

# TRENDS

Legwear

Fashions

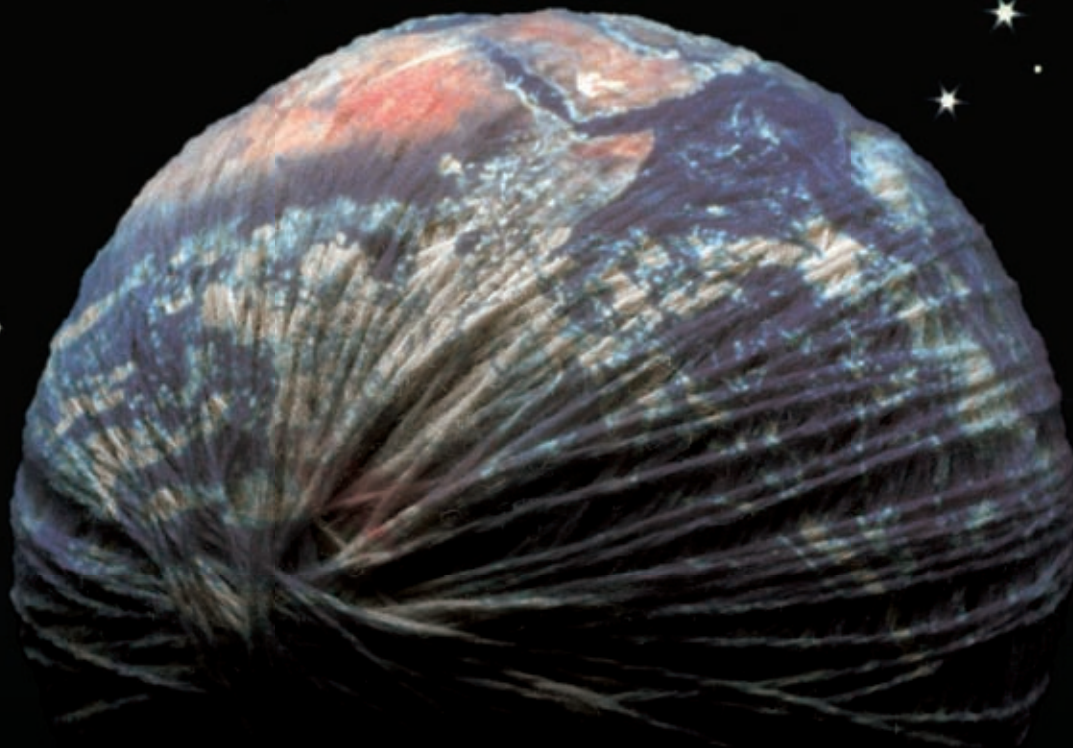
Textiles

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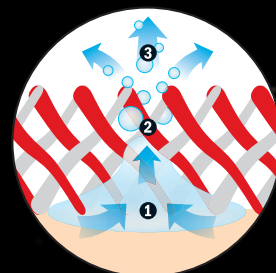
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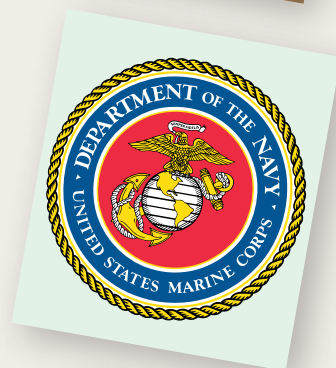


# TRENDS

## Legwear Fashions Textiles

*The only monthly publication that offers  
News About The Industry, From The Industry, For The Industry.*

*inside*



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*The ONLY monthly magazine  
dedicated to the hosiery industry*

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## legislative column

by PAUL FOGLEMAN, Director, Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council

# Re-Energizing Manufacturing Gains Momentum

For all the reservations about Washington's bailouts, the public focus on the automotive industry may

play well for other segments, including hosiery and textiles. Why? The issue has aroused top level talk about preserving manufacturing in the United States.

We need enforcement of trade agreements. U.S. manufacturers need to compete on a level playing field. Quit sending jobs out on a slow boat to China.

were homes to manufacturing.

How to jump start the industrial sector will be a challenge with no easy answers. But legislators certainly will be looking at cost-effective services to protect what is left, short of bailouts given to the auto manufacturers. States are required to operate with balanced budgets. They cannot sell bonds to China or Middle East potentates. The options are freezes and elimination of budget items.

