Better Cotton Farm Data Requirements v.1.1

To be used with the Better Cotton Principles and Criteria v.3.0

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Background

Good quality data is critical for Better Cotton stakeholders to assess field-level impact and inform continuous improvement at the farm level. At the same time, data collection requires significant resources and time. Better Cotton thus aims to make farm and producer level data collection as efficient and purposeful as possible — so that all data informs good decision-making and improvements over time.

About This Document

This Farm Data Requirements document is a key reference for the Better Cotton Principles and Criteria (P&C) v.3.0, outlining the specific data points at the Producer[1] and/or farm level which are required for compliance with the P&C. This links to Criterion 1.2 and related indicators:

Criterion 1. 2 – Effective and relevant data management supports improved decision-making

- Indicator 1.2.1 (all farm categories)*: In line with the Better Cotton Farm Data Requirements document, accurate and complete Producer-level data is collected, validated and reported.*
- Indicator 1.2.2 (smallholder/ medium farm Producer Units only): *In line with the Better Cotton Farm Data Requirements document, accurate and complete farm-level data is recorded.*

Data Privacy

Protecting the privacy and security of personal information is a priority at Better Cotton. According to the Better Cotton Data Privacy Policy, processing personal data is prohibited unless it is expressly allowed by law or the data subject has consented to the processing. Consent must be freely given (on a voluntary basis), specific, informed and unambiguous. For consent to be informed and specific, the data subject must at least be notified about the controller's identity, what kind of data will be processed, how it will be used and the purpose of the processing operations. The Better Cotton Data Privacy Policy is publicly available on the Better Cotton website. In case of any further queries on data privacy, please write to data@bettercotton.org.

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[1] 'Producer' in the Better Cotton P&C refers to either the Producer Unit (PU) — which groups numerous Smallholder (SH) or Medium Farms (MF) together under common management — or an individual farm in a Large Farm (LF) context.

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Data Quality

Producers are responsible for ensuring good quality data. This includes:

- Completeness: No gaps in the data maintained or reported.
- Consistency: No difference when comparing two or more representations of an entity (person, practice, or element) against a definition.
- Accuracy: Data correctly describes the 'real world'.
- Validity: Data is reported in the requested syntax (format, type or range).
- Timeliness: Data represents reality from the required point in time.
- Uniqueness: No entity (person, practice, or element) is recorded more than once for one data point (e.g., farmers).

Where relevant, data collection will also have to be disaggregated by gender. Required data should be kept for at least two seasons.

Producer level data: Large Farm and Producer Units (PUs)

Data type and timing	Data required	Purpose	Guidance documents
Producer & Farmer Data (early Season) Reported to Better Cotton by end of sowing	1. Large Farm or Producer Unit information 2. Estimated area of cotton cultivated 3. <u>PUs only</u>: Farmer/ farming household information (as per farmer list data points)	To identify farmers participating in the Better Cotton Programme To estimate the land area and potential volumes eligible for Better Cotton licensing	See Annex 1, or link to full document: PU_LG and Farmer Data points 24 March 2023 External.xlsx
Adjusted cotton area and predicted yields Reported to Better Cotton by start of harvest	Updated area under Better Cotton Production and predicted yields	To provide an updated estimate of the land area and potential volumes eligible for Better Cotton licensing	Not applicable
Results Indicators Data Reported annually 12 weeks after the end of harvest LF: For each Large Farm PU: for a sample of farmers in a PU	Results Indicator Reporting Farm Results data (RIR) *Note:* *For <u>Large Farms</u>, farm level records should include all required inputs/ outputs and activities to be tracked accurately throughout the season (e.g. applications of fertilizer or pesticides).* *For <u>PUs</u>, this information is covered under farmer-level record keeping.*	To understand impact of sustainability practices at Producer level, and to inform priorities for further improvement	'Working With Results Indicators'
Sales records of Better Cotton	Records or receipts showing volume of Better Cotton sold,	To enable cross checking or verification of sales	Not applicable

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Data type and timing	Data required	Purpose	Guidance documents
No regular reporting required, unless requested by Better Cotton PU: Maintained at either farmer or PU level.	date and buyer (applicable to all farmers in a PU). *Note: If receipts are not given by the buyer, another form of written record can be maintained by the farmer or field staff*	of Better Cotton (between farm and gin level), for example if risks of supply chain integrity are raised	
Practice adoption data <u>Maintained</u> throughout the season <u>Aggregated/ reviewed</u> by 4 weeks after end of harvest. <u>Reported</u> annually	Records are kept showing farmer-level adoption of specific sustainability practices. <u>PUs only</u>: In some countries, practice adoption can be maintained for a representative sample of farmers – confirm with Better Cotton country team.	To assess the extent to which farmers are adopting sustainable practices To evaluate the effectiveness of capacity strengthening and inform future approaches/ activities	Better Cotton guidance on practice adoption [Pending, not yet published]
Training/ Capacity Strengthening Records Maintained and updated throughout the season; completed by the end of the harvest. PU: This information is to be maintained at PU level.	Records are maintained of the number of farmers and workers trained by topic and gender as well as other key capacity strengthening initiatives <u>For Large Farms</u>: This may be relevant only for worker training.	To record the extent and focus of training or other capacity strengthening activities	Not applicable
Labour (Workforce) Profile Number of workers by category is <u>updated</u> at least annually. Labour data is <u>reported</u> through the annual self-assessment 4 weeks after end of harvest. PU: This information is to be recorded at PU level.	Number of workers by category, disaggregated by gender . <u>For PUs:</u> These can be estimated numbers of workers.	To identify potential decent work risks, based on the number and type of workers. The labour profile helps to inform the labour monitoring system referenced under Principle 5	Worker categories for labour profile (See Annex 2)

