

Cotton Recycling & Spinning Education Final Report

CalRecycle's Recycling Market Development Zone (RMDZ) Program combines recycling with economic development to fuel new businesses, expand existing ones, create jobs, and divert waste from landfills.

Funded by technical assistance from the RMDZ Program, CPSC, on behalf of Merced County's Regional Waste Authority, hosted two educational events for relevant regional stakeholders, including local government, haulers, thrift stores, brands, educators, and designers, that provided a community building opportunity to discuss and plan for diversion activities within the Zone.

CPSC worked with Sierra Spinning, a consortium of professionals from different sectors of the textile industry, who are planning to open a cotton recycling and spinning facility at Bowles Farm. This facility aims to divert tons of cotton waste into new products, creating a new era of cotton recycling in Merced County.

Project Overview

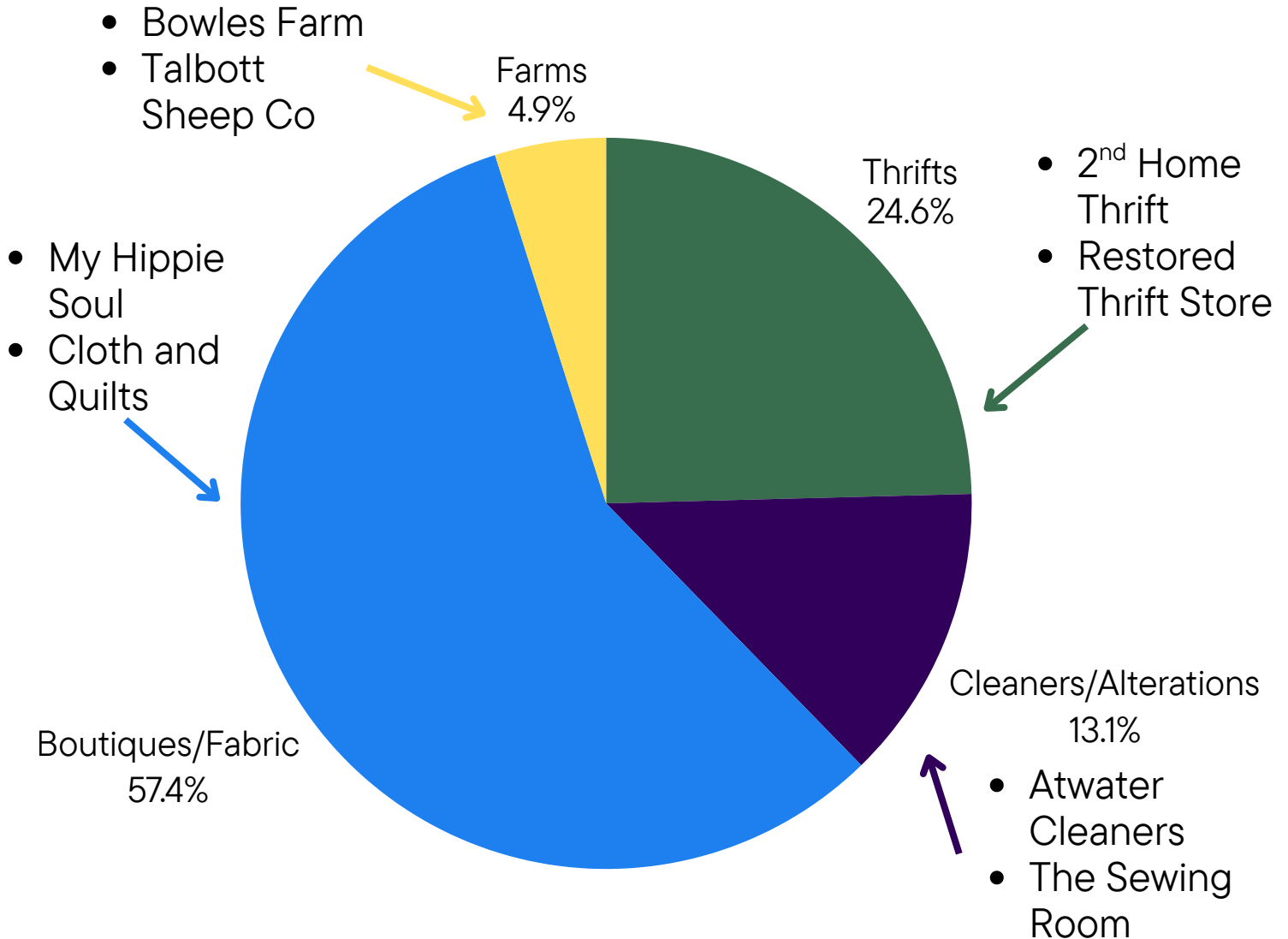
- Compiled a **database of textile businesses** within the Zone.
- Hosted a **virtual** cotton recycling educational event.
- Created **educational materials** such as social media and website content.
- Hosted an **in-person cotton recycling educational event** at Bowles Farm.
- Provided **technical assistance** to Sierra Spinning
- Reached out to **fiber/cotton farms, thrift stores, cleaners, city officials, university organizations, and brands.**

