

TRENDS

Legwear

Fashions

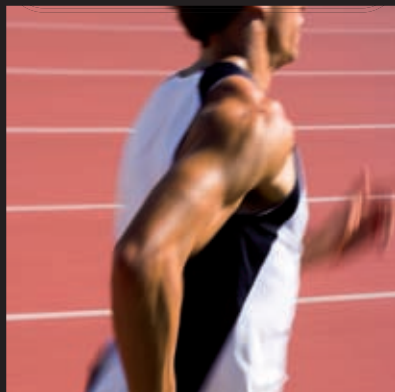
Textiles



**Textile Technology Center
Expands Service With \$1
Million Gift From Wellman**

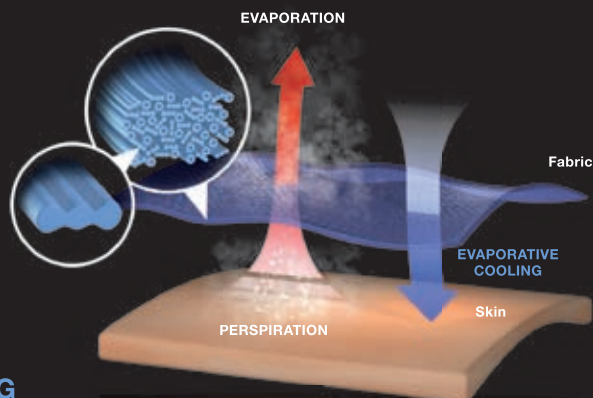


The evolution of comfort



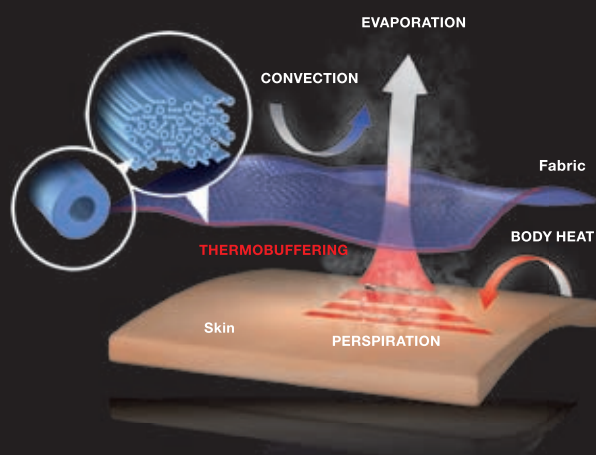
HIGH ACTIVITY

EVAPORATIVE COOLING



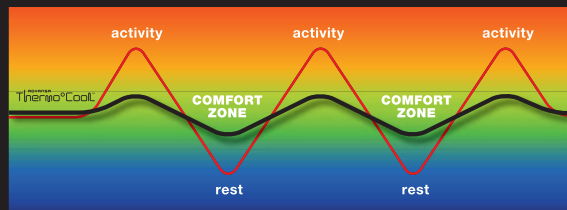
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dedicated to the hosiery industry*

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legislative column

by PAUL FOGLEMAN, Director, Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council

Since 2001, three study groups have issued reports with recommendations to overhaul the North Carolina tax code.

Now the dust is blown off the documents and the State Senate Finance Committee is using those reports as a guideline for establishing a more predictable flow of revenue into the state coffers. "You're driving a 1930 model car in the 21st century," one of the presenters told the senators.

The last major overhaul of the state tax structure was in 1933, the heart of the Great Depression. Is this the year

share of their income on services: yard maintenance, cleaning services, health clubs, entertainment. But now they are not paying taxes on these services.

The study panels identified 168 separate services that could generate tax revenue. North Carolina taxes only 33. Most states tax 56 such services and four states tax 140.

