



OVS IS COMMITTED TO GROWING ITALIAN COTTON OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY WITH REDUCED WATER CONSUMPTION.

Venice, July 2022. A new goal for OVS, after the achievements of 2021, when it reached 100% of its target to procure its cotton from more sustainable sources (organic, recycled, or grown according to the Better Cotton Standard System). OVS, Italy's leading brand in men's, women's and kids' fashions, is now focusing on the production of an all-Italian cotton yarn, grown in partnership with the company Santiva. Santiva operates in Pollina, in the province of Palermo, and it has brought back farming methods that were once traditionally used in the area, giving a new boost to cultivating long-staple cotton of the highest quality, with reduced water consumption.

Cotton is the raw material most used by OVS, where it represents about 70% of the materials used to make garments. Today's major cotton producers operate in India, China and the United States, although this was not always the case. In the 1950s, cotton was widely grown throughout Italy, too. Using organic farming techniques, avoiding chemical fertilisers or pesticides, and only using small bodies of water for the plants, which are irrigated exclusively in the hotter months, the growing methods applied by Santiva safeguard the soil, reduce water consumption, and respect biodiversity. Santiva also involves various young farmers, which means offering significant growth opportunities for the local economy.

On April 22 this year, on the occasion of World Earth Day, the cotton plants purchased by OVS were sown. These will be harvested between September and November 2022, a process carried out by hand to preserve the quality of the fibres and reduce the impact of production to a minimum. The cotton will be used in Spring/Summer 2023, and will make some 30,000 items.

"This initiative is for us a way to support "Made in Italy" and to bring the production of such an important raw material for the clothing industry back to Italy, guaranteeing the traceability of the whole supply chain. If this experiment is a success, then we would hope to increase volumes significantly", says Simone Colombo, *Head of Corporate Sustainability at OVS S.p.A.*

2021 was an important year for OVS on its path to promote transparency and respect for all stakeholders, which achieved significant results in different fields: first place in the Fashion Transparency Index; procurement of 100% of its cotton from more sustainable sources; monitoring of the product supply line with the participation of suppliers on the Sustainable Apparel Coalition Higg index; choice of materials and manufacturing processes with a reduced impact on the environment; new targets to become carbon neutral, approved by the Science Based Targets initiatives and focused on a 46% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030 (already down 85% between 2017 and 2019). All of the activities and aims achieved are described in *Making progress*, the newly published 2021 sustainability report, which this year has a new form and style, thanks to the images by well-known London illustrator, Michael Parkin, that dialogue with the text to interpret the key themes with comedic creativity.

ABOUT OVS

OVS S.p.A. is Italy's leading retailer of men's, women's and kids' fashions, with a constantly growing market share, which is now at 9.3%.

It operates through the brands OVS, OVS Kids, Upim, BluKids, Stefanel, and CROFF. OVS manages a portfolio of brands, each with its own lifestyle, which it develops in-house. PIOMBO, a symbol of Italian style and elegance, with a touch of eccentricity. Baby Angel, for young contemporary women. Grand & Hills, casual clothing inspired by American college fashions. Everlast, a must-have in activewear and sportswear. Shaka Innovative Beauty, dedicated to easy make-up and skincare. The company is the undisputed leader on the Italian market for kids' clothes, where it can boast a double-digit market share.

OVS S.p.A has 2000 shops in Italy and abroad and recorded sales of €1,359 million and an EBITDA of €147.2m in 2021.

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