Objectives & Evaluation Metrics

<p>I. Identify textile-related businesses and organizations, including those involved in cotton recycling, within the Merced RMDZ for inclusion in a business database.</p>	<p>61 textile-related businesses within the Zone 3 fiber farms within Merced County</p>
<p>II. Plan and coordinate a Textile Recycling Education event at Bowles Farm to educate stakeholders on cotton recycling and opportunity to expand diversion.</p>	<p>31 participants 4 expert instructors 2 cotton recycling hands-on activities</p>
<p>III. Develop an event campaign, including education strategy, outreach material, filming media content, social media, and website content.</p>	<p>7 social media posts 14,981 views 853 engagements</p>
<p>IV. Deploy customized textile education, including outreach to local businesses, advertisements in local news outlets, and targeted social media.</p>	<p>1 press release created and sent 30 direct emails 14 direct phone calls to thrift stores, cotton associations, and textile businesses</p>
<p>V. Plan virtual meeting event.</p>	<p>32 registered participants 4 presenters</p>
<p>VI. Media buys, including media content, education material, and event information.</p>	<p>1 boosted social media post Press release sent to 3 local news outlets</p>

Textile Businesses

CPSC researched and compiled a database of **61 textile-related businesses** within Merced County - examples included.



SB 707's Impacts

SB 707 (Newman, 2024), or the **Responsible Textile Recovery Act**, establishes a Producer Responsibility Organization to create a program that repairs and recycles used textiles.

A textile Extended Producer Responsibility program **supports thrifts, collectors, sorters, and alteration/cleaning businesses** who are already doing the work to divert textiles from the landfill.

Collaboration & Technical Assistance

CPSC performed technical assistance for Sierra Spinning and conducted both a virtual presentation and an in-person cotton education event at Bowles Farming Co.



CPSC provided Sierra Spinning with customized SB 707 education, assistance with understanding the local landscape in Merced County, and funding opportunities at the federal, state, and local levels.

Funding Opportunities

- Local Funding
 - RMDZ Technical Assistance
 - Economic Development



- State Funding
 - Go-Biz
 - Treasurers Office
 - CalRecycle
 - Textile EPR Program



California Alternative Energy and Advanced Transportation Financing Authority (CAEATFA)



Landbell
USA

A Landbell Group Company

- Federal Funding
 - USDA
 - Department of Commerce



- Private Funding/Foundations
 - The Cotton Foundation
 - H&M Foundation
 - Laudes Foundation

Outreach/Educational Content

To promote both educational events, CPSC prepared multiple graphics, an event flyer, and a press release. CPSC further made 44 direct calls and emails to local textile businesses, cotton associations, and local governments to promote the in-person event. **The main event graphic was boosted for \$50 each on both Instagram and Facebook, leading to 14,981 impressions across both platforms.**

