



AFTER PLANTING IN 2022, OVS IS BRINGING ITS FIRST COLLECTION MADE FROM ORGANIC COTTON GROWN IN SICILY INTO STORES.

IT'S A GREAT LITTLE STORY, MADE IN ITALY.

A capsule of men's and women's-shirts in six colours, made in Italy, on sale on 22 April, Earth Day

Venice, 22 April 2023. An all-Italian supply chain for the first collection made using cotton harvested in Sicily. Products that represent a stage in the new sustainable Made in Italy project by OVS. The Italian cotton collection by OVS will be available in selected stores and online, at ovs.it, on the occasion of Earth Day on 22 April.

For years, the choice to source more sustainable raw materials is an aim that has been a constant for OVS, Italy's leading retailer of men's, women's and kids' fashions and it is still a key element in 2023. Active support in the production of organic cotton, traced and grown in Sicily, demonstrates the continuity of this commitment.

"We see cotton as a strategic raw material", explains **Stefano Beraldo, CEO of OVS Spa**, "Since 2021, 100% of our procurement has come from more sustainable sources and today, Sicilian cotton means we can start up local production to guarantee the traceability of the whole supply. It is an important step forward - even if still somewhat symbolic - towards producing top-quality raw materials in Italy. From limited production in 2022, we will arrive at more than 100 tonnes in 2023. We will also be investing in research, co-financing a doctorate programme at the University of Catania in *Agricultural, food and environmental science*, dedicated to Italian cotton".

Cotton is the main material chosen by OVS, which uses it in **over 70 percent** of its manufactured clothing. Since 2022, as well as international supplies, OVS has chosen to invest in Italian cotton, in **partnership with the company Cotone Organico di Sicilia** which has brought back a crop that had been forgotten for over 40 years.

The plantation created just outside Palermo will not achieve the same production levels as when cotton fields occupied thousands of hectares on the island, but it is so much more than an experiment. The recovery of this crop plays a part in the rebirth of the area, boosting textile manufacture, and creating opportunities for the local economy. The techniques used protect the soil, reduce the use of water and respect biodiversity.

For OVS, in the first year of this partnership, the project is also a high-value technological challenge. The fibre origin was authenticated by marking it with a unique DNA created specifically for OVS by Haelixa, a Swiss company, leader in solutions for products traceability. The marker is harmless and invisible, and makes the raw material traceable from the origin to the finished garment.

OVS' commitment does not stop at the raw material; in fact it can be seen at every stage in a supply chain with no short cuts: from growing through to ginning (separating the fibre from the seeds) at zero km, through to manufacturing, a path that brings with it a series of positive and social impacts. **The finished product comes from the hands of Progetto Quid**, an ethical fashion company based near Verona, which employs people with a difficult past, leading them to discover their own creative talents.

The collection, which consists of a series of T-shirts in six colours, will be on sale through selected stores and at ovs.it from 22 April, Earth Day.

About OVS

OVS S.p.A. is Italy's leading retailer of men's, women's, and kids' fashions, with a 9.4 % market share that is constantly growing.

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 fashion. Everlast, a brand in active and sportswear. Shaka Innovative Beauty, dedicated to easy makeup 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 Spa has 2000 shops in Italy and abroad and in 2022, it recorded sales of €1,513 million and EBITDA of €180.2 mln.

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