Ananas Anam to launch pineapple yarn and establish supply chain in Spain

By Matthieu Guinebault - 14 July 2022

Ananas Anam, manufacturer of the Pinatex material made from pineapple leaf fibers, is preparing to raise funds to launch the production of its first yarns made from the same fruit. The London-based company also hopes to become less dependent on the Philippine subsidiary by developing a complete value chain in Spain.

To say that Pinatex has attracted the attention of the apparel industry in recent years is an understatement. Following in the footsteps of Bananatex, manufacturer of banana fibers, the company has offered a plant-based alternative to animal skins amid increasing demand for natural materials. Nike, H&M, Paul Smith, Hugo Boss, and more recently Saucony and Selfridges have all tried their hand at exploiting pineapple leaf fibers.

"The pandemic has put sustainability in products and the sourcing of environmentally friendly materials in the spotlight. Consumers have become more aware of their impact, which is pushing brands to act accordingly," Em Mendoza, sales director of Ananas Anam, told FashionNetwork.com at the Première Vision trade show held in the outskirts of Paris.

"And, in this context, we had a material ready and above all commercially available. We have therefore been able to take advantage of two and a half very active years in the field of sustainability, because we are well positioned for this market transformation."

Ananas Anam currently employs a dozen people at its headquarters in the UK, nine in Spain and another 25 in the Philippines. It is there that not only Bananatex finds its bananas but also where the ideal pineapples were identified to develop the concept of Pinatex and target the apparel market. The material is transformed into fiber locally and later finished in Spain. However, transcontinental production did not escape the freight crisis triggered by the
"The pandemic showed us that we had all our eggs in one basket, so we needed more than one supply chain," said Mendoza. "Hence, the objective to expand our production capacity, and eventually have a complete supply chain in Spain, to operate in parallel with our production line in the Philippines. This supply chain would then serve our customers in Asia and Australia, while Spain would supply Europe, Africa and the Americas."

This Spanish project is part of the series B financing round carried out by Ananas Anam. This fundraising should, among other things, allow a project to materialize that the company was already telling us about in September 2019: producing a pineapple yarn for the woven market.

"This is a project that the pandemic led us to postpone to focus on our material, which was already on the market," explained Mendoza. "But now we are ready to expand and diversify our markets."