

What is cellulose?

Cellulose is the main substance found in plant cell walls and helps the plant to remain stiff and strong. Cellulose is the common denominator between cotton and rayon, but both of these fibers vary wildly from one another.



Source: cottonworks

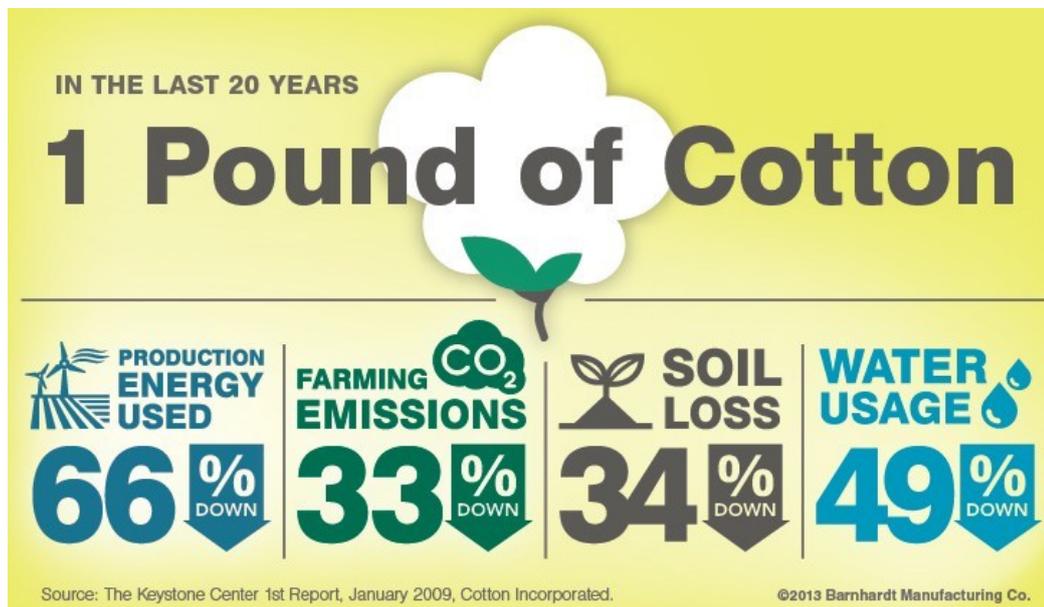
Here are some of their major differences:

Cotton's cellulose is grown in 5-6 months and is produced from plants, while rayon's cellulose is produced from trees and require years to grow until they're ready for harvesting. Cotton plants are replaced seasonally on the farm. But pine trees, for example, take 25-35 years to regenerate after harvesting viscose rayon. Furthermore, nearly 30% of the viscose rayon used in the fashion industry are from ancient and endangered forests.

Unique Properties of Cotton

Strength

When it comes to strength, did you know that cotton fibers get stronger when wet? And viscose rayon fibers actually lose strength when wet. Improved wet strength is extremely important for products like pads and tampons, wipes, and diapers.



Sustainability

For every pound of fiber harvested, there are roughly 1.6 pounds of other useful products being created. This includes cottonseed oil, cattle feed, and mulch. Over the last 20 years, modern cotton farming techniques have reduced energy use by 66 percent! And in those two decades, water usage has also been reduced by 49%, soil loss has decreased by 34%, carbon dioxide emissions have been lowered by 33%, and the amount of pesticides usage has used by 23%.

Cotton is grown all over the world, with the largest share of the market producing in China, India, and the United States. Fortunately, there are no producers of viscose rayon in North America, so all of our focus here at home is on cotton harvesting. If it ever comes down to cotton or viscose rayon, there's an obvious answer: Cotton—and cotton only!

Source: Barnhardt