

## Lee and Wrangler invest in new dyeing process

By [Olivier Guyot](#) - January 4, 2018

To transform the denim industry; the notion is an ambitious one but the team at Indigo Mill Designs (IMD) have made public a new dyeing process in a mousse form, which has the potential to change how dye is used across the denim manufacturing sector.



*The process involves the direct application of the mousse to the yarn - VF Corp*

Developed in 2015, the new solution - dubbed IndigoZero - was constructed at the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute of Texas Tech University, in the United States. It has now been financed by VF Corp-owned denim brands, Lee and Wrangler, and has the backing of the Walmart Manufacturing Innovation Fund.

IndigoZero sees companies reduce their overall dyeing costs by minimising the use of chemicals and eliminating the use of water for rinsing. It works by applying the mousse dye directly to the fibre, taking away the need for dye baths.

"Moreover, the IndigoZero system accelerates the product's development time, reducing time by around 90%," said Dean Ethridge, head researcher at Texas Tech.

Overall quantities could also be reduced, bringing a new flexibility to the industry. Water consumption is a major factor in terms of sustainability in the denim world right now.

Most major labels have worked specifically on reducing or eliminating the use of water in their washing processes. Levi's, for example, has engaged in the reduction of water consumption in the last eight years.

With this new technology working directly with the yarn, the two VF Corp. labels, who have Phil McAdams presiding over the denim division, should be able to drastically reduce their consumption.

In partnering with Lee and Wrangler, IMD has approached Gaston Systems to develop operational solutions at an industrial level. The new solutions are part of the sustainability plans mapped out by VF group, which looks to eliminate all "undesirable" product chemicals in its chain by 2019, as well as the hone in on the reduction of 5 billion litres of water by 2020, and harness the exclusive use of sustainable cotton by 2025.

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