

# Sourcing Snow: Tomorrow's Technology

SUPPLIERS SHOWCASE LATEST MATERIAL ADVANCEMENTS ON SHOW FLOOR

## MATERIAL INNOVATIONS ON DISPLAY AT THIS YEAR'S SOURCING SNOW

— held all four days on the main floor of **Snow Show** — are further proof the industry is hearing consumers' demands for warmer, drier, lighter and more breathable apparel.

Exhibitors from near and far are on hand this week to discuss raw material and supply chain issues, as well as showcase the latest technologies that will help snow sports enthusiasts brave the coldest temperatures, fiercest winds and gnarliest whiteouts.



▲ ROSSIGNOL EMERALD WD WITH 3M THINSULATE FEATHERLESS INSULATION

Building on the success of 3M Thinsulate Featherless Insulation that mimics the performance of 600-fill down, featured in the **Rossignol** Emerald WD Jacket, among others, **3M Apparel and Textiles** unveils a synthetic insulation that performs like 700-fill down. "This year we're stepping it up a notch," says **Erik Iverson**, marketing supervisor for **3M Apparel and Textiles**. "We're going up in performance and warmth."

3M has prototype samples at Sourcing Snow, and Iverson is eager to show brand-specifiers the product's benefits, including the ability to maintain loft and warmth when wet. "Loft is key, because when you keep that loft it allows for warmth capability," Iverson says.

**Concept III Textiles International** is focusing on wool blends for both active and lifestyle clothing, according to **Chris Parkes**, partner and director of

sales. "Wool is not going away, and it's being incorporated in so many different ways," he says. "Our nylon-wool blend offers the performance of nylon with much more durability."

**SympaTex** is showcasing its Moisture-Tech for apparel, according to the company's business development manager, **Heather Santos**, who is seeing a number of material trends emerge for 2016-17, including more waterproof laminates with stretch fabric.

**Paltex** has a collection of high-performance fabrics on display, including a synthetic insulation called PAL-Padding, which integrates the company's PAL-TECH with other materials and is "designed to keep the body warm with breathability and an active channel that offers support through core stability," says the company's **Fino Wu**.

And **Global Merino** is "pushing the envelope on weight," says President **José Fernandez**.



GLOBAL MERINO LIGHT MESH  
BASE LAYER MATERIAL

"We're doing some true featherweight base layer fabrics. On the other end of the spectrum, we have some heavy thermal fabrics that would be used for extreme cold."

While these innovations will benefit anyone who needs different features for variable weather conditions, often on the same day, retailers must know how to best promote these breakthroughs. Santos' advice: "Educate your sales team, who can, in turn, educate your customer about the latest material innovation and why it's a must-have item. In-store animations on iPads are a great way to educate the customer."

—Eric Smith



▲ TOBE OUTERWEAR CAPTO UNDERCUFF USING SYMPATEX CORDURA LAMINATE

## Eco-Friendly Focus

As climate change intensifies and customers demand more eco-friendly outdoor apparel and gear, the industry is responding with greener processes and products, some of which are on display this week in Sourcing Snow, all four days on the Snow Show floor.

**3M Apparel and Textiles** is debuting an improved Scotchgard Protector and a 700-fill down equivalent Thinsulate Featherless Insulation, both of which are bluesign-certified.

The **bluesign** certification promotes sustain-

able textile production by eliminating "harmful substances right from the beginning of the manufacturing process and sets and controls standards for an environmentally friendly and safe production," according to the bluesign website. "This not only ensures that the final textile product meets very stringent consumer safety requirements worldwide but also provides confidence to the consumer to acquire a sustainable product."

**Paltex** is another supplier promoting sus-

tainability. The Taiwanese company brought a host of fabrics to the Show that meet bluesign and **OEKO-TEX** standards, according to **Fino Wu**. "Paltex plays a role in making our environment safer by strictly supervising the manufacturing process of manmade fabrics to avoid hazardous chemicals, such as the derivatives from C8 and PFCs," Wu says. "We are seeking the balance between sustainable products, eco-friendly production processes and environmental initiatives." — E.S.