

# MAKING SOAP

*COSMETICS & CANDLES*

ISSUE  
98

JAN/FEB 2020 · \$12.00 USD

## FRESHEN YOUR PRODUCT LINE

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- SINGLE OIL SOAPS
- REFRESH  
YOUR BRAND
- KNOW YOUR  
SHEA BUTTER
- FAIR ADVICE TO  
FAIR VENDORS

### Know your Shea



-by Wayne Dunn

# Know Your Shea Butter

by WAYNE DUNN

## SPOILER ALERT:

**Raw & Unrefined can mean industrially processed and chemically extracted**

Shea butter is seen by many as a miracle ingredient in soaps and skincare products, and it is. But it can be confusing too.

Many terms are used to describe shea butter and many who sell it don't provide background or information on the terms or, unfortunately, where their shea butter comes from and how it is made.

Let's look at some of the terms, what they mean, and what matters about them.

Depending on your personal preferences and how you position and market your product, some of these terms will mean more than others. And, you may be surprised at some of them.

Let's start by looking at refined vs. raw and unrefined

## Raw and Unrefined [1]

In its simplest terms, raw and unrefined shea butter is shea butter that has not gone through a refining process which removes color, scent and, unfortunately, many of the bioactive ingredients that make shea butter so special.

Many prefer raw and unrefined because the high temperatures and chemicals used in refining reduce the bioactive ingredients like Vitamin A and E by 75 percent or more.

Raw and unrefined shea butter will be soft and creamy and easy to work with. It will have a slightly smoky scent and can range in color from off-white to yellowish and even yellowish with a faint green tinge. All these colors are normal and have no impact on the quality.

**Note:** *If you have raw and unrefined shea butter that is not soft and creamy and has a strong, unpleasant, rancid like odor it is likely that it has gone off. This happens with age, but more frequently because the moisture content was too high, which resulted in rapid deterioration of the shea butter.*

## Not All Raw and Unrefined is Equal

Many do not realize that most, around 80 percent, of the raw and unrefined shea butter on the market is processed in industrial factories and extracted using chemicals. Raw and unrefined simply means that it is not refined.

In addition to the effects of using chemicals and industrial processes, most of the community impact and benefits to rural women is lost with factory processed shea butter.

Rather than let the women process the shea butter, factories purchase bags of shea nuts, or seeds and haul them and their remaining economic benefits off to distant factories. The role of women and communities is limited to simply gathering the shea nuts.



# Know Your Shea Butter

by WAYNE DUNN

## Handcrafted/Handmade [2] [3]

Handcrafted/Handmade shea butter is raw and unrefined but is made without the use of chemicals to extract the oils and makes use of age-old traditional methods and techniques. It is produced in communities and the full economic impact remains in the community, which benefits women, children and families.

Many also claim that the traditional techniques and processes that have been passed down through families for centuries make better shea butter with more healing, beautifying and beneficial properties.

## Refined Shea Butter [4]

Refined Shea Butter is treated with high temperatures as well as hexane and other chemicals to remove all color and odor. Many of the healing and beautifying benefits of shea butter are lost in this process but it still retains moisturizing qualities.

The resulting product is white, much harder than unrefined shea butter and has lost much of the bioactive ingredients that are present in natural, unrefined shea butter. Refined Shea Butter still has moisturizing properties, just not as many.

Most who use refined shea butter do so because, even though many of the benefits are lost, it will nearly always have the same color and fragrance properties.

## Organic vs Non-Organic vs Certified Organic [5]

While nearly all shea butter is wildcrafted with the shea nuts picked from naturally occurring wild shea forests, not all is organic, and only formal certification allows it to be called Certified Organic.

Certified Organic Shea Butter is normally certified



Hand-crafted shea butter uses traditional processes, no chemicals, and benefits women, families and communities



# Know Your Shea Butter

by WAYNE DUNN



[4]

according to European or North American (NOP) standards, or both. The entire process is documented and traceable to ensure that no pesticides or other contaminants contact the product.

Everyone who is eligible to gather and prepare shea nuts must be registered and trained on organic shea nut picking and preparation. Retraining must take place at least annually, if not more.

Shea nuts must be picked only from designated areas, areas that do not include farms, roads and other areas of potential contamination. The picking areas must be demarcated, and the pickers educated on the boundaries.

The preparation of the shea nuts, parboiling, drying, husking, drying and bagging is done under strict controls, keeping it away from pesticides and contaminants. The name/registration number of the person who picked and prepared the shea nuts is marked on the sack to ensure traceability.

If the sacks of nuts are transported to another community prior to being processed into shea butter, the transport is done with an

## Certified Organic Shea Butter



GH-BIO-154  
Agriculture of  
Ghana

[5]

approved and properly trained carrier to avoid contamination risks.

The women who make shea butter must also be registered and trained on organic production. Training must recur at least once a year.

The women are given sacks of prepared shea nuts and a record kept of the number/name of the women who prepared the nuts.

The shea nuts are made into shea butter using designated organic equipment and processing areas to ensure there is no risk of contamination by pesticides or other non-organic materials.

Throughout the entire process—washing the nuts, drying them, crushing them, roasting them, grinding them, kneading in water, whipping the shea and the final finishing and packaging, strict controls and protocols are observed to ensure organic integrity.

The entire process is audited annually by a certified auditing agency. The auditor will thoroughly test all systems, controls and risk management practices. In addition, the women who pick and process the shea nuts, as well as those who process the shea butter are randomly

# Know Your Shea Butter

by WAYNE DUNN

chosen by the auditor for oral exams on organic preparation and production.

