

# Sustainability Report 2021

## Van Ballegooijen Foods



# Introduction: People Planet Profit

Van Ballegooijen Foods (VBF) is a food group with two business units. Royal VIVBuisman (RVB) develops and produces butter and milkfat products. Van der Pol (VDP) is specialized in frozen dough products. With the roots of its subsidiaries originating in the 19th century, VBF has a long-term transgenerational perspective that motivates us to develop our business sustainably.

This report guides you through the efforts VBF has made and is committed to make in order to secure that what we achieve today will not jeopardize our ability to do the same tomorrow. The People Planet Profit trilogy is used as a framework to provide perspective to these efforts.

**Van Ballegooijen Foods in General**



We export our products to more than 50 countries Worldwide

**150+**  
Amount of employees



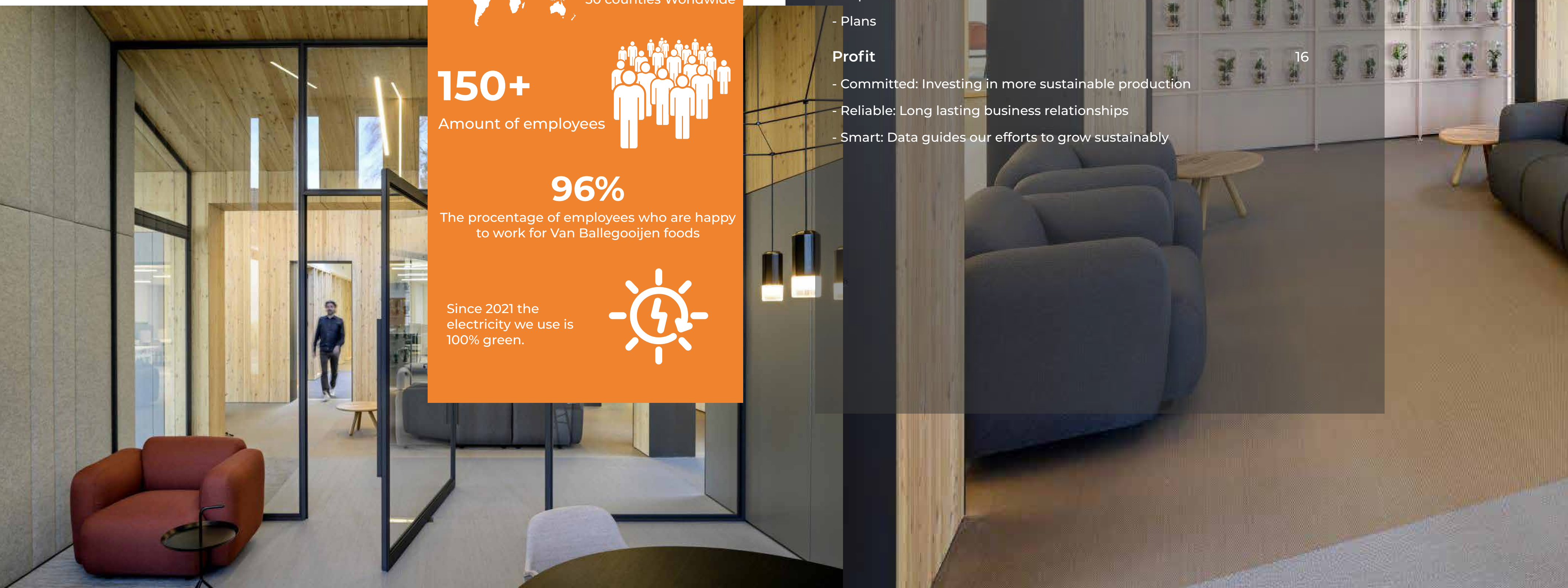
**96%**  
The percentage of employees who are happy to work for Van Ballegooijen foods

Since 2021 the electricity we use is 100% green.



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## Sustainability at Van Ballegooijen Foods:

# Committed, Reliable and Smart

Securing that today's actions will not jeopardize the ability to do the same in the future, is at the core of every sustainability plan. At the same time, it is an intrinsic characteristic of human nature to strive for progress. The challenge of every modern company is to combine both aspirations. VBF seeks to sustainably develop its business in a committed, reliable and smart way.

The wellbeing of our employees is crucial to the success of our endeavours. We are therefore committed to provide a safe working environment, to encourage a healthy life style and to stimulate professional development in balance with corporate and personal goals. As a member of SEDEX we offer our business partners an insight on how we perform in the areas of labour, safety, wellbeing, environment and business ethics.

Supplying customers with save food under all circumstances is essential. We are fully committed to that objective and allow third parties to review, even unannounced, our procedures and efforts to fulfil that societal obligation. In doing so we transparently demonstrate to our customers that we are reliable.

