

## Customer Service - F.A.Q.

### **How does Maggie's make sure our products are not made in sweatshops?**

We require full disclosure of working conditions and production standards. A questionnaire for all suppliers that asks specific questions about average salary, benefits, health care, etc., is reviewed before production begins. In most cases, we visit the facilities and interview workers as well as management. The labor standards we use are based upon those of the internationally recognized grassroots anti-sweatshop organization: [The Clean Clothes Campaign](#). We are also now participating in a pilot project by a third party certification agency that will inspect all phases of our production for fair labor practices, including wages and freedom of association.

### **Why choose organic cotton over conventionally grown cotton?**

Conventional farming allows the use of harsh pesticides, herbicides, defoliants, and synthetic fertilizers. Many of these agrochemicals are concentrated on the outside of the plant like the cottonseed hull, which is used to make the cottonseed oil that is prevalent in conventional food products! Imagine still more chemicals used in the manufacturing and finishing of your cotton garment. These chemicals are not just irritating to the skin, but the process also devastates groundwater, natural habitats, soil fertility, and public health.

The Organic Foods Production Act regulates what can legally be called 'organic' in the USA. Standards are based upon the use of materials and practices that enhance ecological balance. Read all about conventional vs. organic cotton farming on our [Environment](#) page.

### **Why are Maggie's socks not 100% Cotton?**

Our goal always is to have the highest percentage of organic fiber as possible. We do need to include other fibers in order to provide stretch, durability, and performance in our socks – cotton is soft and comfortable but not as durable and stretchy. For people with chemical sensitivities, we do offer a special [99% Cotton Crew Sock](#) that contains 99.8% Certified Organic Cotton and only 0.2% Spandex, which is completely covered by cotton and located only at the very top of the sock to help it stay up on the leg.

In addition, Maggie's lists all of its fiber contents down to the 1/10 of a percent. We also identify each fiber by name – even though the FTC suggests not naming fibers that make up 5% or less – in order to fully disclose all components in each product we make.

### **I have very sensitive skin and/or chemical sensitivity. Does Maggie's have a sock that is appropriate for me?**

Yes! First of all, each pair of our socks is made with organic fibers and processed without the addition of the harsh post-harvest chemicals used to make conventional socks. Since 1992, when we started with our organic cotton socks, we have heard from many of our customers whose feet do not have problems with our socks simply because of our production materials and methods.

However, our socks do contain some synthetic materials because cotton and wool do not have any natural stretch or much durability on their own. So, for those who are super sensitive, we do provide a special [99% Cotton Crew Sock](#), which has 99.8% Certified Organic Cotton and 0.2% Spandex (only a tiny bit at the top of the sock to prevent it from falling down). This sock is available in Natural, untreated with dyes.

**I am allergic to detergent; I am looking for detergent-free product.**

The detergents we allow are those that are non silicone-based and do not contain petroleum solvents. ‘Anti-wrinkle agent’ is a name for numerous functional chemical finishes that make fabrics ‘permanent press’ – we do not allow these finishes.

**Are the colors in Maggie's products all natural?**

No, the dyestuff we use is not all natural. However, we make sure the dyes our processors use are as environmentally sustainable as possible. All of our products meet the stringent dyeing standards in the [North American Organic Fiber Processing Standards](#).

**What does NB (Naturally Bleached) mean?**

Our definition of Naturally Bleached means that we whiten using hydrogen peroxide instead of chlorine and do not add optical whiteners. Chlorine is quite toxic and has a long half-life, taking a very long time to degrade, and optical whiteners do not degrade at all! In contrast, hydrogen peroxide degrades easily and safely into oxygen and water and even helps neutralize the effluent in water from dyeing factories. The end result of our Natural Bleaching is a softer white than others because it leaves an attractive amount of the cotton's natural hue.

**What is Coolmax and why does Maggie's use it?**

We chose to use Coolmax® in our Sport Socks because it moves perspiration away from the body to the fabric surface where it can evaporate quickly, creating a drier and more comfortable sock. Coolmax®, registered by INVISTA SARL, is a non-treated synthetic fiber – meaning that the characteristics of the fiber are ‘built’ into the fiber, requiring no additional chemical treatments to create its unique wicking abilities. We did many tests to determine the least amount of Coolmax® we could add (16%) yet still wick best for most wearers. Our Coolmax® socks are great for anyone, but for cyclists, runners, or other athletes searching for a sock to carry them through duration activities, our Coolmax® sport socks are unbeatable. Check out our Sport Sock offerings in [Sport Tall](#), [Sport Short](#), and [Sport Short Tri-Paks](#).