It is not going to be fun in the halls of Congress or the Legislatures.

Dan St. Louis, HTC manager, recalls attending an outing at Crisco's home in Randolph County with others attending a SEAMS conference. "He knows how to make great barbecue," St. Louis allows.

♦♦♦

The traditional political fundraising receptions on the eve of the opening of the N.C. Legislature were a bit more expensive this year, making lobbyists wonder if news of the recession had reached party leaders.

Republican and Democratic caucuses in

♦♦♦

*The country ponders the loss of 2,500,000 jobs in 2008 – a quarter of them in the last four months of the year.*

Stop the sucking sound of jobs going south of the border. These words are being heard by the Obama administration as the country ponders the loss of 2,500,000 jobs in 2008 – a quarter of them in the last four months of the year.

In North Carolina, where the unemployment rate topped 7.2 percent, and other hosiery and textiles states, the state legislatures are going to face the reality of lost manufacturing jobs: lost revenue from income and sales taxes. North Carolina is looking at a 10 percent budget shortfall – over \$2 billion. The same is true throughout states that once

The appointment of Keith Crisco, chairman of Asheboro Elastics Corp., to the position of N.C. Commerce Secretary, is encouraging news to hosiery, yarn and textiles producers. He is the first Commerce Secretary in recent times to bring experience in "traditional manufacturing."

Crisco has been involved in the activities of the Southeast Apparel Manufacturers Association (SEAMS) and the Hosiery Technology Center. He has supported free trade and the domestic industry.

the House and Senate traditionally hold pre-opening parties on the night before the official opening of the session. This year, sponsorships ranged from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and tickets from \$250 to \$500 per person.

Lobbyists representing pharmaceuticals, insurance companies, utilities, and international technology companies can step to the plate – and do. But personal relationships can balance the equation. North Carolina lawmakers are not involved in "pay to play" tactics. Lobbying reform laws have curtailed the flow of money from lobbyists. ■

## Industry Legislative Event Scheduled For March 18

Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco will be among the participants at the Hosiery and Textiles Day at the N.C. Legislature March 18.

Crisco, former president of family-owned Asheboro Elastic Corp., brings strong support for traditional manufacturing in the 21st century business environment, said Darrell Frye, vice president of Harriss and Covington Hosiery and chairman of the Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council. Frye is a longtime friend of Crisco.

The March 18 event will begin with a breakfast for members of the N.C. General Assembly in the Legislative cafeteria. Personal visits with members, including leaders, will be scheduled during the day.

The event will promote the state support for the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions (CEMS) and its hosiery technology center, and the Textile Technology Center at Gaston College. CEMS is a division of Catawba Valley Community College. ■

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## **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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# HTC, CEMS

## To Get Facilities For New, Expanded Operations

*By Paul Fogleman,  
Publisher*

With the rapid demand for more services, the N.C. Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions in Hickory will be moving into expanded facilities.

The center, under the umbrella of Catawba Valley Community College, will move to a building formerly occupied by a steak house restaurant. A \$950,000 appropriation from the Catawba County Board of Commissioners has enabled the college to acquire the property, along with \$250,000 from the college's

foundation.

The Hosiery Technology Center, the core of CEMS, will be involved in the move. Funds from the HTC will be used toward the costs of renovations, it was announced.

CEMS was created in spring 2008 and has encompassed the Furniture Technology Center at CVCC. CEMS is under the direction of Dan St. Louis who has managed the hosiery center over the past two decades.

"We're talking about jobs," St. Louis emphasized. "We're here to do whatever we can do to help North Carolina manufacturers stay in business," he said. CEMS' success with Catawba







*Dan St. Louis, director of the Hosiery Technology Center, and Garrett Hinsbaw, president of Catawba Valley Community College, at the former restaurant building which will be the new home of CEMS*

County companies in helping with market development and research and development prompted the county government to invest in its future.

The hosiery center is recognized nationally as a model for industry support services. The testing laboratory is used by retailers and manufacturers across the United States. Recently, the HTC has provided test results to support exemption of

hosiery and apparel from lead content requirements imposed by the Consumer Products Safety Protection Council. The legislation originally was aimed at prohibiting the import of toys with lead paint.

