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K Asadullah Basha passed away

Kaniambadi Asadullah Basha, Editor, Leather Line & Leder Informant passed away in Chennai, on Friday, 17th April, 2026. He was 71.

Azeez Sons Publication established by Janab Kaniyambadi Abdul Azeez Saheb, in 1955, first brought out Market Report, popularly known as **K Abdul Azeez Market Reporter,** a widely read and most sought after News Data of the local (Periamet) & London Auction Report of hides & skins. After passing away of the founder in 1968, his brother in law, Mr H M Nisar Ahmad kept the daily market report alive and then handed over to the eldest son **Mr K Asadullah Basha**, who took over the publishing enterprise and introduced several Innovations.

Mr Asadullah Basha, with the active support of his two brothers, brought out several publications, like, Leather Line, Lexport Data, Leatherex Times and the most popular annual edition **Leder Informant** which was used to be brought out during the India International Leather Fair ever year.

Mr Asadullah Basha was a soft-spoken, very friendly and an enterprising person.

Indian Leather conveys its heart-felt condolences to all the members of the bereaved family.

Indian Leather
Digest of Leather News

60th Year

Vol.60 April - 2026 No. 02 Annual Subscription Rs.500

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Email: indianleather@yahoo.com

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CLE felicitates R Selvam IAS

The Council for Leather Exports (CLE) Southern Region, had organised a function, on 2nd April, 2026, at the Hotel Taj Connemara, Chennai, to felicitate, Shri R Selvam, IAS, Executive Director, CLE, marking the completion of his 8- year tenure as the Executive Director, on 8th April, 2026.

A huge turnout of the captains of the industry marked the function as special. The event drew an impressive lineup of industry leaders, and heads of various associations, who include, Dr M Rafeeque Ahmed, Mr Aqeel Panaruna, Mr Israr Ahmed Mecca, Mr A Ateequr Rahman, Dr P Thanikaivelan, Shri K R Vijayan, Shri P S Suresh & Shri Ramesh Prasad among others.

Mr Israr Ahmed Mecca, initiated the proceedings and welcomed the august gathering. He read out the message of Mr Abdul Wahab, Regional Chairman, Council for Leather Exports, wherein, Mr M Abdul Wahab has appreciated Mr Selvam's personal involvement and interest, to make Tamil Nadu as an athletic footwear hub, which has resulted in mobilising Rs 12,000 crore investment, and created one lakh job opportunities, especially for the weaker section of the society. Mr Selvam's efforts in working with the then Chairman, Shri Rajendra Jalan, on removing 20% export duty on crust leather and completely removing 10% import duty on wet blue leather, making both nil, is commendable, he mentioned.

Dr M Rafeeque Ahmed, President, AISHTMA, calling Mr Selvam as a soft-spoken and enterprising, said, he ably handled multiple issues and built strong relationships with the ministries and government officials.


FELICITATION CEREMONY
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Organised by
Leather and
Footwear Industry
2nd April 2026


FELICITATION CEREMONY


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Industry

Mr Israr Ahmed Mecca said, that Mr Selvam stood with the industry during the recent Supreme Court issue related to the Palar River and actively supported the stakeholders at every step. Mr Aqeel Panaruna, former Chairman, CLE, said, Mr Selvam has the unique opportunity of working with Five Chairmen during his tenure of 8 years, while the maximum period is only 5 or 7 years for an Executive Director.

Mr Selvam was honoured with shawls and presented with bouquets and citations by various associations on the occasion.

In his thanksgiving address, Mr Selvam, said it had been both a pleasure and challenge to serve as an Executive Director for 8 years term. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the industry leaders and council members for their unwavering support and co-operation in resolving many problems encountered by the industry during his tenure.

Mr Selvam's soft-spoken nature, friendly demeanor and enterprising vision have left a fasting mark on the leather industry and the industry is grateful for his eight years of committed leadership.

✶ ✶ ✶

Shri Mukhtarul Amin elected as Vice Chairman CLE

At the 185th Committee of Administration Meeting of the Council for Leather Exports (CLE), held on 30th March, 2026, in Kolkata, Shri Mukhtarul Amin, Chairman, Amin International, was elected as Vice-Chairman of CLE.

This prestigious appointment is a testament to his exceptional leadership, industry vision, and unwavering commitment to strengthening India's leather and footwear export sector.

His leadership journey across esteemed institutions such as the Footwear Design & Development Institute (FDDI), the Leather Sector Skill Council, and the National Skill Development Corporation reflects his continued contribution toward industry excellence, innovation, and skill development.

After being elected for the 3rd time to lead the Council, he shared his vision for India's Leather & Footwear sector. He said "India's Leather & Footwear sector stands at a defining inflection point with a strong opportunity to scale globally through investment, innovation and capability building."

Indian Leather wishes him all the very best.

Vasan's Voice

- Vasan Suri
A Passionate Leather Lover & Professional
Hi-Tech Consultancy
Tel: +91-9871504980/9999735293

(Mr. Vasan Suri is a senior industry professional and contributes regularly on topics of motivation and workplace excellence. He has presented below two informative articles - Editor)

Whenever a lock is invented, the key also gets invented

We are passing through the toughest times in our leather & leather products industry.

Remember, whenever a lock is invented, the key also gets invented.

Every problem will have a solution and every challenge brings with it an opportunity. It is important that, we move away from our routines and take a break of few days. Nothing will go wrong.

In such tough times, we need time for ourselves to get rejuvenated. Stay away from the Industry for a week.

Reduce the stress about the future, enjoy the Nature, Get fresh Oxygen in to the system and allow the mind to remain calm.

During this period itself, you will find the appropriate key for the lock.

A calm mind gets better clarity of thought rather than a confused mind.

1. List out the opportunities
2. List out the Challenges
3. Activate a new path of existence.
4. Think differently and out of the box.
5. Encourage positivity to be around you.

6. Do not allow Negative thoughts to shroud you.
7. Open your eyes to look at untapped market.
8. Get the World statistics of Leather & Leather Products Exports & Imports and find out the vacuum where you could fill in.
9. Encourage young minds in your team to come out with a solution.
10. If you are a tannery, work on savings on Nature's gifts. Water, Air, Electricity, Fossil fuels.
11. Take a look at the tanning and finishing process and you could find ways to reduce your costs by minimum of 10%
12. How to offset the 18% increase in price of chemicals? Best way is to dig in and find the way to reduce cost. Reduce consumption and adopt novel ways to reduce cost.
13. If you are Shoe or leather goods factory, right time to work towards reducing the consumption.
14. Activate your design team to be more innovative to make the customers and Brands look up to you.
15. Apparently, what best you can offer at the best price only will sell.
16. Encourage young minds to come up with some solutions.

Everyone is aware of these steps but, do not have time as they are embroiled in their every day routines and pressure.

Time to reset the systems on innovation, cost reduction, better working systems, more peaceful performance.

Let us work for a better tomorrow with a relaxed mind and not with a stressful routine.

Wishing the best for everyone in our fraternity to swim over these tides. God Bless!

Shaping up young minds - Shaping the future of the Industry & Country

It is my humble suggestion and opinion that, we need to train our youngsters to become the future force of our Industry.

Let us wear a different thinking cap and think differently which could activate a great result oriented performance.

What are we missing?

At the tannery side:

1. Pollution Control.
2. Effluent Treatment
3. Disposal of Waste
4. Better utilisation of Natural resources
5. Improvement in Technology
6. Innovative ways to make production more simpler and consistent.
7. Quality upgradation.
8. Systems to produce quality and not team to control quality after it is made.
9. Let the Leather Institutes work in tandem with the Industry to create industry ready students rather than, typical theoretical knowledge.
10. Train them and expose them to the challenges faced by the Industry and get them prepared to work towards solution.
11. Make them expert in controlling water inputs and outputs.
12. Make them smarter in analysing and handling the effluent treatment plants.

13. Let them work towards cost cutting of chemicals used. Every percentage of chemical reduction could make a difference in the cost not affecting the final product.

14. Allow them to try out something new. Every tannery have rejects at every stage and let them use them for the trials.

15. Get the young minds specialised in every area of operation starting from salting and desalting of raw hides until the finished leather gets ready, group up areas and let's concentrate in bringing out specialists rather than everyone studying the same syllabus.

16. When we have Doctors for every speciality health problems which opened up a big opportunity for young Doctors, similarly let us make the Leather Industry a specialised Industry and motivate more students to get involved in building the future of the industry.

17. Education at the University about LWG and other certification and get them prepared to address the requirements from the day one, they get in to the Industry.

At the products side:

1. Allow young minds to open up by giving them exposure.

2. Do not allow them to work in an hierarchy which will make them dumb.

3. Training them from understanding different raw materials and its nature and purpose, could mean a big difference in their approach.

4. While at FDDI or NIFT or CFTI, let them be made ready as specialists in specific areas.

5. Continuous application of mind in a particular operation or activity will help the young blood to shape up and shake up the Industry.

6. Quality is the key for long term success. Train to produce quality not to control after the damage is done.

7. Consistency is the next important requirement. How do we make it consistent in everyday activity?

8. Innovative collection in design and construction.

9. Save, Save, Save. This should be the mantra. Every decimetre of leather saved in cutting, innovative methods to reduce averages in the product, time study at the department to improve efficiency.

10. Do not tax the team rather inculcate responsibility to perform for their own benefits.

11. Inclusive management is the key for a better tomorrow.

12. Bringing up experts in every area of activity in a factory.

    a) Design & development

    b) Selection of leathers.

    c) Assessment of quality of lining, inlays and other metal fittings.

    d) Cutting averages and efficiency

    e) Motivation at every level for a better performance.

    f) Upper making, Shell making whichever case it may be, to work towards improving the output.

    g) Make the team responsible to be a policemen of themselves to check on their outputs every hour.

    h) Better working environment, is a must.

i) There should be no stress and happiness should be everywhere.

j) Future students training should consider all these at the Institute level.

k) Promoting the students to be expert in a specific field of their choice, will make them a better performer for themselves and also for the Industry.

l) Foreign Language - It should be made compulsory that our students are made to learn atleast one foreign language.

m) Proficiency in Language will break the barriers and will allow easy flow of knowledge and technology.

n) Specialise in understanding the social and ethical compliance.

