

LEATHER

Skin to DIE for.

Wear it Kind

Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.





Deceptive Leather

Millions of animals are killed globally for fashion and South Africa is no exception to this practice.

South Africa contributes to some of the world's most consumed animal derived textiles such as wool, mohair, leather, ostrich feathers and others.



The demand for these materials has resulted in intensive farming of animals, often with poor welfare standards that have negative impacts on the animals themselves through poor keeping conditions and inhumane slaughter, and negative impacts on the environment through the negative ecological impact resulting from the processing of animal skins to final textile products.



i Know where your leather comes from



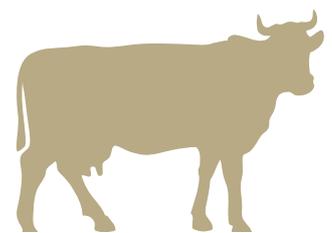
Bovine leather

Bovine is the most common source of leather in South Africa and is derived from cattle and is a co-product of the meat industry.



Animal welfare issues

- Cows kept in crowded, confined spaces
- Painful mutilations
- Dehorning
- Castrations performed without use of pain relief
- Branding by hot iron
- Nose piercings and ringing





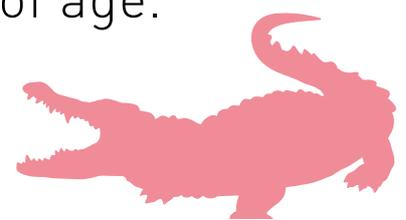
Crocodile leather

South Africa is a leading producer of crocodile skins, with the Southern African region alone, exporting over 250 000 skins each year [1]. Crocodile leather is used for bags, shoes, belts, and other accessories and this industry is well known for poor transparency and regulation, which exploits animals in cruel conditions.



Animal welfare issues

- Crocodiles kept in crowded & confined conditions, often in concrete pits
- Injuries sustained from fighting resulting in deformities
- Slaughtered at two to three years of age.
- Horrific slaughter methods
- Skinned alive in some instances





Ostrich leather

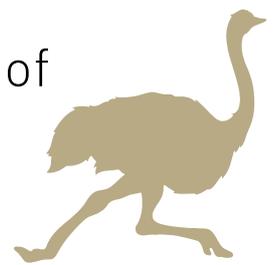
South Africa produces around 70 % of the world's ostrich meat, leather, and feathers[2] and provides skins to top fashion brands such as Prada and Louis Vuitton.

Did you know that unlike bovine, ostriches in South Africa are primarily bred for their skin, and ostrich meat becomes a by-product? [3]



Animal welfare issues

- Feather plucking while birds are conscious
- Keeping in fenced spaces preventing natural roaming
- Slaughtering methods include hanging of birds upside down and electrocution





Environmental concerns



Tanning animal skins to produce leather is a toxic process that can harm both the environment, and the people involved. 90 % of leather production globally uses chromium tanning which produces a highly toxic mix of chemicals and gases, including the carcinogenic chromium[4].

Human health concerns



The adverse health impacts caused to workers by exposure to toxic chemicals are well documented and include a high incidence of cancer, respiratory, skin, and eye problems.

In ostrich farms frontline workers sustain injuries from dealing with highly distressed confined birds.

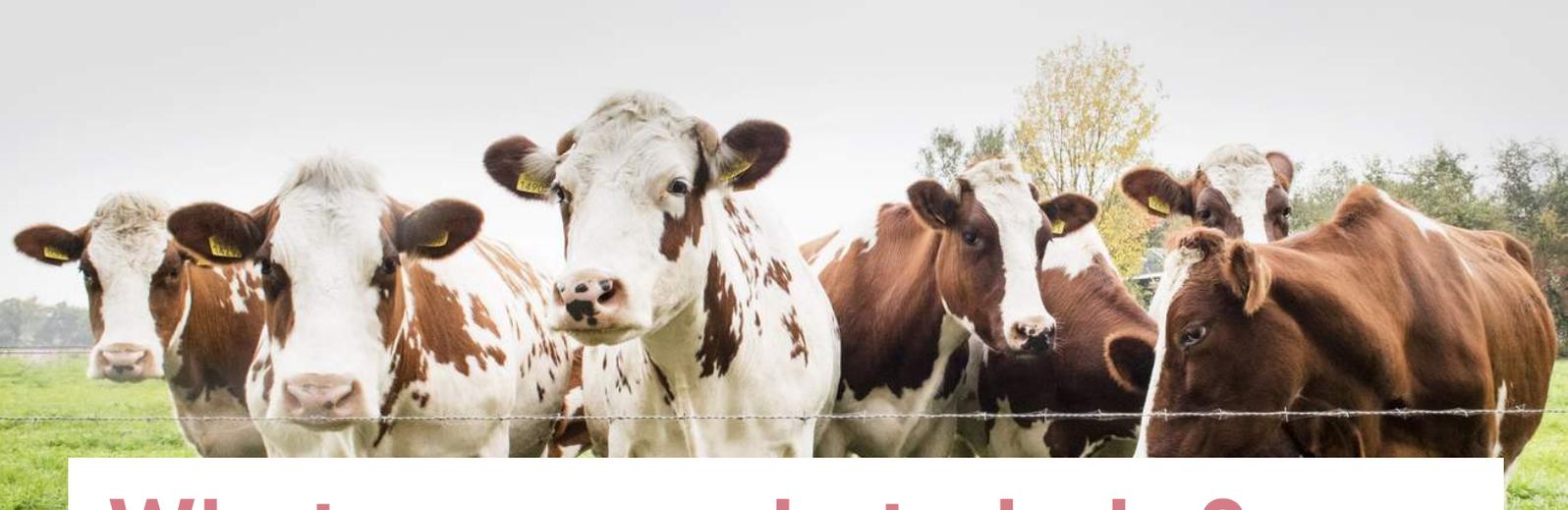
It's common to have bird flu outbreaks in ostrich farms affecting both the birds and the farm workers.

[1] <https://www.smallstarter.com/get-inspired/crocodile-farming-business-in-africa-and-a-success-story-from-kenya/>

[2] <https://www.sasas.co.za/AAH&RD/the-contribution-of-the-south-african-ostrich-industry-to-the-national-economy/>

[3] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348480704_The_South_African_Ostrich_Industry_Footprint

[4] Hedberg, Y, Liden, C & Wallinder, I 2015, 'Chromium released from leather – I: exposure conditions that govern the release of chromium (III) and chromium (VI),' *Contact Dermatitis*, vol. 72, no. 4, pp. 206-215.



What can you do to help?

FOUR PAWS encourages people and brands to buy and use alternatives to products of any animal origin such as;

Faux leather (pleather)

Canvas material

Cork leather

Pineapple leather

Mushroom leather

Apple leather

But it's not down to the individual alone!

Industry players should implement strong policies regarding animal welfare. As the world begins to realise the importance of animal welfare in relation to reducing the risk of zoonotic disease transmission, corporates and business leaders must take progressive action to ensure reduced exploitation of animals.

FOUR PAWS is the global animal welfare organisation for animals under direct human influence, which reveals suffering, rescues animals in need and protects them. Founded by Heli Dugler and friends in Vienna in 1988, the organisation focuses on companion animals including stray dogs and cats, farm animals and wild animals kept in inappropriate conditions as well as in disaster and conflict zones. With sustainable campaigns and projects, such as its own sanctuaries, FOUR PAWS provides rapid help and long-term protection for suffering animals.