



## October Key to New Regional Company

10/4/2011 Michael Duke

*For Naturally Advanced Technologies (NAT), the developers of the patented CRAiLAR fiber process, October will be a key month as it plans to finalize contracts on up to 15,000 acres of flax with local farmers and begin seeding.*

NAT joined forces with HanesBrands, Inc. and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service to cultivate and evaluate the viability of various flax strains for use in CRAiLAR Flax, which looks and feels like cotton and can be used as a blended ingredient with cotton.

The evaluation phase complete, the company has since signed Levi's, Georgia-Pacific, Cintas, Carhartt and others to its growing roster of clients.

Two weeks ago, it announced a 1.5 million pound order of its fiber from Brilliant Global Knitwear, a Hong Kong-based private label maker of sweater and accessories.

A farmer field day, hosted by NAT, Hanes, the USDA and its agronomic partner Carolina Eastern Precision Ag, (CEPA) was held August 3 in Kingstree, attracting more than 100 farmers in the region who were interested in the opportunity to explore an alternative cash crop to wheat in the winter months.

Duncan, CEPA's project lead, is providing agronomic consultation to the company and its contractors, advising on all cultivation related to flax that will be turned into the branded CRAiLAR fibre including seeding rates, fertilization and weed control.

Planting takes place in October and November and the company hopes to finalize its contracts with farmers in coming weeks.

Jason Finnis, cofounder and chief innovation officer, has temporarily moved his family to Kingstree as he, Duncan, and the company's new COO Tom Robinson finalize contracts with local farmers. Robinson recently joined NAT from Cone Denim in North Carolina.

"We are very excited," said Finnis. "We have been meeting with as many people as we can and have received a lot of valuable feedback. The good news is that we have done all of the research, we have the clients, and we will provide all of the agronomic support necessary for a crop that will net an estimated \$300 or more per acre. We just need to stay focused on the tasks at hand this month and get the seed in the ground. To that end, we want to talk to anyone that is interested in adding flax into their crop rotation."

NAT recently revised its payment schedule from what was presented to farmers in August, increasing payments per acre. It has also established milestones that can further increase earning potential. Anyone interested in learning more about the farming opportunity are invited to contact Duncan at CEPA, 803-460-7260, or Finnis at 843-382-2130.

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