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I. Alland & Robert, French SME, a global leader in gum acacia

- **130 years of experience, 5 generations of experts in gum acacia**

Alland & Robert, a family business based in Normandy, founded 131 years ago, is today an international leader in gum acacia, an all-natural additive or ingredient mainly used in the food industry as well as the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industry.

In 1884, the chemist Francisque Alland and his partner, Alfred Robert, created their company to market acacia, which was primarily used in the textile industry at the time. Five generations and many developments later, Alland & Robert registers a 32 million euro turnover (2014), employs 65 people and contributes to the livelihood of several million people living in Sahelian Africa where acacia-producing countries lie. In France, Alland & Robert operates at 3 sites: two plants in Eure at Port-Mort, Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon and its Paris offices where the management and sales teams of the company are based.



1884: Francisque Alland, chemist, and Alfred Robert create their company in Paris, France.

1940: René Alland takes over the company and initiates the transformation of gum acacia using a crushing and pulverization process. Two separate production lines for the two types of gum that are produced, karaya and tragacanth gums.

1972: Through Bernard Alland's driving force, production capacity is increased and Alland & Robert builds its first plant at Port Mort in Normandy.

1984: Frédéric Alland, becomes CEO of the company and accelerates the internationalization of the company.

2002: The first spray drying tower is built in Port Mort (Eure).

2007: A second drying tower is built at the newly acquired production site in Saint-Aubin-sur-Gaillon (Eure).

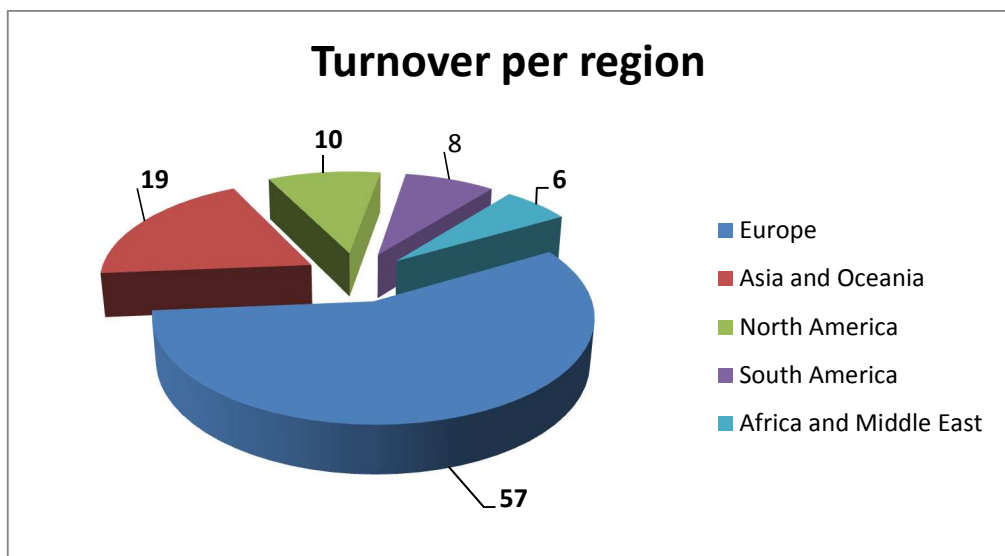
2013: Alland & Robert production capacity of gum acacia reaches 15 000 tons per year with the construction of a third spray drying tower in Saint-Aubin. Alland & Robert invests 5 million euros in this new tower and extends storage spaces for its raw materials and end products. The company takes up headquarters in Normandy.

Alland & Robert's unique expertise is built on constant, regular growth. Through this growth, the company has become one of the world's leading gum acacia suppliers.

Alland & Robert guarantees the traceability and reliability of its products known for their excellent quality. The company has achieved this reputation through certification, together with strict compliance to food and pharmaceutical industry norms and its own internal standards, at every stage of the product life cycle. It supplies clients with gum acacia in a wide variety of forms tailored to the product's manifold uses in soft drinks, chewing gum, wine and cosmetic and pharmaceutical products. Although people are not always aware, gum acacia is used in many everyday products. It owes its varied uses to its wide-ranging properties. It is a natural organic product, contains very few calories (and no sugar or fat) and does not affect the taste of foods. Moreover, it has no impact on health and is guaranteed free from GMOs and gluten. Gum acacia is not a recent discovery. Looking back three thousand years, the Egyptians already found it very useful!

