

Asiatan

Document Name: ASIATAN WET BLUE POLICY		
Date of Preparation: August 2015	Implementation Date: August 2015	Pages: 13
Date of Review/ Update - Version Reviewed January 2022 - Version # 4	Prepared by: AT Wet Blue Technician	Approved by: Chief Technical Manager
Document Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal <input type="checkbox"/> For External Distribution		

江門怡興制革有限公司 Jiangmen Yi Xin Tanning Co. Ltd

江門德勤皮革制品有限公司 Jiangmen TecTuff Co. Ltd

WET BLUE POLICY

Approved by: Iyyappan B. – Chief Technical Manager

Company: ASIATAN

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

RULE TO SELECT WET BLUE SUPPLIER

1. A wet blue supplier should present a sample for initial evaluation with price and grade. LWG rated suppliers are preferred.
2. When the supplier sample evaluation is fully satisfactory, the supplier is recommended for initial purchase.
3. All suppliers' profiles are requested to analyze their products, capacity, lead time, certification and suitability.
4. Sample of leather should pass RSL test on the first test. Then wet blue will be evaluated. Evaluation consists of Main criteria and Secondary criteria.
5. All the wet blue suppliers must score more than 90% in Main criteria. If scoring is less than 90%, suppliers purchase will be discontinued immediately.
6. In Secondary criteria, the suppliers below 60% are advised and a grace period for a maximum of two quarters will be given to improve. If there is no improvement, all purchases from that supplier will be discontinued.

RULE TO SOURCE THE WET BLUE

1. The suppliers are evaluated in two criteria (Main criteria, Secondary criteria). Based on scoring in these criteria, they are graded as Grade 1 supplier and Grade 2 supplier.
 - a. Main criteria: The wet blue materials are tested for RSL, Tannage, and Mold growth.
 - b. Secondary criteria: The materials are checked for Measurement, Grades, Thickness, Trimming and the Supplier's Lead time and Communication.
2. In main criteria, 100% passed suppliers are considered as Grade 1 suppliers. 90% and above suppliers are considered as Grade 2 suppliers. Less than 90% on Main criteria is considered as a failure. No more purchase will be done from that supplier.
3. In secondary criteria, all the suppliers are expected to be above 60%. To be categorized Grade 1 Supplier, supplier must score above 80%.
4. The suppliers below 80% but above 60% are categorized under Grade 2.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

5. No more purchases are made from suppliers whose score is below 60% if no improvements are made after a grace period of maximum 2 quarters.
6. Our customers are categorized as Tier 1 customers and Tier 2 customers. Grade 1 supplier's wet blue is used for Tier 1 customers and Grade 2 supplier's wet blue is used for Tier 2 customers.
7. As part of Asiatan's Roadmap to wet blue Raw Material Management, the plan is to source from Grade 1 suppliers in the future.

QUARTERLY EVALUATION

1. Every three months, all the suppliers and their raw materials should be evaluated based on these criteria and they are graded.
2. The evaluation reports are documented, followed throughout the year for consistency and to improve the quality of our raw materials.
3. Those suppliers who do not meet our requirement will be advised on making improvements. If the problem continues, the purchase will be stopped.

SUPPLIER'S PROFILE DOCUMENTATION

1. All suppliers' details will be collected and documented in supplier's information registration form, which includes supplier's company details, details of production, capacity, lead time, facilities and certification.
2. The wet blue and supplier evaluation and comments will be added to their profile.
3. Written Declaration is sought from all suppliers that all products shipped to the facility adhere to stringent guidelines with regards to Restricted Substances and Chrome VI.
4. Suppliers must notify Asiatan in writing of any changes or updates.
5. Suppliers have to declare in writing the name of substance used as wetting/degreasing agent in tanning process and that it is free from restricted substances AP(alkylphenol) and APEO (alkylphenol ethoxylates).

WET BLUE TESTING PROCESS

A) GENERAL TESTING

1. Every container of wet blue on arrival is checked for any damage to the packing, weight of each pallet as per packing list. Variations in weight or damage found will be communicated to the supplier and further action will be taken.
2. The wet blue is tested for tannage by using boil test method, a simple test to identify if the leather stands for 3 minutes at 100 °C. If the wet blue doesn't and shrinks, the re-tanning technical team and supplier and supplier are notified and rectification is sought.
3. The pH of the wet blue is checked which should be 3.6 - 4.0. Variation in the standard pH will be informed to the re-tanning technical team.
4. Grading, thickness, fly cuts, veins, trimmings are inspected and documented.
5. Other physical testing will be done in crust stage.
6. If any test result is not satisfactory, the supplier will be notified to upgrade and the next shipment also will be carefully inspected for improvement.