Train the children at the Institute level on all International compliances including specific brands so that, we are making the next generation as stronger than ever.

I have only listed few points here and there are many who could contribute more to these ideas and make our Industry standing up to encounter any challenge and come up triumph.

Connectivity of Special Theory of Relativity

Dr. Buddhadeb Chattopadhyay

(Former Principal, Government College of Engineering and Leather Technology, Kolkata)

We shall try to find some connection of the Special Theory of Relativity with some other laws and the extension of it for the fun-loving students

Now let us consider a free-falling object having mass m and falling from a height **h** in the gravitational field of the earth, where acceleration due to gravity is **g**. So, the kinetic energy (T) of that body/particle would be:-

T = ½ m**v^**2 (1)

If, we differentiate T with respect to time t, we get

dT/dt = d/dt (½ m**v^**2) = ½ .2. **v**.{d(m**v**)/dt} (When **v << c**).

or, dT/dt = **v.F** ..... (2) by application of the Newton's Second Law of motion. This is indeed the definition of **power**.

Now recalling that second law we can rewrite the equation (2) as dT/dt = d/dt (m**v**).(-d**h**/dt) or, d/dt (- m**gh**) = d/dt (u), where u = potential energy of the particle (if **v** <<**c**) .....**..**(3)

Now, see the magic, we have never introduced the term potential energy u earlier, as if it appeared all of a sudden on the mathematical stage.

So now, we have a clear picture of equation (3), which states simply dT/dt = - du/dt …….. (4)

Now integrating both sides of the equation (4) we get T + u = constant …… (5)

This is a fantastic deduction that no matter what, the sum of kinetic energy and potential energy of a moving object would be constant under any gravitational field, with a rider that velocity of the object should be negligible as compared to the velocity of light in vacuum.

Now, let us consider what happens to the free particle? The necessity and sufficient condition of a free particle is it's potential energy u must be zero. So Total energy E which is otherwise the sum of T and u is becoming: -

E = T (for free particle only)

Differentiating both sides of the equation with respect to time, we get dE/dt = dT/dt……(6)

Now we shall apply the formula of total energy E = m**c**^2 in the equation (6), knowing the **c**, the velocity of light in vacuum is constant.

So, equation (6) becomes: - d/dt (m.**c**^2) = dT/dt

or, **c**^2.(dm/dt) = **v.F** from the relationship obtained in equation (2) or, **c**^2.(dm/dt) = **v.**d/dt(m**v**) …….. (7)

Multiplying both sides of the equation (7) by 2m we get: - 2m.**c**^2.(dm/dt) = 2m**v.**d(m**v**)**/**dt

Or, we may integrate now both sides with respect to t, then we can write, m^2.**c^**2 = m^2.**v**^2 + k where, k is the integration constant …… (8)

Let us set now to find the value of k. Assuming that **v** = 0 at m = m_0 and substituting these values in equation (8) we get m_0^**c**^2 = k…… (9)

By replacing this value of k in equation (8), we get m^2.**c**^2 = m^2.**v**^2 + m_0^2.**c**^2……. (8) by rearrangement equation (8) we can also write, m_0^2.**c**^2 = m^2[**c**^2 – **v**^2] or, m^2 = m_0^2.**c**^2/[**c**^2 – **v**^2] or, m^2 = m_0^2/[**c**^2/**c**^2 – **v^**2**/c**^2]

By taking square roots on both sides we get, m = m_0/[1 – **v**^2/**c**^2]$^{-½}$…. ……..(9), where m is the moving mass and m_0 is the rest mass of the particle in question. Now we see

m = m_0{[1- **v**^2/**c**^2]}$^{-1/2}$…… (10)

Multiplying both side by **c**^2 we gate m.**c**^2 = {[m_0**c**^2 + ½ m_0**v**^2 + ……..]} by application of Binomial Theorem. Since **c** is too large a quantity, therefore, the terms like [**v**^3 / **c**^3 + **v**^4 / **c**^4 + …….] would be too negligible to compute, hence may be ignored.

Left hand side stands for Total Energy E = m**c**^2 on the RHS the second term stands as kinetic energy, what about the first term m_0^2**c**^2? This is of course an energy term and known as Rest Energy. Means if a particle exists in the universe and does nothing at all, the work done can be zero but still it contains a huge amount of energy because of its sear existence in the order of at least 10^{16} Jules (because **c** = $3.0.10^8$ $m.s^{-1}$)

Now recalling equation (10) we can answer the following riddles: -

a) Can a particle having some rest mass m_0 move in the speed of light in vacuum? The answer is no, because by substituting the value **v** = **c** in equation (10), we get m = m_0/{[1-**c**^2/**c**^2]}$^{-1/2}$ that means m = m_0/{1-1}$^{-1/2}$ or infinity. Mass of a particle cannot be infinite. So we may rule out that probability. This makes an interesting consequence that for any particle existing in the Universe the limiting speed is **c**. Because as the speed increases, the moving mass m also increases, the particle becomes more and more heavy that actually prevents it's speed to reach the value of **c**.

b) Having said so in a) the logical question could be light is dual, it can therefore be considered as particle itself. How come then the light moves in the speed of **c** in vacuum? The reason being the photon particle has a rest mass m_0 = 0; by inserting this value in equation (10) again and then simplification, we get the moving mass of photon particle m = 0/0. We may recall, 0/0 is not infinity, but undefined. So photon particle does move at the speed of light in vacuum with its moving mass undefined.

c) The next consequence, can a particle even cross the limiting speed **c**? The answer is no, because if **v** > **c**, then from the equation (10) we can simplify that the moving mass m becomes imaginary. How can a real particle have an imaginary moving mass?

All these magical perspectives can be drawn up slowly, if we think a little out-of-box. Hope that the fun will be interesting to the students at least.


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Periamet, Chennai - 600 003, India
Ph: 91-44-28343685; Mobile: 9444412685
Email: indianleather@yahoo.com;

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KASTORIA
INTERNATIONAL FUR FAIR

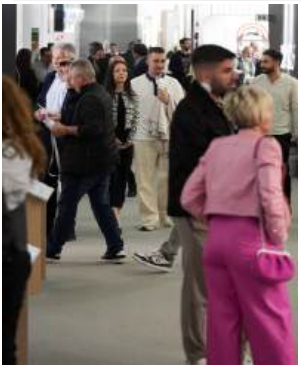
51st KIFF reaffirmed its role as one of the most consistent reference points in the global fur market

The **51st KASTORIA International Fur Fair (KIFF)** held from 16-19 April 2026 at the International Exhibition Centre of Kastoria, Greece, concluded with a strong commercial footprint, further reinforcing its position within the global fur industry. Throughout the duration of the event, sustained buying activity was recorded, marked by a continuous flow of interactions between buyers and exhibitors and a clear focus on the formation of new commercial partnerships.

In total, the fair attracted **927 trade visitors** and buyers from **41 countries**.







More than **93 exhibitors** participated from across the global market, with Greece as a leading presence, of which 89 were fur companies

and companies from related sectors, including designers, manufacturers, dressing companies and leather traders, reflecting the full scope of the production chain within the exhibition space.

The upcoming season's collections span womenswear and menswear, defined by structured lines, fur accessories and interior pieces with a lifestyle character. **Mink, sable, fox, swakara and chinchilla remain the key raw materials of the season.**

Commercial activity was concentrated in the high-end segment, with sable, chinchilla and lynx generating the strongest demand, while mink and fox maintained a steady presence. Finished garments in mink, fox, sable and chinchilla stood out as the dominant commercial categories of the event.

Efforts by buyers to identify lower-cost alternatives remained limited, while several producers opted to withhold part of their sales, anticipating further price strengthening and strategically managing their inventories.

In parallel programming, the event featured the **Fashion Gala Show "The Silent Evolution", opening with SAGA FURS, Grand Sponsor** of the fair, presenting two fox creations of architectural and near-futuristic aesthetic.

The second day of the fair included a **seminar dedicated to the protection of industrial property** as a development tool for businesses in the sector. More than 200 professionals from the international fur industry attended the event, which showed further strengthening of the event's global networking dimension.

The **51st KASTORIA International Fur Fair** reaffirmed its role as one of the most consistent reference points in the global fur market, combining commercial activity, international participation and strategic industry momentum.

The fair welcomed organized business delegations from China, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, supported by **Enterprise Greece**, further strengthening the event's international trade reach.

IFLE
GUANGZHOU

34th edition of Shoes & Leather-Guangzhou, the comprehensive and professional exhibition for the footwear industry, incorporating, International Footwear Exhibition (IFLE), which will showcase a wide range of finished footwear for business sourcing, will take place on 20-22 May 2026 at the China Import and Export Fair Complex, Guangzhou, China.

Shoes & Leather Guangzhou 2026 covers the wide footwear supply chain in one place. From advanced tanning, sewing machinery to sustainable chemicals and finished leather products, will be showcased by over 800 international exhibitors from more than 20 countries and regions, occupying around 40 thousand sq.mtrs exhibition space.

The mega event is expected to welcome more than twenty thousand professional buyers from 80+ countries and regions. The IFLE-GZ will focus on high quality footwear from factories across mainland China and Asia.

Concurrent Events

DesignWalk
设计走廊

One of the concurrent events in the Shoes & Leather - Guangzhou 2026 will be the **DESIGN WALK.** It is a non-profit platform sponsored

by renowned shoe manufacturers, federations, and international footwear associations. It showcases stylish footwear, leather products, and accessories, while sharing new creativity and inspiration to positively impact the industry.

The 15th edition of the International Footwear Design Competition (IFDC), will be organized by the Confederation of International Footwear Conference (CIFA) with the support of Top Repute Co. Ltd. Since 2008, IFDC has been introducing multi-national designers' concepts, while also offering opportunities for young designers to connect with manufacturers. The event also aimed to promote the importance of original product design, fine production skills, and quality to build unique branding.

As usual, Technical Seminars will be organised as part of the fair activities. International speakers will present their latest market technologies and fashion trends, which will be extremely helpful for business planning and decision making.

20/05/2026 **Modeurop Colours Spring/Summer 2027 -** Dr. Claudia Schulz, a prominent German fashion and trend expert specializing in footwear, leather goods, and accessories

21/05/2026 **ZDHC Footwear Engagement 2026 -** A representative from ZDHC

21/05/2026 **How to assess comfort of footwear? -** Lily Li – SATRA China Lab Manager & Langton Lan – SATRA China Lab Supervisor

Shoes & Leather-Guangzhou is being organised by Top Repute Co with the support of The Association of Guangdong Shoes Manufacturers and Guangzhou Footwear Association.

