



# A Guide To Increasing Shea Butter Profits By 35%

A professional production and filtration guide for small-scale shea butter processors to avoid profit leakage.

Empowering Small Farms, Transforming  
Rural Economies.

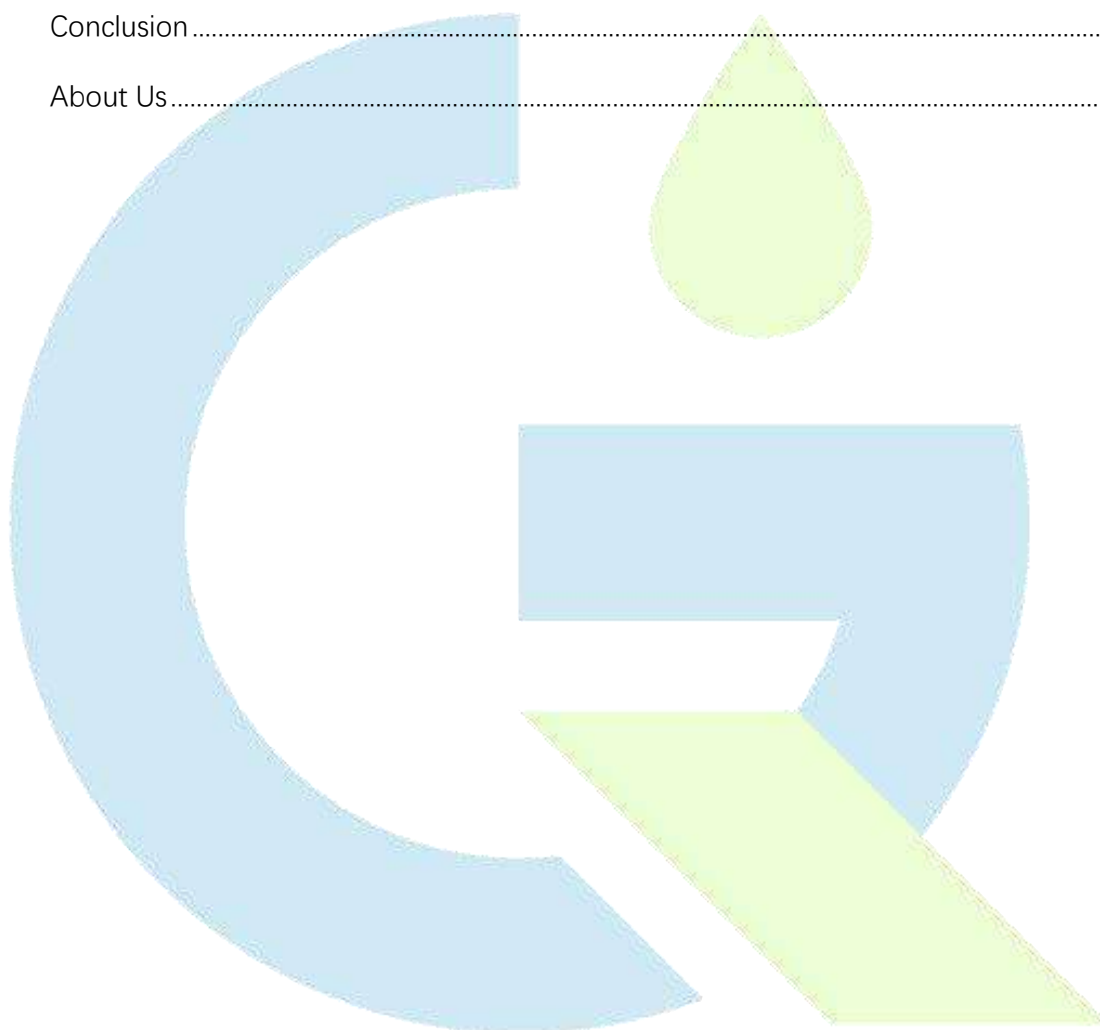
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# Introduction

Shea butter is a natural fat extracted from the nuts of the African Shea tree, a revered resource from the savannahs of West Africa. It is celebrated globally for its exceptional moisturizing and healing properties, making it a cornerstone ingredient in the cosmetics and personal care industry. Rich in beneficial fatty acids and vitamins A and E, shea butter offers significant skincare benefits that are driving its market growth. The global shea butter market was valued at over \$2.4 billion in 2024 and is projected to exceed \$3.8 billion by 2030. This impressive expansion is fueled by strong consumer demand for natural, organic, and ethically sourced products. With raw, unrefined shea butter commanding the largest market share, there is a clear and growing opportunity for producers to enter this lucrative field.