As part of a complex and fragmented value chain that defines the food sector, we can only succeed if all parties in the chain apply fair prices and business practices. Real added value is only created when the whole value chain benefits.

In a highly competitive market, the success of our company relies heavily on the smart use of available resources. This translates into better use of data, improving the skills of our employees, reducing energy and eliminating waste. We are convinced that the search for these smarter solutions is in full harmony with the goals of developing sustainably.

Bart Van Belleghem  
Chief Executive Officer



# People

“The wellbeing of our employees is crucial to the success of our endeavours. We are therefore committed to provide a safe working environment, to encourage a healthy life style and to stimulate professional development in balance with corporate and personal goals. At VBF we believe that investing in our people is equal to investing in our future.”

## We listen to our employees

### SURVEY

Every two years we perform a survey among all employees. We try to better understand their attitude towards working: how committed are they, do they experience a lot of pressure at work, how can we improve as an organization? These findings are the inspiration for improvement plans.

**96% of employees are satisfied with Van Ballegooijen Foods as employer (2020)**



**90% of the employees is using the internal interactive communication platform on a weekly basis**

### WORK COUNCIL

We give employees an active voice in the Work Council where their representatives meet with the directors of the company. Topics ranging from labour conditions and safety on the job, to the future developments of VBF are discussed. The initiatives of the council are aimed at securing that both the company and employees can flourish.

### COMMUNICATION PLATFORM WORKPLACE

Our internal interactive communication platform is called Workplace. This platform is not only used as tool to convey information from management to employees, but also allows them to react and inform colleagues themselves.

In 2020 over 95% of our employees has a Workplace profile. More than half of them (55%) use Workplace on a daily basis and 90% at least once a week. In 2020 employees were informed over 600 times through posts on Workplace.

### SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

We conduct a Risk Inventory & Evaluation once every 5 years. All risks in the field of safety & health are mapped. These risks are discussed in the health and safety committees and improvement plans are made. These efforts pay off as 3 years in a row (2018 – 2020) the number of incidents and near incidents has dropped.

### Good health and healthy life style

#### MONITORING HEALTH

We offer our employees a preventive medical examination every four years. 45% of all employees participated. Besides basis physical checks, we also want to find out if employees enjoy working, have issues with performing on the job or getting their work done. In addition to that, we test their wellbeing and mental state. Lastly, we gather information about working hours and the relationship between work- and private live. Based on the results of the medical examination a plan of action is made.

#### ENCOURAGING HEALTH

Employees are given the opportunity to get a flu shot at work. Since 2018 we offer a free coaching programme to stop smoking. Half of the employees who participated in the programme stopped smoking permanently. From 2022 onwards, smoking will be prohibited on and around our sites.

#### MONITORING HEALTHY LIFE STYLE

A number of colleagues have worn a Vitabit for a period of three months in 2019. This is a device that measures movement. Employees received coaching advice throughout the programme. The advice ranged from individual goals to easy tips on how to be more active. This way, employees improved their health, became more energetic and ultimately more productive and enjoyable at work.



#### ENCOURAGING A HEALTHY LIFE STYLE

We are convinced that happy and healthy employees are key to a successful business. We organize workshops to improve these aspects of our employees. An example of which was the VITA2MOVE-Work-Healthy-at-the-Office workshop. We offer a sports/ fitness compensation to every employee. Over 25% of the employees made use of this compensation.

### Improving skills



**TRAINING AND EDUCATION**  
At VBF we are convinced of the importance of training and education. We actively stimulate our employees to improve or maintain their skills. We offer courses with great relevance to the food industry (food safety, food defence) and industrial production in general. Besides that, we also offer personalized training and education. The average training and education budget per employee in 2020 was €531 . This represents an increase of 50% over the last 10 years.

#### GOODHABITZ

Since 2020 every employee has the possibility to take short courses on an online learning platform called GoodhabitZ. The offered courses cover a very wide spectrum ranging from Microsoft Excel over Time management to Leadership skills.

#### INSIGHTS

“Gnoti seauton” (know yourself) is an important prerequisite to improve yourself. At the start of 2020, every office employee has completed an Insights Discovery test. InsightsDiscovery is a four-colour model to highlight key personality preferences and associated behaviours. This test is used for individual performance and wider team development. Our employees got insight in their personal profile and shared their profile with other colleagues. This way they are able to perform better as a team, are more efficient and, not unimportant, have more fun in their work.

### Equal opportunity

In all our corporate initiatives and development opportunities we make no distinction. We do not discriminate based on gender, race, origin, religion or political views. We give everyone the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills and inspire them with the same values and attitudes.





### Caring for others

VBF has contributed to people in need and will continue to step up when the occasion arises.

#### FOOD DONATION TO REFUGEE CAMPS

Together with our distributor, various aid organizations in Lebanon have donated cans of butter ghee to refugee camps. The refugees received coupons which they could trade for food parcels. This donation was received in such a positive way that we decided to also supply large cans of ghee to soup kitchens in Lebanon.