For details contact :

https://www.toprepute.com.hk/shoes-and-leather-guangzhou/

Email: toprepute@toprepute.com.cn

BFSHOW drives business and attracts major retail chains

The 6th edition of **BFSHOW,** the biggest footwear trade show in Latin America, held by the Brazilian Footwear Industries Association (Abicalçados), and organized by NürnbergMesse Brasil (NMB), will take place from 18-20 May, 2026 at Distrito Anhembi, in São Paulo/SP, Brazil.

BFSHOW is one of the country's main showcases for footwear business, aimed exclusively at industry professionals and attracting both domestic and international buyers. Held twice a year, the trade show presents collections from more than 350 Brazilian brands of women's, men's, children's and sports footwear, as well as, handbag manufacturers, service providers for retail and strategic content for retailers looking to stay updated on trends, sales and e-commerce.

At this edition, the trade show embraces a theme with strong popular appeal by celebrating the men's FIFA World Cup. The choice, aligned with the period leading up to the start of the tournament, uses the sport's aesthetics as a platform to emphasize the quality of Brazilian footwear and provide an even more memorable experience for visitors. More than 12 thousand trade professionals from domestic and international are expected to visit the Show.

Bringing together, in a single venue, a wide range of brands, services, and exclusive content, BFSHOW is a must-attend event for industry buyers - and a strategic environment for doing business.

Easy access to brands from all segments and Brazilian production hubs is one of the key differentiators highlighted by BFSHOW visitors, alongside the venue's segmented layout - which, according to buyers, streamlines the visit. "BFSHOW has established itself as one of the key moments of the year for our market. It is an opportunity to explore products, align strategies with suppliers, and start outlining the next purchasing cycles with greater confidence.

The entire structure provided greatly facilitates the decision-making process," says Rouget Ortiz, men's footwear buyer at Lojas Pompéia.

The event has also established itself as an important hub for attracting retailers from the Northeast. With the presentation of new collections and the presence of professionals from both industry and retail, BFSHOW serves as a platform for decisions that directly impact retailers' planning throughout the year, while also reflecting the movements and priorities of the Brazilian footwear sector.

More information and registration: www.bfshow.com.br

Technical footwear boosts Portuguese industry in foreign markets.

Technical footwear sales increased by 14.5% to €213 million.

The Portuguese strategy of diversifying its offerings is beginning to bear fruit. In 2025, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics (INE), it was technical footwear that boosted the Portuguese industry in foreign markets.

Indeed, while exports of leather footwear registered a slight growth of 0.2% to €1,413 million, footwear with technical characteristics increased by 14.5% to €213 million. In 2025, noteworthy growth was seen in the "Other plastic footwear" segment, with a 25% increase, and in "Footwear made of textile materials" with a 6.6% increase. Meanwhile, 'Safety footwear' grew by 14.1%.

In practical terms, last year Portugal exported approximately 68 million pairs of shoes, worth around €1,718 million, registering a growth of 0.8% compared to the previous period. This performance is particularly relevant in a scenario where the main competitors are facing production and export declines. In 2025, export declines exceeding 10% are expected in countries such as China (-11%) and Turkey (-13%), and declines in relevant players such as Brazil (-2%), Spain (-3%), Italy (-1%), and Mexico.

“The Portuguese footwear industry has once again demonstrated resilience in a particularly demanding international context, bucking the trend of contraction observed in several producing countries,” adds Luis Onofre. For the President of APICCASPS, “the capacity for diversification of supply and adaptation to international preferences confirms the strategic maturity of the Portuguese cluster.” “In a global context of uncertainty, the sector demonstrates that innovation in materials and production flexibility are key factors in ensuring competitiveness and sustained growth,” he concluded.

Light, material, movement and time: four trends shaping the next season

From contemporary art to fashion products, four themes - SHINE ON, RIPPLE, PRISM and PATINA - anticipate consumer trends across footwear, bags, leather goods and sneakers. In Riva del Garda, from 13 to 16 June 2026, the Area Highlights will present them to industry professionals through dedicated events, curated in collaboration with Arsutoria.

During a visit to a major art exhibition, there are moments when you stop looking and start feeling. It is from this same intensity of perception that the key trends of the next season emerge - four visions inspired by **observing art** as a research tool.

Expo Riva Schuh and **Gardabags** (**13-16 June 2026**) will present and explore them through the **Area Highlights** programme, developed in collaboration with **Arsutoria**.

SHINE ON

It starts with Pop Art: Jeff Koons pushes surfaces to the extreme, ultra-glossy and reflective. Daniel Buren introduces the code of coloured vertical stripes, while Bridget Riley adds movement through vibrating optical bands. The result: high-gloss finishes, coloured coatings, latex and metallic effects. A bold, direct palette - saturated reds, bright yellows, electric greens. A trend designed to stand out, using light as a powerful commercial tool.

RIPPLE

Boccioni translated speed into sculptural form. Iris van Herpen creates garments that appear fluid, almost water-like. Both share the same goal: giving shape to the intangible. Applied to product design,

this becomes living surfaces: folds, pleats, embossing and three-dimensional waves. A texture that is not only visible, but above all tangible. Structured leathers - not printed - create real depth, delivering immediate and recognisable added value.

PRISM

Olafur Eliasson creates environments that change colour depending on perspective. Dan Flavin transforms neon into pure architecture. From these references emerges an aesthetic based on iridescent, colour-shifting and mirrored materials. Vinyl materials that shift from green to violet, leathers that capture and reflect light in constantly changing ways. Bags and shoes that reinvent themselves through light and movement - the trend closest to impulse buying.

PATINA

Alberto Burri worked by burning canvas, wood and plastic, revealing unexpected value through transformation. A key insight: the most interesting material is the one marked by time. Patina translates this approach into product design: gradient tones, worn effects, raw edges, vegetable-tanned finishes. Each piece is unique. Imperfection is not a flaw - it becomes the added value to communicate, a strong response to a market saturated with standardisation.

MORE THAN TRENDS AT EXPO RIVA SCHUH AND GARDABAGS

The four trends will be explored in depth during the Area Highlights sessions - a key reference point for buyers and exhibitors. Area Highlights is part of a broader knowledge ecosystem that defines the Riva del Garda Fierecongressi fairs: alongside the **Area Showcase**, featuring selected products from Gardabags exhibitors, the **Innovation Village Retail** dedicated to tech start-ups for retail, and the **Market Focus** sessions analysing global economic dynamics.

An unmissable event: **Expo Riva Schuh** and **Gardabags**, **from 13 to 16 June 2026**.

BASF debuts Elastollan® GripTec outsole solution for enhanced grip, design freedom and sustainability at CHINAPLAS 2026.

- **Elastollan® GripTec series includes three distinct grades to support diverse performance & design needs across multiple footwear categories**

- **Life Cycle Assessment confirms Elastollan GripTec offers environmental advantages over conventional materials in manufacturing**

At CHINAPLAS 2026, Asia's premier Plastics & Rubber trade fair, to be held in Shanghai China from 21-24 April, 2026 BASF will unveil Elastollan® GripTec, a new innovative thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) portfolio designed for the sports footwear industry, unlocking new possibilities for outsole design and manufacturing. The new Elastollan GripTec series combines exceptional grip, durability, design flexibility and sustainability, and is designed for running and hiking enthusiasts, as well as lifestyle fashion and kidswear applications.

"Footwear brands are always looking for materials that enhance user experience and improve safety. Elastollan GripTec - our next-generation TPU outsole solution - is set to redefine footwear performance while enabling greater design flexibility and advancing our commitment to sustainability," said Rohit Roop Ghosh, Vice President, Business Management TPU, Performance Materials Asia Pacific, BASF. "Preliminary feedback from leading global footwear brands have been positive and validates the market potential of Elastollan GripTec. We will continue to collaborate with more customers to strengthen their competitiveness and drive innovation across the industry."

Driving superior performance and design freedom

The Elastollan GripTec TPU portfolio is engineered to deliver superior traction, rugged durability and excellent abrasion resistance across a wide range of conditions.

It also offers design freedom, with options ranging from transparent to black, and allows for more creative and detailed outsole designs using TPU.

To address diverse application requirements, the Elastollan GripTec series comprises three grades:

- Elastollan GripTec 10H: Best-in-class in abrasion with excellent durability
- Elastollan GripTec 11HT: Rubber-like feel with better transparency, enabling greater design freedom
- Elastollan GripTec 12T: Superior transparency with a balanced performance profile

Advancing sustainability across the TPU value chain

Beyond performance innovation, Elastollan GripTec is developed for optimized processability. Its efficient manufacturing process for TPU outsoles helps improve productivity, reduce energy consumption and minimize waste emissions.

A life cycle assessment (LCA) study conducted by Intertek, a leading quality assurance provider, demonstrates that Elastollan GripTec generates 41% lower product carbon footprint (PCF) than conventional rubber outsoles during the manufacturing stage.

Primeasia partners with Eco Indonesia

Primeasia, in its recent news release has stated: “Primeasia is pleased to announce we’ve entered into a manufacturing partnership with Ecco Indonesia to produce Primeasia leathers at their location in Surabaya Indonesia.

This collaboration provides Primeasia with production capabilities and regional proximity to optimize our service to customers and meet growing market demand in Indonesia with greater agility. Primeasia’s procurement and technical teams will support the Indonesia facility through raw material sourcing and chemicals specification.

Our agreement underscores Primeasia’s continued commitment to industry excellence adding in country production to Primeasia’s Jakarta logistics center that was established in 2024.

The establishment of Primeasia Indonesia is another step in Primeasia’s continued commitment to Security of Supply. The Indonesia facility provides local for local delivery of high-quality leathers to Primeasia’s customers in Indonesia, with minimum lead times and supported by our expanded customer service team, located throughout Indonesia.

Jonarthan Clark, CEO, Primeasia has said, “As we enter the second half of 2026, we are extremely excited to expand into our third region of production through our new cooperation with ECCO in Indonesia. ECCO represents a like-minded partner that shares our values and our strong commitment to serving footwear customers with quality, integrity, and value. He further said that Primeasia is continuing to add capacity with additional retanning and coloring drums scheduled to come online in early May, along with various automation upgrades across their tannery operations.