The new facilities will enable the HTC and CEMS to expand research and development activities and prototyping for new products. The center also provides employee training and

retraining for manufacturers, including strategies for lean manufacturing.

The center receives \$750,000 each year from the North Carolina General Assembly. Maintaining this revenue will be absolutely critical to cover the costs of moving into the new building, St. Louis allowed. The cost for moving the boiler alone is estimated at \$100,000, he said. ■

*The center, under the umbrella of Catawba Valley Community College, will move to a building formerly occupied by a steak house restaurant.*

# Niche Manufacturing: Growth Sector For Hosiery Industry

Hosiery manufacturers over the decades have proven to be adept at re-inventing themselves, and in 2009 a new trend is emerging. It's niche manufacturing.

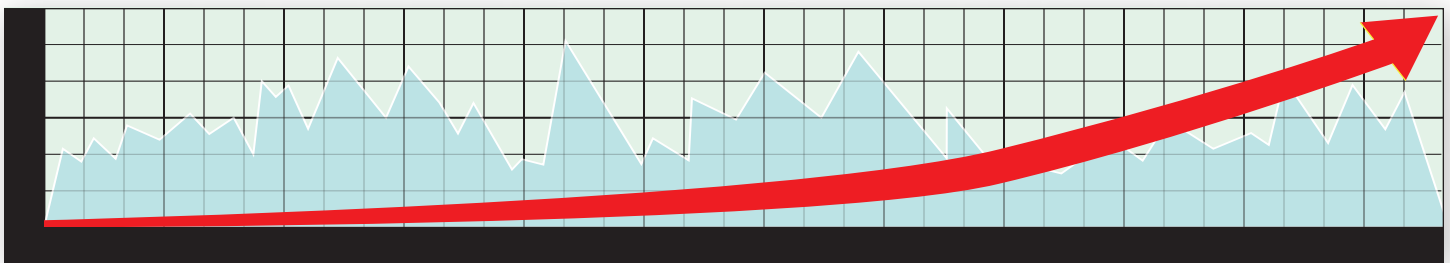
Large multi-national companies, some of them outside the United States, compete for volume orders from the largest mass retailers. But smaller companies, whose demise had been forecast 10 years ago, are holding their ground – even growing. Their customers

and Sandy Houston.

An example of the rise of niche manufacturing recently was spotlighted in the New York Times. In Brooklyn, where 25,000 jobs are in manufacturing, niche companies showed a 17 percent growth in employment over the past six years while

production when the market turns up.

Harriss and Covington Hosiery Co. in High Point is not a small company – but it is focused on business other than mass retailers. The company also contracts with smaller, family-owned manufacturers for knitting and finishing while maintaining



are specialty operations and local retailers.

Ron Brittain, owner of L&R Knitting near Hickory, is an example. He has developed a relationship with a specialty company in Vermont that is marketing to the “green market.” Brittain is shipping socks made with organic yarns, all natural cotton fibers. Last year this one customer purchased 30,000 dozens.

L&R still seeks contract work from larger integrated hosiery manufacturers, but more of his business is going to specialty operations, thanks to leads passed on by the Hosiery Technology Center.

“I used to be worried about business. Now I am more worried about survival of vendors,” Brittain asserts, referring to the closing of yarn companies over the past year, including R.L. Stowe Co. He and other hosiery executives have heard that Wellstone Group may be servicing Stowe customers.

L&R is an example of a small firm competing successfully through strategies built around niche markets using customization, automation, flexible systems, design services and delivery speed. They often partner with other companies and create new companies. L&R’s finishing operations partner is a small company recently started by Darrell

companies producing for mass markets reported a 48 percent decrease. Niche manufacturers make up 25 percent of the total.

R. Evans Hosiery in the Hickory area is another example of a small company building a niche market. Rusty Evans, owner, reports he uses only yarn made in the United States. He has built a customer base of smaller retailers and will ship orders of six to eight dozens. “If the order comes in early in the morning, it goes out the door before night,” he says.

Evans makes women’s fashion socks with ingrain dyed yarn. He maintains an inventory but also is able to get quick delivery from Hickory Throwing Co. and O’MARA Incorporated. Evans also worries about the supply chain and the closing of yarn companies. “We need to pull together to keep our industry vendors healthy,” he says.

