ORIGINAL

DyStar

Working for your benefit.

DyStar UK Ltd
PO Box 63
Earl Road
Cheadle Hulme
Cheadle
Cheshire
SK8 6GH

23rd January 2001

Office of the Secretary
Federal Trade Commission
Room 159
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20580

Re: 16 CFR Part 303 – Textile Rule 8 Comment – P948404

Dear Sir:

1. DyStar, based in Frankfurt, Germany, is the world's largest producer of textile dyes, manufacturing in 8 countries and selling to and providing technical support for the textile industry worldwide. DyStar is jointly owned by BASF, Bayer and Hoechst, Germany's leading chemical companies. DyStar supports the designation of a new generic fiber definition for polylactic acid ("PLA") fiber, using the new generic name "synterra".

2. DyStar is the leading supplier worldwide of disperse dyes, the class of dyes which has been shown to be the preferred coloration system for PLA fibers. Early academic work on coloration of PLA was further developed and extended by the technical marketing team of BASF's textile dyes business, which in October 2000 became part of DyStar. The results of this work are used by Cargill Dow Polymers LLC to advise their customers on how to color PLA, thereby introducing and/or reinforcing the use of DyStar's disperse dyes to innovative textile producers.

   From our perspective as a dyes supplier, PLA offers our customers a fiber, which because of its low refractive index, can be dyed to a wide range of intense, rich colors with good color fastness to consumer use.

3. It is our understanding that petitions must meet the three criteria outlined in the Notice by the Federal Trade Commission, namely that

   1. the fiber must have a chemical composition radically different from other fibers which also results in distinctive physical properties significant to the general public

   2. the fiber is in active commercial use or such use is immediately foreseen

   3. the granting of the name must be important to the public at large, not just to a group of knowledgeable professionals

   We believe that PLA does meet these criteria for establishing a new generic fiber designation.

4. We believe that PLA is differentiated from other recognized textile fibers, in that it combines the comfort and ease of dyeing associated with natural fibers with the strength and resilience of synthetic fibers. Additionally PLA can be dyed at temperatures significantly lower than many common synthetic fibers, making it highly suitable for combination with temperature-sensitive fibers such as wool and elastane.

5. The uniqueness of PLA from the consumer's viewpoint is that it offers the high technical performance of a synthetic fiber from bio-based materials, a combination likely to prove attractive to consumers. Polyester is well known to consumers as the leading synthetic fiber used in textiles. We believe that classification of PLA as a polyester or a subcategory of polyester would fail to recognize the distinct consumer appeal of PLA as a fiber produced from renewable resources. This could lead to confusion among the buying public. It is our opinion that only by creating a new generic fiber name can the unique properties of PLA as a textile fiber be clearly explained to garment consumers.

6. In conclusion, we would like to support the creation of a new generic fiber name "synterra" for polylactic acid fiber, as the clearest and most unambiguous way of describing to garment consumers the properties of garments produced from PLA fibers. May we also express our thanks in being allowed to participate in the rulemaking process.

Very truly yours,

Steve Dervan.

pp Dr John Bone

Technical Marketing Manager

cc: James G. Mills