Statement from FDRA's Matt Priest on Footwear Inflation and Economic Pressures

Matt Priest, President and CEO of Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA), on 13th April, 2026, has released the following statement regarding the latest footwear economic data and the mounting inflationary pressures facing American consumers:

“The latest inflation data confirms what the footwear industry and American families are already feeling at the checkout counter. Footwear prices rose nearly 2.5 percent in March, the sharpest increase in more than three years, as tariffs continue to stack on top of higher energy costs and global instability.”

“For months, brands and retailers have done everything possible to absorb rising costs and hold prices down. But with footwear tariffs more than doubling over the past year, duties surging by more than 80 percent, and oil-driven supply chain costs climbing, that buffer has been exhausted. These price increases are no longer theoretical-they're landing squarely on consumers.”

“At a time when inflation remains elevated, and household budgets are stretched, layering more tariffs onto everyday goods like shoes only adds fuel to the inflation fire. If policymakers are serious about easing inflationary pressure, the place to start is by pulling back on punitive trade policies that raise prices for working families without fixing the underlying problems.”

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The New Retail Culture: Milan Hosts an International Dialogue Redefining the Future of Retail

Global buyers, lifestyle culture, technology, and AI take center stage at the meeting promoted by Fashion Link Milano. Synergy among fashion system trade shows fosters a strategic and integrated vision of markets.

The New Retail Culture, the international event promoted by **Fashion Link Milano** - the platform bringing together the leading trade shows of the fashion system - was held on 14th April 2026 at Palazzo Lombardia. The gathering marked a high-level opportunity to analyze emerging global retail scenarios, bringing together international buyers, industry professionals, media, and stakeholders for a direct exchange on the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior and distribution strategies.

At the heart of the discussion was the transformation of retail from a mere point of sale into a contemporary cultural platform, where product, technology, processes, and lifestyle converge to create increasingly complex and meaningful experiences. In this context, the role of the Lifestyle Curator Buyer is gaining prominence - an emerging figure adopting a cross-disciplinary approach to build true consumption ecosystems, where fashion, beauty, wellness, design, and innovation coexist seamlessly.

Curated and moderated by **Orietta Pelizzari**, *Global Macro-Trend Forecaster in Creative Industries and Cross-Cultural Strategy for Retail Futures*, the event stood out for its dynamic and interactive format. Structured around thematic discussion tables, it encouraged

direct and high-quality exchanges among participants. This model reflects an ongoing approach designed to support the industry beyond the temporary dimension of individual trade fairs.

From this perspective, trade shows are no longer seen as static, isolated events tied to the traditional February and September schedules. Instead, they are evolving into a proactive platform, active throughout the year, offering multiple opportunities for engagement and serving as a continuous tool to interpret and navigate the market with awareness and up-to-date insight.

Key topics explored during the discussion sessions included:

- the evolution of consumer lifestyle behaviors
- the integration of new product categories into assortments
- the growing role of technology and artificial intelligence in production and buying strategies
- cultural differences across Europe, the United States, the Middle East, and Asia
- the impact of wellness culture on purchasing decisions

In particular, artificial intelligence emerged not only as an enabling technology but as a true interpretative engine. In an increasingly data-driven landscape, AI empowers buyers to read lifestyle micro-trends in real time, transforming weak signals and complex data flows into actionable insights that support purchasing decisions and assortment development.

The discussions highlighted a retail landscape increasingly oriented toward experience and cross-sector contamination, where physical spaces are evolving into hubs for interaction, discovery, and cultural connection, while selection and merchandising strategies become ever more sophisticated and integrated.

From left: Fulvia Bacchi, CEO of Lineapelle; Agostino Apolito, CEO of Simac Tanning Tech; Giovanna Ceolini, President of MICAM; Roberto Tadini, President of TheOneMilano; Claudia Sequi, President of MIPEL; Emanuele Guido, Director of Milano Fashion & Jewels and Sì Sposaitalia Collezioni.

The initiative reaffirmed Milan's role as a leading international hub for dialogue between industry, distribution, and innovation, offering a concrete and up-to-date perspective on ongoing transformations. Strengthening the value of the event was the strong synergy expressed by **Fashion Link Milano -** a project that integrates the sector's key trade shows into a single strategic vision: **MICAM Milano, MIPEL, TheOne Milano, Milano Fashion & Jewels, Lineapelle, Simac Tanning Tech**, and **FILO -** aimed at delivering a comprehensive, coherent, and efficient experience of the entire fashion system.

This journey will find its full expression in the September 2026 trade fair calendar, when **Milano Fashion & Jewels** and **TheOne Milano** (September 12–14) will take place alongside **MICAM Milano and**

MIPEL (September 13 –15), confirming the strength of an integrated ecosystem capable of attracting buyers and industry professionals from around the world. Completing the system, **Lineapelle** and **Simac Tanning Tech** (September 15–17), along with **Filo** (September 15–16), will also be held concurrently, further expanding the offering and reinforcing Milan's position as a global platform for the entire fashion supply chain.

An ecosystem that is evolving from a series of trade fair events into a continuous connection tool, capable of supporting the industry throughout the year- bridging business, technological innovation, and contemporary culture.

MICAM Milano – the leading global event for high-quality, innovative, and sustainable fashion footwear.

Milano Fashion & Jewels – the benchmark for bijou, fashion accessories, and everyday apparel.

MIPEL – the most important international event dedicated to leather goods and fashion accessories.

TheOne Milano – a trade show dedicated to outerwear and signature prêt-à-porter collections.

LINEAPELLE – the leading international exhibition of leather, accessories, components, synthetics, fabrics, and models for footwear, leather goods, apparel, and interior design.

SIMAC TANNING TECH – the reference event for machinery and technology for the footwear, leather goods, and tanning industries.

FILO – an exhibition of yarns and fibers.

All shows are international.

COTANCE OPENS A NEW CHAPTER, EXPANDS MEMBERSHIP TO THE ENTIRE LEATHER VALUE CHAIN

At its Extraordinary General Assembly held on 13 February 2026 in Milan during Lineapelle, COTANCE unanimously approved a landmark revision of its Statutes, officially opening the organisation to a new category of members and setting the course toward a broader, more inclusive representation of the leather value chain.

The statutory reform, the result of a year-long review throughout 2025, introduces a new category of "Supporting Members", enabling organisations connected to the leather ecosystem - including education and training providers, research and innovation bodies, leather industry clusters, suppliers, and other stakeholders - to formally participate in COTANCE activities. These members will benefit from the Confederation's activities and participate in targeted events while not holding voting rights.

The revised Statutes also modernise governance by strengthening the executive role of the Presidency. The President will designate Vice-Presidents, allowing greater flexibility in the leadership structure and ensuring representation aligned with the sector's priorities. Also, the term of the COTANCE Presidency has been enlarged to four years.

COTANCE President, Manuel Rios, emphasised:

"The decisions taken in Milan by unanimity signals not just an administrative update, but a structural step forward: a more open, collaborative and future-oriented Confederation, ready to support a modern European leather ecosystem."

Commenting on the reform, COTANCE Secretary General Gustavo Gonzalez-Quijano underlined:

"COTANCE is, and remains, a European organisation representing the interest of European tanners. With this statutory evolution, COTANCE broadens its constituency to cover also the interests of individuals and entities in the leather ecosystem which previously lacked representation. By doing so, it positions itself to better address today's challenges - from sustainability and traceability to skills, innovation and global competitiveness - by engaging the full spectrum of actors shaping the future of leather."

COTANCE members also welcomed Edoardo De Paola as Deputy Secretary General, who will assume the full responsibilities of Secretary General as of April 2026, ensuring continuity and further strengthening the organisation's capacity to support the sector in the years ahead.

During his introduction to the membership, Mr De Paola stated:

"I am an Italian national and a European citizen. While my proximity may make it more immediate for me to engage with the Italian membership, I am fully conscious that this mandate entrusts me with representing a broad and diverse European membership. I am committed to safeguarding the interest of COTANCE's members and the plurality of voices that shape its common position".

Organisations interested in joining COTANCE as Supporting Members are invited to express their interest at cotance@euroleather.com

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The European Social Partners of the Leather Industry kick off their new common project:

Leather: European Social and Environmental Report 2026

Edoardo De Paola (COTANCE) and Camille Franger (industriAll Europe), the European Social Partners of the leather/tanning sector, officially launched a new joint Social Dialogue project aimed at delivering the **2026 Social and Environmental Report of the European Leather Industry (SER2026)**.

The initiative, supported by the European Commission, will run for **20 months** and builds on the previous 2020 edition of the report. The 2026 version will update the previous one to reflect the latest regulatory and sustainability developments shaping the sector. This initiative will be carried out with the collaboration of affiliates in 6 EU Member States (see hereunder).

The project will collect and analyse data from a representative sample of European tanneries and trade unions, on more than 37 social indicators and about 39 environmental parameters. This exercise will provide **reliable benchmarks on social and environmental performances to** support companies in adapting to new EU requirements, including the **ESPR and CSRD/CS3D frameworks**.

Company data will be anonymised and aggregated at national level before being computed at European level for drawing the conclusions that will flow into the SER2026 report.

The project will also include a dedicated **social dialogue workshop**, bringing together employers and workers to discuss key findings. Also, a wide communication and dissemination campaign is included in the project's scope to ensure strong visibility and uptake of the results.

"With SER2026, we are taking an essential step forward in strengthening transparency, credibility and data-driven decision making for the European leather industry. This report is truly ***by the industry, and for the industry.*** *It will fill a critical gap where no national, European, or comparable international data exists. The previous edition, SER2020, remains the most downloaded document on the COTANCE website, and has become a key benchmark in our dialogue with the European Commission. By aligning social and environmental performance with the latest EU policy developments, we are reinforcing the sector's commitment to high standards and continuous improvement"* - Edoardo De Paola, Secretary General, COTANCE

"*The SER2026 project represents a milestone for the European leather sector, reinforcing the importance of social dialogue between workers and employers, advancing sustainability across the entire industry, and ensuring that good quality, secure jobs remain at the heart of our sector's development. By combining reliable data with collaborative discussion, we are building a stronger, more responsible, and future-ready leather industry for all"* - said Judith Kirton-Darling, General Secretary of industriAll Europe.