Huitt Mills in Hickory and North Wilkesboro, and Pickett Hosiery in Burlington are among those companies that have found military procurement a niche. Huitt also is shipping soccer socks made with polypropylene yarn made on 132-needle single feed machines.

Huitt is an example of the advantages – the strengths – of being smaller. Little or no debt service and able to beef up

its own manufacturing operations.

The company has developed a strong market for its Smart Wool socks which is sold in specialty sports stores and high-end retailers. It consistently engages in prototyping to create performance socks.

Dan St. Louis, manager of the Hosiery Technology Center, a division of the Center for Emerging Manufacturing Solutions, says that more opportunities exist for companies going after niche markets. “Those who are successful are willing to turn out samples promptly and follow up quickly,” he says.

Recognized nationally for its industry leadership, the HTC is frequently the first contact for companies and entrepreneurs looking for specialty products. The HTC helps make the contacts and often participates in the prototyping.

“There’s no doubt the hosiery center has saved a lot of jobs,” insists Brittain. “It’s one of the best investments the state can make,” expressing support for continuing the financial support in the state budget.

Given the global economic climate, niche markets could be the growth manufacturing sector, especially as access to capital becomes more difficult. At least some veteran hosiery executives think so. ■



# 9/11 Motivated New Hosiery Firm

*Marine Corps News*  
by LCpl. Zachary J. Nola

## **Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.**

- When Russ Meade was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 1994, the former infantryman thought his separation would be only temporary. After obtaining his college degree, he planned on returning to the Marine Corps as an officer and making it a career.

However, while in college Meade and his wife started a family, so the former war fighter, refusing to trek his family from one base to another, put his goal of seeking a commission aside and entered the civilian workforce.

Although the former devil dog is still serving his beloved Corps, he is not doing it with a rifle in hand. Instead, he is doing his duty with socks.

Meade, now the chief military advisor for and co-creator of the business Covert Threads, has accepted the mission of producing, for Marines, a military sock for every clime and place.

"Socks are what we do best, and that's our mission," said Meade, a native of Hickory, N.C. "I still feel like I'm serving."

Meade's endeavor into the sock business began after the events of Sept. 11, 2001. He was determined to serve his country once again and therefore re-enlisted in the Marine Corps, this time working in public affairs.

Before deploying with II Marine Expeditionary Force in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Meade was given eight pairs of socks from his good friend Peter Menzies, who was already in the sock business.

Meade said although the socks felt great, the extreme heat and other elements resulted in foot problems such as blisters and hot spots. In response, Meade e-mailed Menzies, informing him about the problems, and asked if it was possible for Menzies to develop a better sock for a specific climate. Within a month, Menzies

had shipped his friend a new sock called the "Sand" boot sock.

The sock was such a success that Meade asked Menzies to send more of them so he could hand them out to other Marines. The result was Marines ordered more of the socks, directly from Menzies, and upon returning from Iraq, Menzies and Meade created the company Covert Threads.

The Sand Military Boot Sock is a sock specifically created for hot to moderate climates, incorporating an acrylic and wool blend that wicks moisture away, keeping feet dry and cool, said Menzies. A silver lining also helps battle bacteria, while eliminating foot odor, and aiding in the prevention of blisters.

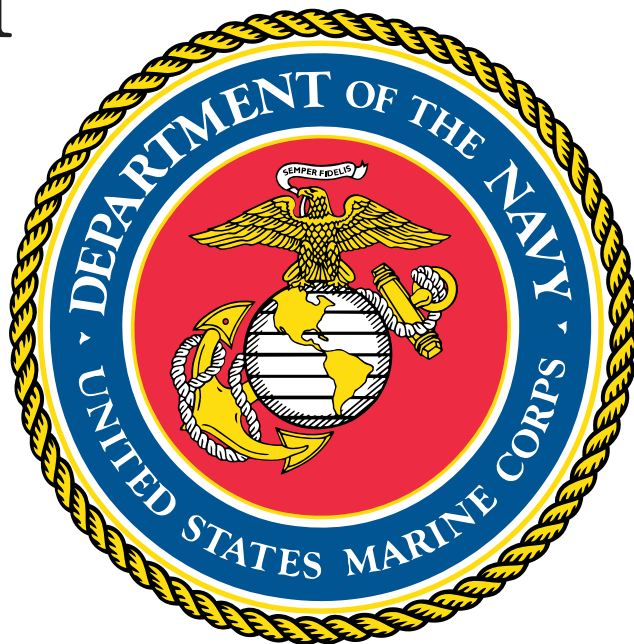
The company has since grown to produce socks specifically meant for physical training, dress, rugged terrain, arctic terrain, and fire protection.

