

WEST ELM GREEN GLOSSARY: A LOOK BEHIND THE LABELS

WEST ELM GREEN: Products that wear our west elm green label are either responsibly produced, certified organic, recycled, rapidly renewable or non-toxic. Look for the elm tree icon for identification of west elm green products.



AID TO ARTISANS (ATA): A global leader in economic development that supports artisan communities throughout the world. Works to protect traditional cultures and connect artisans with business opportunities that bring sustainable economic growth to their communities. Committed to joining environmentally sound – and profitable – business practices. Honored west elm in 2009 as a Distinguished Partner in Craft for our ongoing work with a women’s cooperative in rural India that creates hand-loomed products and generates sustainable employment for thousands of women.

CERTIFIED ORGANIC COTTON: Made from 100% organic cotton and certified from seed to shelf. Responsibly grown without synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Dyed or printed with environmentally safe and friendly dyes.

GOTS: The Global Organic Textile Standard ensures that textiles labeled “organic” meet a specified and strict set of criteria. Certification covers everything from the harvesting of raw materials to manufacturing, packaging and labeling. GOTS prohibits the use of such materials as heavy metals, genetically modified substances, toxics and carcinogens.

OEKO-TEX: A global testing and certification system launched in the early ‘90s to provide clear guidance to consumers and companies about the health impacts of textiles. The Oeko-Tex Standard 100 is now the dominant standard for establishing the human ecological safety of such products as bedding and towels. Centered around rigorous screening for chemicals and other substances, approval becomes stricter the more a product is intended to come into contact with the skin.

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (FSC): A widely recognized not-for-profit organization devoted to safeguarding the world’s forests. Its prime focus is establishing clear standards for responsible forest management, allowing for business practices that benefit people and protect natural resources. Paper or wood products that carry FSC certification come from well-managed, responsibly harvested forests that meet strict environmental, social and economic standards. In 2006, west elm became one of the first major catalogers to commit to printing entirely on FSC certified paper.

WEST ELM GREEN GLOSSARY: A LOOK BEHIND THE LABELS (CONT.)

GLOBAL FOREST AND TRADE NETWORK (GFTN): A partnership led by the World Wildlife Fund to create market incentives and business practices that protect the world's most valuable and threatened forests. Includes more than 360 companies, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and entrepreneurs throughout the world. Supports development of a robust market for responsibly harvested wood as well as national and regional efforts to expand credibly certified forests. west elm joined GFTN in October 2008.

RAPIDLY RENEWABLE: A natural resource that regenerates in a short time frame. Examples include bamboo, jute, hemp, bankuan, abaca. In order to qualify for the west elm green label, products made with these resources must also be finished or assembled with non-toxic materials.

RECLAIMED: A material or product that is diverted from the waste stream and then used again, with minimal alteration and maximum preservation of its original features and beauty.

RECYCLED: Central to reducing waste, recycled materials have been previously used and re-incorporated into new uses or products. Recycled post-consumer content is material that has already been utilized in a consumer product and is then recycled or reprocessed for a new use.

RESPONSIBLY PRODUCED OR HARVESTED: A means of sourcing materials that puts a premium on environmental stewardship. Often refers to procuring wood from responsibly managed forests in ways that support biodiversity, productivity and healthy ecosystems now and into the future.