Senate Finance Chairman David Hoyle says the goal is to make the state tax overhaul "revenue neutral." Yet skeptical Republicans point out that the state has a \$500 million budget hole this year and \$600 million shortfall predicted for next year. So it is assumed that the tax structure adopted will generate enough revenue to balance the budget. Some of the new revenue could come from higher taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, but not

center is in his district and he has been a longtime champion. Top senate chairs moved to restore full funding.

But when a "clean up amendment" was introduced and adopted at the close of the full Senate Appropriations meeting, it appeared the line items completely disappeared. "A mistake," said Chairwoman Linda Garrou. Senator Hoyle said the mistake has been resolved. The budget now is in the hands of House Appropriations chairs.

....

While social issues – sexual orientation, sex education, bullying – grab headlines, the General Assembly also is dealing with business issues beyond taxes and revenue shortfalls.

The last major overhaul of the state tax structure was in 1933, the heart of the Great Depression.

of another major overhaul? And what direction will it take?

A summary of the presentations boils down to: lower income taxes, lower sales taxes, more taxes on services that have been exempted. Also, it could expand the base of those paying income taxes. North Carolina is one of the few states that does not tax income from social security income, the presenters report.

As the boomers enter the older population, their spending patterns change. Purchases of "things" decrease as they have amassed household items over the years. Sales taxes on retail items decrease.

But older people are spending a greater

at the levels proposed by the governor, Hoyle told reporters.

....

Now you're in. Now you're not. Now you are back in.

Appropriations for the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions (CEMS) and the Textile Technology Center arrived at the General Assembly with funding intact.

It was all about jobs.

However language in the final version of the Senate bill seemed to shortchange the Textile Technology Center and Sen. David Hoyle was not happy as the

Transportation matters are near the top of the agenda. Recently the Legislature took up protection of railroad corridors in anticipation of a return to rail shipping. A myriad of highway issues have surfaced. Restrictions on cigarette smoking in business establishments and protection of employees from second-hand smoke dominated the House for over a week.

Almost 3,000 bills have been filed in the House and Senate and some will die in committees. Some will be merged with other bills and some will reappear in special provisions.

All part of a democracy in action. ■

THE WORLD IS GETTING SMALLER. OUR DEMANDS ARE GETTING BIGGER.



MILES ARE NOW MINUTES.

Markets that used to be weeks away are now serviced in a matter of hours. The world is smaller. But thanks to instant communications global markets are available to businesses of all sizes. Companies that introduce new hosiery, socks, apparel, and yarns are growing, thanks to innovation.

The Hosiery Technology Center at the new Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions (CEMS) is supporting companies

with research and development, testing and sourcing, marketing and sales. From production to retailing, the center is engaged in supply chain services. That includes training and lean manufacturing strategies.

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21st CENTURY TECHNOLOGY: Stan Hovis, senior microscopist and material engineer, pictured with \$400,000 microscope given to Textile Technology Center by Wellman Inc.

Textile Technology Center Expands Service With Gift From Wellman

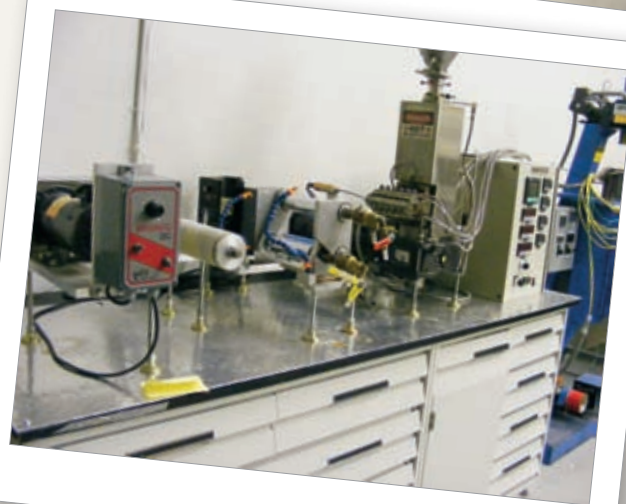
By Paul Fogleman, Publisher

Those who put high-tech companies in the vanguard of North Carolina's future now might imagine textiles among them.