B) RSL FOR WET BLUE

1. All wet blue suppliers should **sign Asiatan RSL declaration**.
2. Suppliers must submit any Asiatan updated version of the required documents for record. Suppliers must notify Asiatan in writing of any changes or updates from them.
3. Written Declaration is sought from all suppliers that products shipped to the facility adhere to stringent guidelines with regards to Restricted Substances.
4. Suppliers must declare in writing the name of substance used as wetting/degreasing agent in tanning process, literature and that it is free from restricted substances AP (alkylphenol) and APEO (alkylphenol ethoxylates).
5. All major suppliers' wet blue or supplier wet blue used in finished leather must be sent for Full Test and must Pass at least annually once based on Asiatan internal wet blue standards against Nike test methods.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

6. Any Third-Party Test reports from suppliers are also accepted.
7. Test reports should be documented.
8. Any RSL failure in wet blue should be identified and addressed.
9. The technical department will process it to remove RS and wet blue will be tested again.
10. The supplier is notified of the failure in RSL and details of the corrective measures used are sent to the supplier. A detailed explanation is sought from the supplier about reasons for failure in RSL.
11. If still a failure after re-testing, the wet blue is considered a rejection. It is isolated and stored separately. The supplier automatically becomes ineligible to buy from, and no future wet blue is sourced from the same supplier.
12. All testing should be done at an ISO 17025 accredited lab. The lab should provide Asiatan with a copy of their ISO17025 accreditation for documentation.
13. Only Raw Material Suppliers who can provide the documentation or test reports that they can comply with Asiatan RSL Standards are eligible to buy from.

C) FAT & FFA CONTENT

1. Incoming wet blue from every supplier is sent for testing at least once annually for FAT (total fat) and FFA. (Free Fatty Acids) The permissible limit for FAT is 2% and 0 – 0.2% for FFA content.
2. Wet blue material having 2-3% will be treated with a little more degreasing agent for better degreasing.
3. If the content is above 3%, the technical team will look for remedial action. The supplier is informed of the failure and notified of the remedial action taken. A second failure in FAT and FFA content from the supplier will make the supplier ineligible to purchase from again.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

D) CHROME VI

1. All major wet blue suppliers should provide Asiatan annually with a declaration/certificate stating that the wet blue purchased from them are chrome VI free based on Asiatan standards.
2. Incoming Wet blue from every major supplier is sent for full testing at least once annually where chrome VI content should have a limit of 0-3 ppm.
3. All testing should be performed to ISO 17075 test methods at an ISO 17025 accredited lab.
4. At the end of wetend process, scavenger wash (such as Yihan g-6010) should be used to remove chrome VI if there is any formation during re-tanning process.
5. Any RSL failure for chrome VI in the wet blue should be addressed and processed for correction by the technical manager.
6. The technical manager will find a suitable process to correct the failure and resend it for testing.
7. The supplier is notified of the failure in chrome VI and details of the corrective measures used are sent to the supplier. A detailed explanation is sought from the supplier about reasons for failure in RSL for chrome VI.
8. If there is a second failure in RSL, the supplier automatically becomes ineligible to buy from, and no future wet blue is sourced from the same supplier.
9. After performing corrective action on the wet blue, if the results of the 3rd party testing are a failure in RSL for chrome VI, the wet blue is automatically rejected and the material will be sent back to the supplier.
10. By testing wet blue annually and testing finished leather on a regular basis throughout the year, the absence of chrome VI and RSL is further confirmed.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

E) FUNGICIDE TESTING

1. All Major Suppliers' wet blue is tested periodically for its resistivity against environment.
2. If the wet blue scores in the range of 8 -10 in Tropical Chamber Test (Grading Scale 0 - 10, 10 considered highest), it is considered to have sufficient active substance against mold growth.
3. Any wet blue having a score of less than 8 is noted and informed to the supplier to improve during tanning process.
4. The technical team will adjust % of preservative in crusting process depending on type of tannage and finishing.

PURCHASING AND PLANNING

1. Purchasing of raw material is conducted in conjunction with the sales forecast as projected by the marketing team.
2. For cow hides, 6 months forecast and for Goat and Splits, yearly forecast is considered.
3. Generally, we aim to estimate an approximate production capacity for the year.
4. Estimations are the result of discussion with the marketing/sales department and forecasts provided by brands and factories.
5. Accurate forecasts from brands and factories are instrumental for consistent production all year long.

