

PFGHL SICHUAN PROJECT

In the fashion industry, we are always looking forward for the next great thing, whether it is colours, styles, materials, etc. Today, that thing is sustainability. With ever increasing demand for social responsibility and environmentalism, we are also faced with challenges surrounding the fine balance of cost effectiveness and sustainability. We at PFGHL believe that we have the answer to having both of these things while keeping the quality and consistency of Chinese manufacturing. Our Sichuan Project brings together true verticality, close proximity, mechanical and manufacturing efficiency principles, in order to deliver a holistically sustainable supply chain.

Why Sichuan?

Upon the discovery that a majority of our workers in one of our coast line facilities were from Sichuan, we decided that instead of continuing to have them travel so far from home, we could bring the work to them. This sparked our interest in silk as Sichuan is famed for being one of the original locations where silk was harvested. Our Sichuan Project consists of three main focuses: raw material traceability, employee happiness, and environmental consciousness. By placing raw material production, garment production, and sourcing our workforce all within Sichuan, we can much more easily trace the garment from the raw material stage, as well as reduce the amount of carbon emissions from trucking all over the country.

Sericulture

In order for a truly traceable and vertical supply chain, we knew we needed to start right from the raw material stage. We decided to begin with silk production, due to our history and experience with it, as well as its own history within Sichuan. This means we will be responsible for the production as early as the soil that the mulberry trees are grown on, which will eventually produce the leaves that feed the silk worms, who ultimately create the yarn that goes into fabrics. This allows us to;

- use Regenerative Agriculture practices to reduce the amount of damage industrial agriculture is doing to biodiversity and ecosystem function
- control all inputs right from the beginning to ensure thoroughly organic material and consistent quality, as well to achieve European organic certification
- trace product right back to the origin of raw material for a new level of transparency
- forgo layers of traders that increase costs, resulting in considerable price reductions
- share profits with local farmers in order to significantly increase their income

Social Sustainability

As a full service, vertical garment manufacturing company, we believe that a crucial part of having a successful organization is employee happiness, which directly affect longevity, skill, and efficiency of our workforce. In recognizing that an increasing number of workers previously employed on the coast are now seeking work in interior provinces, we decided to bring the work to the workers, and the workers closer to home. In doing so we can;

- allow workers to go home to be with their families should they wish to
- decrease travel time and carbon emissions for workers getting to work
- allow for workers to be comfortable in enjoying a familiar environment with familiar cuisine
- balance lower labour cost, in comparison to coastline, with profit sharing for employees
- encourage longevity in employment and decrease employee turnover

We will also be looking to achieve standards by third party governing bodies such as SA8000, ISO, B Corp, and others in order be sure we are doing enough.

Environmental Sustainability

To complete the trifecta of our project, we cannot be without environmental sustainability. Recognizing the increasing demand for environmentalism, and with it at the forefront of our mission, we aim to create a new standard in garment manufacturing for going green. Therefore, not only have we invested in resource efficient technology, but also in ourselves in order to create a supply chain that maximizes sustainability. Looking at sustainability from a non-traditional angle, we have researched and designed this supply chain to;

- have close proximity between all parts of the supply chain from raw material, all the way to finished product, resulting in substantial reduction in carbon emissions from trucking semi-finished goods
- use natural gas for energy instead of more harmful sources such as wood, or fossil fuels
- use water cooled air conditioning, in which water is used to remove heat from the refrigerant, reducing the work of the compressor, therefore decreasing energy consumption
- use dome shaped fluorescent lighting instead of tubes to maximise the spread and reach of light particles with a minimal use of energy
- create specific programming for the lighting to control and determine both when and the level of light to minimise unused and wasted light
- utilise special machinery to change water at a molecular level for washing and dyeing, significantly reducing water usage
- install waste water management systems for zero discharge
- use compost management to turn waste into fertilizer, which can be used for sericulture
- minimise wasted carbon emissions from trucking by reducing empty haul trips