

Raw Hides and Leather Products

1. Introduction

Raw hides, leather, skins and fur skins, and products derived from these raw materials are listed in the EC's Common Customs Tariff (CCT) code, Chapters 41-43. These chapters include clothing products as well as industrial products such as conveyor belts made from leather and skins, but exclude silkworm guts and silkworm gut products.

Custom duties of 0-12% are normally imposed on these products upon entry to EC. Raw hides, skins and fur skins can enter free of tariff from all countries while items such as handbags, cases, trunks made with plastic normally attract a tariff rate of 12%.

The member states of the EC adhere to the CITES. There are restrictions on the importation of animals considered as endangered species and their by-products.

From 1 January 1995, none of the skins or products derived from the skins of animals listed below will be allowed entry to the EC unless the country of origin complies with the international animal trapping standards:

- | | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| ♦ beaver. | ♦ lynx. | ♦ muscat. |
| ♦ otter. | ♦ bobcat. | ♦ fisher. |
| ♦ coyote. | ♦ sable. | ♦ badger. |
| ♦ wolf. | ♦ raccoon. | ♦ marten. |
| ♦ ermine. | | |

Details relating to this regulation are given in the EC Official Journal L 308 of 9th November 1991 ref: 5254/91/EEC.

2. Raw Hides & Skins & Leather

The EC market is not regulated but there are very strict common industry standards. They cover the following areas:-

- ♦ methods of packing (doubleskin packing).
- ♦ methods of shipping.
- ♦ sizing.
- ♦ grading.
- ♦ insect and pest control.
- ♦ dusting.
- ♦ freshness.
- ♦ anti-rotting precautions.
- ♦ documentation and labelling.

For further information contact the International Council of Hides, Skins & Leather Trade Associations as detailed in Section 5.

3. Products of Skins, Hides and Leather

There are no EC or European industry-wide standards for these products except in the case of personal protective equipment (PPE) derived from skins, hides and leather. These PPE standards concern various aspects according to the type of product but all products must provide the following information:

- ◆ storage, use, cleaning, maintenance, servicing and disinfection.
- ◆ performance as recorded during technical tests designed to establish the level of protection provided.
- ◆ suitable accessories and the characteristics of appropriate spare parts.
- ◆ the classes of protection appropriate to different levels of risk and the corresponding limits of use.
- ◆ the obsolescence deadline or period of obsolescence of PPE or certain of its components.
- ◆ the type of packaging suitable for transport.
- ◆ the significance of any markings.

Full details on both product standards and accompanying information is given in the EC Official Journal, OJ L 399 of 30 December 1989, ref. 89/681/EC.

4. Furskin and Furskin Products

The CITES Convention imposes restrictions on the importation of fur skins from animals listed in the Convention. In general, trade in the EC market has no set standards except those already cited under raw skins and hides.

For more information contact the International Fur Trade Federation as detailed in Section 5.5.

5. Further Information and Contact Points

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS	TRADE FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS
1. International Council of Hides & Skins and Leather Trade Association Dalriach House Tummel Bridge Perthshire PH16 5NZ United Kingdom Tel: +44 88 263 4241 Fax: +44 88 263 4321 2. International Fur Trade Federation 2 The Quintet Churchfield Road Walton-on-Thames Surrey KT12 2TZ United Kingdom Tel: +44 93 22 32866 3. European Union of Hide and Skin Merchants 2 Rue de Viarmes F -75040 Paris Cedex 01 France Tel: +33 1 45 08 08 54 4. European Confederation of the Wholesale Leather Trade (Import-Export) Fritz-Elsas-Strasse 36 W-7000 Stuttgart 1 Germany Tel: +49 711 293690 5. European Committee of National Federations of the Leather, Travel Goods and Allied Industries 59 Bd Magenta F-75010 Paris France Tel: +33 1 42 41 44 55 Fax: +33 1 42 41 31 70	1. SEMAINE DE CUIR Location: Porte de Versailles/Paris France Contact: Semaine Internationale du Cuir 109 rue du St. Honore 75373 Paris Cedex 8 France Tel: +33 1 43 59 05 69 Fax: +33 1 43 59 30 02 Frequency: Every year in September 2. International Leather Exhibition Location: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre Contact: Hong Kong Trade Fair Ltd. 44/F China Resources Building 26 Harbour Road Hong Kong Tel: +852 8276211 Fax: +852 8277831 Frequency: Every year in April

European Commission
200 Rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +33 2 299 1111

Leather Garments**Product Coverage**

CCT NUMBER	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION
420310	Articles of apparel
420321	Gloves, mittens and mitts for sports
420329	Other gloves, mittens and mitts
420330	Belts and bandoliers
420340	Other clothing accessories

Customs Duties

CCT NUMBER	FULL	GSP*	LDDC	ACP
420310	7%	0%	0%	0%
420321	10%	0%	0%	0%
420329	10%	0%	0%	0%
420330	7%	0%	0%	0%
420340	7%	0%	0%	0%

* Imports of leather articles of apparel and clothing accessories are allowed entry into the EC free of customs duties within the limits of a ceiling. Imports beyond the ceiling may be subject to the full rate of duty.

