



✦ Premium, sophisticated heathered flannel keeps you warm in style.

✦ This fair-trade bedding from Au Lac Designs in Vietnam is a good way to add luxury to your bedroom.

Sleep Well

You'll sleep better on organic bedding knowing it's good for the planet and your family

TEXT CHRISTINE MADELINE HOLM

More and more of us are getting on the “green” train these days. That’s because we’re learning how important it is to use “sustainable” goods. We want to help protect the Earth by using “natural” things. We’re told that “organic” is the way to go. But what do all these terms mean? Do they mean the same thing?

WHAT IS “ORGANIC,” ANYWAY?

According to Green By Design’s Vanessa Brunner, “While organic and sustainable materials share the same ethical and moral roots, what many people are unaware of is that the two terms are not entirely interchangeable. While organic and sustainable are not necessarily mutually exclusive either, it’s important as a consumer to know



▲ Italian design plus organic comfort equals bedtime bliss.

what it means when an item...is labeled 'organic' or labeled 'sustainable.'" (www.greenbydesign.com) She explains that something can be considered sustainable when, for example, it's been recycled or produced according to fair-trade standards or produced by companies that pay all employees a fair wage, so something can be sustainable without being organic.

Something is organic if it meets the criteria as defined by the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP). The NOP states, "Organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management

practices that restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony."

That sounds great, but what does it really mean? You can learn more at the USDA's Web site, www.usda.gov, but Susan Fullen-Yurek with Kushtush Organics helps sort it out for us. "'Organic' refers to the methods by which foods, cottons, woolens, etc., are farmed and processed without chemicals, pesticides, radiation, or other artificial intervention," she says. Still a bit fuzzy? Here's the easiest way to know: If an item doesn't bear the government's seal, it hasn't been officially certified as organic.

SO WHY BUY ORGANIC BEDDING?

For most of us, sleeping on higher-thread-count cotton bedding feels better, but what's the big

deal about organic bedding? "First and foremost, it's soft, natural, and much healthier than conventional textiles," says Fullen-Yurek. Even better, it naturally resists common allergens, and "studies prove optimal sleeping conditions require breathable surfaces that only organic bedding and natural sleepwear can provide."

"In fact," she continues, "recovering patients are far more comfortable and heal more easily with nontoxic and chemical-free organic bedding and sleepwear in delicate 24/7 sleeping and breathing environments. That's especially critical for babies and growing children." If it's especially critical for them, you know that surrounding yourself in organic bedding will be especially great for you! ■

Images courtesy of Gaiam, www.gaiam.com



Drift off to sleep in bedding that's not only pretty, but it's also environmentally conscious.



▲ Eco-Tex-certified flannel has both warmth and charm.