Cotton Trust Protocol adopts TextileGenesis blockchain for sustainable cotton farming

The U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, a new sustainability program for robust farm-level data for cotton metrics, today announced a partnership with the distributed ledger blockchain TextileGenesis platform to help track and trace cotton supply chains.

The Trust Protocol recognizes the need for increased transparency in supply chains as industry regulators peer further into farming practices and consumers pay more attention to where their clothing and other textiles come from.

"Today, having a holistic view of every step throughout the supply chain is imperative for brands and retailers," said Dr. Gary Adams, president of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol.

By joining TextileGenesis, The Trust Protocol will be adding an extra layer of traceability to its already existing sustainability credits – which provides growers, distributors and retailers with sustainability metrics.

The blockchain will add a transactional network between all of these separate entities, which is trustworthy and auditable by third parties and can be verified without revealing sensitive information. That allows each business to remain separate, but at the same time have greater visibility into the supply chain that allows for more sustainable practices than before — in turn saving money and the environment.

"Collaborating with the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, with its clear focus on robust data and the strength of its verification practices, creates a powerful solution for brands and retailers worldwide in their search for more sustainable fibers and enhanced visibility in their supply chains," said Amit Gautam, founder and chief executive of TextileGenesis.

Using the blockchain, TextileGenesis can track tag a bale of cotton from when it is rolled off a truck from a farm, sent to a gin, spun into thread, turned into a garment and all the way to the retailer. Each of these events can be recorded on the blockchain as a transaction, which can be traced along the supply chain and audited afterward.

Because of this, TextileGenesis' platform enhances The Trust Protocol's sustainability metrics with an even more interesting story of what field became which shirts went to what racks at Nordstrom's, for example, or which retailer or aftermarket distributor received the textiles that the cotton became.

The Trust Protocol has partnered with more than 300 brands, retailers, mills and manufactures since its launch in 2020 and intends to keep expanding its rolls.

This collaboration will lead to pilot trials with selected brands and mills in early June 2021. Full deployment is planned as early as 2022. ◆