▪ International presence

Alland & Robert is an international leader in the specialized gum Arabic and gum karaya markets distributing its products worldwide. Unusually for a French SME, it generates 86%¹ of turnover outside France exporting in a total of 69 countries with the support of 37 distributors.



The food industry is the main destination for gum acacia, and Alland & Robert exhibits at the major international food industry trade shows. By doing so, the company enhances its international profile and maintains relationships with its distributor network. The company attends various shows, including: [Food ingredients Europe](#), [Health ingredients Europe](#), [IFT Annual Meeting & Food Expo](#) in Chicago and [Food Ingredients China](#).

Over the years, Alland & Robert has built up a unique network of reliable, competent suppliers throughout the "gum belt", a vast swathe of the African Sahel stretching from Senegal to

¹ 2014 data.

Ethiopia. This guarantees perfect product traceability. Frédéric Alland, CEO, travels to the product-growing region² several times a year to maintain links with the local community, both to guarantee the consistency and quality of the supply of raw material and to ensure that production is ethical and clean, in line with the CSR policy.

▪ Growth and innovation everyday

Alland & Robert's production capacity is 15,000 tons of gum acacia³ per year. Total global production is estimated at 60,000 tons, making the company a major global player in this growing market.

Gum acacia is edible and its natural qualities and consistency make it very popular with the food industry, where it enables producers to meet the expectations of today's consumers.

Alland & Robert supplies the world's leading food groups, and have invested in a Research & Development lab to devise innovative ways of using gum acacia. It is a natural fiber and has advantageous nutritive properties, and yet is 100% plant-based, free from pesticides, GMOs and calories, and has no odor or flavor.

In addition to its R&D lab, the company is involved in gum acacia research partnerships with Montpellier and Le Havre universities. A 5-year research partnership has been launched with a pace-setting institution, UMR IATE⁴, Montpellier's research unit dedicated to agro-polymers and emerging technologies.

Over the last decade, Alland & Robert has tripled its turnover, thanks to the resolve and dedication of the 65 members of staff who share the company values of transparency, flexibility, community and respect. The company's HR policies are based on strong values including equal opportunities and parity (45% of managers are women). Very low staff turnover (1.5%) demonstrates the unwavering commitment of employees. They drive growth and help maintain the levels of quality and service which guarantee our company's reliability and underpin its global reputation. Year after year, through high standards the company works to obtain and renew the strictest certifications in the industry (ISO 9001, BRC and ANSM (French agency for the safety of medicines and health products) certification, HACCP procedures and the SMETA audit) and to operate an exemplary CSR policy.

² Senegal, Chad, Sudan, Mali, Mauritania, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

³ Alland & Robert also produce 700 tons of gum karaya each year in addition to this.

⁴ Mixed research unit for agro-polymer engineering and emerging technologies at Montpellier university – <http://umr-iate.cirad.fr/>

II. GUM ACACIA, AN OUTSTANDINGLY NATURAL AND RELIABLE PRODUCT

- **Gum acacia is a natural product from harvest through to production**

Gum acacia (or gum Arabic) is an unmodified vegetable fiber, a dried exudate of the falling sap derived directly from acacia trees. It can flow either naturally or as a result of an incision made in the trunk or branches of the tree. Not only is the product itself 100% natural, harvesting methods are 100% natural too. Unlike the majority of products used in the food industry, gum Arabic is harvested not on industrialized plantations but solely from trees growing in the wild, the majority of which are located in the southern Sahel, in Africa.

Gum acacia production plays a role in protecting the environment, because it is guaranteed free from pesticides and GMOs. It is a natural way of protecting countries in the southern Sahel from desertification, making it beneficial both economically and environmentally, and reinforcing its natural qualities. A proportion of the gum acacia marketed is certified organic and the company has adopted strict norms and practices to guarantee hygiene and quality throughout the production process.

Producing a natural product is very important to Alland & Robert which works to preserve the qualities of the product by carrying out strict supplier audits at all stages of the production process, and ensuring gum tappers' working conditions are appropriate. This same level of control is also operated in the company's gum acacia processing factories. The product remains perfectly natural right through to the point of sale, as its composition is not modified at any stage of the process. From harvesting through to sale, nothing is added.

- **A versatile product with a strong past and a great future**

Three thousand years ago, the Egyptians used gum Arabic to ensure the bandages on mummies stuck fast. Today, the product is used in the food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries, as well as in technical applications (such as paper-making and paints). As it is so versatile, it has a wide range of uses and the company continually innovates to develop gum acacia solutions for its clients.

