



SARAH CLARK'S SPEECH AT ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW

Wednesday 6th April 2022

It's a privilege to be invited here today and thank you to Kew for hosting us; Frugi is thrilled to be partnering with Kew on the Easter Family Event.

I thought to share a few words around our journey at Frugi and our upcoming plans....

As many of you may already know, Frugi celebrates its 18th birthday this year. From the outset, Frugi was born with a desire to do business the right way and show that businesses could be both profitable and ethical. To that end, we have always used GOTS cotton across our range, which dramatically reduces water usage, and any exposure to harmful chemicals, as well as ensuring that our suppliers are treated fairly. The remainder of our range is made from recycled polyester, which goes into our outerwear and swimwear.

Giving back has always been in our ethos, and we have always given 1% of our turnover to charity, regardless of whether we make a profit, and as a result have donated over £1 million in cash to charitable causes over our lifespan. Often those programs, such as Eco-Schools and LEAF are about connecting children with nature for their own physical and mental well-being, which is obviously incredibly relevant to us also being here today in glorious Kew Gardens. The UK Government's People and Nature survey updated in October 2021 found that since lock-downs, 81% of children stated that they had spent less time outside with friends. Astonishingly, the average young child now spends an average of 4 hours a week outside, which has halved in the last decade, and is less than a prisoner. So, we all certainly have some work to do.

Our stated internal mission at Frugi is 'inspire the eco-hero in all of us', whilst externally our rallying cry is for people to 'love the planet they play on'. We aim to do that by always creating sustainable organic clothes, with clever features wherever possible in order to extend their lifespan. We create them to be bright, colourful, child-oriented and adventure ready, for all exciting family weekends.

Even after 18 years we continue to challenge ourselves. Fashion continues to make up at least 10% of all carbon emissions, with 85% of textiles going to the dump each year – that's a lorry load every second. The best thing that we can all do is to actually buy fewer, higher quality items, and then to keep them in circulation for as long as possible.

And so, our new stretching 3-year goals are around this objective. This includes:

Rental: over the past 12 months, we have worked with organisations such as The Little Loop and Hire Street in order to make our clothes available for hire. As you can imagine this makes a lot of sense, especially for products such as outerwear and maternity wear, and it is testimony to the quality of our products that they are able to live many children's lifecycle usages. We are currently undertaking durability and destruction testing to continue to challenge ourselves on making products that can last, as well as including lots of fun features such as button-down arms and roll down cuffs and waistbands, to allow products to grow with your child.

Repairs: shortly we will be launching our repair patches and issuing repair materials with key items. We are also investigating a repairs service as our ultimate goal. It's a slightly old-fashioned skill but it's imperative that we bring this mindset back into the household.

And finally: Resale. Frugi products are great quality, and so we know we already have a very active independent resale community of nearly 20k people across social media. As we continue to grow, we will work to ensure that we can also enable the resale of Frugi items, both online and in our store network as it expands, to keep them in circulation as long as possible.



Ultimately, when the end of life is reached for a product, we then have to make smart choices about how to dispose of it. Currently, we are working with a company called Bandstand and their charity partner 'Cotton Lives On', to repurpose some of our terminal fabrics. We have joined their pilot project to shred down old materials and rework them into roll mats that will be distributed to the homeless over the summer.

However, the ultimate goal is to make as many of our products as possible fully recyclable. To that end we have proudly joined the Circular Textile Foundation, an institute that exists to provide support and guidance on the creation of circular designs. As a founding member, Frugi will help develop the foundation's cotton recycling routes which is very exciting for us. Already next Spring we will have 32 options that are fully recyclable, with 2 Kew styles also included within that.

In addition to Frugi, as a group we also own 2 reusable brands, Totsbots reusable nappies and Bloom & Nora reusable sanitary products. These are again very close to our heart, given the dramatic impact that these products can have to our environment. In nappies, disposables use 20x as much raw materials and 8x as much water as reusables. 3 billion nappies thrown away in only the UK every year and will remain in landfill for 500 years, long after we are gone. ... Similarly, in sanitary products, one person will dispose create 5 tonnes of sanitary waste in their lifetime, causing land and sea plastic pollution. Our Totsbots ranges come in 2-part systems or all-in-one alternatives, and again have great longevity for being handed down or resold when no longer needed. Excitingly, we are about to relaunch our period wear range this summer, evolving Bloom & Nora to Nora, a younger proposition to capture users right at the start of their journey; and luckily we are seeing teenagers being actually much more progressive and open than many adults in this area, and really appreciating the impact of their decisions.

We are very inspired by Kew and Wakehurst's target to become Climate Positive by 2030. We ourselves are creating our own Impact Report for the first time this year, where we will set measures for reducing our own Scope 1 and 2 emissions, including our own manufacturing facility in Glasgow, and where we are also kicking off a score-card system with our factories to ensure we are working with them to reduce the Scope 3 emissions within their areas of responsibility. Given that most of our factories know and understand the importance of GOTS, it's fair to say that many of our factories are very proactive in driving environmentally positive programs, such as the use of solar power, and the collection and use of rainwater. I thought I would end by sharing a sneak preview of our new Frugi manifesto, which we will be publishing this summer, with an accompanying film, to hopefully inspire other larger brands and manufacturers to also challenge themselves in their practices:

We need to talk about the fact that cheap things cost more. Cheap things wear down, wear out and fall apart.

The clothing industry alone fills our oceans with microplastics, our rivers with pesticides and our air with CO2. Every second, a rubbish truck of clothes is dumped into landfill. All in the pursuit of fast fashion.

We're Frugi. We sell things, yes, but we're asking you to buy better.

Because a cheap, throwaway society is costing us all the one thing we can't buy back: Our home.

We're asking you to think about what you buy. Buy durable, sustainable, quality clothes. Crafted from gentle, durable fabrics. Made with care, created with kindness, built for adventure and built to last. To pass on, hand down, and patch up.

Because really, kids don't need more clothes. What they need is more trees, fresher air and cleaner oceans. More joy, more fun, and a bright, bright future — for them, and for the planet they play on.

Frugi. Love the planet you play on.