The modern textiles companies today are turning to a market that thrives – actually demands – high tech materials and applications. Include nanotechnology in this trend.

As the textiles industries continue to re-invent themselves for the emerging 21st century marketplace, the Textile Technology Center at Gaston College is providing strong support, including helping those companies develop products for nanotechnology uses.

The center recently received a gift of laboratory and research equipment from



NEW LAB: The testing laboratory at the Textile Technology Center now includes this state-of-the-art equipment as a result of a major contribution from Wellman Inc. All total, the equipment is valued at \$1 million. This equipment will expand the services to textile manufacturers in the development of new products and services.

Wellman Inc. valued at more than \$1 million. There is no private laboratory in the state that can match the capabilities of the Belmont-based textiles center.

John Anderson, director, says the center now has the capabilities to support research in nanofibers. Central to the program at the center are two Scanning Electron Microscopes in the Wellman collection, each valued at over \$200,000, according to Stan Hovis, senior microscopist and material engineer at the center. Hovis previously was employed in the Wellman laboratory.

Nano fibers are so fine that powerful microscopes are required to detect properties and problems in their makeup. The SEM performs by measuring the wavelength of an electron in a vacuum. Those at the center measure at 10,000 times of actual

size. Essentially, the microscope emits a beam through magnetic coils that reaches the sample product as its base, producing secondary electrons.

"Wanted or not, the interaction between the beam and the sample produces X-rays," Hovis explains. The elemental detector (EDX) measures the energy of the X-rays given off by the sample. This applies to metals and ceramics.

One of the microscopes is an Environment Scanning Electronic Microscope. Samples can be imaged without a coating that makes it conductive.

The Textile Technology Center now has the capabilities to broaden its testing services, including nanotechnology fabrics, but also other products such as surgical instruments.

Anderson said the microscopy laboratory is helping companies

verify the properties of their products. The Industrial Fabric Association has promoted this field and the textile center is working with several companies using "metallicized fibers."

The Wellman contributions have made the Textile Center one of the most complete research and development facilities immediately available to companies searching for new market opportunities. As a result, the number of customers using the center and the self-produced revenue are up dramatically.

And while testing and sophisticated research with nano products are opening new doors, the center continues to support its core mills.

"We're here to help everyone adjust to a whole new environment for business," Anderson concludes. ■



Cabot's Darn Tough Socks Receive \$8.5 Million Contract

Darn Tough Vermont socks have been awarded an \$8.5 million contract for flame resistant Merion wool boot socks for the U.S. military.

Darn Tough Vermont is a brand division of Cabot Hosiery Mill in Northfield, Vermont. Ric Cabot, executive vice president and third generation of the founding family, said the contract "validates our long-term commitment to domestic manufacturing."

The contract is included in the recently-awarded Fire Resistant Environmental

Ensemble known as the Free Clothing System managed by ADS Tactical of Virginia Beach.

Cabot Sales Manager Roland Beliveau said "the announcement of this award represents the culmination of several years of hard work and manufacturers coming together to develop and provide the U.S. Army with a high performance clothing system. We are excited to know that soldiers around the world will be more comfortable wearing our Vermont-made socks," Beliveau added. 



Textile Technology Center at Gaston College

**19th century technology gave us
the textiles industry - the 21st century
Textile Technology Center is helping
us re-invent it!**

Today, tens of thousands work in textile operations across the South, thanks to services from the Textile Technology Center at Gaston College in Belmont, North Carolina. We help develop and test new products for specialized markets, support the Made-in-the-USA brand with our quality control innovations, and have worked to make the textile industry leaner and more efficient.

For more information on how we can help you,
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704.837.2525 or anderson.john@gaston.edu

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Future Of Textiles Also Will Include The Alpaca Industry

Think about a study in contrasts. Old and new. Big and small. High and low.



