

## SHORT SUMMARY

**Organisation:** Verstegen Spices & Sauces B.V., [www.verstegen.nl](http://www.verstegen.nl)

**Contact person:** Marianne van Keep, Director Sustainability

**Product & Sector:** office chairs (Office furnishing), export containers, heating/cooling cabinets, attributes for internal transport

**Country:** The Netherlands, Belgium, France, Ireland, England, Germany, Spain



# Circular economy projects, Verstegen



*Condemned export containers are processed into raw materials.*

Verstegen would like to be the most sustainable herb and spice company in the world. To achieve this, the family company is examining existing contracts for such things as heating/cooling cabinets and internal transport.

### Project description

Verstegen has already been involved with sustainability for a long time under the director of sustainability's management. The focus here lies on *non-product related* items. The company is certified for level 4 of the CSR performance ladder (corporate social responsibility). This is one of the highest levels in the food sector. The company works using green electricity, green gas and Euro 6 lorries. The circular economy topic is high on the agenda. Verstegen is currently examining existing contracts including those for heating/cooling cabinets and attributes for internal transport. Suppliers are also asked to give their vision on the circular economy and the possibilities for buy-back and high-quality reuse.

Verstegen has also successfully completed two circular economy projects, for office chairs and export containers.

### Approach

The previous chair supplier was offered the opportunity to produce a proposal based on circular principles, but decided not to do this. Verstegen then found a circular economy partner in BMA. Verstegen owns 300 export containers. Together with the supplier, Schoellert, a calculation was made to determine when repair was still useful. The tipping point appeared to be € 120 (a new container costs € 240). A business case that demonstrated the financial advantages of applying this tipping point was quickly followed by approval of the director.



## FACTS & FIGURES

- > Number of FTEs: 375
- > The tipping point for export containers when repair is still useful is € 120 (a new containers costs € 240).
- > The agreed residual value for an office chair is € 50.

### Results

The BMA office chairs are slightly more expensive than the current chairs, but the quality has improved fivefold. A maintenance contract was not agreed; Verstegen will do this itself. However, a buy-back guarantee and a residual value of € 50 per chair were agreed.

*“The basis for circularity is cooperation.”*

Marianne van Keep, Director Sustainability at Verstegen

Repair and reuse of the export containers have improved. Smart Carriers collects the broken containers and repairs these using parts from other containers. The containers comprise a high-grade Polypropylene (PP), which is easy to recycle. Once the containers have been entirely condemned, they are destroyed by Schoeller.

The electricity generated in doing this is reused. Verstegen also examined its logistics process together with the transporters. Smart planning avoids unnecessary kilometres being driven. No contracts were agreed for this, but agreements were made based on trust. Many transporters have already been working with Verstegen for some 30 to 40 years.

### Lessons learned

- Celebrate your successes and communicate these in the organisation.
- Always keep asking questions.
- Work on the basis of trust.
- Sustainability is a process and not a final destination. The objectives change over time and with every business decision.
- If you are investing time and money in delving deeply into a chain, focus on products and/or chains that have a lot of impact.
- Visit the field to gain inspiration.
- Circularity is not without costs. But if it costs too much, the supplier is doing something wrong.

### About REBus and the Green Deal on Circular Procurement

The Green Deal on Circular Procurement (GDCP) is an initiative of MVO Nederland (CSR Netherlands), NEVI, Central government, Duurzame Leverancier, PIANOo, Kirkman Company and Circle Economy. Various pilots originating from GDCP are partly financed by the European REBus project, implemented in the Netherlands by Rijkswaterstaat (Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management). They are working together to support businesses and government organisations in their circular procurement ambitions.

#### Contact information

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**Partners (selected partners):** BMA | Jungheinrich | Schoellert | Its'me

**Relevant links & documents:** [Sustainable Business Video](#)

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