

Silk Worms

After hatching from an egg, silk worms take one month to grow large enough to spin the silk. They spew out thread from tiny holes in their jaws, which they use to spin into their egg-bearing cocoons.

Silk worms spend three weeks in the cocoon, then emerge as a moth to mate and lay eggs. The eggs hatch into worms in a few weeks, and then the cycle continues.

A silk cocoon is made of one single thread of raw silk that ranges from 1,000 to more than 3,000 feet in length.

It takes 200 pounds of mulberry leaves are needed to produce 1 pound of raw silk. takes a mere 72 hours, during which time they produce between 500-1200 silken threads.

It takes more than 3,000 cocoons to make one pound of silk.

The ancient Chinese unearthed the silkworm's secret, and were the first to spin the silkworm's threads into cloth. They kept this covert, top-secret operation, from the rest of the world by imposing the death sentence upon those who smuggled the worm or its eggs out of China. Eventually, however, the secret was out, and silkworms are now farmed for their silk, in China, of course, and in Japan, India, France, Spain, and in Italy. These countries harness the power of the silkworm through a tedious, labor-intensive, time-consuming process, a process which prominently figures into the price of silk.