Photo: Jobann Dréo (Wikipedia)



Photo: Viridae (Wikipedia)

This helps understand the mindset of innovators helping the textiles industry reinvent itself for the 21st century. Among those at the forefront is John Anderson, director of the Textiles Technology Center at Gaston College.

One of Anderson's more recent undertakings is the development of a fiber industry for the alpaca growers. Old: craftspeople harkening to the early years of making fiber and textiles. New: embracing technology for a do-it-yourself carding and spinning operation.

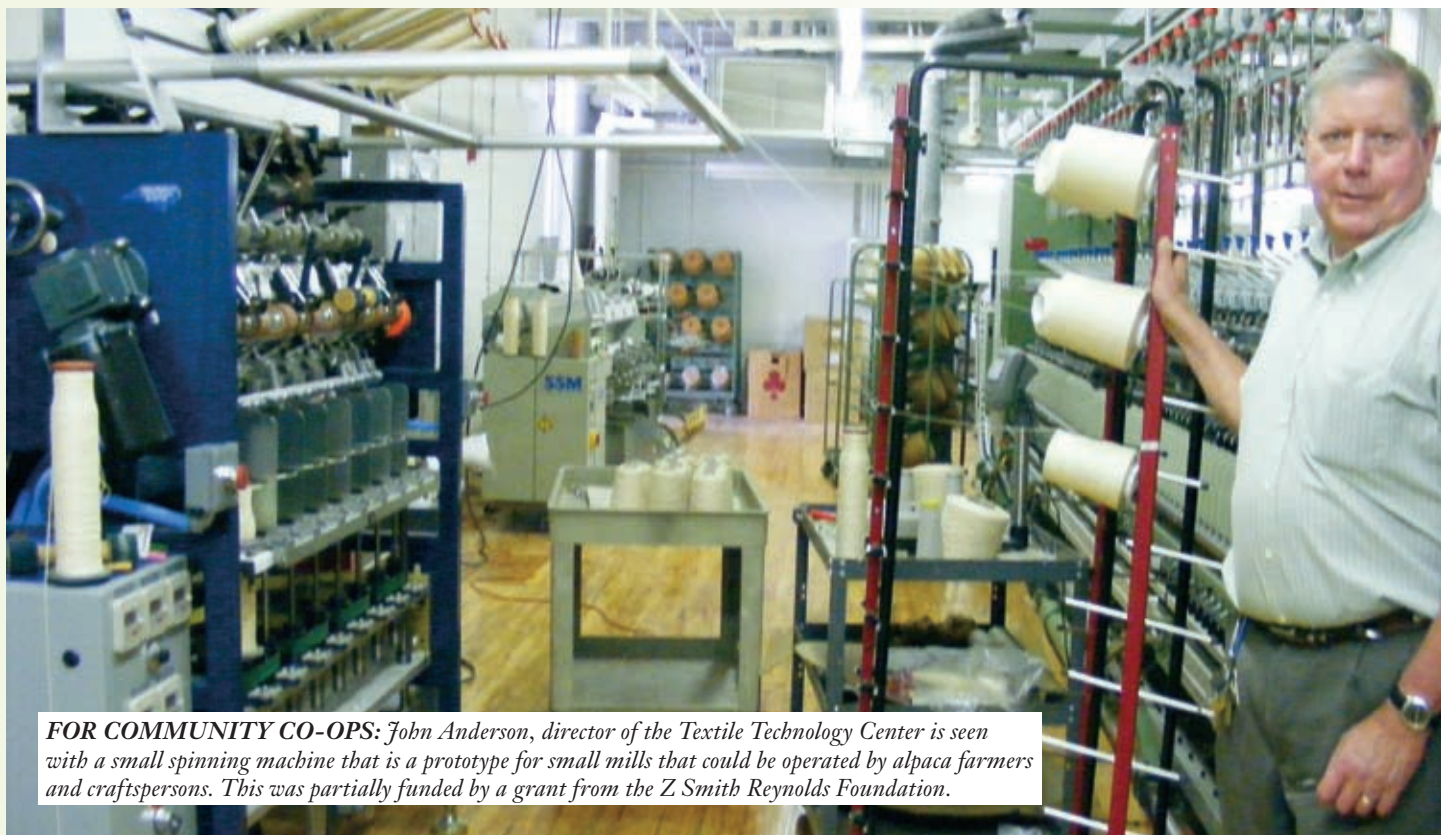
Small: cooperatives that would serve regional alpaca farmers and craftspeople. Large: opportunities for hundreds of producers that could represent millions of dollars in revenue over the next decade.

