

# MEANING OF GREEN

## *Sleep well with natural bedding*

BY GREG SNOWDEN

First, we wanted to eat organically. That felt so good that now, we want to sleep organically. Natural bedding—bedding free of petrochemicals, pesticides, toxic fire-proofing, stain guards and other substances we don't even want to think about—is losing its phobic, allergy sufferers-only label and increasingly being embraced by the mainstream public who want a purer experience in their food, in their bed and in their surroundings.

The good news is that natural bedding is at least equal in comfort to other types of bedding and you can sleep peacefully knowing you are supporting your health and the health of the planet. It is also priced competitively.

Most notably missing from natural bedding are the fire-retardant chemicals used to meet the state's fire rating standards for mattresses. Instead of chemicals, natural bedding often uses wool as a natural fire retardant and still meets the state standards.

Healthy choices for mattresses use combinations of materials, including:

**Organic cotton.** No chemicals are used in the farming of this great fiber, whereas conventional cotton farming is one of the most environmentally destructive of all agricultural crops.

**Wool.** Wool is a truly amazing fiber with many wonderful natural properties. Wool is soft, supportive and naturally resilient. If you sleep "hot" and your mate sleeps "cold," a wool comforter with a cotton cover will equalize body temperature differences between sleeping mates. Unlike down filler, which keeps the heat insulated, wool moves heat and moisture around—it breathes and it is also mildew- and dust mite-resistant, as well as a natural fire retardant.

Organic wool farming practices, such as the Pure Grow Wool™ program, are currently underway at farms in Sonoma and Marin County.

**Natural latex rubber.** Unlike "memory foams," natural latex rubber is made from the sap of rubber trees in Malaysia. The trees are valued and the forest is protected, which helps the indigenous farmers. Rubber's elastic properties are like compressed mini-trampoline clouds—thousands of clouds per square inch. It is flexi-



**This suite of natural furniture and bedding proves green is not only good, but beautiful.**

ble, resilient, durable, naturally dust mite-repellent, and antimicrobial.

When it comes to mattresses, you need not fear the return of your rock-hard cotton futon from college. Natural bedding non-innerspring mattresses are made from springy wool with natural latex rubber. Greensleep makes a luxurious mattress composed of 9 inches of natural latex padding zipped up in an organic cotton and silk velour cover.

All-wool mattresses, while popular in Europe, are available in the U.S. from only a few sources, including Shepherd's Dream in Montague, Calif. (California is the leading producer of organic cotton and wool.)

Not too long ago people discovered high thread count cotton sheets, never to return to polyester. The next wave will be the switch to organic cotton sheets. One of the top manufacturers of organic cotton sheets is, once again, in

West Marin, where Coyuchi in Point Reyes has been a leader in organic cotton bedding for over 10 years. And organic doesn't have to mean white. Anna Sova's line of luxury organic bedding comes in rich, wild colors, all made without using unhealthy chemicals or dyes. \*

*This information is provided by Green Fusion Design Center, which offers natural furnishings and green design resources at 14 Greenfield Ave., San Anselmo, 415/454-0174. For details, see [www.greenfusiondesigncenter.com](http://www.greenfusiondesigncenter.com)*

### Sleep on it

**Natural bedding resources include:**

[www.vivetique.com](http://www.vivetique.com);  
[www.greensleep.com](http://www.greensleep.com);  
[www.shepherdsdream.com](http://www.shepherdsdream.com);  
[www.annasova.com](http://www.annasova.com);  
[www.coyuchi.com](http://www.coyuchi.com);  
[www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)