

TANNING

The tanning industry is an important user of chemicals, including salts, chromium, greases and synthetics. The industry's leading companies include *Fábricas de Calzado Canadá* and *Curtidos Rexis*.

TEXTILES

Mexican textile producers do not generally produce a full range of fabrics, and they are having problems competing with both higher quality and lower prices of imported fabrics. In association with foreign partners, some domestic producers are upgrading to remain competitive. Mexican manufacturers have to comply with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) rules of origin if they want to export their products to the US or Canada. The industry is a large importer of synthetic fibres, including about C \$2.2 million worth of Canadian artificial filaments in 1995. Chemical products imported by the industry include bleaches, dyes and softeners.

Many Mexican companies are forming partnerships with American firms. This sometimes involves American clothing manufacturers making alliances with Mexican textile producers, and sometimes the reverse. This rationalization should improve the industry's competitive position.

The larger Mexican textile manufacturers are members of the *Cámara Nacional de la Industria Têxtil (Canaintex)*, National Chamber of the Textile Industry. They include *Kaltex*, *Avante*, *Romafil*, *Intretex*, *Martex Potosí*, *Negociación Fabril de Soria* and *Grupo Hytt* among many others.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Mexico has a serious water pollution problem, stemming from both household and industrial waste. Less than 400 plants treat only 18 percent of municipal discharges, leaving some 2.9 billion cubic metres per year which is discharged untreated into natural water systems. The industrial sector generates 18 percent of all wastewater and it is estimated that only about 15 percent of it is treated. Mexico expanded its environmental enforcement regulation in 1992, which resulted in plans for many new water treatment facilities. Most were postponed because of the economic crisis in 1995, but a major expansion of this sector is expected over the medium term. This will create important demands for chemicals used in both municipal and industrial waste treatment systems.