Gum Arabic is classified as a multifunctional food additive (E414). It is used as a glazing agent for sweets and pharmaceutical products, an emulsifier (in oils and lotions), a stabilizer (in drinks including wine, mascara, eye liner and other products), a carrier (flavorings) and as dietary fiber (diet products). Thanks to the researches triggered, the number of possible applications is set to rise. For example, gum acacia could be used as a texturing agent, providing an alternative to the animal-based ingredients used in certain products.

Gum Arabic is guaranteed 100% plant-based, GMO free, pesticide free, gluten free, odorless, colorless and very low in calories – needless to say, it has a very rosy future! Alland & Robert is a small French company, but with its prowess in guaranteeing the long-term, safe supply of gum Arabic, it is expected to become a major market player in the future.

▪ **Universally recognized as safe**

All over the world, the appropriate bodies, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the USA, have certified gum Arabic as safe. It is recognized as having no negative impact on health and no maximum daily intake has been set. Alland & Robert do everything possible to preserve the stability and natural properties of gum acacia, by operating to strict standards and ensuring the entire production process, from the tree to the end product, is traceable.

Alland & Robert has an exemplary set of certifications:

Food safety:

- BRC certification (for the manufacturing of *purified acacia gum by spray drying*)
- HACCP procedures applied. These procedures are key to limiting risks in food production.

Pharmaceutical safety: ANSM certification (French agency for the safety of medicines and health products)

Quality system certification: ISO 9001

Corporate social responsibility:

- SEDEX is a not for profit membership organization dedicated to driving improvements in responsible and ethical business practices in supply chains.
- The organization's SMETA audit evaluates working conditions, health and safety at work, environmental issues and ethical practices.

Other food industry certifications:

- Organic certification
- Halal certification
- Kosher certification

III. GUM ACACIA IS A PRECIOUS LOCAL RESOURCE LYING AT THE HEART OF ALLAND & ROBERT CSR POLICY.

▪ **A naturally grown product that helps protect the environment**

The gum belt, the area of Africa where gum Arabic is harvested, lies in the African Sahel. We have built up a solid network of suppliers in the area. Gum acacia is a natural, renewable resource and very important for the region. Alland & Robert mainly work in the following countries: Senegal, Chad, Sudan, Mali, Mauritania and to a lesser extent Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Gum acacia is a 100% natural product and is completely free from pesticides and GMOs. It cannot be produced on an industrial scale. Consequently, Alland & Robert partners with gum tappers who collect gum Arabic from trees in the wild. In the gum belt, a percentage of trees remain untapped, guaranteeing this renewable resource will be available to collect, process and consume in the future.

Acacia trees form a natural barrier against desertification. Two thirds of the African continent is classified as desert or arid land, and numerous organizations fight desertification on a daily basis. In the Sahel, acacia trees play a significant role in this fight because they help maintain local biodiversity and can be used to replant deserts, as well as playing a major socio-economic role for local populations.

Moreover, acacia trees offer numerous advantages for local populations. The gum they collect has international economic potential, but beyond that acacia trees feed the soil and restore its fertility, shade crops, provide fodder for livestock and help feed local people. We at Alland & Robert contribute directly to local ecosystems by taking care to select harvesting methods based on superficial cuts or natural exudation which do not damage other parts of the tree. The tree can then continue to fulfil the rest of its functions, contributing to the daily life and development of the local population.

▪ **An indispensable financial resource for the local population**

An estimated 10 million people make their living from gum acacia in Africa's southern Sahel. Alland & Robert has a privileged relationship with numerous gum tappers and local companies involved in harvesting gum Arabic in the area. Through this reliable network, the company not only achieves traceability and guarantee the quality of its products, but also invests in the local population.

In Chad, Senegal and Mali, the company sets up its own warehouses and equipment, so that it can carry out the first stage of post-harvesting processing on-site. The gum Arabic is sorted and crushed in the warehouses. Conditions are optimal, both for the workers and for the product, and Alland & Robert employs local people.

Its overall strategy is to support African populations long-term to help them improve their working and living conditions (income, training, access to drinking water, shorter travel times to harvesting zones, medical care for gum tappers, no child labor, etc.). Training and work for women are a particular priority, because women do not generally enjoy equal access to education and local jobs.

- **Committed to the local community**

Alland & Robert operates a corporate social responsibility policy on several levels in both France and Africa.

