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118th Annual Convention

May 21-23, 2024

Hershey Lodge

325 University Drive

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For more information go to:
[leatherchemists.org/
annual_convention.asp](http://leatherchemists.org/annual_convention.asp)

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**REAL
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LEATHER BY NUMBERS:

FACTS AND FIGURES FROM THE US LEATHER INDUSTRY AND BEYOND

Note: All figures as of January 2021 or latest available.

ZERO cattle are killed to make US leather. US hides have been valued at **JUST 1-2%** of a cow's total value for the last two years, which is why they are considered a by-product and often end up as waste. The average price per head of US cattle is \$2,000-2.200, while hides vary in price from **\$5 TO \$35 PER PIECE**, if sold at all. ⁽¹⁾

330M hides come from the meat and dairy industries around the world. Approximately **34M** were processed the US. ⁽²⁾ **AS MANY AS 2.4M US HIDES** ended up as landfill in 2019, this is **7%** of the national total.

Worldwide the waste figure is approximately **40%** or **132M** hides. With the average hide weighing 25Kg this means that **3M TONNES** are thrown away ever year.

Leather production turns more than **4.5M TONNES OF** potential waste, every year, into usable, durable goods. This saves **2.7M TONS OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS** from landfill sites. ⁽³⁾

Production, processing and distribution of hides and leather products directly employs an estimated **5,486** individuals, who collectively earn more than **\$384M**. US exports of hides and leather was over **\$1.5BILLION** in 2021. ⁽⁴⁾

The US exports approximately **95%** of all cattle hide and wet blue leather products it produces, worth **\$2.85BILLION**. ⁽⁵⁾

Around **45%** of global leather production is used to make footwear, **22%** for clothing, bags and accessories, **18%** for car upholstery, and about **15%** for furniture. ⁽⁶⁾

Water consumption for the production of leather from cattle hides has fallen by more than **35%** in the past 25 years, down from **60 CUBIC-METERS** per ton of hides to **38 CUBIC-METERS** per ton. US tanneries are required, by law, to connect to effluent treatment plants to prevent pollution. ⁽⁷⁾

Leather will biodegrade in **LESS THAN 50 YEARS**. In contrast, it can take **500 YEARS** or more for synthetics, made from petrochemicals, to degrade. ⁽⁸⁾

ReFed's conversion rate for food waste is for **EACH METRIC TON OF WASTE DISPOSAL** there is **9.8 7MT** of **CO2 EQUIVALENT** emitted. In this case, mostly as methane. ⁽⁹⁾

This factsheet is produced by the Leather and Hide Council of America (L&HCA), established to promote the US leather industry which is responsible for a significant proportion of the international trade in hides. The L&HCA works to establish best practice in US leather production and to share this worldwide. Figures quoted refer to the USA unless otherwise stated.

SOURCE:

- (1) <https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/files/rx913p88g/w0893g25p/5d86qb66f/1stk0223.pdf>
- (2) <https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/files/r207tp32d/pg15cj85z/hd76t466z/lsan0422.pdf>
- (3) 2020 LHCA Infographic
- (4) John Dunham & Associates, Economic Impact of the Meat Industry (2016)
- (5) <https://thesustainabilityalliance.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/US-Hide-Skin-and-Leather-Factsheet-0420.pdf>
- (6) TBC
- (7) 2020 LHCA factsheet
- (8) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leather#:~:text=Leather%20biodegrades%20slowly%20E2%80%94taking%2025,or%20more%20years%20to%20decompose>
- (9) <https://insights-engine.refed.org/impact-calculator?inputs=%207B%22sector%22%3A%22manufacturing%22%2C%22type%22%3A%22fresh-meat-seafood%22%2C%22unit%22%3A%22tons%22%2C%22alternative%22%3Afalse%2C%22destinations%22%3A%20%20%22key%22%3A%22refuse-discards%22%2C%22current%22%3A1%7D%5D%7D>

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Sign up to perform, via email to dcrivaro@naminerals.com or at registration at the ALCA, or even at the event itself! This is all in good fun but just in case you are not sold, OPEN BAR!

We can't wait to see you there!

REMINDER:

Presentations are due May 1st, 2024



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FOR THE 118th ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE
AMERICAN LEATHER CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION

Hershey Lodge, Hershey Pennsylvania
May 21–24, 2024

If you have submitted an abstract for presentation of your recent research to present at the annual ALCA convention at the Hershey Lodge, Hershey Pennsylvania, May 21–24, 2024, the full presentation is due May 1, 2024. Please contact the Technical Program Chair or the Editor if you have any questions.

Abstracts are due by March 1, 2024

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They are to be submitted by e-mail to the
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**By Panos Mytaros Chief Executive Officer
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Wednesday, May 22

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Technical Sessions, Fun Run, Reception and Dinner

Thursday, May 23

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