More than 140 persons attended a workshop recently at the Textiles Center. Anderson was the featured presenter who offered attendees from the Eastern Seaboard a vision of an exciting future. The gathering was sponsored by the Z Smith Reynolds Foundation which has given the Textiles Center \$50,000 to evaluate and develop marketing strategies.

Citing the trend toward sustainable, earth-friendly lifestyles, Anderson asked: "Is there anything greener?" No dyes, no pigments, no chemicals. Sweaters, scarves, and socks made from the natural yarns created from alpacas are hot items.

According to Anderson, there are several hundred alpaca farms in North Carolina alone. Growers attending the recent conference also represented West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, South Carolina, Colorado, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, Maine, and Kansas.

Some of the Reynolds Foundation money has enabled the Textiles Center



FOR COMMUNITY CO-OPS: John Anderson, director of the Textile Technology Center is seen with a small spinning machine that is a prototype for small mills that could be operated by alpaca farmers and craftspersons. This was partially funded by a grant from the Z Smith Reynolds Foundation.



Photo: Kyle Flood (Wikipedia)



Photo: Sizzlingbadger (Wikipedia)

to acquire small spinning and carding machines. "A person can learn to operate this equipment with one day's training," Anderson allows.

Why? Value-added yarn means more profit for the producers, Anderson insists.

His vision includes small mills serving scores of alpaca producers within convenient driving time. The money to be made by controlling the yarn-manufacturing process is significant, he adds.

Anderson also urged the growers to unite behind one broker or dealer. Colors and fibers should be standardized and so should packaging, he continued. He cited the success of Cotton Inc. as a model.

Anderson's presentation also included something like Marketing 101: how to use public service announcements, news releases, and special events to promote the industry.

Sponsorships also stretch the marketing dollars, i.e. fashion shows, it was suggested.

Target the consumers and leave retail outlets alone, Anderson advised. Instead, use the internet, the barn store and boutiques. And own and control as many of the downstream processes as you can. — as individuals, in partnerships, or in co-ops Anderson called this the "hold on to what you've got" path.

Anderson also presented what he described as an "embrace technology" path. Technical fabric markets are growing and "offer significant rewards." Use blends to bring alpaca's unique fiber properties to performance applications, he added. This route will require research partnerships with universities, research and development centers such as the Hosiery Technology Center (CEMS), and technical fabric companies.

The "embrace technology" path also suggests protective fabrics, i.e. flame retardant. Also blends with other innovations to enhance color, comfort and warmth were cited. Medical fabrics with alpaca and anti-microbial fibers or carbon fibers were other suggestions. These also could apply to outerwear and hosiery, Anderson noted.

Anderson sees the alpaca growers and supporters as the textile industry entrepreneurs of the future. Small, innovative, with big plans. That's similar to those small-town textiles entrepreneurs 130 years ago.

As the global economy undergoes transition, it is not hard to imagine the possibilities for those farmers and their hairy creatures, each producing six to eight pounds of fiber each year. The passion is there. Now know-how is required. ■


Domestic Hosiery Business Said Returning To U.S.

