



positive and negative environmental impacts associated with

## flax, ramie and hemp

Flax, ramie and hemp are natural fibers derived from the plant stems.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• rapidly-renewable resource</li><li>• can grow with virtually no fertilizers or water</li><li>• fiber is used in its least-processed state</li><li>• if the plant is cut by hand and left to ret in the ditch, then the environmental impact is minimal</li><li>• reusable and biodegradable</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mechanical methods of harvesting have adverse effects on the environment</li><li>• water retting process produces highly polluting wastewater</li><li>• use of enzymes and water increases biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and eutrophication of waterways</li></ul>