



THE ASSOCIATION & VOICE OF THE US SEWN PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

SEAMS Member Spotlight: Clover Knits

In our latest edition of SEAMS Member Spotlight, Clover Knits, Inc. is highlighted. Company President Kevin McCarter answers our questions.

Company headquarters: Clover, SC

Year founded: 1978

Number of employees: 84

Primary specialties:

Clover's primary specialties are technical fabrics for the military and workwear industries. It makes fabrics for everything from base layers to outerwear. It also works with a wide range of fibers to give the customer the comfort and/or protection level that best suits their application.

Brief company history:

Clover Knits is a family business that started operations as a commission circular knit manufacturer in 1978. In 2000, the business was purchased by the existing owners Kevin and Jeff McCarter. In 2020, Clover Knits purchased Professional Knits, Inc., also in Clover, SC. The acquisition provided product diversification, adding body size jersey and fleece capacity along with additional warehouse space for the growing fabric business.

Diversified product development, industry research, innovation, and reliable partnership are the cornerstones to Clover Knits' success. Over the past 25 years, the company has expanded its capabilities to include fabric analysis, technical research and development, laboratory testing and cut-and-sew resourcing. Clover Knits has evolved from a supplier of traditional circular knits into a business leader recognized for expertise in developing and producing high-quality, advanced fabrics for a wide range of applications.

Markets served:

Military, government, protective apparel, workwear, fashion apparel, marine, sportswear, performance products and specialty products

Company's challenges and opportunities:

"We share the challenges common to all domestic textile industry manufacturers, including a shrinking base of equipment, parts, yarn, chemicals and fabric finishing suppliers. Labor force challenges include rising labor costs, loss of technical expertise with retirements and reduced availability of skilled labor."



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“Despite these challenges, new developments in fiber, fabrics, automation and technology offer Clover Knits promising opportunities. By leveraging technical expertise, manufacturing experience and committed partnerships, the company is well-positioned to continue as an industry leader. Additionally, as domestic and global consumer demand for Made in the USA products increases, Clover Knits will continue to develop new business based on our sustained reputation for innovation, quality and service.”

Company differentiators

“Clover Knits is customer focused, and our goal is to help all of our customers be successful. Also, we are a financially-sound business partner with expertise, integrity, quality and service to deliver on a variety of customer needs. A critical differentiator is our commitment to providing excellent customer service, communicating effectively and fostering collaboration. Clover Knits distinguishes itself by being big enough to deliver yet small enough to care. We have folks on our team who have worked in every area of textile manufacturing and bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to help our customers.”

“I am so proud of the team that we have assembled at Clover Knits. We have dedicated and experienced production folks who come to work (almost) every day and are the reason for our continued success. Our technical, manufacturing and customer service teams do an outstanding job dealing with the daily challenges that the textile business brings. I am sure we could do better – but we always try to let our teams know how central they are to our shared success.”

Thoughts on the Made-in-America/Americas movement and strategy to remain competitive in the U.S. and this hemisphere:

“Clover Knits is 100% dedicated to manufacturing in the USA. Although perhaps slower than many had hoped, there is growing evidence of reshoring textile production to the US and the Western Hemisphere.”

“Clover Knits will continue to invest in our people, offering competitive wages and benefits and equipping our personnel with the necessary technology and automation to succeed. The company will continue to educate those outside the industry about the importance of domestic manufacturing. Clover Knits will continue to compete and lead by maintaining the flexibility to effectively adjust to change.”

Biggest challenges and opportunities for manufacturing in the USA:

“One of the biggest challenges is the cost differential of manufacturing in the USA versus importing from low-labor-cost countries. Improving efficiency and productivity through innovation and technology is crucial to combat this challenge. The benefits, however, of producing close to the world’s largest consumer market are becoming increasingly evident and important to brands, and today’s fabric buyers are much more knowledgeable about the risks and complete costs of importing goods.”



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“We must meet the needs of our military and keep the Berry Amendment strong. As the US textile supplier-base dwindles, the DLA may find it increasingly difficult to maintain Berry Amendment compliance, which could lead to reduced governmental requirements/priority for Made in USA materials and products.”

“Although not yet finalized, the restructuring of tariffs promises to benefit domestic production. Textiles companies in the United States, however, use imported dyes, fibers, yarns and other raw materials and tariffs on these inputs are driving up the cost to make fabrics.”

Business outlook for the foreseeable future and future growth plans:

“With all the uncertainty now in the world, it is very difficult to make a bold prediction about the future of our industry. As previously stated, there is momentum with the Buy American movement and support for our industry, but the American consumer can help tremendously.”

“Manufacturing in the U.S., as noted, is not without its challenges. Clover Knits continues to be grateful for our industry partners and expects to sustain success by continuing to adapt to the ever-changing industry. Developing advancements in textiles and the ability to share these improvements with our partners and customers, will allow Clover Knits to thrive both in the short- and long-term.”

The value of SEAMS membership:

“SEAMS events and venues benefit not only Clover Knits, but so many in the industry, through knowledge building, networking and collaboration. They facilitate discussion, conduct market analyses and share important trends and current trade policies. SEAMS activities have specifically helped Clover Knits identify potential suppliers, business partners and new technologies. And Clover Knits has been able to parlay exhibiting in the SEAMS Pavilion at Texprocess Americas events into significant business opportunities.”