

LEVI STRAUSS & CO.

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Innovating an Icon

With plant-based, hemp selvedge, and circular versions of its iconic 501®, Levi's® is showing that even one of the most classic apparel items in modern history can be a platform for innovation with a sustainability lens.

Subhead: (July 11, 2023 - San Francisco, CA) Over the past five years, season after season, Levi's® has introduced new products that meld innovative design thinking with an overriding commitment to sustainability. Now, in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the iconic Levi's® 501® jean, Levi's® is featuring a suite of products – a Plant-Based 501®, a hemp-cotton blend Selvedge 501®, and a Circular 501® – that show how new thinking and technologies can be applied to an age-old classic, pointing the way to the future.

The **Plant-Based 501®** is made of at least 97% plant-based materials, with all certified organic cotton, natural dyestuff, a plant-based patch and ink made from wood waste. Hitting the market in late Summer 2023, these jeans are an indication of what the industry could look like in the years ahead given the push to minimize synthetic materials derived from fossil fuels and the need to make more garments with renewable inputs rather than finite resources. They are an evolution in the company's design innovation practice, building on past seasons and establishing new foundations on which to build going forward.

"As a company that has been making 501®s for 150 years now, we have an opportunity – and a responsibility – to continually interrogate the process by which these jeans are made," says Paul Dillinger, VP of Design Innovation at Levi Strauss & Co. "These jeans build on past efforts to create more circular jeans and in turn give us a foundation for future innovation."

Among the attributes of the Plant-Based 501® are:

- The fabric is made with 100% OCS-Certified organically grown cotton and dyed with plant-based indigo from Stony Creek Colors
- Denim color references Levi's X80 archival shade
- The garment back patch is made from a material called MIRUM® by NFW, and is fashioned from 100% biobased, plastic-free inputs generating no effluent in production

- The internal pocket bag is 100% cotton and printed with BioBlack TX, a plant-based black pigment made from wood waste, manufactured in a closed-loop system and developed by Nature Coatings, another collaborating partner. Woven labels and sewing threads in non-critical areas of the garment are likewise 100% cotton
- Each pair contains at least 97% bio-based content based on components weight measured against overall garment weight (non-plant-based content includes sew thread, the care label and metal trims)



“We want to show what is possible,” says Dillinger. “At the same time, we’re challenging ourselves to get closer to a state where products like this represent more of a product line, and where they’re seen not as the endgame, but a starting point that we want to top next season, and the season after that.”

Additionally, building on its efforts with [cottonized hemp](#) over the years through its [Wellthread](#) line, Levi's® is releasing a **hemp/cotton blend Selvedge 501®**. These will come in a variety of shades and finishes for women and men alike, some featuring natural dyes. They will be released throughout the year, marrying the premium selvedge fabric with the alternative fiber innovation that has characterized so much of Wellthread's work in recent years.

"In our ongoing research and development, we strive to improve our design practices and conserve environmental resources every way we can," says Una Murphy, Levi's® director of design innovation. "By incorporating sustainable innovation, in mainline and premium product alike, we learn what's possible and how we can continue working towards solving some of our biggest challenges."

Also being highlighted as part of the 150th anniversary celebration is the **Circular 501®**, first released in 2022. This jean is made with a mix of organic cotton and Renewcell's pioneering Circulose® fiber, viscose made in part from recycled denim and other forms of textile waste. The formulation allows us to use far fewer natural resources and chemicals in the production process. Each material component aligns with a strict single-fiber strategy that enables efficient recycling at the end of the garment's useful life. By replacing parts of the garment that would normally be made from synthetic fibers – like polyester pocketing, threads, labels, and interfacing – with 100 percent cotton alternatives, we've removed synthetic elements that would otherwise disrupt the cotton recovery process. The result is a new jean made with old jeans that is itself designed to be recyclable, with the potential to be re-made into new jeans, again and again.

"Together, these three versions of one of the most iconic garments in all of apparel, the 501®, show that while we are still focused on producing classic garments that consumers have known and loved for decades, we are also looking to improve how we make our products, moving in the direction of more circular products and practices," says Dillinger.

About Levi Strauss & Co.

Levi Strauss & Co. (LS&Co.) is one of the world's largest brand-name apparel companies and a global leader in jeanswear. The company designs and markets jeans, casual wear and related accessories for men, women and children under the Levi's®, Signature by Levi Strauss & Co.™, Denizen®, Dockers® and Beyond Yoga® brands. Its products are sold in more than 110 countries worldwide through a combination of chain retailers, department stores, online sites, and a global footprint of approximately 3,200 retail stores and shop-in-shops. Levi Strauss & Co.'s reported 2022 net revenues were \$6.2 billion. For more information, go to <http://levistrauss.com>, and for financial news and announcements go to <http://investors.levistrauss.com>.