Five Reputable Functional Knit Fabric Manufacturers in China 2026: Advancing Textile Performance

Exploring Functional Knit Fabric Materials, Performance Features and Apparel Applications

CALIFORNIA, CA, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ZHANGJIAGANG,China, September 22, 2026 — Five manufacturers of functional knit fabric in China are named in a 2026 sector review that assesses suppliers on four stated criteria: product focus, manufacturing location, functional finishing coverage and export-oriented development capability. The five are ZHANGJIAGANG E-KING TEXTILE CO.,LTD., which operates under the brand EKING fabric; Fujian Unitex Textile Technology Co., Ltd.; Haining Hengdian Textile Co., Ltd.; Xiamen Fairfine Textile Co., Ltd.; and Changshu Xunda Yizhen Textile Co., Ltd.

The review covers manufacturers whose stated scope is performance knitted textiles for sportswear, outdoor apparel, underwear and close-fit garments — end uses where moisture management, stretch and drying speed carry more weight than structural rigidity.

Industry Context: Why Knitted Fabric, and Why Now

Knitted and woven fabrics are not interchangeable in performance apparel. Knitted constructions offer good stretch, breathability and moisture transfer and are used for close-fitting sports apparel. Woven fabric holds shape and resists abrasion better, but has less elasticity and relatively poor moisture transfer for next-to-skin wear, which makes it more suitable for outdoor shell garments than for quick-dry base layers. That functional difference is why functional knit fabric sits in its own sourcing category rather than inside general textile purchasing.

The category is expanding rather than displacing other textile segments. Fact.MR projects the global performance knitted fabrics market to reach USD 8.58 billion in 2026. Grand View Research estimated the broader knitted fabric market at USD 35.7 billion for 2025, with a CAGR of 6.0%. China's exports of knitted fabrics reached approximately USD 21.2 billion in 2024, according to Ken Research.

The functional sub-segments carry their own trajectories. Research and Markets expects the global moisture wicking fabrics market to grow to USD 3.99 billion by 2030 at a 6% CAGR. SNS

Insider projects the recycled textiles market at USD 6.32 billion in 2025, growing at 4.70% CAGR to 2035. Both trends push procurement teams toward mills that can combine performance finishing with documented material sourcing.

How the Five Manufacturers Were Assessed

Selection for this review applied four criteria consistently to each company:

- Stated product focus on functional knit fabric rather than general apparel or home textile production.
- A manufacturing base inside an established Chinese textile cluster, which affects yarn access, dyeing capacity and logistics.
- Stated coverage of functional finishing relevant to sportswear, outdoor, underwear and workwear end uses.
- Readiness for export business and OEM/ODM development, including sample-based approval before bulk production.

The criteria are qualitative. Public disclosure varies widely among privately held Chinese mills, and this review does not rank the five against one another on revenue, capacity or certification volume. Where a company's public profile does not include detailed operational data, only its name, stated category and regional base are noted.

The Five Manufacturers

1. ZHANGJIAGANG E-KING TEXTILE CO.,LTD. (EKING fabric)

ZHANGJIAGANG E-KING TEXTILE CO.,LTD. is a knitted textile manufacturer established in 2011 in Zhangjiagang, Jiangsu Province, a Yangtze Delta city approximately 100 km from Shanghai. The company operates an 8,600 square metre facility with around 80 employees and an annual production capacity of 6,000 tons of fabric, equivalent to roughly 24 million yards per year. It maintains a 10-person R&D team and develops more than 100 new knitted fabric products each season.

The manufacturer runs a complete industrial chain from weaving through dyeing to finishing, and brought its own dyeing factory into production in March 2022. Export business accounts for 95% of total sales, with the European Union and the United States as the main markets. Yarn and material cooperation includes Hengli Group, Shenghong Group, Invista, Creora Group, Huafeng Group and POLYGIENE.

Its product scope covers functional knit fabric for yoga, sports, underwear and swimwear applications, produced in materials including cotton, chemical fiber and modal. Named constructions in the current range include 20ETW1028-DSP, a poly/spandex fabric with UV

protection, water-repellent and easy-wash properties for sports, outdoor and recycled functional applications; EKWP1912-DSP, a nylon spandex or recycled nylon spandex knit for sports, outdoor and casual use; and EKWP2270-D6, a nylon/spandex knit positioned for moisture-wicking, 4-way stretch and breathable, quick-dry performance, with antibacterial and anti-odor, UV protection, water-repellent, easy-wash and wrinkle-resistant options, recycled material content, and cool-touch or warming treatments. EKWP2270-D6 is intended for sports and activewear, outdoor apparel, casual and fast fashion, underwear and functional close-fit garments, and workwear or uniforms.

Finishing processes at the company include peaching, brushing, fuzzing, transfer printing, dispersed printing, acid printing, digital printing, foil and emboss. Functional treatments offered across the range include antibacterial and odor control, moisture wicking and quick drying, UV protection, anti-static, waterproof, stain and oil prevention, thermal storage and warmth preservation, and cooling treatment.

