

GLOSSARY OF COTTON TERMS

Bale

A basic traceable unit of lint (ginned cotton). Bale weights vary from country to country. (See under the relevant country for specific bale weights were applicable.) By convention, a 'statistical' bale weighs 480 lbs.

Base grade

A selected grade of cotton used by cotton merchants as a basis for contracts, premiums and discounts. (See also contract, premium, discount)

Basis

The difference between simultaneous prices for cotton futures and spot cotton. It may be quoted by reference to any futures month. For example the "March basis" would mean the difference between the current price of March futures and the simultaneous quoted value of any given grade and staple of spot cotton. The growth is usually quoted in terms of points on or off the applicable month trading at the New York Cotton Exchange according to the calculated difference. (See also New York Cotton Exchange)

Bleached cotton linters

Linters that have been bleached ready for further processing.

Boll

The fruiting structure of a cotton plant. It is made up of separate compartments called locks, in which cotton seeds and lint grow.

Break spinning

An alternative name for open-end spinning.

broker

One who assembles individual bales or small lots into larger volumes for others. One who acts as a selling agent for shippers/growers and buyers for mills.

Bt cotton

A genetically engineered cotton carrying the *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) gene that produces, in every cotton plant cell, protein crystals toxic to some insect pests.

Carded

A yarn preparation. During the carding process raw cotton is separated, opened, cleaned and made into sliver.

Classing

The process of describing cotton quality so that its value can be determined. (See also staple length, grade, colour)

Combed

An industrial yarn preparation. During the combing process, fibres are combed to make them parallel in the sliver and short fibres are removed.

Colour

the degree of whiteness of the cotton fibre.

Colour grade

describes the colour of cotton lint. There are 30 standard colour grades, of which 15 are physical standards (held as boxed samples of the complete range of grades) and 15 are descriptive.

Continuous spinning

A system of spinning in which the fibre moves through the process without interruption, eg ring-spinning.

Cotton

Cultivated cotton is a perennial shrub, genus *Gossypium*. There are two major species in current production - *G. hirsutum*,

commonly known as upland cotton, and *G. barbadense* or pima cotton. (See also *G. hirsutum*, *G. barbadense*, upland cotton, Pima cotton)

Cotton spinning system

The process originally developed for spinning cotton, applied now also to other staple fibres.

Count of yarn

A number indicating the mass per unit length or the length per unit mass of yarn.

Country damage

Damage to cotton caused by moisture, dust or sand affecting bales that have either been exposed to the weather or stored on wet or contaminated ground.

Dead cotton

An extreme form of immature cotton, having a thin fibre wall. Can result from disease, pest attack or a foreshortened ripening period.

Denier

weight of a man-made fibre or yarn, expressed as the weight in grams of 9,000 meters of the thread. The lower the number, the finer the thread.

Dryland

see raingrown cotton

English cotton count

An indirect system measuring length per unit of mass, ie. The number of hanks (840 yards) per pound weight.

Fairtrade

Fair Trade is an alternative approach to conventional international trade. It is a trading partnership which aims at sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers. It seeks to do this by providing better trading conditions, by awareness raising and positive marketing.

Fibre

A cotton fibre is classified in four ways, by its length, micronaire, strength and uniformity. (See also length, micronaire, strength and uniformity). The fibre typically accounts for approximately 35 percent of the weight of a seed cotton, though this proportion varies.

Foreign matter

Anything that is not part of the cotton plant.

Gossypium barbadense

Pima or extra long staple cotton. Major producing countries are Egypt, the USA, Israel, Peru and the Central Asian states of the former Soviet Union.

Gossypium hirsutum

Typically known as upland cotton of medium staple length. It is the major species of cotton grown world-wide, accounting for about 90 percent of planted acreage.

Gossypium. arboreum*, *Gossypium herbaceum

Asiatic short staple coarse cotton, usually of high Micronaire.

Ginning outturn

the ratio of lint to seed cotton produced by the ginning process.

Grade

Official US classification system given to lint to describe its quality in terms of colour and leaf content. See Universal Cotton Standards, colour, leaf

Handle

The subjective assessment of feel (roughness, smoothness, pliability, thickness).

HVI

High Volume Instrument testing. Systems by which high speed bale by bale testing can be attained. Bales are tested for micronaire, length, uniformity, strength, elongation, colorant trash content.

Jute

A coarse, brown fibre from the stalk of a bast plant.

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Leaf grade

describes the leaf or "trash" content of cotton lint. There are 8 grades, of which 7 are physical (held as boxed samples covering the range of grades) and the remaining is a descriptive standard based on the other 7.

Length

The average length of cotton fibre after the ginning process.

