

SHIVPRIYA TEXCHEM · KNOWLEDGE SERIES

# Bamboo.

## The wellness fibre.

Grass to pulp. Pulp to the softest story in the cellulosic family. A working guide to bamboo fibre — what it really is, what it genuinely delivers, and where its Indian market is growing.

### 3–5 yrs

to harvest — among the fastest-renewing fibre crops on earth

### Viscose route

how nearly all commercial bamboo fibre is actually made

### 100%

cellulosic and biodegradable, like its viscose siblings



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## CHAPTER 01

# What exactly is bamboo fibre?

Almost all commercial “bamboo” textile fibre is bamboo viscose — cellulose from bamboo pulp regenerated through the standard viscose route. The raw material story is bamboo's; the fibre chemistry is viscose's. Honest positioning uses both facts.

| TYPE                       | ROUTE                | WHAT IT SIGNIFIES                                    |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bamboo viscose</b>      | Xanthate route       | The commercial standard — soft, drapey, absorbent    |
| <b>Bamboo lyocell</b>      | Closed-loop NMMO     | The premium, cleaner-process version; smaller supply |
| <b>Bast bamboo (linen)</b> | Mechanical / retting | True natural bamboo fibre; coarse, rare, niche       |
| <b>Bamboo charcoal</b>     | Additive yarns       | Charcoal-infused fibres marketed for odour claims    |
| <b>Blended bamboo</b>      | With cotton/spandex  | The volume formats in towels, socks and innerwear    |

**Buyer's note.** Labelling law matters: major markets require “bamboo viscose” or “rayon from bamboo”, not “bamboo”, and antibacterial claims need test data on the finished fabric — not the plant. Sell the softness and the crop story; certify anything stronger.

## Raw material

Fast-growing bamboo pulped to dissolving grade.

## Process

Viscose route in nearly all supply; lyocell route emerging.

## Supplied as

Staple 1.2–1.5 dtex; spun yarn typically 20s–40s Ne.

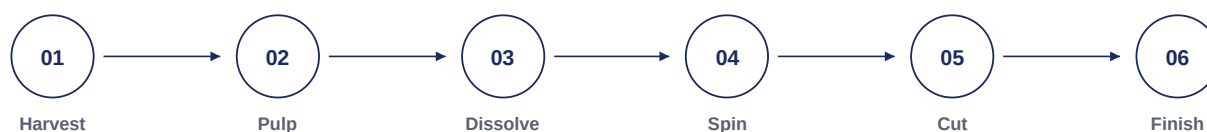
## End of life

Biodegradable, like all regenerated cellulose.

CHAPTER 02

# Grass to fibre

Bamboo's crop stage is genuinely exceptional — speed, low input, no replanting. The fibre stage is standard regenerated-cellulose processing.



## 01 Cultivation

Bamboo matures in 3–5 years, regrows from its own roots, and thrives without irrigation or pesticide load.

## 03 Viscose route

Pulp follows steeping, xanthation and dissolution exactly as wood viscose.

## 05 Lyocell option

A growing minority of bamboo fibre uses the closed-loop NMMO route for a cleaner process story.

## 02 Pulping

Culms are chipped and processed to dissolving-grade pulp — the quality gate for fibre.

## 04 Spinning

Dope regenerates in an acid bath into soft, round-section staple fibre.

## 06 Finishing

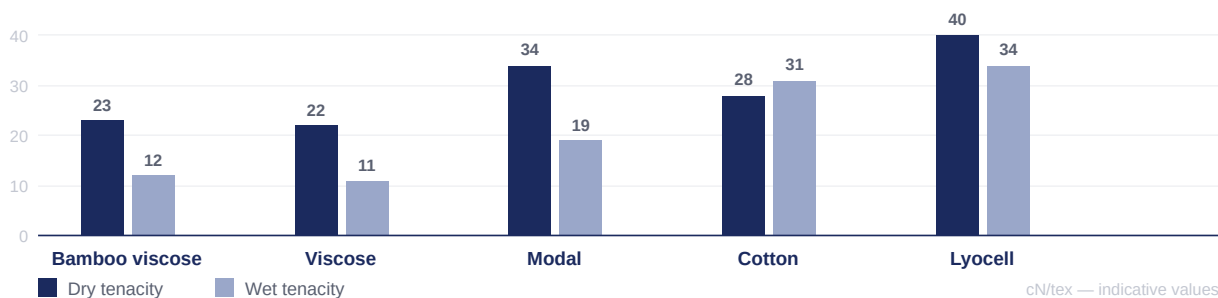
Washed, finished and baled; spun on standard short-staple systems.

| CLAIM                     | WHAT'S SUPPORTABLE                  | WHAT NEEDS CARE                             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fast-renewing crop</b> | Yes — among the best fibre crops    | Pulp chemistry is separate from crop virtue |
| <b>Softness / drape</b>   | Yes — consistently excellent        | Comparable to quality viscose               |
| <b>Antibacterial</b>      | Only with finished-fabric test data | Process removes most native agents          |
| <b>“Natural bamboo”</b>   | Only for rare bast fibre            | Viscose route must be labelled as such      |

