worsted spinning carried out with partner mills in China. GOTS addresses all post-shearing stages such as dyeing and finishing, and includes social criteria. VTOF is one of the first and few companies in the U.S. to have partner spinning mills certified to GOTS and is getting all subsequent processing phases certified to the standard. Sales of O~Wool products grew 107 percent in 2007.

Current and recent designers using O~Wool yarns and fabrics include Bahar Shahpar, Linda Loudermilk, and Diane von Furstenberg, who featured 'O~Wool by Jasco®' fabrics on the runway at Earth Pledge's Future Fashion show in New York City in February, 2008. In addition, companies from North America to Europe and Asia that have used O~Wool include Ecobaby Organics (San Diego, CA), Fox River Mills (Osage, IA), IBEX (Woodstock, VT), J. Crew (New York, NY), Loomstate (New York, NY), Maggie's Organics (Ypsilanti, MI), Patagonia (Ventura, CA), Wildlife Works (London, UK), and Mitsukoshi Department Stores (Tokyo, Japan).

Organic wool is part of the approximately \$1.9 billion global organic fiber industry, according to the *Organic Exchange Organic Cotton Market Report 2007*. For the wool to be sold as "organic" in the United States, the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Organic Program (NOP) requires that the sheep meet its livestock standards which call for the animals to be fed organic feed and forage from the last third of gestation and be raised without the use of synthetic hormones or pesticides. In addition, organic livestock producers are diligent in ensuring they do not exceed the natural carrying capacity of the land on which their animals graze, resulting in agricultural practices that are healthy for both the animals and the environment.