In Africa, the aim is to establish a sustainable partnership with the different suppliers, to ensure French standards of ethics, employment practices, health and safety and the environment are upheld. Good Practice Charter supports this objective. The Charter, which was revised in 2015, is signed by suppliers every five years. The company carries out regular audits, at least annually, to ensure good practice is being followed on the ground. CEO Frédéric Alland and the company's quality director make regular trips to the harvesting areas and know the suppliers and their environments well. For example, compliance with the charter includes recording the names and ages of everyone working for the local suppliers, to guard against child labor.

Alland & Robert is involved with various NGOs working on the ground in the countries where the product is harvested.

In **Sudan**, the company works with Nopec (our local gum Arabic supplier) and NGO **Cap Solidaire** to fight water scarcity, encourage development, protect the environment and boost living conditions for local people.

In 2014, Alland & Robert with Nopec and Cap Solidaire contributed €35,000 to finance a 189 cubic meter water reservoir, an external pump and a rainwater collection system at El Humera, a village at the heart of the gum acacia harvesting area where desertification is an issue. The reservoir was commissioned in March 2014, supplying a village where 4,000 people had been suffering from a shortage of water for several years.



Around half of the villagers had deserted the village. They were able to return to their homes, and now make a living from gum Arabic. In late 2014, almost 1,800 people had moved back into the village, which is now busy all year round and not just during the harvesting season. What is more, this project improved living conditions for the populations. Hygiene is better, and villagers no longer have to walk long distances to access drinking water. They have more time available to harvest gum Arabic, increase their incomes and thereby diversify the crops they grow (millet, sorghum and sesame). Women have become closely involved in the gum Arabic harvest.

In 2015, in partnership with Nopec, Alland & Robert continued its commitment to El Humera by becoming involved in a project to build a school for the village children.

The company extends its commitment beyond the countries of its supplier networks to support local populations and development in neighboring countries.

- In **Central African Republic**, the company has been supporting **Batali** since 2011. Together, they build and repair schools, train teachers and build housing for them, and provide school supplies, school uniforms, clothing, medicines and hygiene products.
- In **Burkina Faso**, in partnership with **Cap Solidaire International**, Alland & Robert has been involved in digging a well, managing and maintaining water sources and improving hygiene by raising awareness among the local population.

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The company is also committed to acting on social issues in **France**. Since 2013, it has been supporting **SOS Children's Villages**⁵ via its "Tous en Cœur" program to provide education and increase children's exposure to music and art.

Alland & Robert has put in place a comprehensive CSR policy, covering its 3 sites and its 65 employees, to reduce its carbon footprint and the volume of waste produced, adopt a sustainable approach to human resources and optimize safety and working conditions. Staff turnover at Alland & Robert is just 1.5%, which demonstrates how successful its employment practices are.

As part of the measures taken to maintain and where possible improve health and safety at its two plants at Port-Mort and Saint-Aubin in Eure, Alland & Robert called in Apave Group, an independent body which assists businesses and authorities in managing technical, HR and environmental risks. The company has already implemented Apave Group's recommendations to make working environment safer and improve performance, thereby guaranteeing the quality of its products.

⁵ <http://www.sosve.org/> SOS Children's Villages is a secular, apolitical international humanitarian association created in Austria in 1949 with the aim of "making orphaned brothers and sisters a part of a family unit with a long-term supportive relationship with an SOS mother, where they will be brought up until they are independent adults." <http://www.sosve.org/>

IV. CUSTOMERS BENEFIT FROM THE COMPANY'S COMMITMENT TO QUALITY AND INNOVATION

- **Gum acacia is a multifunctional product and a favorite with leading food companies**

From wine-making to cosmetics, sweets, soft drinks, flavors, paints and the pharmaceutical industry, tiny amounts of gum acacia are found in a multitude of day-to-day products. It has a wide range of properties and applications. Neither the American Food and Drug Administration (FDA) nor the Joint JEFCA (FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives) has set a maximum daily intake (ADI - Acceptable Daily Intake)⁶ for gum Arabic. It is 100% natural and consequently is very popular as a natural texturing agent or as an alternative to animal-based products. As well as being natural and free from pesticides and GMOs, it contains no calories or gluten, has no odor or flavor, and is high in fiber.

Alland & Robert works with the major global food companies. They appreciate the versatility of gum Arabic, which for them is a reliable natural ingredient. The company also works closely with the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries and some other specific sectors.