The company has also expanded its consumer base to include Marine Corps exchanges, some Naval and Air Force exchanges, and the civilian hunting industry.

James Nelson, the warehouse manager for West Coast Tactical Gear Distributors, the distributor for the Combat Center's Marine Corps Exchange, who was working a tent sale at the exchange at the Combat Center's Camp Wilson Jan. 15, said the distributing company was happy to sell the socks Covert Threads had to offer.

"We were just really impressed with their quality and durability. They're one of our top selling items," said Nelson, a former Marine engineer who said he knows first hand just how important a reliable pair of socks is.

While Meade and Menzies admit, like any other business, the goal of Covert



Threads is to make a profit in order to support a living, the two men also have a strong and unwavering passion for helping Marines.

"The good thing about it is we're taking care of Marines," said Meade, who has provided his product to reconnaissance and infantry Marines, as well as members of Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. "It's almost better than getting a paycheck."

The first time the two saw their product being offered in an exchange they were pleased to see that their business was going to be financially successful, but they were also humbled knowing Marines had access to good gear, said Menzies.

"We're not just making money," said Meade. "We're making a difference."

Testimonials on the company's Web site from Marines, mothers of Marines, and outdoorsmen, show Covert Threads is making quite an impact on the lives of service members and civilians alike - something Meade and Menzies feel privileged to be part of.

"We're just blessed," Meade said.

Blessed with his family and blessed to be able to continue serving his country by providing his brothers and sisters in arms with something as simple as a pair of comfortable socks. ■

# Textile Technology Center: *Outlook For 2009*

by John Anderson

Director, Textile Technology Center

The demand for services from the Textile Technology Center continued to grow rapidly during 2008. Since being re-chartered by the NC State Legislature in July 2005, the Textile Technology Center has consistently expanded its client base and range of services in North Carolina, as well as to the industry at large.

The mission of the Center is to be of service to the textile industry and to assist the industry in solving problems. Since there is an abundant supply of the latter, opportunities to be of assistance abound, both in 2008 and 2009.

In the textile process area, we are active assisting clients with new product development, process development or process improvement. The addition of the CCI sample weaving system and a long staple sample spinning frame significantly enhanced our ability to give clients cost effective preliminary looks at new product concepts. Both of these capabilities were funded by fees generated from our textile operations.

The five testing labs (fiber, yarn, fabric performance, defect analysis and microscopy) at the Center also stay fully occupied, and we increased our staffing to keep our cycle time short and remain responsive to clients needs. We have made arrangements to bring specific technical expertise to bear on an as needed basis for our clients, and in that sense have continued to build our staff without increasing the total State payroll.

## Analytical Laboratory Capabilities

Once installed, (target date late February, early March,) the following capabilities will be available to the Center's clients from a donation of equipment from Wellman:

- Metals testing to ppm level (e.g. lead or other heavy metals in paints or fabrics or type and amount of catalyst) by Inductively Coupled Plasma Spectroscopy (ICP)
- Determining polyester composition (e.g. looking for DEG, EG, PIA, IPA, or DMT) by Gas Chromatography (GC)
- UV/VIS analysis of polymers for com-

ponent levels (antioxidants, UV blockers, and material purity analysis)

- Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) analysis for thermal properties of polymers and other materials
- Various wet analytical techniques – examples: ash, dissolutions, pH, CEG, fiber finish amount and type
- Custom analysis of materials for purity by HPLC
- Gas Chromatography/ Mass Spec (GC/MS) for unknown analysis of polymer or material components and impurities
- Determining oligomer content of polyester by Gel Permeation Chromatography (GPC)/High Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC)

## Microscopy Laboratory Capabilities

- Mettler Hotstage (e.g. determining the softening point of the sheath in a competitor's bicomponent fiber)
- Accusizer Particle Size Analyzer (e.g. has there been a change in the particle size of my incoming raw material additive or filler?)
- Advanced Image Analysis (e.g. determining the amount of binder present in a non-woven fabric when analytical methods will not work)
- Energy dispersive x-ray analysis (e.g. determining the type of metal responsible for the contamination in a yarn)
- Advanced Blend Analysis (e.g. determining the blend analysis of a Kevlar/PBI yarn – in this case analytical methods will not work and neither will conventional microscopy methods)

In all, the Textile Technology Center increased the amount of service delivered to the industry by 77% over the prior year (as measured by dollars invoiced for services provided).

