



**NEW ZEALAND**

## **Apparel industry in New Zealand**

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### **Overview**

New Zealand's apparel sector continues to build on its reputation for fresh thinking and innovation in the global marketplace.

Many of New Zealand's leading apparel manufacturers respond to their natural environment by using home-grown fine wool or other natural fibres in their garments.

The country's success in this sector is helping inform global consumers' perceptions of New Zealand as a nation of new ideas and new thinking.

New Zealand's diverse geography and demographic makeup means that the country has developed leading-edge children's wear, sportswear and active wear.

The apparel sector benefits from having a wide range of companies of varying sizes and structures producing a broad range of garments.

These include cut, make and trim operations that produce finished garments on a contract basis using fabrics supplied to them, through to vertically integrated operations which produce their own fabric, manufacture their own garments and sell those garments in their own stores.

Global brands such as Icebreaker, Pumpkin Patch, Bendon, Macpac, Moontide, Orca, Snowy Peak/Untouched World and Swanndri and well known and highly sought-after among their niche markets.

### **Fast facts**

- New Zealand's combined fashion and apparel exports were worth NZ\$326 million in 2007.
- They have grown by over NZ\$10 million in each of the past three years.
- Over 70 percent of New Zealand's apparel exports currently go to Australia.



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- Europe, the United States and North Asia are strongly emerging markets.
- New Zealand is recognised as a leader in sports- and outdoor-wear, and baby and children's clothing.
- New Zealand companies are renowned for their use of fine New Zealand merino wool and other natural fibres such as possum, cashmere and silk.
- The country continues to develop increasingly advanced applications of wool as a technical fibre.

### **International innovations**

#### **Icebreaker**

Launched in 1994, Icebreaker was the first company in the world to develop a merino wool layering system for the outdoors. It was also the first outdoor apparel company in the world to source merino direct from growers, a system it began in 1997. There are now 10 distinct pure merino fabrics in the Icebreaker system, covering underwear, mid layer, and outerwear. Icebreaker is sold in over 2,000 stores in 24 countries.

#### **Merino Kids**

Merino Kids, founded by Amie Nilsson, started out with the vision of creating 100 percent natural and safe products that would meet the needs of modern parents. The business is a passionate advocate for merino wool which is seen as a wonder fibre, in recognition of its softness and its natural properties that help maintain safe and comfortable temperatures for sleeping children. To this, Amie has brought a dedication to design excellence that has seen her win Product Design Awards from International Forum Design Hannover (iF) for the Go Go Bag (2007) and the Cocooi wrap (2008).

#### **EGG Maternity**

EGG Maternity has just added the EGG Cruise line to its growing range of comfortable, versatile and fashionable maternity wear. Partner/designer Charlotte Devereux established EGG Maternity seven years ago – frustrated at not being able to find the style of clothes she wanted to wear when pregnant. EGG now exports to Australia, Asia and the United States.

#### **Silkbody**

Technical innovation in fabrics and a strong focus on creative design are adding a new twist to the old silk story at Dunedin-based company, Silkbody. Run by father and daughter team, David and Emily Cooper, Silkbody specialises in lightweight, luxurious finished silk garments. The company recently received a European Outdoor Industry Award for its innovative pure silk soft shell layer SilkFleece.

#### **Solo cycle clothing**

Solo cycle clothing design and manufacture a range of premium 'retro' inspired cyclewear. The Solo brand has rapidly achieved cult status with sales to over 40 countries. Strong export markets have been developed in



Australia, the United Kingdom and Germany. A recent request to stock Solo clothing resulted in the brand now being sold at Mellow Johnny's – a new bike shop in Austin, Texas owned by seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong.

### **[Kia Kaha](#)**

Kia Kaha clothing has grown from a humble start as a casual apparel mail-order business operated from a garage, into an international business. Emphasis is on Maori designs, and quality fabrics and cuts. Its clothing and accessories are now available to wholesale and retail customers in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Europe.

### **Sustainability achievements**

#### **[Untouched World](#)**

Untouched World™ was the first fashion company to be recognised for sustainability by the United Nations. It is an ethical lifestyle fashion brand based on the New Zealand lifestyle. Untouched World™ grew out of a desire to create a positive, sustainable future and is famous worldwide for its use of its signature organic fabrics such as Organic Mountainsilk™ and cotton.

### **Industry contacts**

#### **[Textiles New Zealand](#)**

Textiles New Zealand works with textiles, carpet, footwear and apparel companies to build a sustainable industry successfully competing in the international marketplace.

#### **[Fashion Industry New Zealand](#)**

Fashion Industry New Zealand (FINZ) is an industry action group which undertakes co-operative ventures. It is the key point of contact for New Zealand's fashion sector and wider apparel industry.

#### **[New Zealand Trade and Enterprise](#)**

The New Zealand government economic development agency – New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) – firmly supports creative industries such as apparel through a range of initiatives.