#### RED CROSS

When the world was under the spell of the Corona virus, Van der Pol wanted to help. The most effective way to do so was by aiding the health care workers. That is why Van der Pol donated 5 cents per kilogram of laminated dough sold in the month of April 2020, to the Red Cross. The Red Cross helps the most needy and vulnerable in our society.

#### SINTERKLAASBANK

In 2019 we donated to the Sinterklaasbank. This is an organisation that supports less fortunate parents to buy their children presents on this special festive day.

#### SUPPORT FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES

At VBF we sponsor local organisations and sports clubs. We are convinced that this contributes greatly to the development of the social fabric in our local communities Wijk en Aalburg and Zelhem.





# Planet

“Securing that today’s actions will not jeopardize the ability to do the same in the future, is at the core of our sustainability plan. Our natural resources are limited and should be used with great care and respect”



**IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS.** To create awareness among the employees of Van der Pol (VDP), a plastic fishing trip on the canals of Amsterdam was organized. We did that with a company called Plastic Whale which uses boats made of plastic recovered from the water.

## Monitoring Impact

### ENVIROMETER

We have been registering environmental data in a scattered manner for a long time but started introducing it in an organised way on the platform ‘Envirometer’ from Stichting Stimular since 2018 (data 2017). The data as well as its conversion into a CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent, helps us to measure our impact and identify levers for improvement. In 2020 we improved the quality and diversity of the registered data.

Our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint in 2019 was 0,147 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per kg finished product in Wijk en Aalburg and 0,215 kg per kg finished product of CO<sub>2</sub> in Zelhem.



## Improving Impact Achievements

### RENEWABLE ENERGY

In 2018 we took advantage of the southward orientation of the roof of our main office building to install our first solar panels (88 panels producing roughly 35 000 kWh). A symbolic first step for more to come.

In 2021 we switched our procured electricity to 100% Green.



**RECYCLE**

In 2018 we renovated our head office in Wijk en Aalburg, The Netherlands. This renovation gave us the opportunity for a sustainable approach by using recycled materials. The floor of the new headquarter is made of fields of bolon recycled vinyl. Wooden beams of the old egg-sorting facility that once belonged to the group, got a second life as contours of the partition's construction.



**REDUCE**

*Office supplies*

We use 30% less office paper in 2020 compared to 2016.

In September 2020 we announced the new name and a new corporate identity. At this occasion we offert each employee with an appropriate gift created in coordination with Greenstory. A gift that suits our sustainable goals. Together we designed an erasable whiteboard notebook with a vegan leather cover. The notebook is made locally, is plastic free, CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral and recyclable. We also added an extra page to the notebook with our Mission, Vision and Strategy. This way our employees always have our core values at their fingertips.



**Plans**

**RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY**

It is our goal to produce more renewable energy ourselves. The planned new factory will offer us the oppertunity to generate our own renewable electricity trough an installation of more than 2.500 m<sup>2</sup> solar panels on the roof. This installation will generate on avarage 600 000 kWh of our own renewable electricity.