The initiative will conclude with a **final conference in Brussels**, where the findings of SER2026 will be presented to stakeholders, policymakers, trade unions and industry representatives.

Through this project, European Social Partners reaffirm their joint commitment to **high social and environmental standards**, transparency and continuous improvement in the leather industry.

New TFL Colour Trends Autumn Winter 2027-28

TFL has released its new catalogue for Autumn Winter 2027-28, presenting the latest colour trends for leather garments, footwear, accessories and for the upholstery industry.

The trends are divided into **“Wearing” and “Living”.**

“Wearing” comprises inspirations and colour trends for garments, footwear and accessories.

The **“Living”** section features all colours that will decorate the season’s interior designs.

In the **“Wearing”** section, nubuck and reptile prints are infused with vibrant, deep, and translucent hues - ranging from warm burgundy and wine tones to elegant blues, precious emerald greens, and futuristic purples.

In the **"Living"** section, nappa and thick micro-printed leathers embrace saturated colour effects, expressed through enveloping caramel shades, refined neutrals like taupe, and more exotic notes inspired by earth and spice tones.

TFL Colour Trends Autumn Winter 2027-28 are an invitation to explore tactile and visual emotions through colour, combining innovation, comfort and style.

We wish our customers an inspiring read of the TFL Trend Catalogue, supporting future colour decisions.

For more details, please visit www.tfl.com.

Back to School Column

Dr N K Chandra Babu

babunkc@yahoo.com

Vegetable Tanning – Part III

The previous article (Vegetable tanning –Part II) in the column dealt with production of vegetable tanning solid extracts and spray dried powders and their modification to improve the properties. The principles behind vegetable tanning in terms of the effect of various factors have also been discussed. This article would mostly deal with the properties of some commercially important tanning materials, and the popular modern tanning methods for the production of heavy leathers (sole leathers) and EI leathers. The mechanism of vegetable tanning would also be discussed here.

Mimosa Extract

Mimosa is the most popular tanning material preferred world over on account of good tanning to producer fuller leathers with pleasant color. It is obtained from the bark of the black wattle tree which is indigenous to South and East Africa and South America, particularly Brazil. The barks of trees of seven to nine years old have usually have a tannin content of about 35% and hence are selected for extract manufacture.

Tannin extracts have a low concentration of salts and acids with a pH of around 4.5, and usually produce full and firmer leathers with good penetration in a shorter time with satisfactory fixation and yield. Color is the major advantage as mentioned earlier with less amount of reds formation. Like any other condensed tannins, mimosa tanned leather is also prone to oxidation often catalyzed by high temperature, pH and exposure to air and light. Hence topping or

blending with hydrolysable tannins like myrobalan is common in full vegetable tanning processes. Many times bleaching with bisulfite and sometimes with oxalic acid is also carried out to produce lighter colored leathers. Bleached spray dried powders are used especially in top tanning to obtain light colored sole leathers

Quebracho Extracts

Quebracho extracts are produced from the heartwood of Quebracho Colorado trees which grow mostly in Northern Argentina and Paraguay in South America. About 8 years old trees are considered mature enough for extract production.

Unmodified extract contains a high proportion of very high molecular weight tannins which are insoluble (8-9%) and hence deposit high amount of reds causing the resultant leather to be deep red/pink in color. But it produces fuller and compact leathers with relatively better water resistance compared to mimosa. Hence it is preferred for production of high quality sole and industrial leathers but color is often the main drawback. To improve solubility and color, quebracho is sulfited heavily with 5-10% sodium bisulfite/sodium sulfite at high temperature. Blending with chestnut or myrobalan is done to get lighter color.

Chestnut Extracts

The extracts are prepared from the heartwood of chestnut trees that grow mainly in France, Italy and Spain in Europe. Chestnut is a hydrolysable tanning material with low pH (below 3.0) with low concentration of salt and hence fix rapidly with slow penetration but high rate of fixation (high astringency). Hence it is usually modified (sweetening to neutralize acids with milder alkalis like sulfite or ammonium hydroxide to pH of about 4.5 and increase salt content) to overcome this problem. The leather produced is light brown in color which is relatively faster to light. Unmodified chestnut is used in

final stages of tanning (along with mimosa or quebracho) to produce firm and full leathers with high yield with improved color and fastness. Sweetened chestnut produces even lighter colored leathers when topped on leathers tanned with condensed tannins.

Sweetened chestnut was used as a self tanning for the production of sole leather of reasonably good quality in France during the World War due to nonavailabilty of mimosa.

Myrabolan Extracts

The extract is prepared from the dried fruit of a tree which grows mainly in India and parts of Burma. It is a hydrolysable tanning material with a natural pH of 3-3.3. As in the case of chestnut, myrobalan is also highly astringent with slow rate of penetration. Often it is combined with condensed tannins to get fuller and firmer leathers. In the case of sole leathers and E I leathers top treatment with myrobalan (called myrobing in tanners' parlance) is carried out to improve the color and fastness on one hand and also produce firmer leather with high yield.

Valonea Extract

The extract is prepared from the beard and cup of the acorn of Turkish and Greek oak trees. It is also a hydrolysable tanning material with properties similar to myrobalan but produces dark grey brown color. In general hydrolysable tannins are seldom used alone but mostly in combination with condensed tannins.

Apart from the above discussed tanning materials, sumach extract (leaves of Sicilian Sumach shrub plant), tara (pods of Peruvian of Caesalpinia Spinoza plant) and gambier (leaves of Uncaria gambier mostly grown in Malaysia) are also commercially exploited but seldom as a self tanning materials. Sumach and Tara belong to hydrolysable type whereas gambier is acondensed tannin. Tara is

used commonly in retanning to impart flame retardance of leathers, and as Cr(VI) scavenger. Sumach produces light colored (almost white), soft and supple leathers. As it contains high percentage of buffering salts, it gives highest degree of resistance to acid rot. Hence, it is the most preferred as a combination tanning in the case of book binding leathers. Gambier unlike mimosa and quebracho produce mellower tanning effect, and hence is mostly used in retanning of nappa upholstery leathers to impart fullness, round feel and suppleness without affecting the softness.

Modern methods of vegetable tannage

In the first article on vegetable tanning, the history of evolution of tanning method has been discussed in detail with a particular focus on European tanning industry and EI tanning in India. Some of the modern vegetable tanning methods, which are commercially followed are outlined in this article. Sole leather is chosen for discussion as vegetable tanning is still the main tanning system employed for this type of leathers. E I tanning system currently in vogue especially in Truchi and Dindigul tanning clusters is also outlined here.

1. 100% Mimosa Pit Tannage for Sole Leather

The pelts which have undergone extensive liming to ensure good fiber opening are delimed completely and taken through the following pit systems.

Color Pit 1	Barkometer 28^{o}	One day
Color Pit 2	Barkometer 45^{o}	One day
Intermediate Circulator	Barkometer 67^{o}	Three days
Final Circulators	Barkometer 101^{o}	Six days
Hot Pits	Barkometer 140^{o}	Four days
	At 3.85 pH &43^{o}C	

2. South American Tannage based on Soluble Quebracho Extract

Full penetration in pits

The limed pelts are completely delimed, cross section pH adjusted to 4.8 and pretanned with a syntan and salt in drum and taken for pit tanning. Pit coloring in pits for 18-36 h with soluble quebracho liquor at 5-6^{o} Bé. This was followed with main tannage with Quebracho and Chestnut blend for 10-14 days tillpenetration at 10-11^{o} Bé (maintained throughout with replenishment of tannins). Piled for 6-12h and hot pitted.

3. The Liritan Sole Leather System

The fastest of all pit tannages, it minimizes tan wastage and sludge, eliminates from stains, gives excellent color, firmness and fixation.

Tannage:

Color pit	25^{o} Bk	One day
Warm Circulator	100^{o} Bk at 35^{o}C	Nine days

Tannage duration 10 days.

4. Italian tannage

Full penetration in pits

Post Liming	Delimed conventionally
Pre-tanning	In drum with syntan and salt final pH about 5.0
Pit-coloring circulators	5-6^{o} Bé, maintained in strength with extracts, for 1-11/2 days, pH 5.0, 22^{o}C

Main Pit Tannage	9-10^{o} Bé for 8-12 days, pH about 4.0 strengthened with liquor from drums, 26-28^{o}C
Drum Tannage	Float 14^{o} Bé, pH 3.8, 2-3 days. Chestnut extract main constituent. Temperature raised to 37^{o}C.

5. Rapid Dry Drum Vegetable Tanning Extract Powder Tannage

Following an auxiliary pre-tannage with a proprietary syntan.

Tannage is carried out in the same drum.

Goods should be well fleshed and

Delimed	Usually to about 6 pH
Pre tannage	With >5% pretanning syntan
Vegetable Tannage	Addition of spray dried extract powder spread over a period of some hours to ensure even distribution.
	On average 40% of extract on pelt weight.
	Temperature in drum never to exceed a maximum of 40^{o}C
	Overall 3 days tanning time.

E l Tanning for skins as followed in South Tamil Nadu

The limed pelts after fleshing and scudding (to remove short hair and pigmentation) are completely delimed in paddle followed by bating and degreasing (especially for sheep skins). Then after washing, pickling is carried out in drum to a pH of 4.0 using salt and sulfuric acid. Tanning is continued in the drum with 15% wattle extract and

5% GS powder and about 1% TRO. Myrobed with 8% myrobalan (fermented bath) and piled overnight. Next day, the tanned skins are sammed and treated with a bath containing glucose, Epsom salt, hypo and oxalic acid. Then leathers are oiled using pungam oil, piled and hooked to dry for a day. Next day, setting is done using machine as well as hand setting on a table to remove any wrinkles and the skins hooked to dry completely. When completely dry, the leathers are buffed on the flesh side, trimmed, assorted and packed for dispatch.

Mechanism of vegetable tanning

During the discussion on reactivity of collagen, the general mechanism involved in reaction with various tanning materials was briefly discussed. Similarly, in the article on chrome tanning in this series, general mechanism related to how tanning in general impart resistance to the hides and skins against bacterial activity was outlined. Even at the risk of repetition, it is worthwhile to recall the discussion on the subject as follows.