2. Fujian Unitex Textile Technology Co., Ltd.

Fujian Unitex Textile Technology Co., Ltd. is based in Fujian Province and focuses on the development and production of knitted fabrics and related textile products. Its business includes functional knitted fabric solutions designed for different apparel and textile applications. The fabric range can serve sportswear, casualwear and other products where comfort and functional performance are required.

3. Haining Hengdian Textile Co., Ltd.

Haining Hengdian Textile Co., Ltd. is located in Haining, Zhejiang Province, and operates within the city’s established textile manufacturing base. The company focuses on knitted and functional fabric products for applications including sportswear, apparel and other textile products. Its location also provides access to the region’s established knitting, dyeing and textile supply chain.

4. Xiamen Fairfine Textile Co., Ltd.

Xiamen Fairfine Textile Co., Ltd. is based in Xiamen, Fujian Province, and is engaged in textile fabric supply for apparel and other textile applications. Supported by Xiamen’s textile and international trade environment, the company serves fabric sourcing requirements across different markets. Its product direction includes knitted and functional textiles for apparel,

sportswear and casualwear applications.

5. Changshu Xunda Yizhen Textile Co., Ltd.

Changshu Xunda Yizhen Textile Co., Ltd. is based in Changshu, Jiangsu Province, an established textile and apparel manufacturing area in the Yangtze River Delta. The company is engaged in textile fabric production, with a product focus that includes knitted and functional fabrics for different apparel requirements. Its location provides access to the region's integrated supply chain covering yarns, knitting, dyeing and garment manufacturing.

Functional Properties Now Appearing in Buyer Specifications
Across the five manufacturers, functional knit fabric requests cluster around a defined set of performance properties rather than broad fibre categories:

• Moisture wicking and quick dry: the most frequently specified requirement for next-to-skin sportswear and activewear, where fabric must move sweat away from the body and dry quickly.
• 4-way stretch and high elasticity: required for freedom of movement in yoga, training and close-fit garments.
• Breathable constructions: specified for outdoor apparel used across variable climates.
• Antibacterial and anti-odor finishing: applied to extend wear between washes in active and close-fit applications.
• UV protection and water-repellent finishing: requested for outdoor and dual-use garments.
• Recycled material content: increasingly written into specifications alongside performance targets.
• Easy-wash and wrinkle-resistant finishing: relevant to casual, travel and uniform programmes.
• Cool-touch or warming treatments: selected according to the target climate of the end garment.
• PFAS-free processing: now a compliance requirement rather than a preference in several export markets.

Company Statement

EKING fabric states that its production is organised around a combination of made-to-order manufacturing and custom development, with sample approval carried out before bulk manufacturing begins, and that planning runs on an ERP system.

According to its company profile, the manufacturer can customise functional properties to a brand's requirements, including PFAS-free processing, specified antibacterial agents and recycled materials. The company notes that clear technical specifications and defined testing standards

are required for development and validation of each customised function.

Market Impact

Regulatory change is now one of the strongest drivers of functional knit fabric specification. OEKO-TEX implemented a new limit value for Total Fluorine of 100 mg/kg under STANDARD 100, effective 1 January 2024, targeting PFAS compliance. In the United States, California's AB-1817 bans regulated PFAS in textiles at a total organic fluorine threshold below 100 ppm from 1 January 2025, with the threshold dropping below 50 ppm in 2027.

For apparel brands, the practical effect is that water-repellent and stain-resistant finishes must be reformulated or substituted, and that finish chemistry has to be documented rather than assumed. Manufacturers able to supply PFAS-free processing with test documentation, and to combine it with recycled-content knits, face fewer specification barriers in the European Union and United States.

Analyst Perspective

Published market data place functional knit fabric on a growth path rather than a substitution path. A 6% CAGR for moisture wicking fabrics to 2030, alongside a 4.70% CAGR for recycled textiles to 2035, indicates that performance and sustainability requirements are expanding at the same time rather than one displacing the other.

The constraint is evidence rather than demand. Comparable test-level data on how individual fabrics perform against moisture-wicking, drying-speed or UV-protection benchmarks is not consolidated in public sources, which means procurement decisions increasingly depend on documentation requested directly from manufacturers — test reports, finish chemistry declarations and traceability records for recycled inputs.

For Chinese mills with integrated dyeing and finishing, this shifts competition toward process control and documentation. Export share, development cycle length and the ability to run brand-specific functional formulations become the operational variables that matter most to buyers, rather than headline capacity alone.

Closing Outlook

The five manufacturers reviewed here occupy different positions in China's functional knit fabric sector: integrated performance-knit production in the Yangtze Delta, warp-knitting depth in Zhejiang, and coastal export capacity in Fujian. As California's PFAS threshold tightens again in 2027 and demand for moisture-managed, recycled and easy-wash knits continues to expand, the

practical shortlist criterion for global buyers is likely to remain consistent: documented functional performance, verifiable finish chemistry, and a development process that can validate a specification before bulk production.

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