

At Reckless Minds, although we embrace colourful personalities, we aim for transparency. (get it?)

Unfortunately, the industry we navigate in does not count transparency amongst its perks. Keeping that in mind, we make it our utmost priority to focus our approach on sustainability and consciousness. We are not perfect, far from that, but we believe in the power of educating ourselves as well as people, to be accountable for our actions. The way we do business is simple: we believe in a sustainable environment where creativity, culture and profitability can all coexist in equal measures. That being said, here is how we are currently proceeding in our production.

Yes, a part of our production process is being done overseas. Outsourcing gives us access to a wider range of quality throughout the world. Dealing with foreign suppliers allows us to gain access to the diversified riches of the different parts of the world while impacting our culture here locally. While doing our research, we quickly grasped the complexity of both environmental and social impacts at stake in this industry. With that in mind, needless to say that some answers might not always be what we expect them to be. The more we ask questions the more we encourage transparency. That being said, we wish to bring to light on this rather “taboo” part of the industry by asking the right questions and enforcing due diligence amongst ourselves and the people we work with. If we assess that certain prospects do not fit the required standards (those we consider important), we switch to a more appropriate alternative.

As mentioned above, Reckless’s mindset is to spot those red flags early in the production process by expecting certain requirements. One of these requirements is, for example, a proof of contract that specifies wages and such, between the factories we work with and the human beings they employ. You might stumble on more secretive suppliers, like we have. This is why, for these situations and many others, you might want to keep a few options on standby to reorientate your production line towards better options. Please note, that unfortunately, it is common practice for certain companies to issue fake certification reports. Be-aware! Here are certain questions we ask to potential suppliers beforehand. We believe everyone should do the same.

1. How much are your employees paid hourly? Are the wages following the minimum-wage regulations in your country? *It is important to consider the ratio between that said wage and the actual living wage in the foreign country concerned, when answers are given.*
2. Are any unionized measures available onsite?
3. Is there a human resources or department of complaints available to your employees?
4. Do your employees get social benefits such as social security, healthcare and others? Do your employees get vacations, sick days, parental leave, pensions or any other advantages we might consider valuable and important for the well-being of the humans employed in the process?
5. Is there any staff consulting or are all decisions centralized?
6. Is over-time remunerated accordingly?

7. Do any of your activities imply using *zero-hour* contracts? (*to avoid*)
8. What do work conditions look like in your installation? Are they danger free, hygienic and appropriate?
9. Are kids employed in any way, either in your factory or in factories you work with? If yes, what age and what are their tasks? (*please note that in some parts of the world, minors are considered adults in a way and are expected to help provide for their families.*) personally , *Reckless Minds does not condone child labor for any reasons whatsoever.*
10. Do some of your workers manufacture from home? (*to also avoid*)
11. Are you able to provide work contracts for your employees?
12. What is your buying process? Do you work more with long-term or short-term based contracts? (*textile is preferred to be long-term to avoid short timeframes and stressful work environments*)
13. What kind of official relations are there between your management, your employees and the government in place?
14. Do you take measures to limit your negative impact on social and environmental matters in your respective ecosystems? If yes, are you able to provide proof of favorable impact?
15. What is your waste management system?
16. Are you oriented towards *Upcycling* the resources you use in order to produce on a sustainable basis?
17. Are you able to be transparent enough and walk us through every step of your production line? And what kind of procedures are you using for refining processes (dying, prints and any other modification of raw materials)?
18. Are you using vegetable based alternatives as opposed to traditional chemical ones?
19. Do you have access to organic-certified materials?
20. Are you concerned with these issues and aware of the different resources that are available to educate ourselves in better practices? (Like www.oecd.org and other non-profits.)

Let's take our "*The Art of Wellness*" collection for example. This collection was manufactured in Bangladesh, in a factory founded by a Quebecer who implemented Canadian standards to a foreign based company. Our supplier is as concerned about the well-being of his employees as we are, workers have access to a day-care for their children, a worshipping room, an infirmary, and a kitchen with a canteen. The establishment fits Canadian standards related to cleanliness, fire-safety, infrastructure and environmental-friendly regulations. This supplier also meets SEDEX & WARP certification requirements. The company employs both women and men and provides proof of above minimum wages remuneration that represents the *living costs* in that country, all while stimulating economic activities and therefore giving a job opportunity for a portion of the surrounding population.

Room to grow:

Being the flawed human beings that we are, it wouldn't be right for us if we didn't push ourselves to set higher and stricter standards in future drops.

