

PRESS STATEMENT

Parkdale Mills Collaborates with FDA, Gates Foundation, Others to Supply Swabs for Coronavirus Tests

April 20, 2020

WASHINGTON—Parkdale Mills subsidiary U.S. Cotton, the nation’s largest manufacturer of cotton swabs, has joined in an effort with the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), the Gates Foundation, UnitedHealth Group and Quantigen to ramp up production of spun synthetic swabs to help the country’s frontline health care workers administering tests for the COVID-19 disease.

U.S. Cotton has developed a fully synthetic, polyester-based Q-tip-type swab that can be used in coronavirus diagnostic testing. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration just announced that these synthetic swabs – with a design similar to Q-tips – could be used to test patients for the coronavirus.

U.S. Cotton, based in Cleveland, Ohio, plans to leverage its large-scale manufacturing capacity to rapidly increase production of large quantities of the polyester swabs, which are in short supply for testing kits across the country.

The FDA has determined that spun synthetic swabs can be used in COVID-19 testing based on the results from a clinical investigation stemming from its collaboration with UnitedHealth Group, the Gates Foundation and Quantigen.

John Nims, President of U.S. Cotton said, “We stand ready to serve in this important fight and want to do all we can to help deploy these testing kit swabs for the American people. We greatly appreciate the collaborative efforts with the UnitedHealth Group, Quantigen, and the Gates Foundation to help support these necessary clinical studies to help advance this critically needed product to market.”

Anderson Warlick, Chair & CEO of Parkdale/U.S. Cotton said, “Many thanks to Dr. Peter Navarro for his incredible leadership and for all his support. We also greatly appreciate our Ohio Senators Sherrod Brown and Rob Portman and Governor Mike DeWine in these efforts.”

This is the second major COVID-19 relief project that Parkdale has helped lead. Earlier Parkdale constructed an entire supply chain that includes Hanes, Fruit of the Loom, and many other U.S. companies in the production of PPE masks desperately needed by frontline medical staff treating the virus.

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NCTO is a Washington, DC-based trade association that represents domestic textile manufacturers, including artificial and synthetic filament and fiber producers.

- U.S. employment in the textile supply chain was 585,240 in 2019.
- The value of shipments for U.S. textiles and apparel was \$75.8 billion in 2019.

- U.S. exports of fiber, textiles and apparel were \$29.1 billion in 2019.
- Capital expenditures for textile and apparel production totaled \$2.5 billion in 2018, the last year for which data is available.

CONTACT: [Kristi Ellis](#)

202.684.3091

www.ncto.org