LABELING OF WETBLUE

1. Wet blue on arrival should be checked for packing and material as per packing list.
2. After visually checking of wet blue packing, every pallet is labeled with internal JML number corresponding to packing list number, month of receiving and Origin of wet blue.
3. Inventory is maintained based on individual suppliers and wet blue is issued for production based on FIFO policy.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

FIRST IN – FIRST OUT (FIFO)

1. All wet blue materials are issued on **FIRST IN, FIRST OUT** basis.
2. Every day after the issues, the issued quantity will be deducted, and weekly stock report will be issued.
3. Sorter will sort suitable material according to the production plan, and the wet blue will be issued from earliest received container.
4. Wet blue received later should not be opened and issued when appropriate materials are available from an earlier received container.
5. When suitable material is not available from earliest received container, the following received container can be opened to issue for specific reasons of thickness and grade.

STORAGE

1. After inspections of the pallets, the raw material pallets are fumigated by spraying preservative around the pack of wet blue and packed with hard polyurethane to protect from atmosphere, air and sun light.
2. If on opening, any mold growth is found, the material will be isolated and washed separately with required fungicide treatment.
3. Every pallet of raw materials must be stamped with labels which represent corresponding packing list number and month of receiving, origin.
4. All the stocks should be stored under the shed and in warehouse.
5. Wet blue to be issued for production should not be left in open air.
6. All the wet blue pallets are arranged as per detailed Warehouse layout.
7. The storage place must be provided with sufficient airflow to prevent mold growing conditions and a ventilation system to maintain air circulation.
8. Wet blue pallets should be kept off the floor and **50 cm away from the wall**.
9. Storage places are frequently monitored for humidity and temperature.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

10. Periodical fumigation for warehouse should be done, at least 3 times during the year and records of fumigation must be kept.
11. While transferring wet blue from one place to another, it must be covered with plastic.
12. The roof in warehouse should be in good condition with no leakage.
13. Wet blue warehouse should be clean and dry. Foreman should arrange regular removal of trash from the ground, keeping the area clean.

STANDARD OF PROCESS – SORTING

1. The raw materials to be sorted for production depends on type of re-tannage, characters of final product, thickness, type of finishing and considering the various types of operations involved during making of the leather.
2. Wet blue are sorted into five categories. These five categories are the production patterns to be made into crust.
 - HP TecTuff
 - Cow milled and Soft leathers
 - Cow Smooth leathers
 - Goat leathers, and
 - Split leathers.
3. Open defects like Scratches, Ticks, Brand marks, Holes, Flay cuts are considered while making selection. Grading is in reference to the cut ability of the wet blue.
4. Grade C should have above 90% cut ability. The material without holes, flay cuts, one brand mark on edges, light veins, less growth marks, without open scratches and ticks is considered as C grade. These are very suitable for smooth leathers, light finish leathers
5. Grade D should have 80-90% cut ability. Light scratches, light veins, without ticks, no holes, one brand mark will be considered as D1, whereas wet blue with a fewer more scratches and veins with scattered ticks, one or two brand marks light flay cuts will be considered as D2. These are suitable milled leathers.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

6. Grade E should have 70-80% cut ability. Deep veins, open holes, scratches, flay cuts, many ticks, low grain materials are considered as E grade. These are suitable for making corrected grain, pigment finish, printed milled products.
7. Veins are noticed during sorting and those skins are issued for product where veins are acceptable.
8. While sorting, thickness of the raw material is checked and issued according to the final product requirement.
9. Stains or patches are noticed and issued for dark colors.
10. Size of the raw material is important to get desired characters for various types of final product.
11. Selection of wet blue issued for all products is based on the product.

WET BLUE QUALITY CONTROL

1. Wet blue materials are selected according to the S.O.P, which are categorized based on Asiatan leather products.
2. Sorter issues wet blue as per everyday plan requirement, considering type of product and suitable raw material for those products as per the standard chart.
3. While sorting type of leather, category, color, tannage, thickness, veins, scratches, ticks, brand marks, holes and flay cuts are considered to find suitable material.
4. Issued wet blue quality standards are inspected and documented by Foreman or wet blue in charge.
5. Every lot is measured for quantity to make sure we do not over produce than the order quantity.
6. All the issued wet blue lots should have a production plan card, and the wet blue materials in bulk pack will have a label, with details of supplier, grade, thickness, and number of pieces.