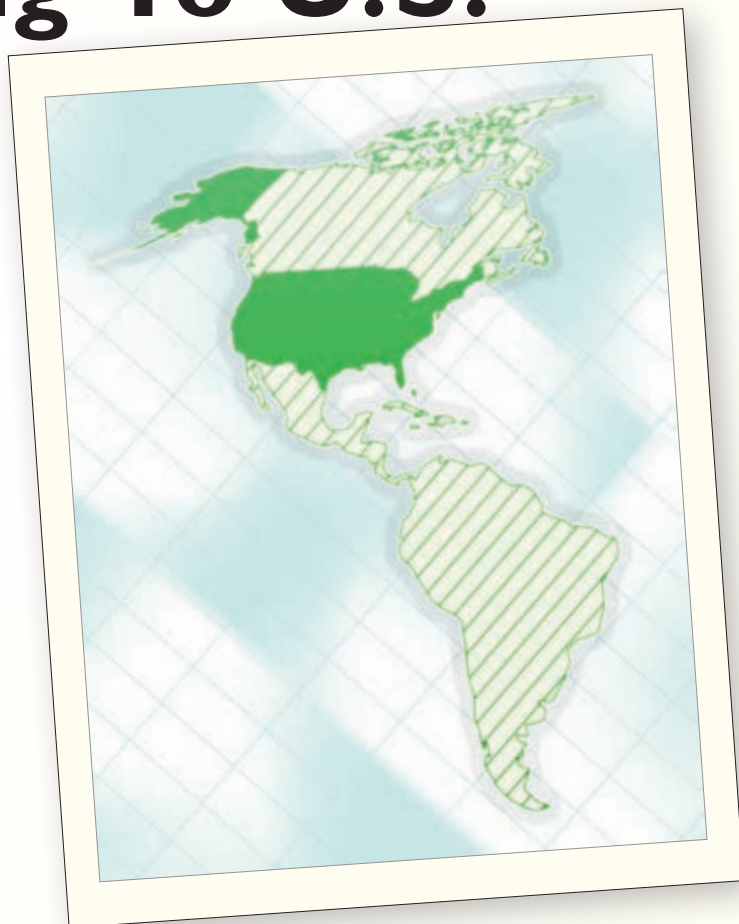
Robert Speizman, CEO of Speizholdings LLC, has added his voice to those who see a strengthening of domestic manufacturing within the hosiery industry.

Recent international developments such as the growing strength of the Taliban in Pakistan have prompted large U.S. importers to look at options in the United States, Speizman said. Pakistan is a primary source for white athletic socks in the U.S. market.

Speizholdings LLC is a distributor of used hosiery manufacturing equipment and seamless knitting machines. The seamless business "also has a lot of activity," Speizman observed.

Dan St. Louis, manager of the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions which includes the Hosiery Technology Center, recently told the N.C. House Committee on Commerce and Entrepreneurship that retailers are contacting him to find domestic sources for socks and apparel.

Shipping costs and quality issues involving offshore hosiery products are prompting major retailers to look for options in the United States, St. Louis added. He said niche business continues to keep scores of small companies in operation. 



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Tarason Packaging Expands Under New Leadership

Tarason Labels Inc., a leading supplier of fabric and paper labels for 25 years to the hosiery and textile industries, has been purchased by packaging veteran Kevin McKenna.

The company now operates as Tarason Packaging LLC in its present location in Conover.

McKenna brings more than 30 years of experience in packaging and printing. He previously served as a cost estimator for International Paper Corp. and more recently as division president for Gulf States Paper Corp.


The name change reflects the company's emphasis on its growing packaging business. Services are being expanded to include design, package prototyping and package production on a variety of materials, McKenna said.

"Our vision is to be a full-service packaging supplier, helping our customers respond to their fast-changing needs with creative packaging solutions that can be delivered on time and at a price that keeps them competitive in the world marketplace," McKenna continued.

McKenna said "our quality packaging will compliment the quality of design and workmanship of the U.S. manufacturer. We will not limit our offerings to those products produced in-house,"



he announced, "rather we will coordinate with other domestic suppliers as needed to assure that our customers have a successful product launch."

Lisa C. Lemons, a veteran account executive, is part of the new Tarason Packaging management team. 



