

Our Standard

In drafting The Good Cashmere Standard, the Aid by Trade Foundation has defined a new benchmark for the production of sustainable cashmere. The Standard incorporates the Five Freedoms as defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council. The Good Cashmere Standard follows three main principles: promote animal welfare in cashmere production, support cashmere farmers to secure a sustainable source of income and protect the environment.



Standard & System

The Good Cashmere Standard has been developed with input from animal welfare specialists and industry experts. The Standard will be regularly reviewed and revised based on findings from the audit process, as well as any new, relevant scientific findings.

Outside of the formal review and revision process, clauses within the standard may be amended or clarified if issues with their implementation arise, new technologies become available, or new scientific findings are made.

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Criteria and Principles

(<https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org>).

The Good Cashmere Standard covers four main areas of cashmere production: goat management, social criteria, environmental criteria and management criteria for small as well as large farms and buying stations. It defines mandatory criteria that must be met in order for a farm to be certified as well as so called „development criteria”.

Should a farm fail to fulfil a mandatory criterion, it will be considered to 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 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.

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Certification

Cashmere producers (buying stations/dehairing plants) apply for certification from The Good Cashmere Standard. The cashmere producer is then issued with a self-assessment questionnaire and applies to the Aid by Trade Foundation (AbTF) for initial approval. Should the certification process be successful, the cashmere producer will receive a certificate which is valid for 1 year.

Once the approval process is successfully completed, the AbTF (<https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org>) contacts an independent auditing firm that conducts an inspection of the cashmere producers. ELEVATE, a service provider focussed on solutions to help manage the social, environmental and business performance of global supply chains, is currently assigned with the audits. If the cashmere producer is found to be in compliance with our Standard, certification is awarded by the 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.

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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
_(<https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org>).

The Good Cashmere Standard can go a long way to making a significant improvement to the welfare of cashmere goats. For more detailed information regarding the Standard, [please click this link](#).

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Farmers

The criteria contained in The Good Cashmere Standard extend beyond the comprehensive criteria that relate to goat welfare. The Standard also includes criteria regarding the planning of animal welfare maintenance and the recording of the resulting outcomes.

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.

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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 fertilisers 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.

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Downloads

For more detailed information regarding the Standard and beyond, please take a look at the documents down below.

The Good
Cashmere
Standard

Download

Chain of
Custody
Guideline

Registration
Template

“The Good Cashmere Standard has been created in close cooperation and dialogue with experts along the textile supply chain. It serves as a benchmark for sustainably produced cashmere and aims to minimize the impact on animals and nature.”

Anna Heaton – independent consultant for the Aid by Trade Foundation and international expert in standards for animal welfare



Region

Cashmere goats are farmed in a number of countries and regions throughout the world. The initial focus of The Good Cashmere Standard is on the cashmere farms of Inner Mongolia, an autonomous region of northern China. Inner Mongolia has a population of around 25 million inhabitants and a total area of 1.18 million square kilometres.

The region is China's leading producer of cashmere, accounting for around 6,600 tonnes or 70 % of Chinese cashmere and 40 % of global cashmere in 2018. Sheep and goat farming in Inner Mongolia have increased substantially in recent decades and this has led to widespread degradation of the grasslands that make up 67 % of Inner Mongolia's land area. This degradation has not only affected cashmere farms, but has also had a significant ecological and environmental impact, such as an increase of desertification and a decrease in biodiversity. The Chinese government has recognised the problem and has responded by introducing goat-Less

[_ \(https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org\)](https://thegoodcashmerestandard.org)

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