Several factors contributed to that growth. As textile firms respond to economic pressure, they have come to rely on the Textile Center more rather than less. Many textile firms which scaled back or eliminated their own R&D, analytical and product testing staffs take advantage of the resources offered by our facility. With firms up and down the supply chain buying fiber, fabric and finished product all around the globe, we have the opportunity to help clients verify whether or not

they received what they paid for. The need for innovation became even more urgent in the climate of 2008, and the Textile Technology Center is uniquely equipped for small scale, quick turn textile development activity.

In the past 18 months, The Center expanded its service offerings to include:

- Fabric Defect analysis
- Elemental analysis (Chemical)
- Material Identification via FTIR “IlluminatiIR II”
- Advanced Scanning Electron microscopy
- Small sample weaving
- Fiber analysis and trend measurement
- Textile training seminars in conjunction with Len Furlough of B&L Consulting
- Virtual Consulting using the Centers Testing data and outside expertise.
- “Private lessons” on textile fundamentals for individuals and groups who came to the industry from other disciplines.

As we look ahead to 2009, the Textile Technology Center is on a path to obtain, with the help of donations from industry, the capability to innovate new fibers and polymers, provide even more sophisticated material testing, and process plant and animal fibers such as alpaca, wool, hemp and flax. We believe the need to innovate will only increase and our roles as a partner for innovation stand us in an excellent position to be of service. The likelihood is high that the federal government will continue to pass regulations that require product testing, which will increase demand for our lab and analytical services.

A grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation will help establish a seminar series focused on the craft and hand spun segments of the industry. The Textile Technology Center will be the host of a major three day conference in April titled “The Alpaca Fiber Symposium- Today, Tomorrow and Beyond”, examining the future of alpaca as a new growth specialty fiber. For more information go to [www.alpacafibersymposium.com](http://www.alpacafibersymposium.com).

Our biggest concern, of course, is the pressure that global competition and the recession place on our clients. From my perspective, the entire industry is focused on change and agility, and that has to be

(continued on page 14)



# The Textile Technology Center

The industry's  
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fiber and yarn manufacturing

How can we  
assist you?

# Following 2008 Surprises, Those In 2009 May Include VAT



*By Paul Fogleman,  
Publisher*

With the U.S. government facing deficit spending equating to 12 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), more questions are surfacing about payment.

Who is going to repay the costs of bailouts and recovery? And when?

Some economists are predicting that the U.S. will join European nations and others around the globe with a value-added tax. The VAT was introduced in Europe 55 years ago and today accounts for 45 percent of revenue collected by the French government.

Manufacturers would be significantly impacted by the VAT. The tax is imposed at each level in the supply chain. For instance, a yarn company would buy fiber and pay the fiber producer a tax in addition to the cost of the fiber. The yarn company would then charge a tax on the yarn sold to the hosiery manufacturer. The manufacturer then charges the retailer a tax and ultimately the tax is paid by the consumer.

At each level of production, the tax is adjusted. For instance, if the hosiery manufacturer pays \$50 VAT for yarn valued at \$800 and then charges the retailer \$150 for a shipment of hosiery, then the hosiery company deducts taxes paid for yarn and sends the government \$100. The added value of the hosiery after made from yarn is the principle behind the concept.

All European countries have a VAT. In Great Britain, it is 17.5 percent. In France it is 19 percent and the Denmark VAT is 25 percent. Other nations have VAT in the same range.

The concept of a VAT for the United States was pushed in 2008 by Republican Presidential candidate Mike Huckabee, former governor of Arkansas. He and

other VAT advocates would lower income taxes and regulatory fees.


Also various countries have exemptions or different rates. For instance, food products would be taxed at a lower rate or not at all. So-called luxury items may have a different rate than utilitarian products such as socks, sheers, bath towels, sheets, et al.