<p>FEATURED SPEAKER!</p> <p>COTTON RECYCLING EDUCATIONAL EVENT</p> 	<p>FEATURED SPEAKER!</p> <p>COTTON RECYCLING EDUCATIONAL EVENT</p> 	<p>FEATURED SPEAKER!</p> <p>COTTON RECYCLING EDUCATIONAL EVENT</p> 
<p>FIBERSHED</p> <p>ALEXANDRA FARAH</p> <p>ADVOCACY MANAGER</p> <p>DATE: APRIL 1, 2026 TIME: 10 AM - 1 PM PT LOCATION: 11609 HEREFORD RD. LOS BANOS, CA 93635</p> <p>RSVP: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mercedtextileevent Space is limited.</p>	<p>Materolve</p> <p>KRISTLE MOODY WOOD</p> <p>FOUNDER & CONSULTANT</p> <p>DATE: APRIL 1, 2026 TIME: 10 AM - 1 PM PT LOCATION: 11609 HEREFORD RD. LOS BANOS, CA 93635</p> <p>RSVP: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mercedtextileevent Space is limited.</p>	<p>MERCED COUNTY</p> <p>SCOTT SILVEIRA</p> <p>MERCED COUNTY SUPERVISOR</p> <p>DATE: APRIL 1, 2026 TIME: 10 AM - 1 PM PT LOCATION: 11609 HEREFORD RD. LOS BANOS, CA 93635</p> <p>RSVP: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mercedtextileevent Space is limited.</p>

CPSC created graphics for all **8 speakers** presenting at the event. Three examples shown above.



YOU'RE INVITED!

TO A COTTON RECYCLING EDUCATIONAL EVENT AT BOWLES FARM!

Featured Guests:
Sierra Spinning

DATE: APRIL 1, 2026
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CPSC California Product Stewardship Council
MERCED COUNTY RWA REGIONAL WASTE AUTHORITY
Funded By **CalRecycle**

Cotton Education Event



CPSC and Merced County hosted a **cotton recycling education event**, at Bowles Farming Company - the future site of Sierra Spinning's cotton recycling and spinning facility.



Cotton Education Event



A snapshot of the diverse organizations and stakeholders who attended:

- **Eco-Catalyst**
- **CalRecycle**
- **Fafafoom Studio**
- **El Nido School District**
- **Gateway Quilters Guild**
- **City of Atwater**
- **Just Porch It**
- **Merced County**
- **Waste Management**
- **Ethix Merch**

