

The value chain of native and organic cotton in the Lambayeque Region of Peru

In the Lambayeque Region of Peru a strategic plan to recover the native cotton and promote its [territorial organic production chain](#) is being implemented. Since 2016 the Government of Lambayeque, through a regional regulation, declared the native cotton as a natural product of Lambayeque and had implemented a [Concertation Table](#) involving public and private sector organizations, universities, farmers and craftsmen local associations.

In 2019 the new [Board of Directors and the Technical Commissions of the Native Cotton Concertation Table](#) were established, strengthening ongoing strategic alliances in order to develop the whole production chain of the native cotton, including initiatives of sowing and cultivation, production and marketing.

[The *Gossypium barbadense* species of the native cotton that is cultivated in the Lambayeque Region](#) is characterized by a natural pigmentation of different colours. This native cotton comes in myriad of colour-grown hues, including russet, light and dark brown, copper, light and dark lilac, beige, pale yellow, cream and light white, as well as other colours to be rescued.

The plants of this species, cultivated for millennia in small plots, orchards and gardens, also have other important properties: they are resistant to pests, bacterial and fungal diseases, insects. They are also resistant to high concentrations of soil salinity and they are able to survive in sandy areas for up to five years without the need for irrigation.

Despite the great potential advantages of this native cotton, representing a biodiversity heritage of the country, its cultivation and use remained limited in the practices of small agricultural producers and artisans, meanwhile the big industry was producing the white cotton.

Native cotton doesn't require dyeing and allows to create garments of natural colours suitable to satisfy the demand people who are allergic or have a sensitive skin to chemical coloured fabrics. More in general it satisfies the continuous growing demand of consumers who prefer to make use of natural materials produced with environmentally friendly processes. In addition, the ability of this cotton to grow in arid soil represents another important advantage taking into



account the massive use of irrigation required by industrial cotton. Moreover, it is naturally resistant to pests, making possible to avoid chemical pesticides and favouring the transition towards an organic production.

The risk of extinction of native cotton has generated in Peru a process to rescue this millenary crop, which involved national institutions, universities and regions such as that of Lambayeque, where the practices of cultivation and artisanal production of its fibres were still in force. In 2008 the Government of Peru declared Native Cotton as a Genetic Ethnic Cultural Heritage of the Nation.

The strategy defined in the Lambayeque Region with the participation of all actors involved in a public-private partnership, foresees a set of initiatives that cover the different themes related to the recovery of this ancestral crop. These initiatives are also based on the results achieved with ongoing projects in key aspects such as:

- The diffusion and improvement of the native cotton cultivation, favoring the implementation of arboretum, advising producers on good organic production practices, doing specialized studies on the suitability of soils, developing procedures for organic certification, favoring the use of mechanized equipment in the process of fiber treatment, such as precasting. [The Technological Innovation Centre of Lambayeque CITE SIPAN](#) collaborates in these aspects through the [Native cotton fibre recovery Project](#), carrying out activities that are described in its publications.
- The knowledge building, including specialized studies and research on genetics to improve native cotton. Within this framework, universities collaborate providing a very significant contribution. [The Institute of Biotechnology of the Universidad Nacional Pedro Ruiz Gallo de Lambayeque](#), for example, through specialized studies, has identified 15 different natural colours produced by this plant. The Institute also works on the conservation of genetic material in seed form, in in-vitro cultures and in the field. The Institute also provides interested producers with plants of 10 or 15 different colours for them to take advantage of this organic cotton.
- The strengthening of the craftsmanship and the promotion of native cotton products in the national and international markets. The Lambayeque Region promotes the [generation of collective brands](#) and the process to achieve the denomination of origin of the native cotton, creating a unique trademark for the products of the territory. The Region also promotes an alliance between the public sector, producers and academia to improve production processes, to create an observatory of the textile and clothing production, and encourages new companies to join the value chain of the native cotton textile fibre.

To know more

[Ministry of the Environment Document](#)



[Ministry of the Environment Study](#)

[Mesa de Concertación in *busqueda.elperuano.pe*](#)

[News Mesa de Concertación in *senasa.gob.pe*](#)

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[Articles on algodón nativo in *rpp.pe* website](#)

[Article *Plan Regional Exportador de Lambayeque* in *andina.pe* website](#)

[Article in *agroforum.pe*](#)

[Algodonnativo *blogspot.com*](#)

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[Lambayeque in *turismoenperu.com.pe*](#)

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