Because U.S. exports are subject to VAT levies, some advocates say American manufacturers would benefit as imports into the country would be subject to the VAT.

Opponents of the VAT argue it is a national sales tax. The conservative Heritage Foundation, a Washington-based think tank, says it would encourage more government spending. However with government spending to help banks, automakers, and the housing industry, the question now is how to repay the taxpayers. Since October 2008, government commitments to bailouts already total \$30,000 for every man, woman and child in the U.S. And more spending is around the corner to create jobs and repair the infrastructure.

President Obama, in the face of a global financial crisis, also has pledged to give some form of tax relief to the middle class. Additionally, massive job losses mean less revenue for the government coffers in tax collections. States and cities are facing troublesome losses in revenue.

No one is saying the VAT is the end-all answer. Nor will cranking up the currency printing presses solve the problem. Indeed, the fear of inflation already has seeped into some quarters.

Every year has its surprises – good and bad. Most would like to forget the surprises of 2008 with bank shenanigans, unaccountable bailouts, retail meltdown. Expect surprises in 2009 and VAT could be one of them. 



# CPSC May Ease Lead Testing Regulations For Hosiery Industry

Editor's Note: Jim Schollaert, Washington governmental affairs representative for socks manufacturers who are members of Made In America coalition, recently sent the following communications to his members. Schollaert has been a leading participant in a coalition to exempt socks and apparel from the new regulations announced by the Consumer Product Safety Council which requires testing of products for lead if worn or used by persons under 12 years of age. The Hosiery Association also has participated in the coalition in cooperation with the American Apparel and Footwear Association.

CPSC sources assure me that the CPSC will soon announce steps to either delay or possibly fix the controversial new lead testing and certification requirements on the apparel industry bought about by the CPSIA Act of 2008 and scheduled to go into effect on February 10.

The most influential Committee Chairmen of the House and Senate, along with their Subcommittee Chairmen of the Consumer Product Safety Subcommittees have sent an important letter to the Consumer Product Safety Commission urging the CPSC to act expeditiously before February 10 to relieve manufacturers of children's apparel and some other products of the testing and certification requirements. A link to this important letter is on the website of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and posted below.

[www.energycommerce.house.gov/images/stories/Documents/PDF/Newsroom/nord%20moore%202009%201%2016.pdf](http://www.energycommerce.house.gov/images/stories/Documents/PDF/Newsroom/nord%20moore%202009%201%2016.pdf)

This follows considerable lobbying efforts against the new certification and testing requirements of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008, which is scheduled to enter a new phase of certification and testing requirements on February 10. As I reported earlier, House and Senate Committee staff had been understanding and sympathetic to the pointless problems posed by the new CPSIA requirements on the domestic sock industry, when I met with them in December and early January. This joint letter from House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman, and Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller, along with their Consumer Affairs Subcommittee Chairmen Senator Mark Pryor and Congressman Bobby Rush demonstrates that they are trying to push the CPSC to solve the pointless problems faced by the apparel and children's books industries, rather than open up the new CPSIA law to new amending legislation.

For their part, the CPSC also recognizes the need for relief from some of the pointless and extremely onerous requirements of the new law, but they are moving cautiously because they feel constrained by the specific language which they feel will open them up to challenges in the courts by consumer product safety activists if they deviate from the language of the law. They are

annoyed, to say the least, that the Congress passed very specific legislative mandates leaving them little flexibility, yet now is pressing the CPSC to solve the problems by finding a way to evade the language of the legislation.

Nevertheless, prompted in part by the Congressional letter, on Thursday, January 22, the CPSC held a meeting at their Bethesda MD headquarters with representatives of textile and apparel manufacturers, importers and retailers to receive science-based information and evidence needed to establish that all commercially available textile fibers, yarns and dyes used in apparel, and the simple apparel products that are produced from these inputs are inherently lead free. Dan St. Louis of the Hosiery Technology Center and his chemist, presented evidence that no lead had been detected in hundreds of tests of sock products, Walmart, J.C. Penney, the Children's Place, the Cotton Council, the American Apparel and Footwear

*(continued on page 14)*

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# Textile Technology Center Outlook

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good. The performance and technical textile sectors in the state continue to grow, and future winners are looking in that direction for growth. Of immediate concern is the misperception that this is a shrinking industry and therefore no longer deserving of public support. The fiber, yarn, fabric and finished product complex remains a major employer in North Carolina. Since our ultimate sponsor is the North Carolina State Legislature, it is important to the Textile Technology Center that clients and partners who feel that we bring value to the industry tell their local legislators that the industry needs more shared resources to support innovation and process improvement, not less.

