



31st International Union of Leather Technologists and Chemists Societies (IULTCS) Congress 2011



IULTCS CPD: Elton Hurlow, immediate Past-President IULTCS receiving the first IULTCS-IUT Leather Professional Certificate

The XXXI IULTCS Congress held in Valencia, Spain, in September attracted almost 280 people from 28 countries. A total of 51 lectures were given during the three-day event and a total of 53 poster displays were shown.

The opening presentation was the Heidemann Lecture, entitled "A natural plant cross-linker from olive waste for leather tanning". This was presented by Dr Heinz-Peter Germann, Director of the Lederinstitut Gerberschule Reutlingen, Germany.

An overview of the present status of chrome tanning as the major tanning agent was given where it was stated that, although many alternative systems had been investigated over the years, most had fallen short of the benefits provided by this form of tanning. Vegetable tanning agents were long established, but it was not possible to significantly increase manufacture of this type of leathers as global resources of these natural extracts would always be insufficient to meet demand.

A new alternative was based on the residues from olive oil production, where the leaves and twigs totalled between 5-10% by weight of the harvested crop. Developed by N-Zyme

Biotechnic, Germany, aqueous extracts from this waste were found to cross-link with collagen to form a stable tannage with a shrinkage temperature greater than 70°C. Based on conventional beam house processing, the tannage has been found versatile, with leathers produced from tannage processes between pH 3.0 and 5.0., with and without conventional acid/salt pickle. Over and above the possibilities of avoiding salt within processing, the new leather was free of metals and aldehydes, was shaveable, offered potential savings in retanning materials, and provided good dyeing properties. With the range of parameters for physical testing the performance was similar to chrome-free white leathers. With good storage properties, these new leathers were considered suitable for use in the automotive, furniture, leathers goods and footwear sectors.

The AQEIC Lecture (Spanish Chemical Association of Leather Industry) was presented by Dr Anna Bacardit, and was entitled "Study of the weathering variables on chrome-tanned leather aging". This study confirmed that wet-white and chrome tanned leathers showed different effects due to aging. The relative humidity was the more significant factor in the aging of wet-white leathers, but exposure to ultra violet light was the factor that most affected chrome tanned leathers. It was also concluded that aging in practice can, within reason, be replicated by laboratory studies.

The other lectures were divided into six sections - basic research in the tanning sector, new developments in chemical products (two sessions), clean innovative technologies in the tanning industry (two sessions), future technologies, waste products and environment, and use of advanced techniques for leather analysis.

These presentations were complemented by independent visual displays that supported and provided fresh information relevant to these six defined areas.

Participation in International Union Commissions

In addition to the lectures and posters on display, it was encouraging to see the excellent attendance by people from around the world and their interest in the meetings of the Testing Commissions (IUC/IUP/IUF), and the Environmental (IUE), Research (IUR) and Training Commissions (IUT).

IULTCS Congress 2013

It was announced that the XXXII IULTCS Congress will be held Istanbul, Turkey, 29-31 May 2013. Information and updates on this event may be accessed through <http://www.iultcs2013.org>



Continuing Professional Development (CPD) IULTCS-IUT Leather Professional Certification

A new initiative was announced by the IU Training Commission, and at the Congress banquet the first certificates were presented for the award of IULTCS-IUT Leather Professional.

The objective of this initiative is to encourage the continuous professional growth of individual members, and to provide a mechanism for their review, planning and structure of leather related activities.

This is not a hierarchical qualification. It is about recognising what the individual does for themselves, and how the individual benefits industry as a whole.

The initiative is designed to:

- Recognise individual professional growth and improvement over a four year period in one or more of six categories. This aspect is measured by means of criteria points.
- Encourage all individuals – irrespective of their professional position – to continually develop their skills and knowledge via a range of activities that contribute towards certification.
- Support willing professional development and contribution to the advance of science and technology in the leather industry.
- To encourage applicants to demonstrate their continuous professional growth by tracking and recording evidence of their leather related development.

This can be seen as a platform for further initiatives by IULTCS to encourage the professional development of the individual and in the interests of the industry.

For details on this initiative go to: www.iultcs.org and select the "Training IUT" tab

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The IULTCS is founded for the purpose of encouraging the technology, chemistry, and science of leather on a worldwide basis. The Aims, Objectives, and Activities of the Union are to:

- Maintain regular contact with professional leather societies around the world, and facilitate cooperation between leather organisations.
- Hold Congresses and conferences that support professional presentation of research and interchange of knowledge on leather.
- Operate various commissions that develop standard test methods specific for leather.
- Promote the correct use of test methods and supports international adoption of the standard methods.
- Operate international commissions that study common and special problems relating to environmentally sound leather manufacture.
- Facilitate international communication on resources and topics for research and training that are important for the industry's future.
- Offer a politically neutral platform for interested parties to participate in positive communication on issues and towards developing a constructive market strategy for the industry.

Membership of the Union:

- Comprises of more than 20 country member associations that are leaders in leather manufacture.
- Represents approximately 3,000 individual leather professionals.

Membership is of benefit to individuals who want to:

- Establish professional links in the global industry through individual contacts and friendships.
- Increase professional satisfaction through voluntary industry service.
- Contribute towards the establishment and maintenance of sensible leather test methods.
- Increase their influence on the direction and evolution of leather science and processing technology.
- Develop and grow to higher levels of personal and professional excellence.
- Contribute towards the maintenance of the brand and value of leather as a unique and aesthetically pleasing structural material in the global industry in which they make their living. ☎