

## Brazil Exports US\$ 1.7 Billion in Leather, a 8% Slump

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Leather exports from Brazil totaled US\$ 1.68 billion from January to October this year, representing a decrease of 8% over the same period last year, according to figures disclosed yesterday by the center of Brazilian Hides and Skins Industries (CICB).

According to the organization, should the monthly average be maintained, foreign sales should reach US\$ 2 billion by the end of 2008, a reduction of US\$ 500 million compared with the organization's previous estimate.

Exports of bovine leather answered to US\$ 1.65 billion during the period, a reduction of 8% over the first ten months of 2007. According to the CICB, the tanning sector answered to 7.4% of the total Brazilian trade surplus until October, which was US\$ 20.8 billion.

The leading destinations of leather exports from Brazil in October were China and Hong Kong, which imported US\$ 537.5 million; Italy, with US\$ 453.4 million; and the United States, with US\$ 153.1 million.

From January to October, Vietnam was the market that grew the most, having imported US\$ 80 million, growth of 96% over the same period last year. Indonesia, Germany, Mexico and Norway are also among the importers of the Brazilian product.

From January to October, the Brazilian state that exported the most was São Paulo, which sold the equivalent to US\$ 519.4 million; followed by Rio Grande do Sul, with US\$ 447.7 million; Ceará, with US\$ 167 million; and Mato Grosso do Sul, with US\$ 93.21 million. Bahia, Paraná, Goiás and Minas Gerais are also on the list of Brazilian exporter states.

The CICB represents approximately 80 leather manufacturers and processing companies. The industrial complex employs some 50,000 people and generates a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$ 3.5 billion.

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