

Aoife McNamara Ltd.

Problem Statement: Sustainable Sourcing of Irish Wool and Linen for Aoife Mc Namara LTD

31st of October 2022

Introduction:

Aoife Mc Namara LTD is committed to setting a new standard of sustainability and responsible sourcing in the fashion industry. As part of our dedication to reducing our environmental impact and contributing to local economic development, we have made a strategic decision to exclusively use Irish wool and linen in our product offerings. This problem statement outlines the rationale behind this choice and establishes criteria for Irish suppliers with whom we will collaborate.

Sustainability and Local Economic Development:

Sustainability is at the heart of our brand's values. We recognise that fashion, as an industry, has a significant environmental impact, and it is our responsibility to mitigate these effects. Additionally, as a company committed to ethical practices, we aim to contribute positively to the communities in which we operate.

Ireland boasts a rich heritage in wool and linen production, with a long-standing tradition of craftsmanship and sustainable practices. By sourcing these natural fibres locally, we aim to support and strengthen the local textile industry, preserving traditional skills and techniques that have been passed down through generations.

Environmental Benefits of Irish Wool and Linen:

Choosing Irish wool and linen aligns with our efforts to promote sustainable fashion. Both materials are renewable, biodegradable, and have a lower carbon footprint compared to synthetic fibres. By using these fibres, we can significantly reduce our overall environmental impact, including greenhouse gas emissions and resource depletion. Furthermore, by using Irish wool and linen we will not need to source outside of the country of Ireland, reducing our impact compared to industry standards.

Supporting Local Communities:

By prioritising Irish wool and linen, we seek to foster partnerships with local farmers, weavers, and artisans. This collaboration not only ensures a transparent and traceable supply chain but also creates meaningful connections with the communities that produce these fibres. As we source materials directly from local suppliers, we contribute to the economic development of rural areas, helping to sustain livelihoods and preserve the cultural heritage associated with wool and linen production.

Criteria for Irish Suppliers:

To ensure that our commitment to sustainability and ethical practices is upheld, we have established the following criteria for Irish suppliers we choose to work with:

- Transparency and Traceability: Suppliers must provide full transparency regarding their supply chain, from raw material sourcing to the finished product. Traceability is crucial to validate the authenticity of Irish wool and linen and maintain a transparent value chain.
- Sustainability Credentials: Suppliers must demonstrate their adherence to sustainable farming practices/wool processing, which include responsible land management, ethical treatment of animals (in the case of wool), and low-impact production processes.

- Quality and Craftsmanship: We prioritise suppliers who uphold high standards of craftsmanship, ensuring that the wool and linen we source are of exceptional quality and durability, aligning with our brand's commitment to creating long-lasting, sustainable products.
- Fair and Ethical Labour Practices: We partner with suppliers who prioritise fair wages, safe working conditions, and ethical treatment of their employees, reflecting our dedication to social responsibility.

Challenges in the Irish Woolen Market:

Despite the abundance of high-quality wool produced in Ireland, a significant portion of it is imported, leading to various challenges for Irish sheep farmers and the local woollen industry:

- Low Prices and Unsold Wool: Due to the influx of cheaper imported wool, Irish sheep farmers often face difficulty selling their wool at fair prices within the domestic market. This economic challenge hinders the growth and sustainability of the Irish wool industry.
- **Environmental Impact:** Importing wool from distant countries increases the carbon footprint of the supply chain, negating the potential environmental benefits of using natural and renewable materials like wool.

Conclusion:

At Aoife Mc Namara LTD, we believe that conscious choices have the power to drive positive change in the fashion industry. By exclusively sourcing Irish wool and linen and partnering with local suppliers who meet our stringent criteria, we are taking a significant step towards a more sustainable and community-focused future. Our commitment to supporting local economies, preserving traditional craftsmanship, and reducing our environmental impact is ingrained in our brand's DNA, as we work towards redefining fashion as a force for good.

Aoife Mc Namara

Founder

Aoife Mc Namara LTD

Miriam Keegan

Head of Sustainability