



## **Fiber World**

### **NAT Announces CRAiLAR® Flax Developments**

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Naturally Advanced Technologies Inc. (NAT), Vancouver, Canada, provider of CRAiLAR® enzymatic technology for processing bast fibers, is ramping up its flax cultivation and processing capabilities in South Carolina. The company has contracted Carolina Eastern Precision Ag, Pamplico, S.C., to help recruit growers and contractors and provide advice related to flax cultivation. NAT CEO Ken Barker reports interest among farmers in the region has surpassed expectations, and the company anticipates contracted acreage to exceed original first-year projections of 15,000 acres of flax as a winter crop. The harvested flax will be used first to supply Crailar Flax to HanesBrands Inc., Winston-Salem, N.C., under a 10-year purchasing agreement announced earlier this year.

NAT expects to have a production capacity of 650,000 pounds of Crailar Flax weekly at a facility it plans to have in full operation in the second quarter of 2012 in Kingstree, S.C., with feedstock coming from the Southeast as well as from the Canadian and Northern U.S. prairies, where flax is grown for its seed, leaving fiber stock available for textile use. The company also plans to build a facility with equivalent capacity in Canada, with completion expected in the second half of 2012.

Under a three-year agreement, NAT is supplying Georgia-Pacific Consumer Products LP, Atlanta, with Crailar Flax to use in developing formed materials. The company is working with Levi Strauss & Co., San Francisco, to develop cotton/Crailar Flax denim and non-denim fabrics and is testing blends containing up to 50-percent Crailar Flax. In addition, NAT's CRAiLEX® dissolving pulp made with hemp or flax is in testing under an agreement with Ashland Inc., Covington, Ky., for commercial applications; and also has potential applications as a lyocell yarn ingredient.