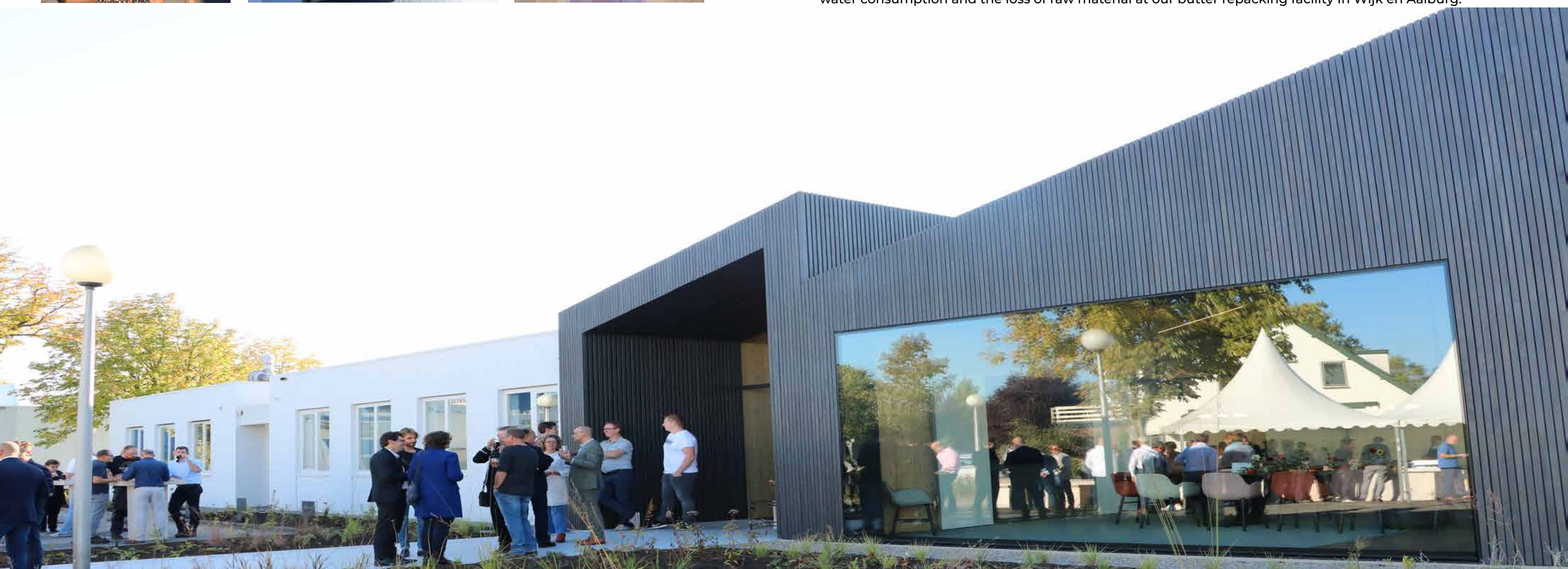
**REDUCE ENERGY**

At our location in Zelhem we researched the possibility of placing new innovative LED lighting. Each Smart LED light is equipped with its own computer and a WIFI connection. The LED light is able to communicate separately with the rest of the lights and also with control software. For example: walk path lighting, twilight switching, emergency lighting and motion notification. This way the most ideal situation is created for people, and consume no energy when no one is present. These lamps light up brighter when you approach them and dim when you pass. A nice fact is that these special LED lamps are also used at all Tesla factories and many other large factories. Once implemented, the lighting plan in our factory in Zelhem will provide energy savings of 80-95%, equivalent to the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 23 tons per year, which is comparable to planting 1,800 trees. At the end of 2020 the budget for this investment has been approved for 2021.

We also plan smart innovations in the field of process technology and climate control. We will seek to use the energy that is extracted from the cooling units to heat the water needed for CIP cleaning. At the same time we will use heat exchangers to recuperate the heat of the CIP water before it goes to the sewage system. We are also planning investments to minimize product loss in our cleaning cycles.

**REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION**

In 2020 we started a research project to reduce the water consumption. The cleaning of our production equipment consumes a significant amount of water. When optimizing the effectiveness of our Cleaning in Place (CIP) process, 4 equilibrating parameters are at play: Temperature, Time, Chemicals and Force. Improving the recuperation of energy through heat exchangers offers the opportunity to increase the temperature and thus reduce the 3 other parameters. This has resulted in a plan to reduce water consumption and the loss of raw material at our butter repacking facility In Wijk en Aalburg.







# Profit

“It is an intrinsic characteristic of human nature to strive for progress. The challenge of every modern company is to do this sustainably. VBF seeks to develop its business in a committed, reliable and smart way”

## Committed

**INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION**  
*Preserving sustainable efforts of milk producers in our new tank reception hall in Zelhem*

At the end of 2020 we started the construction of a new tank reception hall which should be finished at the end of June 2021. One of the most important motivations for this project was to centralize our raw material and liquid product flows and allow us to decrease the movement of tankers on and off our property. This reduces the impact of traffic for our neighbours and saves energy and fuel. But more importantly this new tank reception hall will give us the opportunity to process streams of cream from sustainably produced milk (Organic, Meadow Grazed or GMO Free). Because of lack of critical mass this cream is often added to streams of regular cream. This investment enables us to preserve these characteristics.

In the fall 2021 we plan to start building our new factory in Wijk en Aalburg, The Netherlands, on the same site where we are currently producing our frozen doughs. Our objective is to make this factory more efficient than our current buildings. This ranges from more energy efficient installations to better isolation of the storage



## Reliable

**LONG LASTING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS**

At VBF we pride ourselves with the long lasting nature of our business relationships. More than 50% of our current business is conducted with suppliers and customers that were already our partners more than 10 years ago. The champion is a business relationship with a customer that started in 1972 and still flourishes today.

## Smart

**DATA GUIDES OUR EFFORTS TO GROW SUSTAINABLY**

Today, more and more information flows are digital. The investment in a new ERP system in 2019 and the start of the MES (Manufacture Execution System) implementation will ensure a better information and data flow that will be available to the appropriate people wherever they are. We have hired an information manager to help us harvest this valuable data from our processes and use them to make smart and sustainable decisions.

Our investments in hardware and software has also facilitated working from home as effectively as at the office. While the COVID-pandemic was the main accelerator for working at home, we expect important sustainable benefits when we introduce a hybrid working model once the pandemic is behind us.





*Together it works*