

# Silk venture to improve lives of Sichuan's poor

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A Hong Kong-based clothing company has launched an organic silk planting base in a rural area in Sichuan province, as the company steps up efforts to get more involved in the mainland's poverty alleviation efforts.

On Oct 26, Profits Fund Global Holding Ltd (PFGHL), a Hong Kong-headquartered textile and garments supplier, launched the silk base in Yilong, a county under Nanchong, Sichuan province. Covering an area of 67 hectares, the base has been established for organic mulberry cultivation and silkworm rearing.

The products of the organic base — mainly raw organic silk materials and garments — will be sold both at home and abroad.

Li Wei, vice-president of Sichuan Silk Association, said that Nanchong is renowned for its silk industry. Planting mulberries, sericulture, filature and weaving are traditions that have been passed down by the local people for over 3,000 years. The mild climate and abundant rainfall offer ideal conditions for mulberry planting and silkworm breeding.

Xu Shaolin, director of operations at the Nanchong sub-



**A farmer from Yilong county**, Sichuan province, picks mulberry leaves at the organic silk planting base launched by Profits Fund Global Holding Ltd. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

siary of PFGHL, said that teaming up with the mainland, the company is committed to becoming the world's largest supplier of raw organic silk materials.

"We plan to invest 30 million yuan (\$4.6 million) and 100 million yuan in the first and second phase of the project respectively, and develop 867 hectares of fields for mulberry planting in the next two years."

Within the next three to five years, the company plans to invest a total of 300 to 500 million yuan, develop 2,000 to

3,300 hectares of mulberry fields, and meanwhile prepare weaving and dyeing production, which will be put into use by 2020.

"In 2029, our total investment in the base will exceed 1.5 billion yuan," said Xu.

"Since our first investment in Sichuan province in 2013, the company's strategy has been providing better products and services in a sustainable way. Therefore, we choose to develop regenerative organic agriculture.

"From organic silkworm rearing to silk production, we

have strict rules for each process to make sure their production is non-polluting and of high quality.

"Meanwhile, we build standardized demonstration zones to serve as a template for farmers in surrounding areas. We plan to invite experts in sericulture to provide guidance to farmers in order to increase income for poor households and promote Yilong's agricultural economy," added Xu.

"Yilong is a relatively poor county. The organic silk project we brought here is expected to create over 1,000

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**Xu Shaolin**, director of operations at PFGHL's subsidiary

jobs, while the total number of jobs we created in Chinese mainland has reached 2,000 so far.

"The third phase includes silk reeling, dyeing and weaving. The project will offer employment for the local farmers," said Xu.

So far, the company has offices and clothing manufacturing plants in provinces including Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Sichuan.

*Lan Linfeng and Fan Chenwei contributed to this story.*