

Press release

for immediate release

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## Natural and Organic Awards Finalist

### Second year running for fou furnishings

The quality organic bed linen company, fou furnishings has scooped the finalist award for the best organic textile product - for the second year running.

Fou furnishings' founder and designer, Stephanie McIntosh is jubilant:

"Less than two years in business, and we have won the two best organic textile finalist awards on the planet," she says.

A Natural and Organic Awards 2009 finalist, fou furnishings became a Natural and Organic Award finalist in April 2010 – the only organic textile company to make the final shortlist of three (the other two were fashion joint-winners).

This year, the innovative bed linen company entered a cot duvet cover from its first children's collection.

Founder and designer, Stephanie McIntosh, had a special reason for entering the design, called *Love to Learn*.

"We ran a competition to celebrate Soil Association Organic Week last September. The two winning designs were made into a limited edition range to celebrate our first collection of organic bed linen for babies and children.

"The *Love to Learn* cot duvet cover is designed by a mother in Middlesex, England, with appliquéd and embroidered animals and numbers," says Stephanie.

## **Why organic?**

Stephanie believes organic plays a vital role in children's bedding.

“Organic cotton is soft for sensitive skins because of its long fibres and is completely toxic-free. This is really important for babies and children. They are more vulnerable than adults to chemical-overload because they are small and still growing.

“The advantage of buying quality organic is that your sheets will last for generations, just like in the old days. We use high-quality 330 thread count organic cotton in our baby and children bedding collection so its soft smoothness lasts and lasts.”

Buying organic has wider benefits too, as Stephanie explains:

“Organic production is sustainable so it's good for the planet. It's also safe for cotton farm workers in developing countries, where safety regulations are weak. So it's extra-important they are not having to work with toxic chemicals during the growing, harvesting and processing process,” says Stephanie.

Stephanie has worked in textile retail and buying all her career. But when she set up her own company two years ago, she insisted all the products must be organic.

“I wanted exceptional quality – and the best yarns come from cotton grown the organic way,” she says.

## **Notes to website editor**

Fou furnishings [www.foufurnishings.com](http://www.foufurnishings.com)

Fou blog [www.foufurnishings.com/foublog](http://www.foufurnishings.com/foublog)

## **Notes to editor**

1. Hosted in association with the Soil Association and Natural Products magazine, the Natural and Organic Awards have become a benchmark for excellence over the last 15 years, setting a standard for innovation, quality and commitment in the natural and organic sector.
2. Fou furnishings achieved the Natural and Organic Awards 2009 finalist award for its unique 'fou duvet' top opening cover – the hassle-free way to change a duvet cover. In 2010, the company entered its first collection of organic bed linen for babies and children.

3. Soil Association Organic Fortnight, is the UK's biggest celebration of all things organic. This year it runs from 3-17 September 2010.
4. Fou furnishings' Design-a-Duvet competition that resulted in the limited edition winning designs ran during Soil Association Organic Fortnight 5-20 September 2009.
5. The entire fou furnishings baby and children range is certified Fairtrade ensuring fair wages and an ethical and transparent supply chain. One of India's longest-established organic companies has produced the limited edition bedding.
6. Fou furnishings is a Soil Association-certified company specialising in organic bed linen. All Fou Furnishings linens are certified by either the Soil Association or Oeko-Tex.
7. Why organic? Fou furnishings director, Stephanie McIntosh, explains: "Organic production is sustainable, traceable and safe for farm workers – it's also exceptional quality."
8. The Committee for Advertising Practice has approved the following statements on the benefits of organic farming:
  - a) Organic farming reduces environmental pollution and the release of greenhouse gases from food production by severely restricting the use of artificial chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Instead, organic farmers rely on developing a healthy, fertile soil and growing a mixture of crops
  - b) Organic production aims to use methods as close to nature as possible to maintain a healthy living soil and positive plant and animal health. It builds soil fertility naturally using compost and clover and encourages wildlife;
  - c) Organic means working with nature, not against it.

### **Notes to picture editor**

For images, cut-outs or room shots, samples for photographic shoots and discounts on products for room makeovers: Stephanie McIntosh T: 0141 644 5211  
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### **Feature angles and interviews**

Glasgow-based designer and director of Fou Furnishings, Stephanie McIntosh offers comments on why she focuses on organic and Fairtrade products. Her story of setting up an award-winning international online company from the family home is also inspiring.

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