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Basic instincts

An innerwear brand is intent on sowing the seeds of sustainable fashion.

SPARKED by a cadre of sustainable fashion and affordable innerwear, Nukleus is an all-enhancing appreciation of organic cotton. To demonstrate this, the innerwear brand recently held an event at Zang Toi Cafe in Parkson Pavilion Kuala Lumpur.

It was an event not unlike any other, until a video put together by ballsy journalist Leah Borrromeo entitled *Dirty White Gold* was screened. The documentary is an exposé about cotton farming in India, the largest cotton producers in the world. The film documents cases of cotton farmers committing suicide due to rising debt and bankruptcy, brought upon by the purchase of pesticides.

What yours truly never expected to discover was that the cotton we wear without batting an eyelid could possibly be "blood cotton".

Borrromeo, in her mission to make ethics and sustainability in the fashion industry a norm, speaks to widows and pesticide peddlers to uncover the harsh truth that has been blanketing the cotton farmers in India.

"When you buy at bargain, who pays for it?" she asked matter-of-factly in the documentary, of the cotton we have grown accustomed to.

Production and trade of cotton is a business of gigantic proportions, estimated to be worth US\$30bil (RM91bil) a year. Cotton, too, is the world's most valuable non-food crop but sadly, the life of a farmer involved in cotton farming and production is far from comfortable.

"The use of deadly pesticide is also widespread in conventional cotton farming where a staggering 99% of the world's cotton is produced this way. In 2010, more than US\$3bil (RM9.1bil) worth of pesticides were used, and half of the chemicals in pesticides are classified 'hazardous' by the World Health Organisation," explained the brand's CEO Tan Cheng Woi.

Nukleus is intent on sowing the seeds of sustainable fashion with its pesticide-free organic cotton innerwear. With its aim of educating consumers, the company is confident its purposeful greening efforts will go a long way.

Nukleus also actively seeks to improve the welfare of cotton farmers through its advocacy of "buy organic cotton", hoping with the increase of organic cotton usage, more farmers will switch to the less dangerous option available.

Very soon, Nukleus will be sourcing 100% of its organic cotton from India's Morarka Organic. It is a social enterprise backed by non-profit organisation Morarka Foundation, dedicated to improving the lives of Indian farmers through sustainable agriculture. The environmental-friendly brand's philanthropy exercise has been in place since 2010, where part of the sale proceeds are channelled towards WWF Malaysia's conservation efforts.

Since the Christmas season is almost upon us, it's time to start sourcing for a meaningful gift for loved ones. Nukleus innerwear and basics are not just sassy and super-comfy, its favourable, eco-coolness is heightened by environmentally friendly practises and use of materials.

■ Nukleus is priced from RM15.90 to RM39.90, and available at selected Parkson department stores and online at nukleusshop.com.

Comfy:
Nukleus innerwear and basics for men and women.



Above:
A light pink ensemble for women.



Left:
Nukleus for men in light blue.

A way of life

Consider fashion apparel that reminds you of how to live a balanced life.

"LIVE honestly. Love passionately. Care endlessly. Speak kindly – usually."

These are the empowering sentiments that global fashion and lifestyle brand Esprit conveys with its first sportswear collection, Wellness.

Campaign shots depict supermodel Christy Turlington Burns against a grey backdrop, snugly clad in relaxed-fitting apparel from the new range.

The zen-like calm in her appearance portrays the brand's direction in inspiring women toward a healthy – and fashionable – lifestyle.

The collection combines sportswear and lifestyle fashion apparel that are designed for versatility: cosy sweat-shirts and pants as well as sporty tops for layering that come in soft and

vibrant colours.

There's the Sharira Top, a snug knit top with an in-built bra and racer back support; the Ganesha Top, a classic hoodie with unfinished seams, which works for both exercise and lounging; and Flow Pants, which are great for yoga classes or worn for gym workouts.

Circular knit designs and laser cut fabrics offer flexibility of movement, and some of the workout apparel have been designed with Esprit's in-house "E" material, which is designed to breathe, dry quickly and prevent odour. – **Cheryl Poo**

■ Price starts from RM69.90. The Wellness collection is available at all Esprit outlets nationwide.



Snug: Supermodel Christy Turlington sporting the Krishna top and Flow Pants from the Esprit Wellness collection.



Turlington sporting tracks, a tank layered with the Krishna Top and a Yoga mat from the Esprit Wellness collection.