



# MILESTONE®

Dear MILESTONE customer,

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important to your customers. Discussions about this topic are often very emotional - sometimes, unfortunately, to the detriment of the actual facts. For this reason, with our many years of leather expertise, we are happy to take a stand on this issue and thus offer you a fact-based argumentation basis.

## Sustainability

Sustainability it is rarely associated with leather or lambskin. How essential the sustainability aspect is with regard to fashion made of leather and lambskin is unfortunately often lost in the process.

For a few years now, the issue of sustainability has become the criterion of good fashion and this, of course, affects all areas of the fashion world. How sustainable a label or company really is is not only defined by which materials are used to manufacture products. It is an interplay of different factors. In order to clear up any ambiguities, we would like to clarify below what is important to us and how resource-conserving we are already working today.

## Is it even possible to combine sustainability and leather?

The term sustainability is the subject of controversial debate. There is no clear definition of what „sustainable“ is. Nevertheless, everyone agrees on one point: sustainability means future viability.

And that's exactly what we want: To sell fashion that does not cause additional harm to the environment and at the same time is sustainable.

But how can fashion and especially how can leather be sustainable? Textile waste and cheap production of clothing are still a big problem in the fashion industry. So, theoretically, the best solution would be to create new products from waste. We already use this approach, except that our „waste product“ comes not from the textile industry but from the food industry.



## LEATHER: A waste product

Our leather comes from animals that have been processed in the food industry. **Thus, we use waste products for the production of our fashion, respectively leftovers that have been rescued from the waste.** It is very important to us to clear up this misunderstanding: No animals were bred for the production of our fashion.

For many, vegan leather is still the only buyable option, but it's not that simple. Vegan leather in no way automatically guarantees a more environmentally friendly and less harmful product. Vegan simply means that animal products have been eliminated and a synthetic alternative (not ecologically degradable or recyclable) has been used instead. This is misleading especially when it comes to an apparently ecological material like apple leather: Here, the raw product is mixed with a synthetic plastic and coated. The „leather“ is thus made robust, but consists of at least 70% plastic.

We do not use artificial leather, as it is always made of plastic, and rely on natural materials. These are ethically unrestricted, precisely because they return to their natural origin in the event of disposal. For reference: a leather jacket takes about 50 years to decompose - whereas plastic takes more than 500 years to decompose. And with repairs and mending in our in-house tailoring shop, we can even extend the life of our products.

## Production sites

The upstream suppliers of our leather products manufacture exclusively in India and Pakistan and comply with all applicable European standards, especially with regard to health maintenance and fair working conditions. We can guarantee this due to our long-standing business relationship with our suppliers and our regular on-site visits and inspections. This is the only way we can ensure that the manufacture of our products complies with our high code of values.

## Corporation

It is important for us to communicate our challenges and goals transparently and openly and to continuously improve.

The tanning process is one of the most important steps in the manufacturing process of leather. Unfortunately, chemical tanning, which is a burden on the environment, is still the most popular and also the most widespread. Therefore, at the moment our assortment still includes chemically tanned leather jackets.

However, it is our goal to gradually reduce this proportion in the future and to switch more and more to the more sustainable alternative of vegetable (plant-based) tanning. For 90% of our leather jackets, the leather already comes from vegetable tanning.

