

## 2009 is Year of Natural Fibers

**International recognition of natural fibers to raise awareness of their value and promote the sustainability of their production going on throughout 2009.**

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Natural fiber lovers: 2009 is our year!

The United Nations declared 2009 as International Year of Natural Fibers.

While people involved in agriculture probably already understand the importance of animal- and vegetable-derived fibers, many people around the world have never considered where fiber-based materials come from.

You might be a small-farm owner, and if that's the case, you know these fibers also generate income, which is just as important for small-scale farming operations that keep fiber animals for fun as it is for farmers in developing countries.

Events for the Year of Natural Fibers will raise awareness of the value of natural fibers and to promote the sustainability of their production.

The International Year of Natural Fibers kicked off on January 22 at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, Italy.

Another large event will be the first-ever International Day at the New York Sheep and Wool Festival in October.

And check out Keep the Fleece, a competition that will inspire fiber artists from around the world.

According to the International Year of Natural Fibers website. "Since the 1960s, the use of synthetic fibers has increased, and natural fibers have lost a lot of their market share. ... Natural fibers form an important component of clothing, upholstery and other textiles for consumers, and many of them also have industrial uses in packaging, papermaking and in composite materials with many uses, including automobiles."

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