

30th anniversary NIG GmbH

25th anniversary rhubarb leather

In this year of our anniversary we will share monthly short stories with you about important projects of our company's history.

In the early 1990's NIG, together with research and industrial partners from Saxony –Anhalt, Saxony and Bavaria, has researched intensively on renewable resources for leather tanning. As you know, pioneers are sometimes very early birds. We are not surprised that tanning based on renewable resources are a high point of interest after 25 years again – for us too!

Our main scope of research in the 1990's was the family of Polygonaceae. Polygonum and Rumex species are known as member of this family and especially the rhubarb too.

With our partners, we investigated around 30 different varieties of Rhubarb and selected the best under consideration of crop, yield and tannin quality.

We have developed and optimized the extraction successfully, and following technical processes from lab to industrial scale are getting a high quality tannin powder. For example in Rehau the technical tanning process was realized, for automotive leather too.

Especially the re-tanning of wet-white hides delivered leather with exceptional quality.

In 1996, our intensive research work led to the registration and granting of a patent under the title of:

„Verfahren zur Gewinnung von Gerbstoffen aus Polygonaceae als nachwachsende Rohstoffe sowie die Verwendung dieser Gerbstoffe als Ledergerbstoffe“.

That means rhubarb leather is not as new as reported sometimes.



Picture 1: Pieces of wet-white re-tanned with Rhubarb and Polygonumextract



Picture 2: Supply chain Rhubarb-root, Rhubarb-root extract, Rhubarb leather shoes