



# The Good Cashmere Standard<sup>®</sup> by AbTF

## Glossary



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## AbTF

The Aid by Trade Foundation was established in 2005. Under the credo to help people help themselves through trade it stands for an innovative approach that focuses on activating market forces instead of relying on charity. Together with various partners from textile industry, governmental and non-governmental organisation, the foundation makes a significant contribution towards combatting poverty and protecting the environment.

The Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) is a non-profit organisation, pursues charitable aims and is based in Hamburg, Germany. Tina Stridde is Managing Director of AbTF since 2015.

Further information about the AbTF can be found on our website <https://www.aidbytrade.org/>.

## Advisory Board GCS

The Good Cashmere Standard's Advisory Board serves to advise the initiative, and it consists of representatives from various international stakeholders. Non-governmental organisations, retailers, cashmere producer, and government organisations, each contribute their own points of view and experiences. Their expertise means that members of the Advisory Board are important partners for dialogue and advisers for the Management Board.

## ATAKORA Fördergesellschaft GmbH

As a registered trading company, ATAKORA is commissioned by the AbTF with the marketing of the trademark rights of the standards 'Cotton made in Africa' and 'The Good Cashmere Standard', supporting their implementation in textile production and the sale of the certified raw materials. ATAKORA is entitled to grant sublicenses and generate income from partnership fees and license fee, which is transferred to the AbTF to be used for the foundations purpose.

## Audits

Cashmere producers (buying stations/dehairing stations) apply for certification from The Good Cashmere Standard®. The cashmere farmer which sell the cashmere to the cashmere producers is then issued with a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) and applies to the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) for initial approval. Should the certification process be successful, the cashmere producer receives a certificate which is valid for 12 months.

Once the approval process is successfully completed, the AbTF contacts an independent auditing company that conducts the inspections of the cashmere farmers and the buying stations/dehairing stations. ELEVATE is currently assigned with the audits.



Is the cashmere producer compliant with the Standard, certification is awarded by AbTF. In addition to the regular visits and audits, a number of Corrective Action Plan (CAP) services help scope the long-term value of the certification, provide support for the auditees with their corrective and preventive actions and offer capacity building.

## Buying Station (BS)

The buying station is the entity that collects and stores raw cashmere from verified farms. Each Buying Station must pass an audit to achieve GCS certification. The certificate is valid for 12 months. Details about its requirements and criteria can be found in the standard.

Further information can be found under the heading Cashmere Producer (CP).

## Cashmere Producer (CP)

Cashmere Producers (buying stations/dehairing stations) need to apply for certification according to The Good Cashmere Standard<sup>®</sup>. In order to apply, cashmere farmers have to submit a self-assessment (SAQ) about their operations and conditions on their farms via the cashmere producer. Based on the results of the self-assessment and in consultation with AbTF, random on-site verifications of the farms are conducted to check the proper implementation of the standard. The CP must have an effective management system and sufficient staff capable of implementing GCS and has always direct contact with farms.

When the verification process has been successfully completed, the CP will receive a GCS Certificate which is valid for 12 months. The CP must follow certain reporting criteria which GCS will explain to them.

## Cashmere Tracking System (CATS)

GCS has a Cashmere Tracking System (CATS), which tracks cashmere orders as they are fulfilled through the supply chain, from the Cashmere Producer (CP) to the Retailer/Brand (RB). The system is triggered by orders from RBs and includes all partners in the supply chain fulfilling GCS orders.

The retailer regularly exports data on orders into CATS via an interface or as an Excel file. The Readymade Garment Manufacturer (RGM) is the first link in the RB's supply chain as it receives the data from RB. The RGM must acknowledge the record it receives detailing the order. It must then specify the fabric or yarn manufacturer that the GCS cashmere will be obtained from to fulfill the order and send an order to that yarn/fabric mill. In its turn, when the yarn/fabric mill receives an email about this order, it also has to acknowledge it in the system and place the GCS order with a Spinning Mill (SM). The SM then provides information on the certified CP that the GCS cashmere has been purchased from. The volumes in the CP and SM supply chain links is managed and controlled through CATS. Detailed information is provided by GCS in the CATS User Manual.



## Chain of Custody Guidelines (CoC Guidelines)

The Chain of Custody Guidelines (CoC) specifies the requirements of the individual stages along the supply chain of GCS.