Field of use	Main properties of gum Arabic
Food	
Confectionery: chewing gum, sweets, sugar-coated sweets, etc.	Texturing and gelling agent Stable, sugar-free coating agent
Soft drinks	Emulsifier
Wine-making and brewing	Colloid protector (color) Clarifies and stabilizes foam Improves mouth-feel
Cakes and pastries	Extruder
Snacks	Fixing agent
Dairy products and ice cream	Stabilizer and thickener Adds natural fiber
Diet foods	Adds natural fiber (senegal and seyal gum Arabic contain over 90% fiber)
Aromas and flavors	Encapsulant, emulsifier

⁶ The Acceptable Daily Intake is the quantity of a substance that an average person weighing 60kg could theoretically ingest every day without any risk to health.

Pharmaceuticals	
Capsules, tablets and pills, creams and lotions, syrups, dental adhesive, etc.	Texturing agent, coating agent, emulsifier, adds natural fiber
Cosmetics	
Mascara, eye liner, cream, hair care	Stabilizer, emulsifier, thickener, emulsifying and protective agent
Technical applications	
Printing inks, paints and technical applications in industry	Emulsifier, stabilizer, natural glue, thickener and stabilizer, adhesive

▪ **A product for the future supported by effective R&D**

Alland & Robert believes there is scope to extend and perfect the functionalities and properties of gum acacia, in particular in the fields of nutrition and diet products. Consequently, the company places great emphasis on Research & Development, and invests €1 million in this domain annually. For example, gum acacia has a great deal of untapped nutrition and dietary potential.

The company's R&D efforts center on two areas:

- Long-term fundamental research. In this area, Alland & Robert works with scientific and academic partners, in particular UMR IATE (the mixed research unit for agro-polymer engineering and emerging technologies) at INRA Montpellier. The next step is the technology transfer process, which serves to check the technical feasibility of a product and move from the concept phase to the industrial phase, thereby improving processes and bringing new products to market.
- Research resulting from suggestions by customers and market intelligence, to move ahead of trends and meet the requirements of the various departments in a company (quality, production, purchasing, etc.). An important part of the company's commitment to quality and service is its awareness of customer's requirements and the challenges they face in formulating and using products, as well as technological issues which can block a project. In such cases, the teams work with the customer to develop specific solutions to meet their needs.

Research laboratory employs four people full-time. Alland & Robert has invested to equip it with cutting-edge technology. Recently, the company acquired steric exclusion chromatography (SEC) equipment and a quadruple detector⁷ and is the only company in the industry with this equipment, which is used to study and classify polymers (chemically, gum acacia or gum Arabic is a complex polysaccharide). With this equipment and a dedicated team, Alland & Robert offers customers bespoke solutions, in line with the company's sales and marketing priorities.

To supplement the work of its in-house research team, Alland & Robert has joined forces with Montpellier University, which leads the field in fundamental and experimental research into gum acacia. Together, both organizations work to develop new applications and competences

