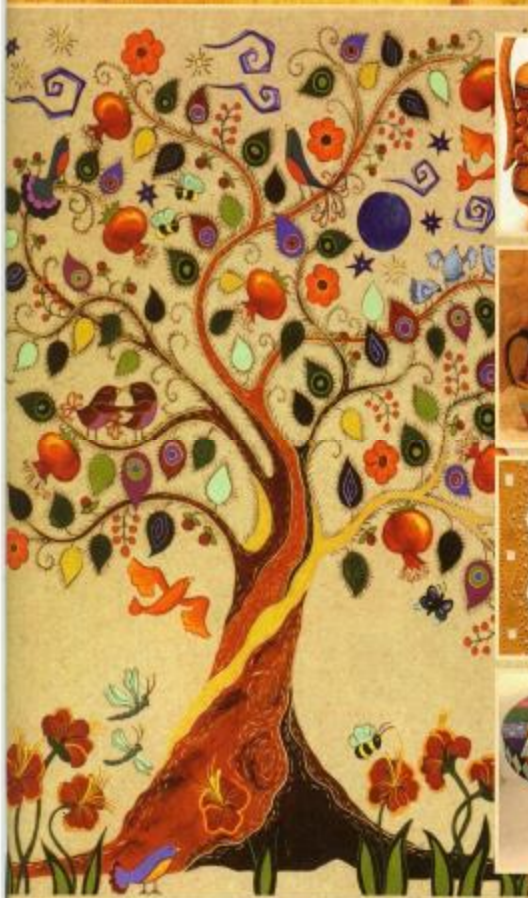


The Leather Retailers' and Manufacturers' Journal

Shop Talk!

APRIL 2008

WITH BOOT & SHOE NEWS



- More Auctions
- Demographics
of our Trades
- Making Cow Hobbles
- Roundup Turns 20
- News from Alal Tanning

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Company News from Alal Tanning

The Alal Group has recently taken several steps to help develop the company as a leading tanner in the vegetable leather industry. The vegetable tannery has enhanced the skirting sides business during the last year and, at the moment, has regular, ongoing programs worldwide for their three core segments:

- Skirting sides: in addition to the russet color, the tannery is developing a golden color as well as different "dyed through" bridle leathers.
- Sole leather: sole leather is available in bends and double bends.
- Dossets (complete hide without the bellies) have been added to the tannery's existing line of double butts, vegetable shoulders and, vegetable bellies, in natural or dyed through.

For the next two years, the family-based company with headquarters in Reconquista, Argentina, will focus on the following three issues as a part of its long-term strategy:

A) Extensive investment in state of the art machinery

The latest addition is a brand new Turini setting out machine, made in Italy. This \$140,000 machine is not only the ideal equipment to eliminate fat wrinkles on the skirting sides but also allows the setting out of whole hides rather than just sides. Technicians from Turini in Italy came to install this machine and worked along side the Alal team for one week. It features a roller spreading system which permits a perfectly spreading effect.



In order to cope with an increasing workload at the tannery, a new warehouse of 12,000 square feet has already been approved by the local government of Reconquista and will house, among other things, a new toggling machine and a new show room. The facility, which will be located next to the tannery, will be completed by 2009.

B) Environmental Management System

During October 2007 Alal Tannery commenced a joint venture with the National University of Technology (UTN) in Reconquista. Company technicians will work closely with the engineers from the University on a project to certify ISO 14001 standards during 2009.

By achieving this standard, Alal tannery will be the first veg-

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etable tannery in Argentina to certify that its manufacturing procedures contribute to a healthy environment which will help the company to maintain a competitive edge in a market that has become increasingly environmentally conscious. The latest acquisition to help in this effort is a new \$90,000 water filtration plant. The new filter band, in place since January 2008, improves the performance of the effluent treatment plant and allows for very cost effective pollution control.



Alal understands that the environmental management system of ISO 14001 is a driving force for sustainable development by creating "green" products with enhanced market value.

Part of this program will include interaction between Alal and a

team of students, lecturers, and engineers at the University who will work together on different issues such as quality control procedures, statistical methods, inventories optimization, and processes surveillance.

This work is guided by a Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy of doing business, where the company aims to satisfy internal and external customers, suppliers, and continuously improve the business processes.

C) Continuous quality improvement & certification of Alal products

In November 2007, a leading laboratory in Italy certified that all the leather produced in Alal tannery is free from an extensive list of hazardous substances including azo-dyes, mercury, PCP, and arsenic. This certification is required to work with the most important brands in the United States, the European Union and, lately, in China as well.

In order to add more value to the leather, Alal is being assisted by a team of technicians from Italy that guide the developments and work together with Alal team. The technicians have been visiting the tannery every two months since March 2007, and there is already a development plan to work together during the rest of 2008 and 2009.

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Luis Fara, Sales Manger,
with Marcelo Alal,
President

Here's the contact information for Luis Fara, Sales Manager, at Alal—and Luis speaks excellent English!

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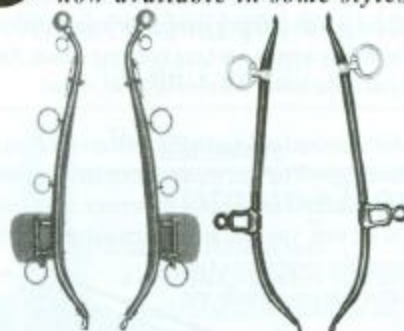
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