

Policy for the use of animal products and raw materials

BACKGROUND AND GOALS

Seidensticker Group is continuously aiming at minimising negative impacts of its business activities. This includes ecological and social aspects in equal measure as well as animal welfare and animal protection. Seidensticker Group's product range also includes products with materials of animal origin. With this policy, Seidensticker Group commits to prevent practices that are harmful to animal health and wellbeing and to advocate the improvement of animal welfare in the garment industry – especially in the own supply chains.

Seidensticker Group requires its business partners and suppliers to comply with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), especially in cases where raw materials of animal origin are used. Business partners are advised to check at <https://cites.org/eng/disc/species.php> whether the products they deliver to Seidensticker Group are covered in the scope of CITES. Via the EU Export Helpdesk, business partners can find detailed information on CITES regulations. The corresponding EU regulation is available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31997R0338&from=DE>.

Especially regarding knit items, wool production and sheep farming practices present a concern. The supply chain of sheep's wool is often connected to animal welfare risks: In particular, the procedure of "mulesing" which is being primarily performed in Australia puts sheep in pain. Mulesing refers to the removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from the breech area of sheep to prevent infections with fly maggots. Usually, mulesing is applied without anesthetizing the animal first. Seidensticker Group is clearly positioning itself against mulesing practices: The use of wool which is not mulesing-free is prohibited for any products of Seidensticker Group.

In addition, in silk production, still pupated silkworms are boiled: To produce one gram of silk, the cocoons of 15 animals are needed. The silkworm is mainly fed mulberry leaves which is why these trees are planted in large quantities and require large amounts of water. Water is also consumed in the cleaning and processing of silk. Also, pesticides are used which can potentially damage the soil, groundwater and living species (e.g., insects). Disinfectants and antibiotics are applied to prevent massive spreading of diseases among the caterpillars. Seidensticker is aware of the animal welfare and environmental risks associated with silk production and therefore prefers fibres, yarns and fabrics that are GOTS certified.

Angora wool comes from angora rabbits. About 95% of the angora wool available worldwide is being produced in China. In many cases, the conditions under which the animals are kept and handled are harmful and disrespectful to animal rights. So far, the Seidensticker Group is not aware of practices to produce angora wool that is compliant with principles of animal protection and animal welfare. Consequently, the Seidensticker Group prohibits the use of Angora wool.

In the clothing industry, down, referring to the lower feathers of waterfowl such as ducks and geese, is mainly used as a heat-insulating material (e.g., in jackets). The production of down is also associated with considerable risks in terms of animal welfare. In addition to the so-called live plucking, ducks and geese often suffer from poor husbandry conditions. Seidensticker therefore prefers down that is certified by the Responsible Down Standard (RDS), Global Traceable Down Standard (Global TDS) or Downpass.

To enhance animal welfare in the garment industry and the supply chain, Seidensticker Group requires all suppliers to commit to the following framework which applies to the production of products containing materials of animal origin.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

Seidensticker Group advocates the protection and respectful treatment of animals by promoting internationally recognized frameworks: Five Domains of Animal Welfare¹, which is a concept for assessing the well-being of animals in human care and has been established by the organisation Four Paws, and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial Code², which pursues the same objectives as the Five Domains of Animal Welfare:

1. Good Nutrition to minimise thirst and hunger and enable eating to be a pleasurable experience by providing access to fresh water and a species-appropriate diet to maintain full health and vigour.
2. Good Physical Environment to minimise discomfort and exposure to adverse environmental conditions and to promote physical comfort by providing appropriate outdoor access and suitable shelter against adverse weather conditions, and/or housing with different functional areas, comfortable resting areas, and good air quality.
3. Good Health to minimise pain, disease, and other discomforts and to promote the pleasures of vigour, strength, robustness, and harmonious physical activity by preventing or rapidly diagnosing and treating diseases and injuries, and by stimulating, i.e., proper muscle tone, natural body posture, cardiorespiratory function, and digestive system processes.
4. Appropriate Behavioural Interactions to minimise threats and unpleasant restrictions on behaviour and movement, and to promote engagement in rewarding activities by providing sufficient space, conspecific company, human interactions that are adapted to the individual needs and appropriately varied conditions to allow for species-specific behavioural expression.
5. Positive mental experiences to promote the experience of various forms of comfort, pleasure, interest, confidence and a sense of control by providing safe and species-appropriate environmental, conspecific and human interactive opportunities to have pleasurable experiences.

¹ Please refer to <https://www.four-paws.org/campaigns-topics/topics/science-and-research/animal-welfare-assessment-framework>

² Please refer to <https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/terrestrial-code-online-access/>

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS - ANIMAL WELFARE FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

Seidensticker Group is committed to seven basic framework conditions for the use of animal products and raw materials. Suppliers of Seidensticker Group are expected to adhere to the conditions stipulated below.

1. Seidensticker rejects breeding, husbandry, slaughter, transport and production conditions that are unworthy of animals and is committed to ensuring that animals are treated ethically in our supply chains.
2. Seidensticker strongly positions itself against animal testing.
3. Seidensticker does not permit any products or components from genetically modified or cloned animals and their offspring.
4. All business partners selling animal products are required to promote animal welfare throughout their supply chain. Direct suppliers of Seidensticker Group are responsible for passing on and monitoring the compliance with the requirements arising from this framework to/at their suppliers.
5. Seidensticker pays attention on a species-appropriate presentation of the animal (e.g. in the context of product marketing).
6. Seidensticker is committed to increasing traceability and transparency in the supply chain of products with materials of animal origin.
7. Seidensticker is committed to enhancing the use of materials from sustainable sources. This includes materials from animal sources.

Business partners proactively report the percentage as well as the total amount and the country of origin when they use animal-based materials in products delivered to Seidensticker Group if not explicitly ordered or nominated (e.g., buttons).

Seidensticker strongly advocates ensuring compliance with the basic principles set down in this Policy. Our partners guarantee that the Seidensticker Group itself or, if necessary, any third party it authorizes may be allowed to carry out a review of how the principles are being adhered to on the premises of either the direct suppliers or on those of any other sub-agents they deploy.