CHAPTER 03

## What the fibre actually does

Bamboo viscose performs like a fine viscose with a marginally softer, cooler hand — its differentiation is the crop story and the wellness positioning.



| PROPERTY               | TYPICAL VALUE      | COMMERCIAL MEANING                                 |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tenacity</b>        | 21–25 cN/tex       | Fine-viscose territory; gentle processing required |
| <b>Wet strength</b>    | ~half of dry       | The standard viscose constraint applies            |
| <b>Moisture regain</b> | 12–13%             | Highly absorbent; cool and comfortable             |
| <b>Hand</b>            | Exceptionally soft | The buyable difference vs standard viscose         |
| <b>Drape</b>           | Excellent          | Fluid fall for tops, dresses and loungewear        |
| <b>Thermal feel</b>    | Cool touch         | Marketed — and felt — as summer comfort            |
| <b>Dyeing</b>          | Reactive           | Deep, even shades on standard cellulosic recipes   |
| <b>Shrinkage</b>       | Viscose-like       | Control finishing and honest care labels required  |

**Process caution for your mill.** Treat bamboo viscose exactly as premium viscose: low wet tension, single fibre lots per programme, realistic shrinkage allowances — and route every marketing claim through the finished-fabric test report, not the fibre brochure.

## CHAPTER 04

# Bamboo against the alternatives

A like-for-like view of the fibres competing for the same programme. Ratings are indicative and read horizontally, not as absolute laboratory values.

| PARAMETER                | BAMBOO VISCOSE   | VISCOSE       | MODAL            | COTTON      | BAMBOO LYOCCELL  |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| <b>Crop story</b>        | Outstanding      | Wood-based    | Beech-based      | Water-heavy | Outstanding      |
| <b>Process story</b>     | Viscose route    | Viscose route | Modified viscose | Natural     | Closed loop      |
| <b>Softness</b>          | Excellent        | Very good     | Exceptional      | Good        | Excellent        |
| <b>Wet strength</b>      | Poor             | Poor          | Moderate         | Good        | Excellent        |
| <b>Price</b>             | Value-plus       | Value         | Mid              | Volatile    | Premium          |
| <b>Label requirement</b> | "Bamboo viscose" | —             | —                | —           | "Bamboo lyocell" |
| <b>Biodegradable</b>     | Yes              | Yes           | Yes              | Yes         | Yes              |

## The honest trade-off

Bamboo carries viscose's physics with a premium story on top — and that story invites scrutiny. Programmes built on softness, comfort and the crop's renewal rate are durable; programmes built on medical-sounding claims are one test report from trouble.

## The direction of travel

The category is consolidating around honest positioning: bamboo-cotton towels, bamboo-spandex socks and innerwear, and loungewear — wellness-adjacent comfort categories where the fibre genuinely delivers.

## CHAPTER 05

# A story-led, D2C-driven market

Bamboo's Indian growth has been led by direct-to-consumer brands in towels, socks and innerwear — categories where softness is felt at first touch and the crop story closes the sale.

## THE SUPPLY BASE

## Chinese fibre producers

### VOLUME SUPPLY

The bulk of global bamboo viscose staple originates in China; qualify lots carefully.

## Bamboo lyocell entrants

### PREMIUM ROUTE

Closed-loop bamboo fibre is emerging for brands wanting a cleaner process claim.

## Indian spinners

### 20s–40s Ne

A widening set of mills spin bamboo and bamboo blends to order.

## D2C brand demand

### TOWELS · SOCKS · INNERWEAR

Indian wellness brands pull the category and set its specifications.

## Wellness positioning sells

Comfort-plus-nature is the strongest D2C textile story of the decade.

## Softness is verifiable

The hand difference is felt at the shelf — no education needed.

## Towels found their fibre

Bamboo-cotton terry's absorbency and softness built a real category.

## The crop story is true

Bamboo's renewal rate and input profile survive scrutiny — lead with it.

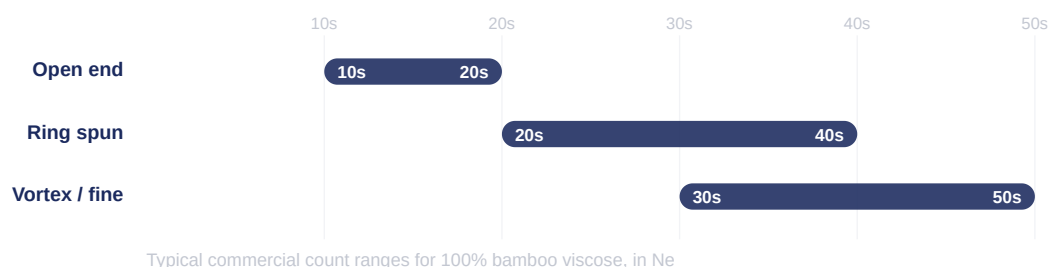
**What this means for the yarn trade.** Bamboo programmes succeed on supply discipline — consistent fibre source, single lots, honest claims — and on matching D2C brand specs to mills that treat the fibre gently. We assemble exactly that chain.