Further information about the CoC Guidelines can be found on our website

<https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org/>

## Certificates

AbTF issues two types of certificates: the GCS Certificate, for certified cashmere producers that have successfully passed their audits, and the GCS Registration Certificate, which is for spinning mills and yarn traders. The certificates are valid for 12 months.

Please find more information under the heading Cashmere Producer (CP), Spinning Mill (SM), Yarn Trader (YT) and Audits. An overview about the requirements can be requested from GCS.

## Combing Season

Every year during spring, the combing season begins when temperatures rise and goats naturally shed follicles. The rules for combing are defined in the standard.

## Dehairing Station (DS)

The Dehairing Station (DS) is the entity where collected raw material undergoes the dehairing process. Once this process has been successfully completed, dehaired cashmere is available for further processing and for the production of GCS products. Depending on the set-up of the company, the BS or the DS is audited so that it can receive GCS certification, which is valid for 12 months. Details about the requirements and criteria that must be fulfilled to receive certification are found in the standard.

Please find more information under the heading Cashmere Producer (CP).

## Environment

The protection of the environment in which cashmere goats, farmers and farming communities live is one of the central aims of The Good Cashmere Standard®. One of its key principles in this regard is that goat farming should have no negative impact on the environment, especially on the land and biodiversity.



The Standard also contains criteria regarding the responsible use of fertilizers and pesticides, which define when and how it is appropriate to deploy them. The Standard additionally stipulates that farmers co-exist with wildlife and restrain from negatively impacting biodiversity on and around the areas that they manage.

## Farmers

Farmers must ensure that persons who work with goats are trained and competent enough to do so. Additionally, it requires that goat farming activities protect the land and do not cause pollution. In addition, farmers must co-exist with wildlife and not negatively impact biodiversity on and around the areas they manage. Above that, the Standard defines social criteria for both small and large farms. These criteria govern issues such as the rights of children and workers, gender equality, correct payment as well as health and safety. Farmers must also adhere to stipulations regarding management criteria and audits. By working side by side with cashmere farmers we aim to achieve wide-ranging, significant and continuous improvement.

## GCS Officer

The Cashmere Producer (please find details under the heading Cashmere Producer) must appoint a person responsible for GCS matters, called the GCS Officer who has the relevant knowledge and experience to carry out this post.

The GCS Officer must be responsible for:

- Handling all necessary GCS related communication;
- The overall coordination of GCS matters in the Producers premises;
- Acting as a liaison between AbTF, the lead verifiers and farmers regarding GCS matters;
- The submission of annual Self-Assessments and annual Continuous Improvement Plans;
- Overseeing compliance, implementation and monitoring of the farmers' performance regarding the GCS requirements.

## Goats

Animal welfare is at the heart of The Good Cashmere Standard®, which is why it incorporates the Five Freedoms as defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council. No animal should be subjected to hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, injury or disease. Animals must also have the freedom to express normal behaviour and live a life free from fear and distress.



The Good Cashmere Standard® contains clear and comprehensive criteria regarding:

- ✓ feed, water and nutrition
- ✓ indoor/outdoor living environment
- ✓ health, herd, breeding and kid management
- ✓ physical alterations
- ✓ combing and shearing
- ✓ handling and transport
- ✓ euthanasia and slaughter

The Good Cashmere Standard® can go a long way to making a significant improvement to the welfare of cashmere goats.

## Labels

GCS labels can be requested at the exclusively label producer NILORN. You must order predesigned and approved hangtags and woven labels displaying The Good Cashmere Standard® by AbTF trademark from our nominated label producer NILORN.

The GCS label book can be requested from GCS.

## Marketing and Communication

GCS retailer/brand partners receive marketing and communication support, including communication guidelines, verified texts and pictures, and video materials.

## Marking

GCS offers an option to create unique identifiers of raw cashmere that can then be traced along the production process, providing enhanced transparency and traceability throughout the supply chain.

Further information will be provided by GCS team. Please contact [gcs@abt-foundation.org](mailto:gcs@abt-foundation.org)

## Orders

GCS retailer/brand partners can place their GCS orders in CATS. Each link in the supply chain has to verify their acceptance of any orders placed, to ensure the process of traceability and tracking is complete. Login information for access to CATS is provided by GCS.