As we carry out our mission to be of service to the textile industry, we continue to search for emerging segments that can benefit from our services, technologies and cumulative expertise through the "Center of Excellence" shared resource concept. To use Benjamin Franklin's words in a slightly different context than he originally spoke, "We must hang together, gentlemen ... else, we shall most assuredly hang separately." 


# CPSC May Ease Lead Testing Regulations For Hosiery Industry

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Association (AAFA) and others also presented technical evidence that all natural and man-made fibers used in apparel, as well as all commercially available dyes for apparel products, contained no measurable amounts of lead. Some lead was found, however, in apparel non-textile hard parts such as zippers, rivets, buttons and the like. Also some lead was found in chromium yellow dyes used in outdoor, weather-exposed fabrics such as awnings, outdoor carpets, and artificial turf.

I was told by a contact at the CPSC yesterday to expect soon, an announcement from the CPSC which addresses the problems of some parts of the apparel industry. Nancy Nord, Chairman of the CPSC, announced at the January 22 meeting that the CPSC was considering among other things, the legality of a stay, of the February 10 lead content deadline for certain products almost certainly to include unaccessorized socks in my opinion. The CPSC has noted before that they have the authority to stay the effect of the bill for any products they so choose for at least 60 days.

This still leaves the certification requirements for the Flammable Fabrics Act, even though the sock industry is exempt from the testing requirement because it meets the fabric weight exemption. I would be illogical in the extreme to relieve the children's apparel industry of lead testing and certification requirements, but allow the flammable fabrics certification requirements to remain in effect for adult and children's socks, even though they meet the conditions for exemption from testing.

Meanwhile the request for public comment by CPSC staff on the likely effect of allowing 3rd party testing on component parts rather than the finished product is approaching its deadline of January 30. This request which can be found on the CPSC website ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)) is attached above and individual sock companies are encouraged to submit comment by e-mail by January 30 to [Sec102ComponentPartsTesting@cpsc.gov](mailto:Sec102ComponentPartsTesting@cpsc.gov). 

 <h2 style="text-align: center;">TRENDS</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Legwear Fashions Textiles</h3> <h2 style="text-align: center;">2009 Editorial Calendar</h2>				
<h3>March</h3> <p>The sustainability movement gains momentum. Organic fibers and yarn blends and how manufacturers are promoting recycled materials. What are retailers looking for in earth-friendly products?</p>	<h3>April</h3> <p>Nanotechnology is making inroads in hosiery and apparel manufacturing, especially healthcare products. We look at opportunities and research and development in this arena. Marketing around Earth Month is analyzed. Hosiery and Textiles Day at the North Carolina legislature is in focus.</p>	<h3>May</h3> <p>Preview of fall fashion trends. Retailers and manufacturers are asked to look ahead.</p>	<h3>June</h3> <p>Sporting socks and apparel are a mainstay for U.S. manufacturers. With the Outdoor Retailer Show on the horizon, we look at trends.</p>	<h3>July</h3> <p>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.</p>
<h3>August</h3> <p>Marketing trends for textiles and hosiery supply chain. This entails steps to improve efficiency and deliveries and promoting new technologies in yarns and fibers.</p>	<h3>September</h3> <p>Coverage of the biannual MAGIC Show. Hosiery and Textile Technology Centers will analyze R&amp;D activities. Yarn and fibers companies will be invited to report on developments adding value to their products. Holiday promotions will be evaluated.</p>	<h3>October</h3> <p>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?</p>	<h3>November</h3> <p>Women hosiery fashions – sheer and socks – continue to be important to domestic manufacturing. How has technology changed this segment?</p>	<h3>December</h3> <p>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.</p>
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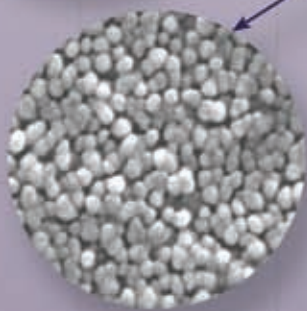
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