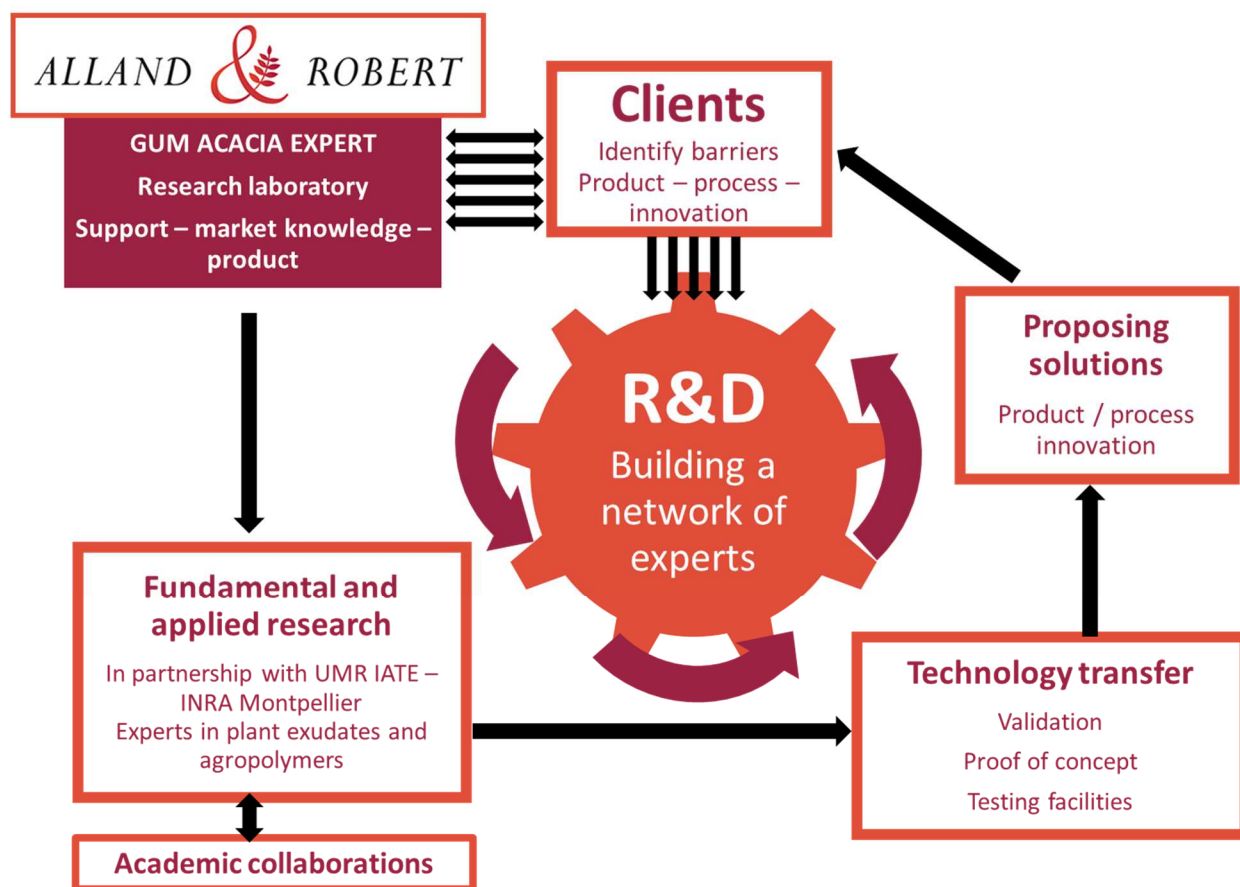
⁷ MALLS - UV-RI-visco type quadruple detection equipment (Multi-Angle Laser Light Scattering).

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relating to the structure, behavior, mechanisms and techno-functional properties of gum Arabic. The company is involved in a five-year research program with UMR IATE⁸, Montpellier University's research unit for agro-polymers and emerging technologies.

Alland & Robert has also worked with URCOM (organic and macromolecular chemistry research unit) at Le Havre University, whose research is dedicated to organic molecules with pharmaceutical potential and complex polysaccharide-based systems.

Between in-house department and partnerships, the resources dedicated to gum acacia R&D are equivalent to ten full-time research posts.



⁸ Mixed research unit for agro-polymer engineering and emerging technologies at Montpellier university – <http://umr-iate.cirad.fr/>

▪ Precision and quality, the driving forces behind Alland & Robert

Alland & Robert has developed specialized knowledge of gum acacia, from extraction and processing through to sales and use. Each stage of the process is strictly controlled, equipping the company to supply quality products and respond as quickly as possible to customer requests.

The company achieves its exemplary service by setting quality standards and audit policy above the industry average. The two factories in Eure are equipped with spray dryers, purchased in 2002 (Port-Mort), 2007 and 2013 (Saint-Aubin). They are used to produce soluble gum Arabic granules. Annual production capacity is 15,000 tons of gum acacia and 700 tons of gum karaya. Each stage of production, from supplies of raw gum through to work on the production lines is strictly controlled to ensure the company meets all legislation requirements relative to gum acacia:

- European regulations on food additives,
- the strictest pharmacopoeia standards (European, American and Japanese),
- the Food Chemicals Codex and JECFA⁹ monographs,
- customer requirements.

Alland & Robert achieves the very highest standards of quality by meeting the requirements of the following certifications:

- **BRC Certification**, established by the British Retail Consortium, defines a common base for food safety requirements for processors manufacturing own brands for the British market, and in doing so harmonizes audits.
- Application of **HACCP procedures** (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point), a key risk prevention tool used in the food industry.
- **ANSM certification** (French agency for the safety of medicines and health products)
- **Quality system certification: ISO 9001**

The company also meets the very strictest corporate social responsibility standards:

- **SEDEX** is a not for profit membership organization dedicated to driving improvements in responsible and ethical business practices in global supply chains.
- The organization's **SMETA audit** evaluates working conditions, health and safety at work, environmental issues and ethical practices.

Alland & Robert can also meet the standards of the following food certifications;

- Organic certification
- Halal certification
- Kosher certification

⁹ The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) is an international expert scientific committee administered jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It has been meeting since 1956, initially to evaluate the safety of food additives.