Event Interactive Activities

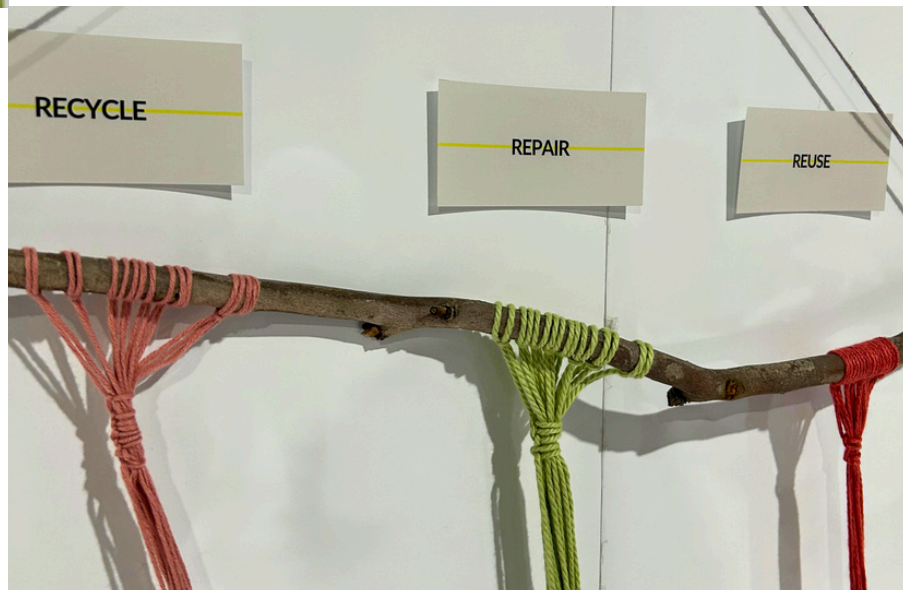
FASHION IS OUTRAGEOUS

Knot Educational Project



Fashion is Outrageous (FIO), develops **educational materials** and **interactive experiences**, evidence-based data insights, reports and creative art-driven dissemination across research and policy to spaces and digital media.

For CPSC's textile events, FIO sent their **Waste Knot Project** which encourages participants to read the SB 707 definitions for reuse, repair, and recycle and **tie a knot** on the string that best represents their work.



All materials are zero-waste: deadstock yarn sourced in LA, stick found while hiking, and deadstock corozo nut buttons.

The photo on the right showcases the activity results after the event: **6 knots for recycle, 4 knots for repair, and 3 knots for reuse.**

Event Interactive Activities

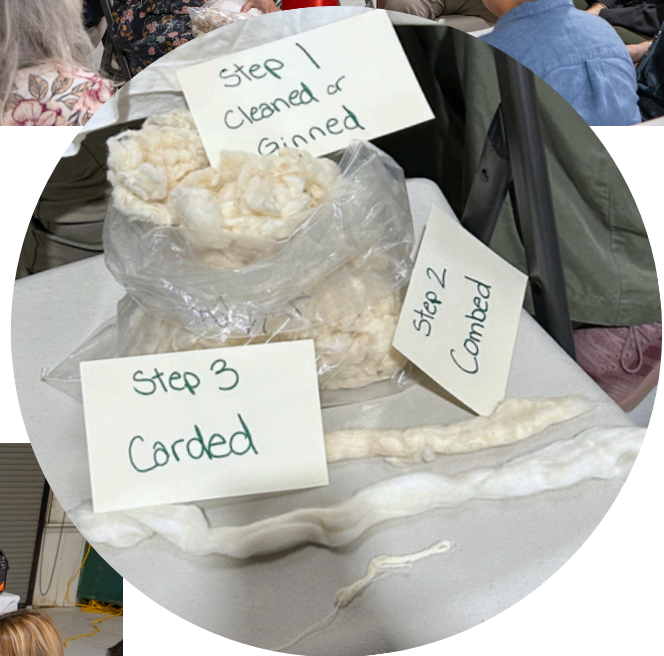
Cotton Processing Steps

Krystle Moody Wood from **Materevolve, LLC** hosted an interactive activity that engaged attendees to learn the stages of cotton processing, help identify barriers and opportunities in **cotton processing** and **textile recycling**, and propose solutions, and explore collaborations.

Bowles Farming Co assisted with providing materials to let attendees arrange items in the **order of the cotton lifecycle**, from raw material to finished product.



Materevolve



Activity prompts included:

- Where does the recycling process break down?
- What part of the product circular lifestyle becomes harder and why?

Recommendations

- **Fund CPSC** by extending RMDZ technical assistance funds to continue ongoing education and support for Sierra Spinning.
- Write a **Letter of Support** for CPSC's proposal to the Cotton Foundation, and other grants, supporting Sierra Spinning.
- Recruit local businesses to join **CPSC's STRAT, a free Textile Taskforce** and active Working Groups.
- Work with **established collectors and local thrifts** to bolster repair programming.
- Engage in **extended producer responsibility regulations** to implement the program in Merced County.



Resources



Website Updates for
CPSC and Merced County

Social Media Campaign



CPSC Textile Resource Map