H&M introduces fabrics made from pineapple leaves and orange peel

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Spotted: H&M's ninth Conscious Exclusive line introduces textiles made from fruit material that would otherwise go to waste. Working with three companies – BLOOM Foam, Orange Fiber and Piñatex – the global brand's latest line should help raise further awareness to the now well-documented wastefulness in the fashion industry.

BLOOM Foam uses algae biomass to make a flexible, lightweight material used in shoe soles. Orange Fiber uses discarded orange peels from citrus juice production to create an environmentally-friendly alternative to silk. And Piñatex uses the leaves of pineapples, an agricultural waste product, for a vegan leather.

The new collection became available online and worldwide earlier this month. While H&M appears to be working on its sustainability, some critics see the launch as gimmicky. Others, while acknowledging the vast amount of work needed to reduce the fashion industry's profligate use of natural resources, view the brand's global reach and high profile as an important tool for raising awareness.

Despite the origin of their materials, none of the textiles are compostable or recyclable. This is because they are chemically finished in the same way as are regular fabrics.

Takeaway: Scalability is a particular challenge for circular economy projects, especially in industries as large as fashion and food. Although there are projects working to improve almost every aspect of global supply chains, most, if not all, are simply not large enough to make substantial change on their own. Springwise has spotted a Finnish restaurant that introduced its model of "Refuse, reduce, reuse, and only as a last resource, recycle" to New Yorkers via a four-day pop-up. And a product returns software service provider (albeit global) works to reduce the overall cost of having items returned.

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