All company and brand names referenced are the property of their respective owners and are used for identification and informational purposes only; no affiliation or endorsement is implied unless stated.

CHAPTER 06

# 100% bamboo yarn: soft counts, careful hands

Bamboo spins in the standard viscose window and is bought overwhelmingly for knits — where its hand does the selling.



| YARN TYPE / SYSTEM | USUAL RANGE         | WHERE IT FITS                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Ring spun          | 20s – 40s Ne        | Knits, towels and wovens with the classic soft hand |
| Vortex             | 30s – 50s Ne        | Low-pilling knits for premium basics                |
| Open end           | 10s – 20s Ne        | Terry and heavier constructions economically        |
| Core spun          | 95:5 elastane       | Socks and fitted innerwear                          |
| Blended            | With cotton / modal | The volume commercial formats                       |

## Specification to order

- Fibre source and lot consistency documented
- “Bamboo viscose” labelling compliance for export
- OEKO-TEX® on finished product for wellness positioning
- Antibacterial claims only with finished-fabric test data

## Processing discipline

- Premium-viscose handling — low wet tension throughout
- Single lot per programme against barre
- Gentle terry finishing to preserve the hand
- Honest care labelling on shrinkage

CHAPTER 07

## Blends: bamboo's commercial formats

Pure bamboo is the story; blends are the products — cotton for structure, elastane for fit, modal for even more hand.

| BLEND                         | COMMON RATIOS | WHAT IT DELIVERS                          | PRIMARY END USE             |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Bamboo / Cotton</b>        | 70:30, 60:40  | Softness and absorbency with cotton body  | Towels, T-shirts, baby wear |
| <b>Bamboo / Spandex</b>       | 95:5          | Fitted comfort with soft face             | Socks, innerwear, leggings  |
| <b>Bamboo / Modal</b>         | 50:50         | Maximum-softness cellulosic pairing       | Premium loungewear          |
| <b>Bamboo / Polyester</b>     | 60:40         | Durability and price into the story       | Value knits, linings        |
| <b>Bamboo / Lyocell</b>       | 50:50         | Crop story plus closed-loop process story | Premium brand capsules      |
| <b>Bamboo charcoal blends</b> | By programme  | Odour-positioning speciality yarns        | Socks, insoles, activewear  |



**The commercial logic in one line.** Bamboo-cotton towels and bamboo-spandex socks are the category's proven money-makers — the blend gives the product engineering, and bamboo gives it the shelf story.

CHAPTER 08

# Where bamboo is being used

Bamboo concentrates in wellness-adjacent comfort categories — products bought on touch and story together.



## Towels and bath

Bamboo-cotton terry built the Indian category — softness plus absorbency.



## Socks

The D2C hero product; soft, absorbent, odour-positioned.



## Innerwear

Soft-face briefs, vests and maternity wear.



## T-shirts and basics

Premium-feel basics for wellness brands.



## Loungewear

Fluid, cool sets riding the comfort-wear wave.



## Baby and sensitive

Gentle hand and absorbency for baby ranges.



## Bed linen

Cool-touch sheeting at the value-premium tier.



## Hygiene textiles

Absorbent cellulosic for reusable hygiene products.



BAMBOO / COTTON · TERRY



BAMBOO / SPANDEX · SOCKS



BAMBOO KNIT · LOUNGE

**Segment to watch in India.** Bamboo lyocell. As claim scrutiny rises, the closed-loop process version lets the category keep its story with cleaner chemistry behind it.

CHAPTER 09 · OUR VIEW

# Bamboo grows with honest wellness

The comfort-plus-nature positioning that built bamboo's D2C wave has room to run — if the category keeps its claims as soft-washed as its towels.

## 01 D2C wellness keeps pulling

Comfort-led online brands continue to build categories on bamboo's touch and story.

## 03 Honest labelling wins long-term

"Bamboo viscose" positioning survives scrutiny; overreach does not.

## 05 India can grow the crop

Domestic bamboo missions open a future raw-material story worth watching.

## 02 Towels are the beachhead

Bamboo-cotton terry has proven repeat purchase — adjacent bath categories follow.

## 04 Bamboo lyocell is the upgrade path

Closed-loop processing answers the chemistry critique while keeping the crop story.

## What to be realistic about

The fibre is viscose physics with a better crop; premium claims must be built on tested products, not the plant.



### HOW SHIVPRIYA TEXCHEM CAN HELP

Authorised agent and strategic partner to India's leading spinning mills since 2003, trusted by **2,500+ customers** across polyester, viscose, cotton, PC/PV, fancy and recycled yarns. For bamboo and bamboo-blend programmes we support mill identification and capability matching, count and blend development, sampling and trial lots, mill-direct commercial terms, and delivery through our pan-India network.

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