It is only after this process that the shea butter is certified and sold as certified organic and the appropriate NOP and/or EU logos used.

If you want to be certain you are getting organic shea butter, insist on seeing the organic certificate and that the appropriate logo is displayed on the packaging.

Many claim their shea butter is organic but did not undertake the process of certifying it. They will often claim that it comes from wild forests and since the trees are not fertilized, it is organic.

You need to realize that if the shea butter is not certified organic, the nuts can come from near pesticide treated fields, from roadsides or other such places. And, during the processing they can be stored in areas with pesticides and other ingredients.

Non-organic shea butter can be very good shea butter and have all the healing and rejuvenating properties of organic shea butter, but it can also have traces of pesticides, fertilizers and other non-organic ingredients

## What about Colors?

Refined shea butter will always be white and hard.

**BEWARE:** *If someone promises you yellow shea butter, they are likely adding a dye to it when it is being made. While the dye is often made from a local plant, it still is an extra ingredient and you are not buying pure shea butter.*

Pure, unrefined shea butter, whether industrially processed with chemicals or handmade, will range from off-white to yellowish to even yellowish with a slight green tinge. All colors are natural and have no impact on the quality of the shea butter.

Shea butter tends to be more yellowish when freshly made and cooled. After being packaged for a few weeks the yellow color often fades. However, the color of the shea butter stems from several factors, including rainfall and temperature during the growing season. This year, a lot of shea features a slight greenish hue from the mineral makeup of the soil where the trees grow, whether the nuts come from early season fruit or later in the season and other factors.

The main issues to be concerned about with color are that if it is white and hard it is refined and if it is consistently a deep yellow it is likely dyed.

## [6] Refer to table on next page

Shea Butter is an amazing ingredient. By knowing more about it you can learn to source the shea butter that best fits your business, your principles and your marketing strategy. There is no one right answer.

.....  
*Wayne Dunn is the founder and manager of Baraka Shea Butter. Contact him at [wayne@barakasheabutter.com](mailto:wayne@barakasheabutter.com), +1.250.701.6088*

# Know Your Shea Butter

by WAYNE DUNN

[6]

<p><b>Raw and Unrefined</b></p>	<p>Shea Butter that is not Refined. It can be industrially processed and chemically extracted, or hand-made and hand-crafted.</p> <p>If industrially processed the bulk of the impact and benefits is taken from women and communities of the shea forest</p> <p>All the natural goodness and benefits of shea butter is present.</p> <p>Soft and creamy texture</p> <p>Colour ranges from off-white to yellowish to yellowish with a green tinge</p>
<p><b>Hand-Made / Hand-Crafted</b></p>	<p>Made by hand in shea forest communities using traditional methods and processes passed down through generations. Maximum impact and benefits to shea forest communities, women and families</p>
<p><b>Refined</b></p>	<p>Treated with temperature and chemicals to remove colour and scent.</p> <p>White and hard.</p> <p>Majority of the healing, beautification and beneficial properties lost during refining</p> <p>Retains moisturizing qualities</p>
<p><b>Certified Organic</b></p>	<p>Soured and prepared under strict, controlled and audited processes to ensure there is no contamination with pesticides, fertilizers or impurities.</p> <p>Certified Organic Shea Butter should have an organic certificate available to the purchaser and have EU or NOP (USA) Organic logos</p> <p>If you can't get an organic certificate it likely isn't certified organic</p>
<p><b>Colours</b></p>	<p>Yellow – if you are promised Yellow Shea Butter all the time it is likely dyed during the processing phase</p> <p>Refined shea is white and hard</p> <p>Raw and Unrefined can range from off-white to yellowish to yellowish with a green tinge</p>

GOOD FOR YOU, GOOD FOR THE WOMEN WHO MAKE IT, GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

# BARAKA SHEA BUTTER

Pure, Natural, & Unrefined

*...from our  
hands  
to yours...*



PRIVATE LABEL • DIY • WHOLESAL

Natural, unrefined and 100% handmade by the hardworking women in Northern Ghana, each container of **Baraka Shea Butter** is a labor of love. From supplying DIY home-crafters to industrial users to formulating and producing private label products ... shea butter is our business.

**Baraka Shea Butter** prides itself on using traditional, time-honored processes that leave behind all of the goodness nature intended. No chemicals or additives, no animal testing, no harsh industrial processes.

BARAKA  
SHEA BUTTER



1 (855) 929.7639 • [BarakaSheaButter.com](http://BarakaSheaButter.com) • [info@BarakaSheaButter.com](mailto:info@BarakaSheaButter.com)



# MAKING SOAP

## *COSMETICS & CANDLES*

Founder/Editor In Chief    Kathy Tarbox  
Managing Editor            Beth Byrne

---

### COLUMNS    WRITERS

Guest Articles	Wayne Dunn
Soap	Alicia Grosso
In The Lab	Cindy Lantier
Working Smarter	Sara Golding
Potpourri	Bill McConnell
Chemist Corner	Niki Senior
Review	Diana Gale
Tech Talk	Ruth Romano
Candles	Cindy Novack

---

### EDITORIAL OFFICE

344 Mizzen Ave NW Ocean Shores, WA 98569  
Phone. 425.760.1004 • [hello@makingsoapmag.com](mailto:hello@makingsoapmag.com)

Making Soap, Cosmetics & Candles Magazine (ISSN 1099-6672)  
is published bimonthly (6x year) by Petal Pusher Press

[www.makingsoapmag.com](http://www.makingsoapmag.com)