Lint

The cotton fibre obtained by the ginning process once the cotton seed, leaves and casing have been removed.

Long

Someone who has bought cotton futures or other cotton, is said to be long until he sells his contracts to another or accepts delivery of the cotton at the maturity date of the contract. (See Also NYCE, futures contracts)

Metric cotton count

An indirect system measuring length per unit of mass, ie. The number of kilometres per 1/2 kilogramme.

Micronaire

The size of an individual cotton fibre taken in cross-section.

Motes

Can be either fuzzy (immature seeds on which fibre development ceased at an early stage) or bearded (a piece of seed coat with long fibres attached). Both are often termed seed coat neps.

Nep

A small knot of tangled fibre.

New York Cotton Exchange

The New York Cotton Exchange (NYCE®) was founded by cotton brokers and merchants in 1870. It is the oldest futures exchange in New York. (See Also futures contracts, long)

Option

Under the terms of an option contract, a buyer has the right to buy or sell a futures (or other) contract, at a specific price within a set period of time. The contract price is not dependent on the current market price for the contract item. The buyer is under no obligation to fulfil the contract.

Open-end spinning

A process by which yarn is spun from a broken-up sliver or roving.

Opening

The process of separating fibres from the pressed bale.

Organic cotton

Organically grown cotton uses crop rotation, beneficial insects, compost and other farming methods in place of chemical fertilisers and intensive farming techniques.

Premium

An amount by which a price is increased in order to buy a product of a higher grade or quality.

Pima cotton

Long staple cotton variety.

Polyester fibre

Generic name for a synthetic fibre made from polyethylene terephthalate.

Pressley

measurement of fibre strength

Quality

see also discount and premium

Raingrown cotton

cotton grown using mainly water provided by the natural cycle of rainfall rather than artificial irrigation. Also known as dryland cotton.

Ratoon cotton

crop that is cut back or cropped and is left to grow again for another season.

Rayon fibre

A man-made fibre made from regenerated cellulose.

Reginned cotton

Reginned cotton is cotton that has passed through the ginning process more than once, and has also already been baled. It may go through the ginning again for additional cleaning, blending or the removal of foreign material.

Ring-spinning

A system of continuous spinning of staple fibre.

Sea Island cotton

Fine, long staple cotton grown in the West Indies.

Seed cotton

Unginned, picked cotton.

Short

Someone who has sold cotton futures or other contracts is said to be short until he buys the contracts back or delivers the cotton at the maturity date of the contract.

Single

Describes the ply of yarn. A single is the most popular ply and means , raw cotton twisted into a single thread.

Spot quotations

Reported prices for all specific quality designations on a certain trading day.

Spun yarn

Yarn spun from staple fibre held together by twist.

Staple

Cotton fibre considered with regard to its length and fineness.

short staple : less than 25 mm

medium staple : 25 to 30 mm

long staple : 30 to 37 mm

extra long staple : 37mm and above

Strength

prices : firmness or steadiness

fibre : power of the fibre to sustain the application of force (as applied in spinning) without breaking.

Strike price

The price specified in the option contract at which the xxxx futures or commodity will move from seller to buyer.

Synthetic fibres

Fibres or filaments produced from polymers. Not naturally occurring.

Tare

The weight of wrapping bands or wires used to cover cotton bales.

Technical analysis

The attempt to forecast future market action on the basis of past price behaviour. The underlying assumptions are that price fluctuations are not strictly independent and that certain chart formations tend to correlate with subsequent price direction.

Tex

(grams per kilometre) A direct decimal count system for describing the linear density (mass per unit length) of fibres, filaments and yarns. The lower the number, the finer the thread.

Trash

the leaf content of ginned lint.

Uniformity

The degree to which the fibres in a sample are uniform based on the ration of mean length to the upper half mean length. Given as a percentage.

Universal Cotton Standards

Refers to American Upland Cotton. Established in 1924 as an aid to promoting domestic and foreign trade. Recognised by 18 countries in Europe, South America and Asia

Upland cotton

Originally used to refer to cotton grown on raised lands not prone to flooding. Now refers to short and medium staple cottons.

Viscose fibre

A man-made fibre spun from regenerated cellulosic material.

Warp

Threads which run parallel to the loom

Weft

Threads which run at right angles to the warp .

Weave

The manufacturing of cloth by the interlacing of yarns

Worsted

Worsted yarns are made from long fibers of 3 to 6 inches, which are combed to lie parallel to each other, producing a smooth, clean look. They are usually fine, tightly twisted ply yarns.

Yarn number

cotton yarn is measured by yarn number, based on how many hanks (840 yards) there are in 1 lb of yarn. The higher the number the finer the thread

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