Features:

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Compact Design

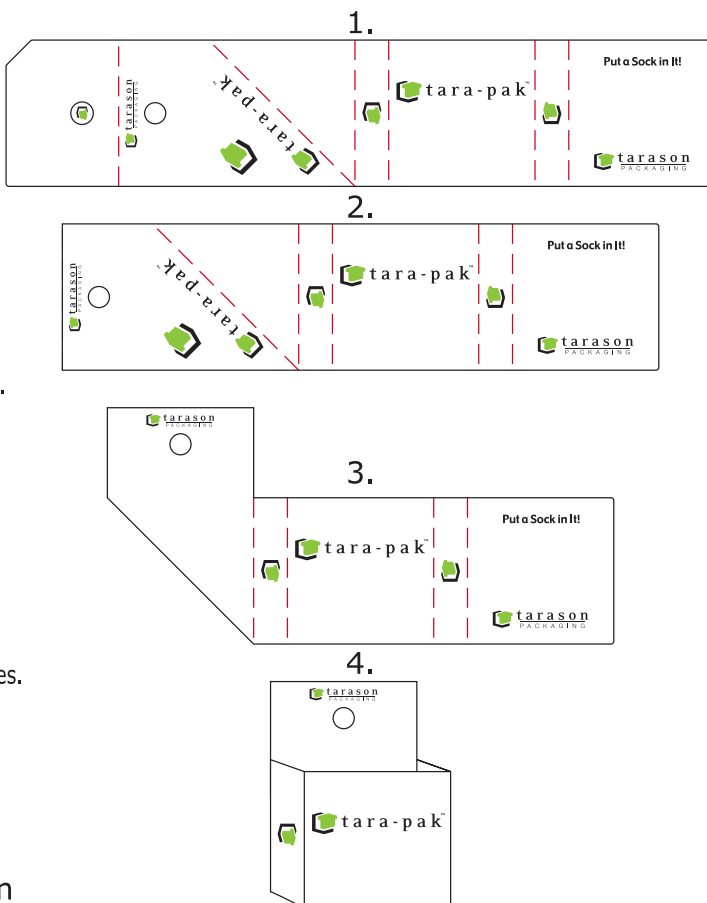
Integrated peg hole

One step manufacturing

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- **Lower cost.**
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Companies Receiving CEMS Support For R&D Expanding

Some 60 manufacturing companies have turned to the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions (CEMS) with its Hosiery Technology Center for assistance in the development of new products.

The majority of those companies are based or operating in North Carolina. The out-of-state firms are mainstays for the hosiery and textiles supply chain.

Dan St. Louis, manager of the CEMS and its hosiery laboratories, released the list of companies that have utilized the testing and prototyping capabilities of the center to demonstrate the diversity of the program's outreach. "As our reputation grows, we are expanding our national and international contract," he added.

A significant percentage of the

companies using the HTC are yarn suppliers to the hosiery and apparel producers. Cotton Inc., Tuscarora Yarns Inc., Unifi, and Primaloft are among the global companies working with the center. Specialty yarn companies including Hickory Yarns, Hickory Throwing, Melatex, Carolina Mills, Shuford Yarns Inc., O'Mara Textiles, and National Spinning are clients of the CEMS operations.

Hosiery manufacturers include Mayo Hosiery Mills in Tarboro, Harriss and Covington Hosiery, High Point; Hosiery, Asheboro; Catawba Sox Inc., and Feetures Brands, Conover; Robinson Hosiery, Valdese; and national brands manufacturers throughout the United States.

Packaging companies and retailers are prominent clients.

St. Louis said the growing list of companies seeking support in research and development reflects the trend for more domestically-made goods. Unrest in some of the countries that have been major exporters to the U.S. marketing, Pakistan among them, has prompted retailers to seek more domestic partners, he reports.

More companies are focusing on specialty products, leaving commodity goods to offshore producers. "Performance and high quality products are where domestic mills can be successful and we want to help them," St. Louis concluded. 