Farm Inputs and Outputs Data (PUs Only)

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This refers to record keeping at the <u>individual farm/ farmer level</u> for Producer Units only

Data type and timing	Data required	Purpose	Reference Documents
Farmer level record-keeping (e.g. Farmer Field Books) Maintained at farmer level, updated regularly throughout the season and completed/ checked by end of harvest. Note: For selected countries, farmer level records can be maintained for a sample of farmers only (as part of a reduced Farmer Field Book pilot)	Individual farm-level record keeping showing inputs, outputs, and other key activities at farm level. For farmers who are reporting Results Indicator data for a given season, the farmer level record is usually the basis for this reporting. It should therefore include all required data points (e.g. individual applications of pesticide or fertiliser). It should also be maintained regularly and have a system to check data accuracy.	To enable farmers to track inputs/outputs and key practices at the farm level and identify trends and improvements For PUs, data keeping at the farm level supports Results Indicator Reporting at the PU level Note: Aside from RIR reporting, farmer level records can be more flexible and can be used in different ways by the PU (for example to demonstrate impacts on farmer profitability or yields)	'Working With Results Indicators'

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Annex 1: Required Learning Group (LG) and Farmer data points (PU only)

Full document available here: PU_LG and Farmer Data points 24 March 2023 External.xlsx

Data Type	Data Point	Frequency of data collection/ update
LG Data	LG Code	Once
LG Data	LG Village	Once
LG Data	FF name	Seasonally
LG Data	FF surname	Seasonally
LG Data	FF Contact Number	Seasonally
LG Data	Gender of FF	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Farmer code	Once
Farmer Data	Farmer Name	Once
Farmer Data	Number of household members working on the farm (women)	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Number of household members working on the farm (men)	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Year of birth/ may be a range of age group	Once
Farmer Data	Farmer Status	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Farmer continuity	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Gender	Once
Farmer Data	Joined LG in season	Once
Farmer Data	Total cultivable Land holding (Acres)	Once
Farmer Data	Area under cotton cultivation	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Expected seed cotton production	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Total number of hired men workers	Seasonally
Farmer Data	Total number of hired women workers	Seasonally

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Annex 2: Worker Categories for Labour Profile

Definition of worker: Better Cotton defines <u>workers</u> as all individuals carrying out work on cotton farms, regardless of gender, background, and identity. Workers can be permanent or non-permanent (e.g., seasonal, or temporary), and recruited directly by the farmer or sub-contracted, e.g., through a labour broker. Workers are normally paid for their work but can also be non-wage-earning such as family members or community exchanged labour.

Category of worker	Definition
Family members or family workers	Family members, or family workers in an agricultural context, are persons who help another member of the family run a farm and who are not considered employees. They may be the spouse, daughter or son of the farm owner or other relatives such as a sister or brother, aunt, uncle, or cousin, provided that they live in the same household as the owner or in a house located on the same plot of land and with common household interests.
Migrant worker	Individuals who move to another country or area to engage in a remunerated activity on a cotton farm for a period of time, e.g., seasonal or temporary work. Workers who cannot return to their place of residence at the end of the working day and must be accommodated closer to their place of work are considered migrant workers.
Non-permanent worker	In an agricultural context, non-permanent workers refer to individuals engaged in agricultural activities on a temporary or seasonal basis. This category includes both: *Seasonal Workers*: Workers who are often employed during the entire cotton season. These workers tend to be paid by month or in lump sum, or sometimes as a percentage of the yield. They do not have decision-making powers over inputs. *Temporary Workers*: Workers who are employed for short durations to fulfil immediate labour requirements, e.g., picking cotton, weeding or other. Temporary workers are normally paid at piece-rate (either for a defined period, e.g., day or hour, or for the volume of cotton picked, the area irrigated or sprayed, etc.). In some countries, such workers may be referred to as 'casual', 'interim', 'contractual' or 'freelance' labour and may have different legal statuses. Unlike permanent workers, non-permanent agricultural workers typically do not enjoy the same level of job security or benefits and are subject to fluctuating employment opportunities depending on the agricultural production cycles and demands.
Permanent worker	An individual who has a continuous employment with a farm or agricultural enterprise. They typically engage in agricultural activities on a long-term basis, for at least 12 months within a year on an ongoing basis and are paid a regular salary. In the context of Better Cotton, these workers may support production of other crops within the wider farm area.
Sharecroppers	Sharecroppers are agricultural workers without land access who cultivate crops like cotton on others' land. Unlike tenants, they do not pay fixed cash rents but compensate landowners with a share of the crop or in-kind labour. Sharecroppers often borrow money from landowners for tools and seeds. Inability to repay, often due to low yields, can trap them in a cycle of debt, forcing them to work to clear the debt and risking exploitation and debt bondage.

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