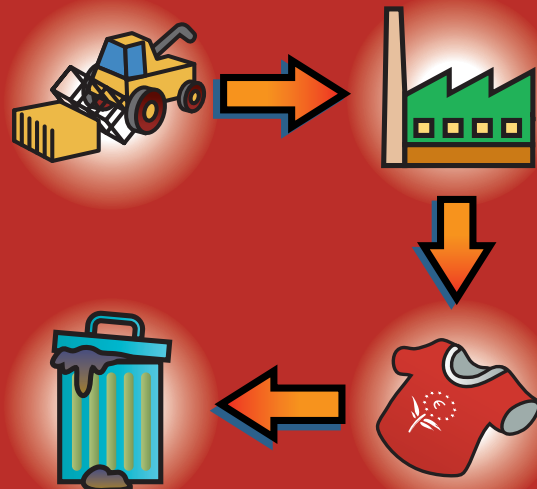


**Clothes with a conscience** Would you take the shirt off your back for Mother Nature? Or at least trade it in for one bearing the European Eco-label?

Considering that many shirts are made from pesticide-infused cotton that has been treated with chemicals, it might be a nice gesture. Clothing and footwear sporting the Flower of the Eco-label are better for the environment as well as the wearer. Among other advantages, they:

- are made by processes that conserve water;
- avoid the use of unhealthy dyes, printing pastes and other materials; and
- hold their shape and colour and are made to last.

By following the Flower, you can wear fashions that treat the environment gently throughout their entire **life cycle**, from the gathering of raw materials right through to disposal (see diagram). Simply said, Eco-labelled clothing and footwear is better by nature.



**The European Eco-label**

distinguishes products that meet high standards of both performance and environmental quality. Every product awarded the European Eco-label must pass rigorous environmental fitness trials, with results verified by an independent body.

Other environmental labels cover specific environmental concerns such as recyclability or energy efficiency, but the Flower of the European Eco-label stands for low environmental impacts throughout a product's life cycle — from manufacturing to disposal. Consumers can find it across the European Union, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

Criteria exist for more than 23 types of products and services, with new categories continuously being adopted. The Flower adorns, among other items, environmentally friendly appliances, clothing, gardening products and tourist accommodations.

**Look for the Flower!**



**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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 Your national Competent Body: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/tools/competentbodies\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/tools/competentbodies_en.htm)  
 General information on the Flower: <http://ec.europa.eu/ecolabel>  
 The Green Store: [www.eco-label.com](http://www.eco-label.com)  
 The European Eco-label on tourism services: <http://www.eco-label-tourism.com>



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The choice for **health** and **value**



## Clothing

### Environmental advantages

- Factories must limit their use of water and reduce water pollution.
- Detergents and fabric softeners used in production must be 95% biodegradable.
- Printing pastes cannot contain certain hazardous substances.
- Dyes must be natural or otherwise friendly to the environment.
- The use of fabric treatments that can harm underwater animals or plant life is limited.
- Colour-stripping agents must meet ecological standards.
- Manufacturers are asked to provide detailed information on energy saved during spinning, knitting, weaving and other processes.

### Energy savings

- Energy savings at the factory are passed on to the consumer.

**Cotton production accounts for almost a quarter of the world's pesticide use — a key factor in the environmental impact of clothing.**

**With strict attention to the safety of dyes, printing pastes and other treatments, Eco-labelled textiles are better for health and environment.**

## Footwear

### Environmental advantages

- Packaging, whether cardboard or plastic bags, must be made largely of recycled materials.
- Water use must be limited during production.
- Limits are set on the amount of chemical residues on products.
- Non-recyclable plastics are off limits, unless they themselves are recycled products.
- Use of certain categories of hazardous chemicals is forbidden.
- Footwear producers are requested, on a voluntary basis, to provide detailed information on the energy consumption per pair of footwear.

### Energy savings

- Energy savings during manufacturing are passed on to the consumer.



### BETTER FOR YOUR HEALTH

- Strict limits are placed on fireproofing agents and fabric treatments that have health risks.
- The use of dyes that can be carcinogenic, mutagenic or harmful to unborn babies is prohibited.
- Clothes made of cotton must be cleansed of all pesticide and weed-killer residues.
- Footwear may not contain any electric or electronic components (as in blinking shoes for children).
- The common process of using hazardous heavy metals in the dyeing process of cotton is forbidden.



### BETTER FOR YOUR WALLET

- Eco-labelled clothes resist shrinkage during washing and drying.
- For fabrics that shrink more than average, notification shall be provided on the likely extent of shrinkage.
- Colour fastness against perspiration, washing, rubbing and sunlight is guaranteed.
- Footwear must meet requirements in regard to flex, tear resistance, abrasion and how well the upper sole binds to the sole.
- Cold weather footwear must be water resistant.

**Energy savings from efficiency measures at the factory can result in cost savings for the consumer.**