



Tannery of the Year: The Americas

The fourth programme of Tannery of the Year has yielded a candidate list of eight excellent tanneries for The Americas region.

All Tannery of the Year candidates have caught the attention of industry experts for their commitment to corporate social responsibility, including issues such as fair treatment of workers, respect for the environment, compliance with local and national laws, openness to innovation and to forming strong partnerships with suppliers and customers.

Brief profiles of each of the eight candidates, in alphabetical order, appear here.

Artanco, San Luis, Argentina. La Hispano Argentina was founded in 1914 and operates four manufacturing plants with an annual capacity of 90,000 tonnes of leather. Its plant in Buenos Aires tans up to crust leather while the Artanco operation in San Luis is a finishing plant. Almost all the hides used by the Argentinean operation are sourced domestically, with around 10% from Australia and a small number from Chile, the US and Uruguay. To better serve its Asian customers, the group also launched a finishing plant in China in 2006 as well as commercial offices in Hong Kong and Dongguan. Clients include Clarks, Hush Puppies, Merrell, Caterpillar and Zara.

Bojos Tanning, Santiago, Dominican Republic. The Bojos tannery suffered a severe flood in 2007 and was unable to operate fully for two years. Its owners took the decision to mothball the beamhouse and resurrected the business as a finished leather specialist, and it now has a steady roster of clients including Timberland and Rocky Brands.

Curtidos Treviño, El Carmen, Nuevo León, Mexico. The Curtidos Treviño tannery has been operating for more than 90 years, exporting half its production to over 20 countries. It works with cattle, goat and ostrich skins and supplies to the automotive, footwear, leathersgoods and upholstery sectors. The company manages two tanneries, a protective footwear plant and a leather furniture factory.

Curtiembre Arlei, Lanús Este, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Founded in 1938, Arlei began as a small, vegetable-tanned leather trading house distributing goods to local footwear and handbag manufacturers. The company constructed a vegetable tannery in Salta, a chrome/chrome free tannery in Santa Fe, and later a finishing plant and a cutting and sewing facility in Buenos Aires. The family-run tannery employs more than 2,000, processing 9,000 hides a day, seven days a week, and claims to consume around 22% of Argentinean hides.



Curtume Della Torre, Franca, São Paulo, Brazil.

Curtume Della Torre was founded in the city of Franca in 1886. In the mid-1920s production grew from 20 to 120 skins a day, and to 450 per day in the 1940s. The business invested in a modern industrial plant, and it now operates a full-service tannery producing 1,500 pieces of finished leather per day. It operates its own effluent treatment plant and also uses a secondary, common plant located within the district.

JBS Couro, Itumbiara, Brazil. Meatpacker JBS opened its leather division in 2009 after becoming the world's largest supplier of beef and poultry, employing 185,000 globally. The group operates 22 tanneries, mainly located in Brazil, producing wet blue, semi-finished and finished leather. With 100,000 skins available every day, those with the best characteristics for the specific markets it serves – automotive, upholstery and footwear – are separated and processed. JBS manages distribution centres in America, Europe and Asia and runs its own port terminal. A pioneering social and environmental monitoring system provides control over the origin of all leather processed by the company.

Midori Atlântica, Penapolis, São Paulo, Brazil. Automotive and aviation-focused tannery Midori counts Suzuki, Nissan and Honda among its clients. It was bought in 1972 by Japanese group Midori Anzen, which was attracted by the abundant local supply of raw materials and was, at the time, focused on footwear production for the safety shoe market.

Vanzella-Vancouros, Rolândia, Paraná, Brazil. Launched in 1990, Vanzella-Vancouros produces wet blue, semi-finished and shavings. It uses a tracking system to identify the source of all raw material, ensuring that hides do not originate from protected or deforested areas of the Amazon.

From this group of eight candidates, two finalists have emerged. Detailed reports on both finalist tanneries appear in the following pages of *World Leather*.