Industry Briefs

Parkdale Mills Closes Plant Near Sanford

Parkdale America has announced it will close its Sanford NC plant June 30 due to the economic slowdown. The move eliminates 81 jobs.

"We just don't have the capacity to keep it open," said Diane Stanley, director of Human Resources at Parkdale. The company operates 24 other plants in Virginia and the Carolinas and has manufacturing operations in Mexico and Columbia.



Wigwam Mills Adds Line With SmartSilver

Wigwam Mills in Sheboygan, WI will introduce a new line of socks at the upcoming Outdoor Retailer Summer Market featuring SmartSilver.

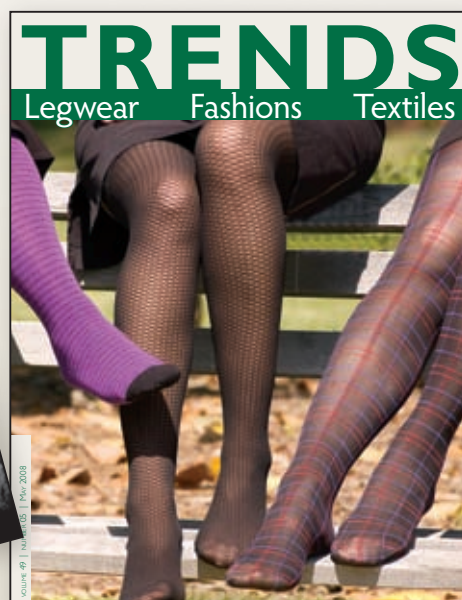
Wigwam's new wool runner socks will have the softness of Merino wool and the anti-microbial properties of SmartSilver developed by NanoHorizons. "SmartSilver is the natural choice to give our socks the anti-odor performance Wigwam consumers expect," declared Bob Chesebro, company president.

The Outdoor Retailer Summer Market will be held July 21-24 in Salt Lake City, Utah. It attracts scores of socks and apparel manufacturers from around the nation, especially the southeast.



TRENDS

Legwear Fashions Textiles



2009 Editorial Calendar

JULY

Government contracts for the U.S. military have been important and the U.S. wants more companies to bid on contracts. The opportunities and the hurdles for domestic manufacturers will be cited. An update on the Berry Amendment that is supposed to give preferences to U.S. producers.

AUGUST

Marketing trends for textiles and hosiery supply chain. This entails steps to improve efficiency and deliveries and promoting new technologies in yarns and fibers.

SEPTEMBER

Coverage of the biannual MAGIC Show. Hosiery and Textile Technology Centers will analyze R&D activities. Yarn and fibers companies will be invited to report on developments adding value to their products. Holiday promotions will be evaluated.

OCTOBER

Ten months after a new administration takes over in Washington, we report on shifts in globalization. Is China still dominating global manufacturing or is the shift to the Caribbean and South America gaining traction. How is the supply chain responding?

NOVEMBER

Women hosiery fashions – sheer and socks – continue to be important to domestic manufacturing. How has technology changed this segment?

DECEMBER

Healthcare products represent the fastest growing segment in some textiles and hosiery companies. The aging of America's population and more sophisticated healthcare services are fueling this trend. The technology centers are helping companies integrate technologies into this market.

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Where's the Fire?

It should be in your head.

Politicians and the American public are insisting change is on the horizon...must be on the horizon. People are fired up.

So how does this affect your very future?
How will the changes affect your business?
Your personal assets?
Your quality of life?

The Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council is fired up for 2009.

You should be too. The elections will entail choices.

People who understand what it means to keep a business competitive with rules that restrict our operations. Taxes that hurt our ability to invest.

It's time to get fired up. Let your voice be heard in 2009. Join the Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council and let the politicians know where the fire is.

**Send your membership check (\$350) to HGAC, P.O. Box 1708,
Hickory, N.C. 28603, or call 828-322-7766 for information.**