La Rhea Pepper is a fifth-generation farmer, the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of the global non-profit Textile Exchange and a lifelong advocate for more sustainable practices in the apparel and textile industry. For more than 18 years, Textile Exchange has been at the forefront of driving meaningful change towards preferred, organic and regenerative fibres. After spearheading the successful growth of the organic cotton market, Textile Exchange (formerly Organic Exchange) has expanded the chain of custody standards beyond Organic Fibers, to include recycled rPET, as well as Responsible Down, Responsible Wool and Mohair.

Prior to Textile Exchange, La Rhea and her late husband, Terry, were founding members of the Texas Organic Cotton Marketing Cooperative (TOCMC) in 1993. In 1995, La Rhea served on the Administrative Council for Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) and was later elected to the Organic Trade Association’s Fiber Council Steering Committee. She joined the Organic Trade Association’s Board of Directors in 1998 where she supported the creation of organic fibre-processing standards and chain of custody for the industry. She more recently served as chair for RAFI, the Rural Advancement Foundation International, from 2015-2018 and is currently serving on the board of Directors for CottonConnect and the Regenerative Organic Alliance.