Product Standards

Fashion is the major factor in this industry. Certain classical designs and colours remain with slight changes from year to year. Changes in colour standards are usually decided by professional associations of tanners and dress designers in the United Kingdom, France, Italy and the United States. These are regularly published by trade journals and magazines.

Softness, drape and aesthetic appeal are essential requirements of quality garments. Introduction of new machinery and technical innovation has made leather goods from all animal sources more usable and major fashion houses regularly include leather in their sample garment range emphasising its prestige and demand from the fashion conscious market.

Marketing and Distribution

Over the last two years overseas skin tanning industries have grown rapidly and imports of finished and semi-finished garments have increased rapidly.

International trade in leather garments is well established. As a general rule leather garments from developing Commonwealth countries are best marketed through importers. Many of these importers specialise exclusively in the leather business. They maintain close contact with exporters providing information on products and markets. They are normally able to determine the quality required by the product. Very often importers serve as an agent, importing on a commission basis or as a wholesaler selling to retailers.

Buyers purchase leather garments on a sample basis with trial orders varying in size. Delivery of two months after order is acceptable, although this shortens if the garment is a more fashion led item.

Documentation

Aside from normal shipping and import documents, Certificate of Origin - Form A for GSP and LDDC countries, EUR 1 for ACP countries - must accompany consignments to benefit from reduced tariff or tariff free entry into the EC.

CITES certification or a special licence is required to import garments made from animals classified as endangered specie.

Other Information

Trade Fairs: SEMAINE DE CUIR
Location: Porte de Versailles/Paris
Contact: Semaine Internationale du Cuir
109 rue du St. Honore
75373 Paris
Cedex 8, France
Tel: +33 1 43 59 05 69
Fax: +33 1 43 59 30 02
Frequency: Every year in September

Trade Associations: European Trade Union for Textiles, Clothing and Leather
Rue Joseph Stevens 8
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 2 511 5477
Fax: +32 2 511 0904

Hides and Skins

Product Coverage

CCT NUMBER	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION
41011	Small bovine hides
41012	Bovine hides (fresh or wet salted)
41013	Bovine hides (dried or dry salted)
41014	Hides and skins of equine animals
40121	Lamb and sheep skins with wool
40122	Lamb and sheep skins without wool
41031	Goat and kid skins

Customs Duties

Imports of raw hides and skins are allowed entry into the EC free of customs duties from anywhere in the world.

Product Standards

Hides and skins must be graded according to quality (in particular blemishes or damage), weight and size. First and second quality pelts are used to produce high quality clothing leather. Ungraded or poorly graded shipments, although accepted by some importers, will get a much lower price. Careful consideration must be given to method of packaging and precautions must be taken to preserve quality and freshness during shipment.

Marketing and Distribution

Hides and skins are normally brought into the EC by brokers, agents, merchants or traders. They look for new sources of supply around the world. They work closely with suppliers to establish quality. Suppliers wishing to make an offer must send information not only of price but also details of selection, grading, sizes and methods of drying. In most cases the importer will inspect source of supply to verify information in order to establish quality and consistency. Importers will initially trade on a consignment basis on the first few shipments.

Documentation

Aside from normal shipping and import documents, Certificate of Origin - Form A for GSP and LDDC countries, EUR 1 for ACP countries - must accompany consignments to benefit from reduced tariff or tariff free entry into the EC.

CITES certification or a special licence is required to import garments made from animals classified as endangered species.