The mechanism by which various tanning systems impart resistance against bacterial degradation is not well understood though many theories have been put forward by researchers to explain this. The most logical explanation is that the tanning materials bring about changes in the substrate either at molecular level or at microstructure or macro levels such that bacteria or the enzymes secreted by them do not recognize the substrate any more but the method through which they achieve this may be unique to each one of them. Some of the mechanisms proposed include cross linking, deposition and fiber coating with effective blocking of active sites in the collagen supramolecule prone for attack by bacteria, reduced availability/accessibility of hydrophilic functional groups due to reaction with tanning materials, even tanning materials acting as biocides against bacteria. Cross linking leading to high hydrothermal

stability is considered important but this can not explain bacterial resistance in oil tanning with which there is no increase in hydrothermal stability. Some researchers talk about minimum shrinkage temperature of 62^{o} C being necessary for imparting bacterial resistance.

Apart from the ability to confer resistance against bacterial and enzymatic activity, drying out soft, reduced swelling characteristics, increased hydrothermal resistance and increased hydrolytic resistance are also considered important hallmarks of good tanning and the degree to which this is achieved varies from one material to another.

Here, we would focus on the mode of fixation of tannins to substrate as well as the reaction that takes place in vegetable tanning process.

Vegetable tannins react with collagen matrix through hydrogen bond formation. As discussed earlier in the article on reactivity of collagen, the peptide bonds in the triple helical strands as well as side chain OH groups from serine, threonine, hydoxylysine and hydroxyproline are capable of participating in hydrogen bond formation with molecules having functional groups such as OH and amino/imino groups. The large number of phenolic –OH groups can in principle contribute to hydrogen bonds, thus can form many intermolecular and interfibrillar crosslinks. It is mostly decided by the accessibility which may be limited by steric hindrances and distance. Strength of the bonds also varies depending on the distance between reacting groups. Hence good fiber opening is essential to allow for the diffusion of colloidal dispersions of tannins into the matrix to achieve effective tanning. Dipole-dipole interaction is another probable mode of fixation of vegetable tannins. Once the tannins penetrate well into the fiber matrix, the fixation can be brought out by decrease in pH or treatment with hydrolysable tannins, which promotes aggregation of

tannin molecules with increase in particle size to obtain good filling and firmness in the leather.

Though vegetable tannins can fix to collagen over a wide pH range (2.0-8.0) through hydrogen bonds, the pH range is often decided by the ease of diffusion in the initial stage and the nature of changes in the tannin molecules and their aggregation behavior at different pH conditions. Higher pH above 8.0, though might help in better diffusion, the tanning decreases due to ionization of phenolic OH groups. Moreover, the tannins tend to oxidize at elevated pH resulting in dark color of the tanned leathers which is undesirable and hence, the ideal starting pH should not be above 5.5-6.0. The pH is gradually reduced to around 3.0 to fix the tannins through deposition uniformly across cross section.

In practice, the normal pH range for tanning is 5.0-3.2. At lower pH values, the higher acidity causes the following problems:

Basic NH_3 + side chains can also act as sites for vegetable tannin fixation, but are of less significance because:

Effect of Pretannages

Tannages which block the basic NH_3 + side chains and the peptide groups, reduce the fixation of vegetable tannins thus help in their penetration and uniform distribution especially when tannin is carried out at low pH (~4.0) as in rapid tannages.

Syntans are small particles (average molecular weight range 400-800), carrying an anionic charge due to the presence of sulfonic acid groups (-SO3H), i.e. similar to sulfited condensed tannins. They fix on similar groups in the protein as vegetable tannins and so accelerate the penetration of vegetable tannins. They also tend to disperse the tannin solution thus preventing high rate of aggregation in the initial stage of tannins. The pretanning syntans also exerta

marked influence on the properties of the leather, i.e., increase in flexibility, paler color, smooth fine grain.

Some important terminologies used in the case of vegetable Tanning

Yield

Yield is defined as the ratio of final dry weight of leather to the pelt weight expressed as percentage.

Degree of tannins

It is defined as percentage ratio of fixed tannins to hide substance. As fixed tannins can not be analyzed directly, it is calculated from other analyzable organic components in the vegetable tanned leather such as hide substance, fat, volatiles, inorganic water insolubles, water soluble etc. The analysis of these components in tanned leather would be dealt with later under appropriate topics as a part of this series.

Yield is usually used as a quality control tool for vegetable tanned leathers in tanneries internally, the quality standards for many heavy and industrial leathers as well as E I leathers (which are primarily tanned with vegetable tannins) prescribe degree of tannage as a critical parameter for ascertaining quality of leathers.

For any queries/comments or further information, Pl contact by mail at babunkc@yahoo.com

STAHL'S 2025 ESG REPORT PRESENTS FURTHER PROGRESS AND SHARPENED STRATEGIC FOCUS

Stahl, a global provider of speciality coatings for flexible materials, has published its 2025 Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report**. The report outlines Stahl's recent progress on its ESG Roadmap to 2030 and the steps the company is taking to live its purpose: Touching lives, for a better world.**

Maarten Heijbroek, CEO of Stahl: "2025 marked the completion of a multi-year transformation for Stahl. We sharpened our strategy, enhanced our portfolio and strengthened the foundations of our business. This ESG report reflects that journey, not as a record of activities, but as a clear statement of focus: on impact, on accountability and on long-term value creation. Progress is only possible thanks to the commitment of our people. ESG lives in our everyday decisions, actions and behaviours. As we look ahead, our ESG Roadmap to 2030 remains our compass, keeping us focused on what truly matters."

Focused on what matters

In recent years, Stahl has transitioned into a pure-play speciality coatings company for flexible materials, as well as further embedding sustainability into its strategy and reinforcing strong governance across the organisation. This focus allows Stahl to concentrate its efforts on reducing environmental impact, keeping people safe, acting with integrity and supporting customers and partners.

In February 2026, Stahl's majority shareholder, Wendel, announced that it had entered into an agreement to be acquired by Henkel, after 20 years of ownership. The transaction is subject to customary approvals and reflects Stahl's position as a focused, resilient company guided by a clear ESG roadmap.

ESG progress in 2025

From an environmental perspective, Stahl's Scope 1 and 2 absolute emissions have declined by 34% since 2021, driven by the transition

to green electricity and electrification, on track to achieve its science-based, SBTi-validated reduction targets by 2030. Significant progress was also made on reducing its Scope 3.1 footprint, through portfolio management and close collaboration with suppliers and value chain partners. During 2025 the scope 3.1 absolute emissions reduced by 19.4% since 2024.

In 2025 Stahl completed its transformation journey and entered a period of organisational evolution, focusing on the alignment of processes and embedding stable structures. Stahl made improvements to its safety performance in 2025, with a reduction in reportable injuries supported by a global 'Safety Cornerstones' training for all employees.

The company also launched its first Reverse Mentoring programme, pairing Gen Z mentors with senior leaders to strengthen cross-generational learning, accelerate cultural transformation, and equip leaders with fresh perspectives on digitalisation, innovation, inclusion and new ways of working.

The Fair Wage Network renewed Stahl’s Living Wage certification until 2027 in recognition of our commitment to fair and responsible employment.

Collaboration across the value chain has been essential in driving Stahl’s transformation and advancing progress towards its 2030 goals. Its supplier engagement programme includes EcoVadis supplier assessments and ongoing dialogue on key topics such as environmental impact, human rights, and health and safety, supporting the advancement of sustainable practices and consistent standards across the value chain. In addition, 88% of Stahl’s raw material expenditure now goes through EcoVadis-rated suppliers. In 2025, Stahl engaged with suppliers below the threshold to help improve their performance.

These efforts continue to be recognised externally, with Stahl maintaining its EcoVadis Platinum rating for the fourth consecutive year, placing the company among the top 1% of all assessed organisations.

Strategy and Leather Industry Part – II

NSK SRINIVASAN [1] & HASMUKH SHAH [2]

UMTA Management & Texstyles Academy, Vapi, Gujarat, India [1&2]

nsk_sriya@yahoo.com[1] textiles.vapi@gmail.com [2]

(Contd.. from March)

4. Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies [4]

The leather industry is a significant contributor to the global economy, generating billions of dollars in revenue each year. However, the industry is not without its challenges, particularly in pricing and profitability.

Leather manufacturers face a wide range of factors that affect the pricing of their products, including raw material costs, labor costs, tanning and processing costs, market demand, and competition.

To maintain profitability, leather manufacturers must develop effective pricing strategies, reduce costs, diversify their product lines, and invest in technology and innovation.

These pricing and profitability strategies are explored in greater detail and discussed the challenges and opportunities facing the leather industry today.

- Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies: A Brief Overview
- Meaning of Leather Pricing and Profitability
- Significance of Leather Pricing and Profitability
- Factors Affecting Leather Pricing
- Common Pricing Strategies for Leather Products
- Profitability Strategies for Leather Businesses
- Challenges in Leather Pricing and Profitability

4.1 Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies: A Brief Overview Table – 4 A

4.1 Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies: A Brief Overview Table – 4 A
• Leather pricing and profitability strategies are crucial for the success of businesses involved in the production and sale of leather products.
• Furthermore, leather pricing is influenced by factors such as the cost of raw materials, labor costs, tanning and processing costs, and market demand and competition.
• Common pricing strategies for leather products include cost-based pricing, value-based pricing, and competition-based pricing.
• Profitability strategies for leather businesses involve reducing costs through techniques such as efficient production processes and supply chain management, diversification of product lines, investment in technology and innovation, targeting niche markets, and effective marketing and branding.
• However, the leather industry also faces challenges such as fluctuations in raw material prices, labor shortages and rising wages, environmental regulations and sustainability concerns, and competition from synthetic materials.
• Businesses in the leather industry must navigate these challenges while implementing effective pricing and profitability strategies to remain successful.

4.2 Meaning of Leather Pricing and Profitability

- Leather pricing refers to the process of determining the cost of producing and selling leather products. This involves factoring in the cost of raw materials, labor costs, processing costs, and other expenses to arrive at a price that will generate a profit for the business.

- Profitability, on the other hand, refers to the ability of a business to generate a profit from its operations. Profitability strategies are

aimed at maximizing the profit margins of a business by reducing costs, increasing revenue, and optimizing the use of resources.

