

Fashion's Turning Green for a Cause

Erin Etheridge
Staff Writer

Beware booties, bejeweled accessories, and brilliant metallics – this fall, fashion is going green. By green, I mean eco-friendly. Organic clothing and accessories are taking the fashion world by storm, and with huge profits, great fits, and environmental advantages, this trend looks like one that is here to stay.

Bones, hemp, and bamboo have always been popular choices from which to manufacture organic clothing. Now, however, the king of all organic materials is cotton.

In an article written for FOXNews, Michael York states that our nation's organic cotton industry has seen its profits increase from \$245 million in 2001 to \$535 million in 2006.

Retailers are also

acknowledging the economic growth organic cotton products can bring. For instance, the co-founder of the California-based organic cotton boutique Stewart+Brown, Howard Brown, remarked that sales have doubled or tripled annually since the company's launching in 2002.

Adds Brown, "[T]his green revolution that's happening hasn't even peaked."

Besides generating huge profits, organic clothing, especially that made from cotton, proves softer and simpler to clean and maintain.

"From everything I've read and everything I've heard and my personal experience, it's softer and it feels nicer," says Asheville clothing designer Shari Keller, who uses Indian-manufactured natural cotton fabrics in her collections.

Organic products are also gaining attention because of the celebrities and brand names associated with them.

The biggest name in organic clothing is U2 lead singer Bono, who along with his wife, Ali Hewson, and designer Rogan Gregory created the label Edun. (Yes, the brand's name is nude spelled backward.) Edun pieces are sewn in African and South American family-run businesses and are available at many Saks Fifth Avenue locations. Visit <http://www.edunonline.com> for more information regarding this collection.

Levi's has also entered the organic clothing mix with its Eco line. With men's items starting at \$28 and women's pieces starting at \$58, this line promises to allow customers to display their support for the environ-

ment without busting their budgets. According to the line's website, Eco jeans "are made from 100% organic cotton, grown without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides." The website also states, "It's all about offering products that use raw materials that demand less from the environment." For more information on Levi's Eco line, visit <http://www.levistore.com/collections>. >Other stores that are cashing in on the organic cotton trend include Cutter & Buck, H&M, Nike, Nordstrom, Sam's Club, Target, and Wal-Mart.

Organic cotton does have its dissenters, however. Park adds in his article that "[S]ome insist that the organic-wear movement is an example of the emperor with no clothes – especially for the big-time textile associations."

For instance, Cotton Inc. has stated that not enough organic cotton exists to supply the world, and higher organic cotton-growing costs translate into higher prices for consumers. >Other critics emphasize the improvements in genetic engineering that are already reducing plants' water use and farmers' dependence on pesticides.

Proponents of organic clothing reply that contaminated resources, disruption of plants' and animals' life cycles, and sweatshops represent the textile industry at its worst. They argue that pesticide costs are not an issue with organic clothing, as well as executive salaries, since most businesses start small and grow.

Clearly, organic cloth-

Green cont. on pg. 6

Water Restrictions Becoming Tighter

Amber McKinney
Staff Writer

It's impossible to be living in North Carolina right now and not know that the state, and most of the Southeast, is experiencing a record-breaking drought. Whenever meteorologists put up a map of the United States on CNN, most of the country is covered in a big, red splash that indicates a drought. Every day, there are stories in the News & Observer about how water restrictions are getting tighter and tighter throughout the Triangle.

David Bracken and Anne Blythe of the News & Observer write that

the Falls Lake reservoir, one of Raleigh's water sources, has only about 98 days of water left. In an attempt to stretch out the water supply, officials are insisting on tighter water restrictions. According to reports on ABC11.com, the city is currently under Stage 1 water restrictions. Under Stage 1, people can use handheld hoses without spray-ends two days a week but only during certain hours.

Starting October 23rd, sprinkler systems, spray irrigation systems, and handheld hoses with spray-ends are banned. Also, residents will not be able to wash their cars at home on the week-

ends. Since last Tuesday, people have not been allowed to buy permits for new lawns. ABC11.com states that the fines for breaking the water restrictions will remain the same as they were during Stage 1 restrictions: "\$200 for a first violation; \$1000 for the second; water cut off for the third."

As of now, no businesses that require a large use of water have been shut down. However, if the city is forced to take the restrictions to Stage 2, Tim Nelson of ABC Eyewitness News reports that car washes that cannot meet guidelines for recycling water will have

to be shut down.

With water becoming such a scarce commodity, you would think that people would be doing everything they could to conserve it and make sure it lasts as long as possible. However, such doesn't seem to be the case. At Duke University and UNC Chapel Hill, powerful sprinkler systems are watering synthetic grass on field hockey fields. Yes, you read correctly, these universities are watering fake grass while real grass has to die in order for citizens to conserve water.

According to the News & Observer, the universities are able to continue this practice

because the International Hockey Federation "requires the college teams to saturate the synthetic turfs before each practice and all games." Needless to say, citizens of Chapel Hill and Durham are upset to see their scarce water supply being used in such a seemingly ridiculous way.

Even though North Carolina and most of the surrounding states are suffering from severe drought, we seem relatively untouched here at Meredith College. Our sprinklers still continue to spray down the lawns

Restrictions cont. on
pg. 6