

How Do Organic & Traditional Cotton Systems Compare with Regenerative Agriculture?



FACT SHEET

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TRADITIONAL COTTON PRODUCTION:

- Practices have been refined across generations for specific fields and previous climates
- Some RA practices already used (reduced tillage, crop rotations) to lower costs and stabilize income.

ORGANIC COTTON: PRODUCTION

- Some RA frameworks include organic requirements, but these are tangential to soil health.
- Organic emphasizes prohibiting synthetic inputs, not necessarily soil outcomes.

REGENERATIVE COTTON PRODUCTION

- Elevates soil health and off-farm environmental benefits (reduced nutrient runoff, less erosion, carbon sequestration).
- Outcome-based: focuses on soil regeneration, biodiversity, and long-term productivity rather than fixed input rules
- Yield and quality effects can vary: reduced drought stress may improve fiber quality, while delayed stand establishment may hinder maturity.
- Recognizes and helps prepare cotton farming for climate change.

Key Distinction:

Traditional = efficiency and profitability.

Organic = compliance with input restrictions.

Regenerative = outcomes for soil, climate, environment and profitability

Unlike traditional or organic systems, **Regenerative Agriculture** includes soil health and resilience rather than primarily profitability or input rules