## Readymade Garment Manufacturer (RGM)

The Readymade Garment Manufacturer (RMG) buys GCS certified yarn or fabric from a source that is itself also certified as comply The Good Cashmere Standard® by AbTF. The contact details of eligible sources are available from GCS.

Each RMG must be registered in the Cashmere Tracking System (CATS) to accept and track orders placed by a Retailer/Brand (RB). Whenever an order is placed in CATS, the RMG needs to provide purchasing information about the yarn, cashmere or fabric being procured. It must also apply for GCS labels through CATS. Detailed information about the registration process is available at GCS and is explained in the CATS User Manual.

## Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ)

The self-assessment questionnaire has been developed by the Aid by Trade Foundation and covers all aspects of sustainable cashmere production under The Good Cashmere Standard®. Based on the results of the self-assessment and in consultation with AbTF, random on-site verifications of the farms are conducted to check the proper implementation of the standard.

Further explanations can be found under the heading Audits.

## Shearing Season

Every year during spring, the shearing season begins when temperatures rise and goats naturally shed follicles. The rules regulating shearing are defined in the standard.

## Spinning Mill (SM)

The Spinning Mill (SM) purchases dehaired cashmere from a certified source and processes it into yarn. Every SM that wishes to register with GCS must fill in the GCS registration form, which included acceptance of the GCS code of conduct. The form is available online or can be requested from GCS. The SM will get access to CATS as soon as they are registered and have purchased cashmere from a certified source. Once GCS received completed data from the SM, the SM get a GCS Registration Certificate which is valid for 12 months. A SM cannot be registered if no GCS cashmere has yet been purchased.



## Supply Chain

GCS retailer/brand partners provide GCS with information about their supply chain. Based on the information received, accounts will be created in CATS and each link in the supply chain receives authorised logins to allow them to use the system.

## The Good Cashmere Standard® by AbTF (GCS)

The Good Cashmere Standard® (GCS) is an initiative of the Aid by Trade Foundation. GCS was founded in 2019 with the aim of creating, promoting and implementing a benchmark standard for sustainable cashmere.

The Good Cashmere Standard® stands for sustainably certified cashmere from farms where goats are treated responsibly, where the environment is protected, and the social, ecological, and economic living conditions of cashmere farmers and their families are respected. Following AbTF's approach to activate market forces instead of collecting donations, brands and retailers pay a licence fee to get permission to source sustainable cashmere that is certified under The Good Cashmere Standard and to label their products accordingly. Income from licence fees is then reinvested to foster the impact of The Good Cashmere Standard, pay for verification of the sustainably produced cashmere and benefit goats, farmers and the environment equally.

Further information about GCS can be found on our website <https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org/>

## Timeline

GCS follows a timeline, which is an annual schedule to ensure that it implements all necessary steps on time and that it is prepared for the following shearing/combing season. GCS will share the timeline with its partners.

## Verification

The Good Cashmere Standard® covers four main areas of cashmere production:

- goat management
- social criteria
- environmental criteria
- management criteria for small as well as large farms and buying stations.

It defines mandatory criteria that must be met in order to be certified as well as so called „development criteria“ to be considered to be.



Should a farm fail to fulfil a mandatory criterion, it will be non-compliant. This can result in a farm not receiving certification in the first place or being removed from the certified supply chain. The Five Freedoms as defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council provide the overarching principles of The Good Cashmere Standard® that are mandatory criteria.

They state that no animal must be subjected to hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, injury or disease and that animals must also have the freedom to express normal behaviour and live a life free from fear and distress.

Please find more information under the heading Audits.

## Yarn Trader (YT)

A yarn trader (YT) purchases certified yarns from a registered Spinning Mill (SM). Every YT that wishes to register with GCS has to fill in the GCS registration form, which includes acceptance of the GCS code of conduct. The form is available online or can be requested from GCS. Completed forms are kept on file by GCS for reference. The YT has to pay a registration fee in case the YT is registered externally and not part of the supply chain from the retailer/brand. An invoice for the current fee is issued by GCS. Once GCS receives a completed GCS registration form and payment for the fee, the YT gets a GCS Registration Certificate, which is valid for 12 months.

Each YT must present proof of its purchase of cashmere yarn from a GCS registered SM. The proof has to contain the spinner's name and the quantity of GCS yarn. The YT gets access to CATS as soon as they are registered and have purchased yarn from a registered source. A YT cannot be registered as long as GCS yarn has not been purchased yet.