



## THE FASTER SOLUTION FOR SHEA



**Identifying opportunities and converting them into successful logistics concepts. That's what drives us. This also goes for the shea butter supply chain, where we're offering new solutions for the West African market.**

Shea butter is a vegetable fat extracted from the kernels of the shea or karité tree. Shea butter is mainly used in cosmetic products, such as moisturisers, ointments or lotions. But it's also used as an edible oil, in margarine or chocolate and confectionary.

### **Sustainable product**

"Shea butter is a natural product that's becoming increasingly popular," says Bart van de Vorst, Managing Director at Van den Bosch DMCC in Dubai. "Shea butter is not extracted using mass production techniques because the tree only occurs in a limited part of the savanna. This reinforces its sustainable characteristic."

### **Olein and stearin**

Delving deeper into the process, you discover that shea butter is first split into stearin and olein. Olein is a sustainable alternative to sunflower oil, palm oil and olive oil. Stearin mainly goes to the food sector. The ingredient is particularly popular in the chocolate and confectionary industries as an alternative to cocoa butter. "Where splitting previously took place in Europe, we see that multinationals are now investing in local processing centres so that the product is processed directly at source", says Van de Vorst.



Bart van de Vorst  
Managing Director  
Van den Bosch DMCC

### **From blocks to bulk**

Van den Bosch ships raw shea butter and stearin to Europe in 20ft ISO tank containers. "The product is loaded at the right temperature and cools down during transport. In Europe, we bring it back up to the right temperature at strategically located heating stations close to the unloading location. This provides a lot of advantages over traditional modes of transport", says Van de Vorst.

"The usual method of transporting it as a block requires a lot of physical handling. What's more, heating up blocks is a time-consuming process. The move to bulk transport in ISO tanks is ideal in terms of reduced labour, increased capacity and heating options."

"Step by step we have optimised the shea butter supply chain," continues Van de Vorst. "With our modern and better insulated equipment we can considerably shorten the heating process and thereby reduce costs."