We want to orientate our way of doing things towards cleaner and more sustainable alternatives. We want to minimize our footprint more and more as we go, as we acquire more knowledge and resources to do so.

This is something we try to incorporate across all aspects of our business and that you, reckless minds, will see more and more in the future.

We aim to prioritize raw materials in our fabrics and packaging as they are responsible for a major part of our environmental impact.

We also want to reduce our use of conventional fabrics and gradually switch to textiles made with organic grown materials.

For example, our next collection will all be produced with Organic cotton. Organic cotton products are grown without toxic chemicals, and therefore eliminate any use of GMOs.

By rotating crops, organic farms can prevent the complete depletion of nutrients in the soil present in these ecosystems. Ultimately, this crop rotation enforces and maintains fertility while respecting the soil's saturation points. The more fertile the soil is, the less water it takes to grow things on it. To produce an organic cotton crop, the cultivation process uses approximately 70% less water. Organic cotton farming is able to further conserve water as it relies on rainwater for up to 80% of its water usage. It therefore utilizes up to 62% less energy than regular cotton. Combined with the water conservation, this results in a massive overall reduction in resource usage.

On a more personal basis, someone suffering from skin conditions such as Eczema, might find a relief in organic textiles. Organic cotton, in this case, is produced using fewer chemicals than the traditional method. This is, in most cases, less irritating for the skin, than regular non-organic cotton.

Exposure to chemicals can wreak havoc on our bodies. This is why it is especially important that we limit what harmful toxins we expose ourselves and our children to.

It all comes down to this:

Organic-cotton finished products are considered safer than their non-organic counterparts.

Community benefits:

Those working on organic cotton farms or living nearby also reap the rewards of chemical-free activities. Farmers are not, or at least fairly less, exposed to chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. These workers and their families also benefit from the ability to diversify crops. There are nearly a million people whose livelihoods benefit from the organic cotton industry, and only about two hundred thousand are farmers, so you can see that the reach of community benefit is wide. Going with organic cotton has a less aggressive impact on global warming, reduces soil erosion, and helps slow down the decrease of our natural resources.

Local production:

Our goal for 2021 is to have an additional label that is 100% produced in Montreal. To kick things off, we just finished creating a tote bag that was made by a talented Montreal designer using REPREEVE-certified recycled polyester woven by Geo Sher, a manufacturer in the north of Quebec. Coming in clutch to compliment your outfits, these bags are made from an upcycling process so you can look good while rocking post-consumer plastic that looks better on you than in our ecosystems.

By employing domestic labour we contribute to the local economy and **we** are guaranteed fair wages controlled by government standards. Small-scale local production allows us to get rid of unnecessary back and forths of samples overseas that, let's face it, pollute as fuck.

Controlling the development first-hand made products enables greater quality control and helps to reduce waste and overproduction. Not to mention the waste caused during shipment: excessive packaging and labels, aligned with multi-channel transportation, emissions and cost of fuel (whether cargo plane or ships).

Our restock sale happening on black friday will have a few interesting additions that embrace this way of thinking and consuming. The restock drop will include: A limited quantity restock of "The Art of Wellness" fleece sets we previously dropped, our new tote bags mentioned above, as well as biodegradable iphone cases made out of recycled bio-plastics and bamboo fibers.

Reckless Mind's steps to a well-being oriented future

Although being conscious of the complexity and the multiple possible obstacles we could encounter. We are more than dedicated to have a positive impact in our community and the industry in general. As you all know, well-being is our company's core mission.

Anxiety is a burden for many of us and eco-anxiety is something to take seriously as a contributing factor to mental health related issues.

In order to fulfill our mission in the most accurate way, we need to make sure we take as many steps as possible towards progress and healthy, more equitable and **sustainable** ways of doing things. Change comes from within and real change comes from collective effort.

We are not perfect. But education is our priority. Educating ourselves, educating others and always striving for better results and better alternatives in the name of well-being.

This is one of the reasons we decided to partner with Tel Jeunes in order to maximise awareness on an issue that we hold deep to heart: Mental Health. As you can tell, Mental health can be both impacted positively and negatively by a wide range of factors. It is our duty to shine a continuous light on both these good and bad sides of consumerism. Since, you know, we make and sell clothes.

It is also our duty to be accountable for our own response to environmental issues and to minimize our impact on a personal and global scale. Better educated companies push other companies to do the same. If we, as a company and us, **as** a generation, ask more questions, inevitable change is bound to happen.

Better companies make a better industry, and a better industry allows us to consume in healthier ways.

All we need to do is lead the way.

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