



Striving for Sustainability Against a Disposable Mindset

Hello from Pergamena's new Director of Sales and Marketing, Grace George, and new Director of Sustainability, Liv Virta-Meyer.

As a company that has been around for over five centuries, Pergamena knows a bit about sustaining. In 1922, Richard Edward Meyer approved blueprints for three new tanning drums commissioned from the *Turner Tanning Machine Co* for his growing family business. One hundred years later, we are more than a company with a long and trusted history; we are a family legacy. The blueprint of those drums still hangs in our office. Our goal is to have it still hanging for our ancestors to see come 2122.

Jesse Karl Meyer, current company head, measures our success not only by the bottom line but also through the quality of our products. For years we have been committed to making beautiful parchment and leather in ways that are not only innovative but also sustainable. We take a lot of pride in the fact that we focus not just on the products we make but also on how we make them.

Tanning using the "tannins" naturally found in plants was the industry standard dating back to ancient Egypt. This method of tanning spanned centuries and continents because it did not fight nature; it embraced it. Then the advent of modern technology turned the focus away from the beautiful characteristics of each individual hide to plastic-covered and cheaply mass-produced leathers. From fast-fashion to fast-food, cheap and easily-forgotten products have filled up shelves, and what was saved in time was lost in quality, sustainability, and individuality.

Chrome tanning was a solution singularly focused on increasing production to meet rising global demand. Developments in technology allowed massive amounts of leather to be produced at a much lower cost to the manufacturer. The price for the planet, however, proved to be enormous. Chrome tanning requires toxic heavy metals and plastic coatings to make the leather appealing and functional. From its destructive production to the disposable economy it fed into, the whole world feels the repercussions of the chrome-tanning industry. We are passionate about veg tanning because of the beautiful products it creates and because, at its core, veg tanning focuses on quality, sustainability, and individuality. While these traditional methods take a lot more care, time, and effort than chrome tanning, we sincerely believe that the benefits far outweigh the trade-offs.



Last year saw two new additions to the Pergamena staff; a Director of Sustainability and a Director of Sales and Marketing. Both of these new positions represent our continued commitment to our product and to our planet. From collaborating with nationally-recognized organizations to research the ramifications of our process to working with suppliers focused on regenerative farming, we are committed to exploring all facets of our environmental impact. We also recognize that a new generation of designers and manufacturers is looking for sustainable materials. That is why we work with conscientious American farms to produce a fully USA-raised and made leather line. This new line is environmentally friendly and fully traceable, allowing you and your customers to know the origin of your leather from start to finish.

We acknowledge the interdependent web that our industry belongs to; we exist connected to farmers, ranchers, artists, and designers. We aim to use our knowledge and passion to bring these communities together. By creating thoughtful and innovative bespoke materials, we set the stage for our customers to make unique and lasting projects. We hope our passion and commitment to our product and planet encourages others to search for more sustainable solutions in their production as well.

Grace George
Director of Sales and Marketing

Grace George is Pergamena's new Director of Sales and Marketing. She is a graduate of Marist Business School, holding a degree in business administration focusing on entrepreneurial studies. With her talent and experience in event coordination for wedding venues, marketing for start-ups, small business development, and farming, she is a welcome addition.

Liv Virta-Meyer
Director of Sustainability

Liv Virta-Meyer, Pergamena's first Director of Sustainability, deeply loved the environment long before falling in love with a Meyer. Though her educational credentials ended in Neuropsychology, her early college experience was spent taking classes called "Images of Nature," studying the principles of Green Building and working as a TrailBlazer. Liv's work earned her a NYS "Outstanding Student Service Award" and the title of "NYS College Environmental Ambassador."