MOLD MANAGEMENT

1. All Suppliers' wet blue are tested for its resistivity against environment.
2. Suppliers have to declare in writing the % of substance used as preservative/ anti-molding agent in tanning process. Literature of all agents used by suppliers is obtained.
3. Suppliers are recommended on guidelines to follow for packing of product on pallets.
 - a. Suppliers are recommended to use dark plastic, preferably black, to wrap the wet blue.
 - b. The containers used to ship product on recommended IPPC wooden pallets have to be accompanied by a Fumigation Certificate from holder of an approved license.
 - c. All pallets are to be fumigated to ISPM 15 standard. The wood packaging is to be heated to a temperature of 56° Celsius for a period of 30 minutes in accordance with requirements within the ISPM 15 standard Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging in International Trade.
4. On reception of wet blue from supplier in containers, random pallet from the container is opened to check for fungus/ mold growth. Moldy wet blue can be recognized from the discoloration or staining in hide caused by Fungus. The fungus is often red and leaves dark spots on the wet blue.
 - i. After a visual inspection is done, if mold is found on wet blue from the random pallet, supplier is informed about the presence of the mold and is expected to improve his preservation techniques for the next batch.
 - ii. Pallets should be stored separately and quarantined from the rest of the wet blue inventory
 - iii. The wet blue has to be immediately washed for mold and then taken for further processing.
 - iv. Re-tanning Department is informed and re-tanning department adjusts process to take into account the presence of mold – thru addition of preservatives to treat the selected pallet.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

- v. Persons handling moldy wet blue should wear suitable PPE such as full sleeve gloves, mask, safety goggles, work overalls and work shoes.
5. Every pallet from every container is sprayed externally on the protective covering of the wet blue with preservative, BUSAN 100 (mixed with water-1% solution) according to recommended guidelines and procedures.
6. **DO NOT SPRAY THE WET BLUE with BUSAN 100.** The sprayed pallet is then again covered with polyethylene plastic wrap/tarp and stored.
7. Recommended PPE is mandatory for any persons handling BUSAN 100. The recommended PPE includes, mask, chemical resistant gloves, safety goggles, body protecting clothing and safety shoes.
8. BUSAN 100 should be sprayed on an off- day to ensure minimum exposure of the chemical to factory workers.
9. BUSAN 100 is again sprayed quarterly (every 3 months) on pallets, floors and walls of the wet blue warehouses to prevent growth and infestation of mold.
10. The necessary information of the sterilization procedure should be recorded and documented.
11. Wet blue & Crust prepared from Wet Blue is sent to a testing lab on a regular basis to be evaluated for the extent of mold growth & resistance to mold growth.
12. If any concern is shown in the test result, re-tanning department adjusts preservative based on test results and new crust is sent to the lab for retesting.
13. Test for Air borne spores for mold/fungus is conducted periodically and sent to Lab for Testing. A test report is generated and facility obtains recommendations on use of fungicide and sterilization based on the results of the test. Use of Busan 100 is recommended to prevent mold growth.

Asiatan

WET BLUE POLICY

SORTING TOOLS

Asiatan categories of Leathers - HP TecTuff, Cow Milled and Soft leathers, Cow Smooth leathers, Goat leathers, and Split leathers.

HP TECTUFF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure whole split fits to the mold size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If bigger than mold size cut it into half and issue separately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For darker colors use of stained wet blue is not problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For lighter and white color make sure wet blue is not stained
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-shave and remove deep veins to make sure of less veins before issue to processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For non-wicking leathers always use recent wet blue
COW MILLED AND SOFT LEATHERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 16 sq. ft. and above wet blue for this type of leathers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepted light veins to medium veins in this leather
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For dark colors, use of stained wet blue and wet blue with patches is fine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For light colors, make sure wet blue has no stains and patches
COW SMOOTH LEATHERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use big size wet blue for this type of leathers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure shaving is clean on flesh side of the wet blue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't issue wet blue with loose flanks and unshaved belly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For dark colors, use of stained wet blue and wet blue is not problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For light colors, make sure wet blue has no stains and patches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before shaving make sure thickness is enough in wet blue for clean shaving

Asintan

WET BLUE POLICY

GOAT LEATHERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sort wet blue according to size and thickness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For corrected grain leathers and milled leathers, use bigger size wet blue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For full grain leathers, make sure there is no issue big size wet blue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For dark colors, use of stained wet blue and wet blue is not problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For light colors, make sure wet blue has no stains and patches
SPLIT LEATHERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For suede type of leathers, use wet blue 18 sq. ft. and below sizes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For milled and oily articles, use wet blue 19 sq. ft. and above
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do proper trimming to avoid damages while processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For dark colors, use of stained wet blue and wet blue is not a problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For light colors, make sure wet blue has no stains and patches