**Are Maggie's socks latex free?**

Some of our products rely on the stretch and recovery characteristics of Latex/Rubber. Other products solely use Spandex for these same characteristics. The following products include Latex/Rubber: Ped Athletics, Wool Crew, Baby Tights, Classic Flat Knit Tights, Textured Tights, and Grapevine Stripe Tights. For the complete content list for all products, see our [Contents](#) page. (Note: If you receive a product that lists ‘Elastic’ as an ingredient, it is really Nylon covered Spandex and therefore latex-free)

### **Is the thread in your garments 100% organic cotton or synthetic?**

The thread used in our natural color garments is 100% cotton. However, our dyed garments do include cotton-covered polyester thread, as our producers have trouble sourcing many colors in 100% cotton thread.

### **How much can I expect Maggie's products to shrink?**

Shrink varies slightly in each different run of fabric, but in general, if washed and dried according to our instructions, our garments will shrink between 5% and 7% (approximately 1" in the width and length of most). This shrink should all occur during the first three washings. To avoid shrinkage, wash at lower temperatures and minimize machine drying (it's also better for the environment and helps clothes last longer!). Socks will shrink a bit as well (if they are machine dried), but due to their construction, they will stretch back to fit your feet.

### **Are Maggie's products Vegan?**

All our products can be considered Vegan, except those made with Certified Organic Wool.

### **How does Maggie's ensure that the sheep that produce our wool are treated humanely?**

Maggie's only uses Certified Organic Wool in our products. The sheep that produce our organic wool must be treated in ways that comply with USDA's federal requirements for organic certification regarding livestock. These include:

- Livestock feed and forage used from the last third of gestation on must be organic.
- Use of synthetic hormones and genetic engineering is prohibited.
- Use of synthetic pesticides (internal, external, and on pastures) is prohibited.
- Producers must encourage livestock health through good cultural and management practices.

Our Wool Socks include: [Wool Crews](#), [Killington Mountain Hikers](#), [Urban Hikers Tall](#) & [Short](#)

### **Why does Maggie's no longer carry hemp products?**

We formerly purchased all of our hemp from a group of cooperative farmers in France. They used dew retting to remove the fiber and had great employment practices. Unfortunately, these farmers discontinued their growing of organic hemp. We will continue to seek out another source that follows our standards of farming and employment practices.

### **Why doesn't Maggie's use Bamboo fibers?**

The vast majority of 'bamboo' fiber used in apparel products is actually Rayon, a manufactured fiber that is often made from wood but can also be made from bamboo. Even though bamboo itself requires little to no chemicals to grow, rayon manufacturing uses highly toxic chemicals to turn the bamboo into yarn. In addition, this processing removes the natural properties of the original material, so rayon made from bamboo does not retain the anti-microbial benefits of the original bamboo.

### **Does Maggie's have a store location?**

We do not have an official store at our warehouses in either Michigan or North Carolina. However, pre-orders may be placed on-line or via the phone and may be picked up at our Michigan location any business day of the week.

### **Why are Maggie's Socks more expensive than other socks?**

**1. All of Maggie's socks are made in the USA.**

Maggie's is proud that every pair of socks we have made since 1992 has been made in the USA using fair labor practices. Our contracts help to keep seven different knitting companies in business in North Carolina, in an industry that has been ravaged by foreign competition. All workers involved from the start to finish of our products are treated fairly and paid a fair wage.

**2. All of Maggie's socks are made with Certified Organic Fibers according to the [North American Organic Fiber Processing Standards](#).**

Using Certified Organic Fibers and following organic processing standards helps reduce the environmental impact from manufacturing our products, it prohibits the use of chemicals that harm the environment and are detrimental to human health. Overall, these organic processes produce a healthier, safer pair of socks not only for the environment but also the people who make and wear them.

**3. Our socks are designed to last.**

We use older and slower machines to knit most of our styles of socks. These machines put less stress on the organic cotton and organic wool fibers, which results in the socks lasting longer. We also spin our cotton using slower techniques, again protecting the fibers. We use combed cotton in all of our socks - for a smoother, softer feel. We often hear from our customers who have worn the same pair of socks year after year, and each time it gives us a great sense of pride. Maggie's socks may cost a little more, but we feel they are a better investment.

**4. Maggie's is an independently owned and run company.**

Maggie's has been independently owned and operated since its creation. Because we do not have corporate backing, we are able to react to customers' requests and comments and are free to pursue our passions – creating functional and durable apparel made using organic fibers and fair labor practices.