## Pressing Processes, Oil Yield, and Characteristics

The extraction of shea butter is a well-defined process, with different methods yielding distinct products. While cold pressing is favored in niche, high-end markets for its ability to preserve nutrients, **hot pressing** is the more common

and higher-yield method used globally, particularly in West African producing nations.

This method involves roasting the shea kernels at a controlled temperature of 130° C to 140° C before they are fed into a **screw press**. The heat helps break down the kernel's structure, making the oil extraction more efficient. The mechanical press then exerts immense pressure, separating the fat (shea butter) from the solid meal. The typical yield for this process ranges from **40% to 50%**, meaning for every 100 kilograms of shea kernels, one can expect to produce 40 to 50 kilograms of crude shea butter. This initial butter is opaque and requires further processing, but it holds the characteristic properties that make it so valuable.



## Factors Affecting Shea Butter Yield

To run a profitable operation, maximizing the butter extracted from each batch of nuts is essential. Several factors directly impact the final yield, and at GQ Agri, we guide our partners to master each one.

- **Nut Quality and Purity:** The process must begin with clean, high-quality shea nuts. Removing debris like sand, stones, and twigs through screening is

critical, as these impurities can damage equipment and absorb the valuable butter during pressing.

- **Moisture Content:** This is one of the most crucial variables. The ideal moisture content for shea kernels is approximately 8–10%. Kernels that are too dry are difficult to press effectively, while those that are too damp can compromise the quality of the butter. A controlled roasting process is key to achieving this optimal moisture level.
- **Process Temperature:** The temperature during roasting and pressing directly influences yield. Gently heating the kernels in a hot press process significantly increases the amount of butter extracted compared to cold pressing. However, this heat must be carefully controlled to avoid damaging the butter's natural vitamins and fatty acids.
- **Press Calibration:** A screw press is not a "set-it-and-forget-it" machine. The pressure settings and the speed of the screw must be carefully adjusted and fine-tuned for the specific characteristics of the shea kernels being processed.
- **Equipment Maintenance:** A clean press is an efficient press. Regular cleaning to remove blockages and residue from the press chamber and filters is vital for maintaining consistent pressure and ensuring the machine operates at peak performance for maximum yield.

## Tips for Improving Shea Butter Yield

Boosting your production output often comes down to a series of small but significant process refinements.

- **Prioritize Purity:** Begin with a thorough cleaning and screening process to ensure only pure shea kernels enter your press. This protects your equipment and your final product.
- **Manage Moisture:** Use a controlled roaster to consistently achieve the target moisture content of 8–10%. This step is fundamental to efficient extraction.
- **Optimize Temperature:** Find the right balance in your hot pressing process to maximize yield without compromising the butter's valuable nutritional profile.

- **Fine-Tune Your Press:** Experiment with and document the optimal pressure and speed settings for your screw press to extract every possible drop of butter.
- **Maintain a Strict Cleaning Schedule:** Keep your equipment in top condition. A clean, well-maintained press runs more efficiently and has a longer operational life.

## Conclusion

The transformation of a raw shea nut into a smooth, valuable butter is a journey of precision and care. From cleaning and roasting to pressing and filtering, each step plays a vital role in the final product's quality and yield. While the process is straightforward, success lies in mastering the variables and selecting the right equipment to match your operational scale and business ambitions. Choosing between different presses, filters, and roasters can be a complex decision with long-term financial implications.

This is where a knowledgeable partner becomes essential. The "best" production line is not a generic solution but a system carefully designed to fit your unique vision and budget.

## About Us

At **GQ Agri**, we are more than equipment suppliers; we are partners in production. We have extensive experience working with a diverse range of clients, from artisanal women's cooperatives to growing commercial facilities. We specialize in listening to your goals and helping you design and build a complete production line that is efficient, cost-effective, and perfectly suited to your needs.

If you are ready to explore the potential of the shea butter market or wish to enhance your current operations, we encourage you to **contact us**. Let's start a conversation and build the ideal setup for your business, together.