Other Information

Information on prices of cattle, sheep and goat hides is available from:

The Market News Services
International Trade Centre
54-56 rue de Montbrillant
1202 Geneva 10
Switzerland.
Tel: +41 22 734 6021
Fax: +41 22 733 4439
Tlx: 414118 MNS

Trade Association: International Council of Hides and Skins and Leather Trade
Dalriach House
Tummel Bridge
Perthshire PH16 5NZ
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 88 263 4241
Fax: +44 88 263 4321

Trade Fair: SEMAINE DE CUIR
Location: Porte de Versailles/Paris
Contact: Semaine Internationale du Cuir
109 rue du St. Honore
75373 Paris
Cedex 8, France
Tel: +33 1 43 59 05 69
Fax: +33 1 43 59 30 02
Frequency: Every year in September

Publications: "The International Leather Guide"
Benn Publications Ltd
Sovereign Way
Tonbridge
Kent. TN9 1RW
United Kingdom

*Leather Goods***Product Coverage**

CCT NUMBER	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION
42021	Trunks, suitcases, vanity cases, executive cases, brief-cases, school satchels and similar containers
420221	Handbags
420231	Articles of a kind normally carried in the pocket or handbag

Customs Duties

CCT NUMBER	FULL	ACP	GSP	LDDC
420211	5.1%	0%	0%*	0%
420221	5.1%	0%	0%*	0%
420231	5.1%	0%	0%*	0%

* Imports of leather goods from GSP countries enter the EC free of customs duties within the limits of a tariff ceiling. Imports beyond the ceiling may be charged the full rate of duty.

Product Standards

As in all consumer items dependent on changing styles and fashion there are no set standards applicable to the sale of leather goods. Prices are dependent on quality of leather and craftsmanship. The market is very competitive with higher quality goods already coming from EC member states. The middle and low end of the market is extremely price sensitive and at the moment is facing fierce competition from products made from very good synthetic materials.

Marketing and Distribution

Distribution and marketing will vary from country to country. There is an increasing trend towards direct buying from large retail and mail order companies. With the Single European Market this should increase as links between member companies are formed through mergers and acquisitions.

Documentation

Aside from normal shipping and import documents, Certificate of Origin - Form A for GSP and LDDC countries, EUR 1 for ACP countries - must accompany consignments to benefit from reduced tariff or tariff free entry into the EC.

CITES certification or a special licence is required to import garments made from animals classified as endangered species.

Other Information

Trade Association European Committee of National Federations of the Leather, Travel Goods and Allied Industries
59 Bd Magenta
F-75010 Paris
France
Tel: +33 1 42 41 44 55
Fax: +33 1 42 41 31 70

Trade Fairs PRIMIÈRE/AMBIENTE/AUTUMN FAIR

Location: Frankfurt, Germany

Contact: Messe Frankfurt GmbH
Postfach 970126
D-6000 Frankfurt 1
Germany
Tel: +49 697 5750
Fax: +49 697 5756433

Frequency: Primiere - Every year in January
Ambiente - Every year in February
Autumn - Every year in August

ACP Commonwealth Countries

ACP Commonwealth Countries

Entry Conditions:

Tariff free and quota free entry into the EC.

Rules of Origin:

General rules of origin apply. The following products are subject to special rules which can be obtained from your national Customs and Excise:

- ◆ raw skins of sheep or lamb, with or without hides
- ◆ leather, without hair or wool other than chamois leather and patent leather
- ◆ patent leather and patent laminated leather.

Documentation:

Form EUR 1 must accompany products sent from ACP countries, if the exporter is to benefit from the preferential treatment applicable. These forms should be available from the exporting country's national Customs and Excise office or Ministry of Trade.

GSP Commonwealth Countries

GSP Commonwealth Countries

Entry Conditions:

Entry to the EC is generally tariff and quota free.

The following products are subject to tariff ceilings:

- ◆ Leather of bovine or equine animals
- ◆ Sheep or lamb skin leather
- ◆ Goat or kid skin
- ◆ Trunks, suitcase, cases, satchels, handbags and similar articles
- ◆ Articles of apparel and clothing accessories
- ◆ Tanned and dressed furskins.

Imports beyond the ceiling may be subject to the full rate of duty.

Rules of Origin:

General rules of origin apply. The following products are subject to special rules which can be obtained from your national Customs and Excise office:

- ◆ Raw skins of sheep or lamb, with or without hides
- ◆ Leather, without hair or wool other than chamois leather and patent leather
- ◆ Patent leather and patent laminated leather.

Documentation:

Certificate of Origin (Form A) must accompany products from GSP countries if the exporter is to benefit from reduced tariff duties. These forms are available from the exporter's national Customs and Excise office or Ministry of Trade.

LDDC Commonwealth Countries

LDDC Commonwealth Countries

Entry Conditions:

Tariff and quota free entry to the EC.

General rules of origin apply. The following products are subject to special rules which can be obtained from your national Customs and Excise office:

- ◆ Raw skins of sheep or lamb, with or without hides
- ◆ Leather, without hair or wool other than chamois leather and patent leather
- ◆ Patent leather and patent laminated leather.

Certificate of Origin (Form A) must accompany products from GSP countries if the exporter is to benefit from reduced tariff duties. These forms are available from the exporter's national Customs and Excise office or Ministry of Trade.