

VALUE OF HIDES AND SKINS FROM DAIRY ANIMALS





Introduction

Hides and skins are by-products of slaughtered cattle, goats, sheep, and camels, among other animals. Hides are from larger animals like cattle and camels, while skins are from smaller animals like goats and sheep. Dairy animals are culled due to poor health, low production, and reproduction performance and usually taken for slaughter.



Hides and skins from dairy cattle and goat



Dairy cow



Dairy goat

- Dairy animals have long lifetime productivity; up to 7 years in goats and beyond 8 years in cattle. Their lifespan may also be extended if the culls are added into a feedlot system for fattening. This makes hides and skins prone to damage due to on-farm injuries, diseases, parasitic attacks, and scratches, which lowers its quality.
- Since hides and skins represent a small part of the value of an animal, many farmers perceive hides and skins to be of low value. Hides and skins end up either harvested poorly, disposed of, left to rot, or given as feed to animals.
- There are over 3.5million dairycattle and over 200,000 dairy goats in Kenya with a consistent animal culling capacity leads to an aggregate of many hides and skins that would go to processing.



LEFT: Poor slaughter and flaying of cattle. RIGHT: Poorly preserved hides

Products from hides and skins

- **Traditionally**, hides and skins have been used to make various products such as ceremonial regalia, garments, musical instruments, beddings, upholstering furniture, utensils and handicrafts. Hides and skins were treated by sun drying, producing leather that is hard, brittle, and adversely vulnerable to wetness.



Products made from hide and skins (Shield and musical instruments)

- **Conventionally**, hides and skins are cured by salt and later tanned by vegetable or chemical tanning. The resultant leather is imputrescible (does not rot) even after exposure to water. Such leather produces high value footwear, garments, automobile upholstery, furniture, gloves, and other leather accessories.



Leather products (shoes, briefcase and gloves)

Economic importance of the leather sector

- Leather sector contribution to Kenya's economy is valued at KES. 10.6 billion, which is about 10% the value of the dairy sector and 25% the value of the tea sector.
- It accounts for about 5% of the agricultural GDP and 1.5% of the overall GDP.
- Leather value addition and trade creates employment to over 22,540 people in Kenya.
- One (1) hide is about 25 ft² which can produce about 5 to 8 pairs of school shoes, or 3 to 5 pairs of boots, depending on shoe size.

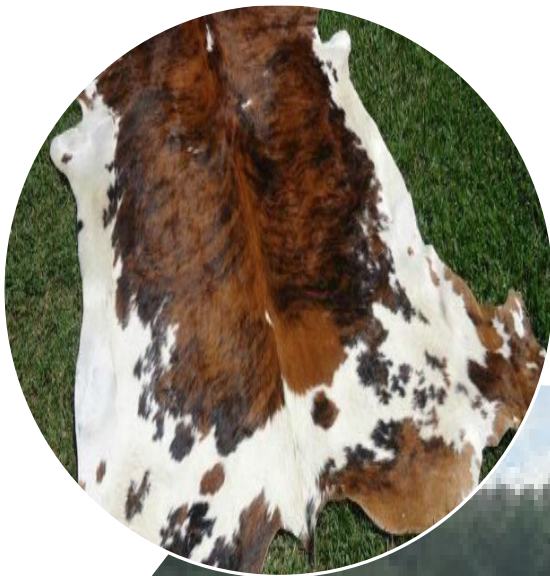


Finished leather for the manufacture of school shoes



Finished leather for the manufacture of school shoes

- Currently, Kenya produces about 4 million pairs of shoes per year, against a demand for 20 million pairs.
- Production of dairy animals with best management practices will produce quality hides and skins that may be utilized in the production of high-quality footwear and leather goods
- Dairy culls and fattened dairy bulls represent 22 % of all cattle slaughtered for beef in Kenya and therefore are important in contributing to the leather industry and availing shoes to Kenyan school children and uniformed forces.





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KALRO/NAVCDP BRI Brochure No. 061/2024

