

RETAIL

Net-A-Porter debuts sustainability vertical as demand for eco-conscious luxury grows

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Net Sustain will feature eco-friendly fashion. Image courtesy of Net-A-Porter

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Online retailer Net-A-Porter is hoping to help shoppers indulge in sustainable fashion with the launch of a platform dedicated to environmentally conscious apparel and accessories.

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Affluent consumers are becoming more interested in ethical and environmentally responsible fashion, but it can be challenging to know which brands are truly committed to sustainability. With the launch of Net Sustain, the retailer has designated 26 brands and more than 500 products that meet at least one of Net-A-Porter's sustainability criteria.

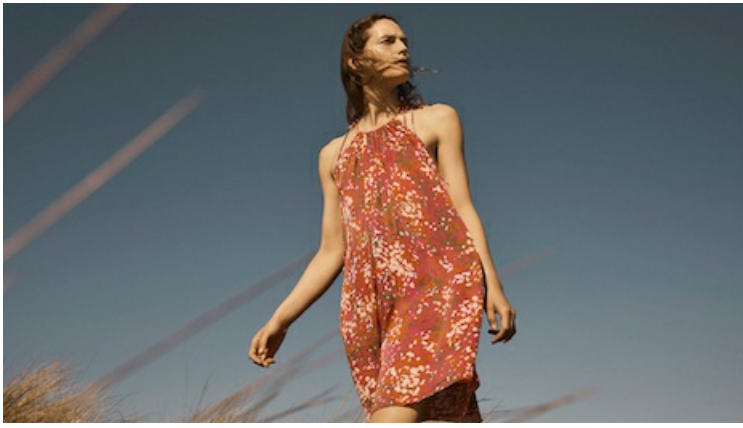
“Creating an industry standard is a very powerful initiative for the brand,” said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Palm Beach, FL. “Sustainability is not just the new pillar of fashion or luxury; it’s the cost of entry.”

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Net-A-Porter, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Net-A-Porter](#) was reached for comment.

Sustainable shopping

To be included as part of Net Sustain, brands and products must meet at least one attribute. Shoppers can search for Net Sustain products and further refine products per each sustainable category.

“Considered Processes” limit the environmental impact during production and protect the health of workers and wearers, while “Considered Materials” include organic cotton and responsibly-sourced wool and down.



Net-A-Porter has launched Net Sustain. Image courtesy of Net-A-Porter

“Reducing Waste” is reserved for items that are designed to be part of the circular economy and use regenerated or reused materials. “Locally Made” brands manufacture at least 50 percent of their product in their own community or country.

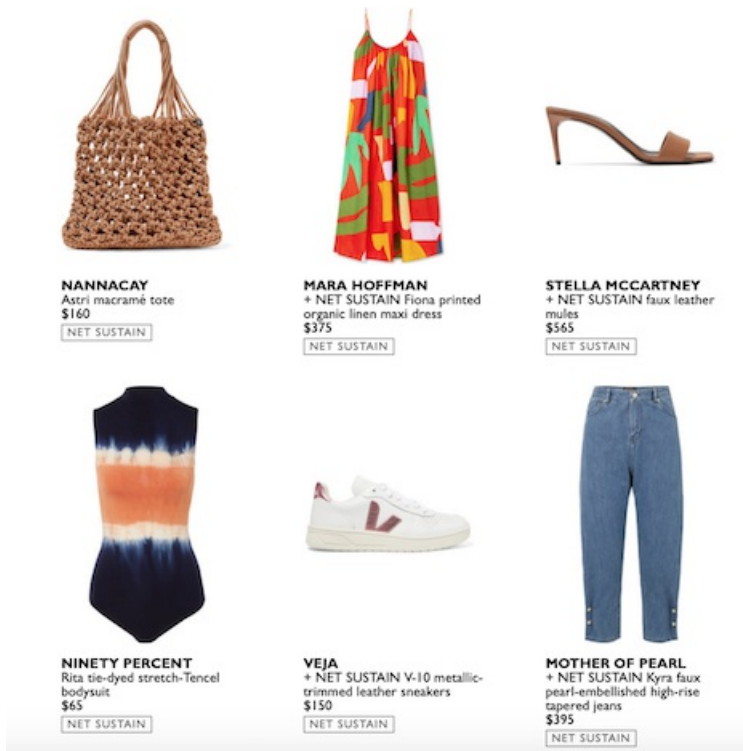
Reflecting the craftsmanship that is central to luxury, “Craft and Community” celebrates brands that use fair trade practices or rely on local artisans.

Net-A-Porter reviews standards and certifications such as Global Organic Textiles Standard, EU Ecolabel, Leather Working Group and the World Fair Trade Organization before including brands in Net Sustain.

“Net Sustain is interesting because it aligns consumer demands with companies that provide similar brand values,” said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York. “This will create stronger advocacy as well as essential curation of brands that align with their interests.”

Brands featured in the launch of Net Sustain include Chopard, Mara Hoffman and Stella McCartney. More labels will continue to be added, and Net-A-Porter also plans to expand the Sustain label into the beauty space.

Reflecting today’s instant gratification attitude towards shopping, Net Sustain will include drops throughout the season, as well as limited-edition capsule collections from Stella McCartney, Pearl x BBC Earth and more.



Net Sustain offerings from Mara Hoffman and others

In addition to Net Sustain, Yoox Net-A-Porter Group is part of the Fur Free Retailer Program and does not sell any real fur products ([see story](#)). Net-A-Porter will also reduce travel and eliminate the use of plastics during any editorial creation in another effort to protect the environment.

“This is an important milestone in our sustainability journey at Net-A-Porter,” said Elizabeth von der Goltz, global buying director at [Net-A-Porter](#), in a statement. “We have always wanted to provide our customer with the best products and allow them to make informed choices when shopping on the site.

“Our sustainable edit provides our customers with the knowledge they need, understanding that they can trust that these brands have been carefully reviewed and meet our criteria for inclusion,” she said. “Our aim is to give a voice to the brands that are truly making positive changes by providing them with a platform to highlight their best practice.”

Corporate commitment

More than half of consumers want fashion brands to be more sustainable, but they have differing ideas on how the industry can become more environmentally responsible.

About one-third of consumers would pay more for a product from a brand that they believe is committed to sustainability, according to a new “Sustainability in Fashion Retail” report from ecommerce platform Nosto. Interest in sustainable fashion remained consistent across genders and age demographics.

Six in 10 consumers believe that brands can be more effective in promoting sustainably-made clothing. Among strategies that brands can employ is spotlighting sustainable products when consumers are online shopping ([see story](#)).

Sustainability has been a cornerstone of Yoox Net-A-Porter’s corporate social responsibility strategy.

YNAP is fostering growth in young women to find emerging talent in the fashion community as well as mining ideas for greater sustainability.

Running until July 1, YNAP is inviting women aged 16 to 25 to submit ideas for a creative fashion app concept. YNAP hopes to set in motion a series of events for young women to look to drive sustainable growth to better the world ([see story](#)).

“A common mission, standards and transparency amplify that Net-A-Porter’s values are in-sync with their best customers’ values,” Mr. Ramey said. “In luxury, values trump value.”