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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Responsible Down Standard 2.0 Released

A global certification standard to help ensure humane treatment of animals used for feather and down-based

March 31, 2015 – Textile Exchange, a global nonprofit dedicated to sustainability in the apparel and textile industry, today announced the latest version of its Responsible Down Standard (RDS) – a third-party certification standard that can be applied to any waterfowl-based supply chain to help ensure humane treatment of animals from hatchling to end product. The goal of the RDS is to recognize and encourage best practices in animal welfare and to enable traceability so that products can be labeled accurately and consumers can make informed choices. Over the past year, an International Working Group (IWG) comprised of brands, animal welfare groups, and supply chain members have worked to revise the original standard.

Officially launched in January 2014, the RDS is the most comprehensive, global, third-party certified animal welfare and traceability standard for down and feathers available for use by any company. Down, which comes from geese and ducks that are grown primarily for the food industry, remains one of the highest-quality, best performing materials for use in apparel, bedding and home goods. Due to the attention given by animal welfare groups to issues such as live-plucking and force-feeding, in late 2012 The North Face combined forces with Textile Exchange and Control Union Certifications, an accredited third-party certification body, to design and implement the RDS across primary sourcing regions in Europe, Asia, and the United States. This included working closely with leading suppliers Allied Feather & Down and Downlite to analyze and certify every step of the down supply chain.

Upon completion of the standard, The North Face gifted it to Textile Exchange to administer and evolve the standard as needed with the hope of engaging more brands and down suppliers to begin to implement the RDS. In the following months, TE created the International Working Group tasked with revising the standard. The group includes the European Outdoor Group and Outdoor Industry Association, The North Face, adidas, Coyuchi, animal protection organizations FOUR PAWS and Humane Society International, as well as the European Down and Feather Association, and Pro-Down Alliance.

RDS 2.0 includes a number of updates, creating even more credibility in the standard's requirements and applications in the down and feather industry around the world. Parallel production is banned all the way through to the slaughterhouse, and only products that are 100% certified down can be labeled as RDS. In addition, all the requirements have been carefully reviewed and revised by the IWG to make sure they are as strong and clear as possible.

"We welcome the efforts made through the RDS to achieve higher animal welfare safeguards and full supply chain traceability within the down industry. The RDS has been successful in driving transparency and adoption of traceability across the down supply chain. Our hope is for the standard to continue evolving in order to provide the highest possible guarantees that live-plucking and fore-feeding are fully excluded from the down supply chain." said Nina Jamal, International Farm Animals Campaigner at FOUR PAWS.

Down and feathers are traditionally sourced from waterfowl already earmarked for the food supply, however, there is an inevitable risk of animal welfare issues with the use of farm animals for industrial purposes. The primary mandate of the RDS is to prevent practices such as force-feeding and live-plucking as well as provide strict approvals on issues such as food and water quality, housing, stock density and outdoor access, animal health, hygiene and pest and predator control, among others.

For further information on the RDS please visit <http://textileexchange.org/RDS>.



About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange (TE) is a global non-profit organization that works closely with all sectors of the textile supply chain to find the best ways to minimize and even reverse the negative impacts on water, soil, air, and the human population created by this \$1.7 trillion industry. We accomplish this by identifying and sharing best practices regarding farming and ranching, materials, processing, and end-of-life. The Industry Integrity team’s work in standards and certification is foundational to the work of Textile Exchange. Other TE standards include the Content Claim Standard, Organic Content Standard, Recycled Claim Standard and Global Recycled Standard. To learn more about Textile Exchange, visit our website: www.textileexchange.org.

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