

Satbir's story

A good price, technical guidance and interest-free loans are just some of the benefits that cotton farmer Satbir Singh enjoys through working with Agrocel.



He farms with his wife, Batriben, and they have three children: a daughter, Saroj (12) and sons Sasil (9) and Shakti (7).

Satbir joined Agrocel in 1997, the same year he started growing cotton.

"Somebody from Agrocel came here and explained about Agrocel and how I could make organic improvements," he said. "After that I decided to join.

"For the last eight years I've grown only cotton that is organic. I like working with Agrocel. The cotton price is better, it is a good price. Also we get technical guidance. The field officer visits us. There are also credit facilities and we can get good quality seed.

"My farm is 19 acres and 14 of that is cotton. The rest of the land is empty at present, but next month I am going to be growing wheat there. It is a good harvest of cotton this year due to the good rain, but last year it was not so good. Now I don't have drip irrigation but I hope to get it next season.

"When I came here, I first took land to lease. I worked continually and managed to buy the land. That has been my main achievement. In the future, I hope to buy more land.

"We are taking more care of the cotton. It is contamination-free and also our technical quality makes it very good. When we take the cotton after being fully dried then the length is also good. It is very satisfying when I see all the crop in.

"For the last two or three years I have had a problem with production. Last year I made a loss so with the money from this year's good crop, I will pay off that. One year I could not pay my loan to Agrocel but they gave me extra time to pay.

"The loans from Agrocel are interest-free. If I had not got a loan from Agrocel I would have had to get money from other people and they can make the rate whatever they like. There is no worry about that with Agrocel.

"The same with selling cotton. If I want to sell my cotton to another person then the rate is not fixed. Maybe I will get a lot less. But with Agrocel I don't have to worry about the price because it is finalised and I am assured of the rate.

"I hope that my children will get a good education and get jobs."

About Agrocel

Agrocel aims to increase the net earnings of farmers and assist them with market support as they develop sustainable agricultural practices. Agrocel has links with various research organisations and NGOs involved in water management work and other similar initiatives. Its service centre provides a "one stop shop" for advice, agricultural supplies and crop purchase.

Considerable support from Traidcraft has enabled Agrocel to enter and grow within the fair trade market, which now accounts for a key proportion of its sales. Agrocel produces cotton, rice, grapes (for sultanas) and cashews.

About Fairtrade cotton

Traidcraft buys its organic, Fairtrade-Marked cotton from farmers in the Kutch region of Gujarat, a semi-arid region of Western India where cotton is among the few crops the climate will support.

The cotton is used in Traidcraft T-shirts which are produced by Craft Aid in Mauritius, providing benefits to two producer groups.

You can [buy Fairtrade organic cotton products](#) on our webstore.