- In the context of the leather industry, profitability strategies may involve improving production efficiency, diversifying product lines, investing in technology and innovation, targeting niche markets, and implementing effective marketing and branding strategies.

4.3 Significance of Leather Pricing and Profitability

- Leather pricing and profitability are significant for the following reasons:

- **Profitability:** Profitability is the ultimate goal of any business, and the leather industry is no exception. Effective pricing and profitability strategies can help leather businesses maximize their profit margins and remain competitive in the market.

- Businesses in the leather industry can increase their profit margins by using effective pricing and profitability tactics **- Customer Satisfaction Market Positioning & Sustainability**.

- In summary, leather pricing and profitability are essential for the success and sustainability of leather businesses. Effective pricing strategies can help businesses remain competitive in the market, improve customer satisfaction, and achieve long-term profitability.

- Furthermore, by implementing effective pricing and profitability strategies, leather businesses can improve their bottom line and ensure long-term success.

Source : 4 & Table – 4 A. Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies, Deskera

5. Factors Affecting Leather Pricing [5]

5. Factors Affecting Leather Pricing Tables – 5 A

The pricing of leather is affected by several factors that vary based on the type and quality of the leather. Here are some of the key factors affecting leather pricing.

5 . Factors Affecting Leather Pricing Tables – 5 A

5.1 Cost of Raw Materials Supply and demand. Quality. Location Processing costs.

Overall, the cost of raw materials is an important factor that affects the pricing of leather. As the cost of raw materials increases, the price of the final product may also increase to compensate for the higher costs.

5.2 Labor Costs

Labor costs are another significant factor that affects the pricing of leather products. The production process of leather involves several labour-intensive steps such as harvesting, tanning, dyeing, and finishing. The cost of labor can vary based on several factors such as:

5.3 Location, Skill level, Working conditions, Labor

However, investing in skilled workers, modern equipment, and safe working conditions can result in higher quality products and more efficient production processes, which can ultimately lead to more competitive pricing.

5.4 Tanning and Processing Costs

Tanning and processing costs are significant factors that affect the pricing of leather products.

Tanning refers to the process of treating raw animal hides to turn them into leather, which involves several steps such as cleaning, soaking, and treating the hides with chemicals.

Processing refers to the additional steps involved in preparing the leather for use in various products such as shoes, bags, and furniture.

5. Factors Affecting Leather Pricing

5.5 Type of tanning, Quality of chemicals, Labor costs, Environmental regulations:

Overall, tanning and processing costs are crucial factors that affect the pricing of leather products. The higher the cost of tanning and processing, the higher the production cost, which can lead to higher prices for the final product. However, investing in higher quality chemicals and complying with environmental regulations can result in a better-quality final product, which may justify the higher production costs.

5.6 Market Demand and Competition

- Market demand and competition are important factors that affect the pricing of leather products.
- The market demand for leather products can be influenced by several factors such as fashion trends, consumer preferences, and economic conditions. The higher the demand for leather products, the higher the price that can be charged.
- Competition from other leather product manufacturers can also impact pricing, as companies may lower their prices to remain competitive.
- The following are some ways market demand and competition can impact pricing- **Supply and demand**, **Product differentiation, Price competition**, **Economic conditions**

Overall, market demand and competition are crucial factors that impact the pricing of leather products. Companies that can effectively anticipate and respond to market demand and remain competitive can set prices that align with consumer demand and maximize profits.

Source : 5 & Table – 5 A. Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies, Deskera

6.Common Pricing Strategies for Leather Products [6]

There are several pricing strategies that leather product manufacturers can use to set prices for their products. Leather Manufacturers can choose from several pricing strategies in order to set their product prices.

6.1 Some common pricing strategies for leather products

6.1.1 Cost-plus pricing Table – 6 A

6.1.1 Cost-plus pricing Table – 6 A
• **Cost-plus pricing is a pricing strategy that involves adding a markup to the cost of production to determine the selling price of a product. The cost of production includes all the expenses incurred in making the product, such as raw materials, labor, and overhead costs.**

6.1.1 Cost-plus pricing Table – 6 A
• Cost-plus pricing can be an effective pricing strategy for leather product manufacturers because it ensures that the selling price covers all the costs of production and results in a profit. • However, it does not take into account market demand, competition, or perceived value. Therefore, it is important for manufacturers to consider other pricing strategies such as value-based pricing and competition-based pricing when determining the selling price of their leather products.

6.1. 2 Value-based pricing Table – 6 B

6.1. 2 Value-based pricing Table – 6 B
• Value-based pricing is a pricing strategy that involves setting prices for products or services based on the perceived value that they provide to customers. In the case of leather products, value-based pricing means setting prices based on the unique features, quality, brand reputation, and other factors that differentiate the product from competitors. • Overall, value-based pricing can be a powerful pricing strategy for leather product manufacturers who can identify and communicate the unique value proposition of their products. By setting prices that align with customer demand and perceived value, manufacturers can increase profits and remain competitive in the market.

6.1. 3 Competition-based Pricing Table – 6 C

6.1. 3 Competition-based Pricing Table – 6 C
• Competition-based pricing is a pricing strategy that involves setting prices based on the prices of competitors' products. This strategy is often used in industries where there are many similar products or services offered by different companies. • The competition-based pricing strategy involves several steps: Researching competitors

6.1. 3 Competition-based Pricing Table – 6 C
• Determining the market position, Setting the price, Monitoring the prices.
• Competition-based pricing can be effective in helping leather product manufacturers set prices that align with the market demand and remain competitive. However, it is important to consider other factors such as production costs, value-based pricing, and market demand when setting prices.
• Companies that can strike a balance between these factors can set prices that maximize profits and remain competitive in the market.
• Some additional pricing strategies: Penetration pricing, Skimming pricing, Bundle pricing. Psychological pricing
• Overall, choosing the right pricing strategy depends on several factors, such as the product's target market, the competitive landscape, and the product's life cycle. A well-executed pricing strategy can help leather product manufacturers set prices that align with consumer demand, maximize profits, and remain competitive.

Source : 6 & Tables – 6 A & 6 B & 6 C. Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies, Deskera

7.Profitability Strategies for Leather Businesses [7]

Some crucial profitability strategies for leather business are:

7.1 Cost Reduction Techniques

- Cost reduction techniques are methods used by leather product manufacturers to reduce the cost of production and increase profitability. Here are some common cost reduction techniques: **Raw material sourcing, Lean manufacturing, Automation,** , **Energy efficiency**, **Outsourcing**., **Process improvement**

- Implementing cost reduction techniques can help leather product manufacturers reduce costs and improve profitability. By focusing on efficiency, sourcing, and process improvement, manufacturers can increase their competitiveness and remain profitable in the face of market challenges.

7.2 Diversification of Product Lines

- Diversification of product lines is a strategy used by leather product manufacturers to expand their product offerings and reduce their reliance on a single product or market.
- Furthermore, this strategy involves creating new products that complement or supplement the existing product line, as well as exploring new markets and customer segments.
- Here are some ways in which Leather product manufacturers can diversify their product lines in some ways - **Introduce new product categories**, **Offer new product features**, **Expand into new markets**, **Collaborate with other brands**, **Use alternative materials.**
- By diversifying their product lines, leather product manufacturers can reduce their reliance on a single product or market and increase their revenue streams. However, it is important for manufacturers to conduct market research and carefully evaluate the potential demand and profitability of new products before introducing them to the market.

7.3 Investment in Technology and Innovation

- Investment in technology and innovation is a strategy used by leather product manufacturers to improve their production processes, create new products, and increase their competitiveness. This strategy involves investing in research and development, adopting new technologies, and implementing innovative ideas.
- Some important ways in which leather product manufacturers can invest in technology and innovation are - **Research and Development, Adopting new technologies, Collaboration with Technology Providers, Innovative Product Design, Sustainable Production Practices**
- By investing in technology and innovation, leather product manufacturers can improve their competitiveness, create new revenue streams, and reduce costs. However, it is important for

manufacturers to carefully evaluate the potential return on investment and ensure that the investment aligns with their overall business strategy.

7.4 Targeting Niche Markets

- Targeting niche markets is a strategy used by leather product manufacturers to focus on specific customer segments or markets that are often underserved by mainstream products. This strategy involves identifying unique customer needs and preferences and creating products that cater to those needs. It is important for manufacturers to conduct market research and carefully evaluate the potential demand of niche products.
- Some ways in which leather product manufacturers can target niche markets: Customization, Specialty Products, Geographic Markets, Sustainable Markets, Luxury Markets.
- By targeting niche markets, leather product manufacturers can differentiate themselves from competitors, increase customer loyalty, and create new revenue streams. However, it is important for manufacturers to conduct market research and carefully evaluate the potential demand and profitability of niche products before introducing them to the market.

7.5 Effective Marketing and Branding

- Effective marketing and branding is crucial for leather product manufacturers to reach and engage with their target customers and differentiate themselves from competitors.
- Some ways in which manufacturers can create an effective marketing and branding strategy: Understand the target audience, Develop a strong brand identity, Build an online presence, Create compelling product descriptions and visuals, Offer exceptional customer service. Partner with influencers
- By creating an effective marketing and branding strategy, leather product manufacturers can increase brand awareness, build customer loyalty, and differentiate themselves from competitors. However, it is important for manufacturers to regularly evaluate

their marketing and branding efforts and adapt to changing industry trends and customer preferences.

7.6 Challenges in Leather Pricing and Profitability

- Leather pricing and profitability can be affected by a number of challenges. Following, we've discussed some challenges in leather pricing and profitability.
- Fluctuations in Raw Material Prices, Monitor raw material priced, Hedge against price changes, Diversify sourcing, Improve supply chain efficiency, Pass on costs to customers, Labor Shortages and Rising Wages, Invest in automation and technology, Implement training and retention programs, Leverage outsourcing, Consider relocation, Increase prices.
- Managing labor shortages and rising wages requires a combination of strategic planning, operational improvements, and flexibility. By adopting a holistic approach to managing labor costs, manufacturers can improve their ability to attract and retain skilled workers, reduce turnover, and maintain profitability.

