



An Analysis of the US Bottom Weights Market: Production, Consumption, and Denim

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ABSTRACT

Growing denim fashion trends coupled with developments in the global market have caused changes in the US apparel marketplace in terms of production and consumption. Therefore, this research explored the current condition of the US market to determine if the United States was a premiere marketplace for production and consumption of bottom weights and denim, in particular. In order to reach a conclusion, market research and statistical analysis was completed in the following areas: production, consumption, imports, exports, global supply chains, and retail channels. This analysis concludes that the US is not the premier production market for bottom weights and denim. However, there is a production opportunity for the United States in terms of niche bottom weights such as premium denim. Although the US is not a premier production market for bottom weights, it is a premier consumption market for bottom weights and denim. Results also identified major trading partners with the United States, such as Mexico and Central American countries. With the increasing imports of bottoms, retailers have placed increased importance on full package sourcing.

Keywords: Denim, bottom weights, production, consumption, textile industry, apparel industry, trade, import, export, cotton, retail channels, global supply chains

From white jeans in Spring 2005 to the newest fall styles, denim has become a most popular fashion trend. In fact, the denim apparel market grew 5.0% and 6.8% in unit sales and dollar sales respectively in 2004 (Denim, 2005). This statistic is not surprising, given the proliferation of denim when looking at runways, fashion magazines, and celebrity style. In addition, jeans are becoming more and more popular in business settings and are no longer considered a casual look. By accounting for nearly 75% of the market, jeans drove the growth of the denim apparel market. In 2004, jeans increased 10.8% in dollars as well as 8.8% in units. Jeans also accounted for the largest growth in the men's denim

market and the only market to grow in women's denim apparel (Denim, 2005). Therefore, it is fitting to further analyze denim jeans and the denim market as a subset of the larger bottom weights market in the US marketplace.

In order to understand the importance of the US bottom weights market in the global textile and apparel industry, research and statistical analysis have been completed in the following areas: production, consumption, imports, exports, global supply chains, and retail channels. In addition, due to the scope and nature of the research, as mentioned above, specific data on denim fabric and denim jeans are provided where appropriate.