8. How to Stay Competitive in the Leather Industry? – Continuous Improvement and Adaptation for Manufacturers and Suppliers Tables – 8 A & 8 B & 8 C

Staying competitive in the dynamic and evolving leather industry requires a commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and adaptation. Manufacturers and suppliers must proactively respond to market trends, consumer preferences, and industry challenges to maintain a competitive edge and thrive in the global marketplace. Here are some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry:

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 A & 8 B & 8C

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 A
8.1 EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
• Invest in cutting-edge technologies and innovative manufacturing processes

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 A

to enhance efficiency, productivity, and product quality.

• Explore advancements such as computer-aided design (CAD), automated machinery, and digital manufacturing techniques to streamline operations and improve competitiveness.

8.2 FOCUS ON QUALITY AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

• Differentiate your brand by prioritizing quality craftsmanship, attention to detail, and superior materials in your leather products.

• Maintain rigorous quality control standards throughout the production process to ensure consistency and excellence in every product.

8.3 OFFER CUSTOMIZATION AND PERSONALIZATION

• Cater to diverse customer preferences by offering customization options and personalized experiences, such as monogramming, bespoke designs, or made-to-order services.

• Leverage technology to facilitate customization, such as online customization tools or virtual fitting experiences, to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 B

8.4 STAY AGILE AND ADAPTIVE

• Remain flexible and responsive to market shifts, changing consumer demands, and emerging industry trends.

• Continuously monitor market dynamics, competitor actions, and consumer feedback to identify opportunities and adjust strategies accordingly.

8.5 OPTIMIZE SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCY

• Streamline supply chain processes, optimize logistics, and reduce lead times to improve efficiency and responsiveness.

• Forge strategic partnerships with reliable suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors to enhance agility and minimize supply chain risks.

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 B

8.6 PRIORITIZE SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL PRACTICES:

• Embrace sustainable sourcing practices, ethical labor standards, and environmentally friendly production methods to align with consumer values and regulatory requirements.

• Adopt sustainable materials, such as eco-friendly tanning processes, recycled leather, or alternative materials, to minimize environmental impact and support responsible manufacturing practices.

8.7 INVEST IN TALENT AND TRAINING

• Nurture a skilled workforce by investing in employee training, development, and retention initiatives.

• Foster a culture of continuous learning, creativity, and collaboration to empower employees to contribute to innovation and drive organizational growth.

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 C

8, 8 ENHANCE BRANDING AND MARKETING

• Develop a strong brand identity and compelling brand story that resonates with target consumers and communicates your values, heritage, and commitment to quality.

• Leverage digital marketing channels, social media platforms, and influencer partnerships to reach and engage with customers effectively and build brand awareness and loyalty.

8.9 LISTEN TO CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

• Actively seek feedback from customers through surveys, reviews, and social media interactions to understand their needs, preferences, and pain points.

• Use customer insights to inform product development, refine marketing strategies, and enhance the overall customer experience.

Some strategies for staying competitive in the leather industry Tables – 8 C
8.10 MONITOR INDUSTRY TRENDS AND INNOVATIONS **• Stay informed about emerging trends, technological advancements, and disruptive innovations shaping the leather industry.** **• Attend trade shows, industry conferences, and networking events to stay abreast of the latest developments and opportunities for collaboration and innovation.**

By embracing continuous improvement and adaptation, manufacturers, suppliers, and every dedicated leather bag supplier in the leather industry can navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and maintain a competitive edge in today's rapidly evolving marketplace. By prioritizing quality, innovation, sustainability, and customer-centricity, leather industry players can position themselves for long-term success and resilience in an increasingly competitive landscape.

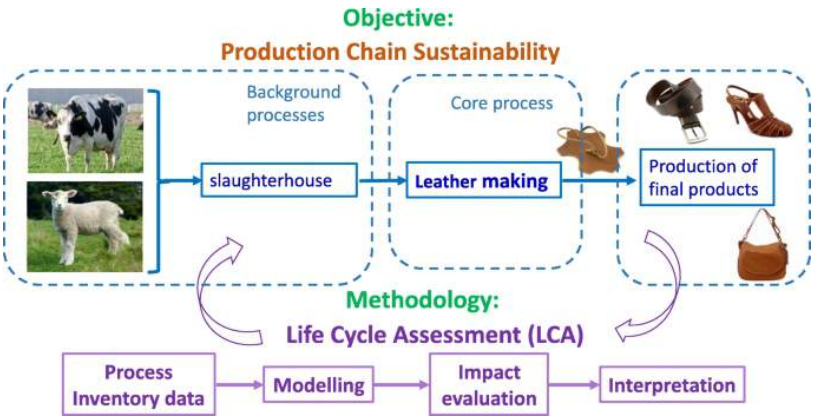
Source : 8 & Tables – 8 A & 8 B Leather Pricing and Profitability Strategies, Deskera

9. Life cycle assessment and leather production [9]

Leather industry is facing new trends on production and consumption patterns due to society concerns. Circular economy is proposing a transition from the current economic model to a more sustainable one, in which waste is designed out and resources will be reused and recycled as long as possible. In this transition, Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is an important tool to help decision-making.

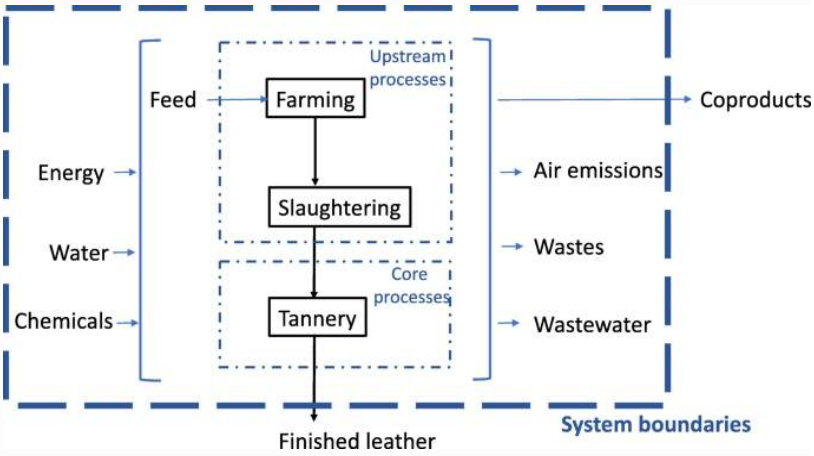
Leather industry has important challenges to address: increasing sustainability and transparency on the supply chain, and strengthening the beauty of leather. Taking up these challenges from a life cycle perspective will help leather industry flourish in the coming future.

9.1 Production Chain Sustainability Figure – 9 A



The system boundaries of a "from cradle to gate" LCA of leather should include all upstream processes, such as farming and slaughtering, in addition to core processes (tannery) and all transports needed from one process to another. Impacts due to production of chemicals, energy and water used in our system and impacts due to waste and wastewater treatments should also be considered.

9.2 System boundaries of an LCA study of leather "from cradle to gate" Figure – 9 B



System boundaries of an LCA study of leather “from cradle to gate” - the importance of the leather supply in eco-design of leather products (not all the leather has the same environmental profile), a framework to measure sustainability (Figure – 9 C) and water footprint of tanning processes.

9.3 Framework to evaluate sustainable value chain (VC) practices

Figure – 9 C

VC Support Activity Domain	1.Sustainable Design [Product Design, Process Design]					
	2.Sustainable Sourcing [Supplier Selection, Procurement, Supplier Development]					
	3.Sustainability Standards & Systems [Sustainability Assessment, Sustainability Reporting]					
	4.Employee Development [Employee Training, Employee Care & Welfare]					
	5.Community Development [Employment Generation, CSR Activities]					
VC Primary Activity Domain	1.Sustainable In-Bound Logistics [Inspection, Transportation, Warehouse &Inventory Management]	2.Sustainable Manufacturing Operations [Waste Management, Energy Conservation, Pollution Prevention, Water Conservation, Agile Manufacturing, Worker's Health & Safety]	3.Sustainable Out-Bound Logistics [Out-bound Testing & Inspection, Sustainable Packaging, Warehouse & Inventory Management, Transportation]	4.Sustainable Marketing &Sales [Product Promotion, Product Sales]	5.Sustainable After Sales Service [Spare Parts Management, Customer Complaints Management, Repair & Maintenance]	6.Reverse Logistics [Product Return, Post Return]

Society is changing, and production and consumption patterns will also change accordingly. Leather industry, which has been highly important since ancient history, needs to understand this change and continuously innovate to be competitive and sustainable. LCA can help leather industry have a wider view of environmental issues and guide leather innovation to sustainability.

Source : 9 & Figures – 9 A & 9 B & 9 C . lis-8-Life cycle assessment and leather production

(to be Contd.)

LEATHER: Studies for Information and Self-Training

Richard Daniels

(The author – Richard Daniels – has wide technical experience of leather manufacture, other leather-related practices, within formal education and counterpart training. The third study in the series -Leather: the technology of manufacture - is presently undergoing edit)

Two studies are available for download free of any charge from the website www.indianleathermagazine.com

1] Leather: AN INTRODUCTION (Volume 1 of 3)

This has been created for people who need a better general understanding of what leather is, and for those who need a better understanding of how leather is made.

It describes the versatility of this unique material, its natural origins, how it is manufactured, and why its properties are so comprehensive. It enables comparisons with plastics, laminates and conglomerates of binders/natural materials - as long as their origins, composition and environmental profiles are similarly detailed.

2] Leather: AN OVERVIEW OF MANUFACTURE (Volume 2 of 3)

This second study is for people who wish to become leather technicians, and those who need more than the most basic understanding of leather and its manufacture.

It follows the processes and operations used, and their purposes, for making different leathers from bovine hides, sheep and goat skins.

This is a very comprehensive self-learning package in 10-parts. It has been created for ease-of-study, comprises 30,000 words, and supported by 300 technical images and diagrams. It is designed for use by the individual via smart phone, tablet and computer. However, it can be used for support within more formal training and education.

These studies have been subjected to review by leather making professionals. Also, it has been accredited and recommended by the UNIDO, IULTCS, ALCA and SLTC.

This is about making Leather !

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TEX BIOSCIENCES (P) LIMITED

"Guru Krupa" Building- 2nd and 3rd Floor
No. 101/56, 4th Avenue Ashok Nagar,
Chennai - 600 083.Tamil Nadu, India.
Tel : +91-44-4298 8700
E-mail : aravindha@texbiosciences.com
Website: www.texbiosciences.com

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