



Our client, **Darta Group** is a reputed Belgian family company, founded in 1988, that has grown into a global player in the development, processing and commercialisation of fresh frozen products such as vegetables, fruits, herbs and ready-made (side) dishes. Strengths of the group are a family-centred framework with short decision-making processes, professional employees and a high-quality customer service and flexibility in a fast evolving market. It is in the group's DNA to keep investing in people, production technology and product innovation. **Darta Group** exports over 2.000 products to more than 70 countries. They currently employ approx. 1.200 people in 5 production plants in Belgium (HQ), the UK, Portugal and Italy. Recently the group has further expanded its European presence and footprint with the opening of a sixth plant in Spain.

Darta works together with more than 850 farmers and the group fosters long-lasting collaborations built on mutual trust, respect and transparency with each and every one of them. **Darta Group's** leading position is based on their integral quality assurance approach, which is built around four pillars: systems, infrastructure, machinery and people. A focus on these pillars and continuous pursuit of improvement and innovation enables the group to cope with the increasingly strict legislation in terms of food safety and the ever-increasing demands from customers.

To support the group's continued European expansion and strengthen its overall operational leadership, **Darta** has a pivotal position available for an :

International Chief Operating Officer

Group Role, based in Ardooie HQ

MISSION

Reporting directly to the co-CEO's, you will hold a dual operational mandate combining the daily management of the Ardooie HQ plant with group-wide COO leadership. Key Responsibilities include :

- Driving operational excellence in HQ, ensuring reliable performance, strong service levels, quality and safety.
- Overseeing all European plants, guiding Plant Managers and steering Production, Packaging, Supply Chain Operations and Planning while harmonising processes and performance standards across the entire production network.
- Owning and implementing a group-wide operational strategy embedding 'customer intimacy' in all workflows and ensuring ownership, responsiveness, service quality and long-term partnership thinking across all plants.
- Translating strategic goals into measurable KPIs, ensuring clarity on targets, responsibilities and performance follow-up throughout the operations organisation.
- Leading cost-efficiency initiatives and change and improvement programmes, shaping a structured project management culture and fostering best-practice sharing between sites.
- Managing budgets, resources and investment proposals, safeguarding financial discipline and ensuring optimal use of assets within the framework of the group's long-term strategic plan.
- Fostering and strengthening cross-functional and interdepartmental collaboration, while championing organisational learning and encouraging teams to adopt innovative ideas, new technologies and more sustainable operating methods.

PROFILE

- At least 10 years' senior operational leadership experience in a multi-site production environment with international exposure. The ideal candidate combines vision with strong execution capacity and excels in building trust within a family-owned organisation.
- Proven ability to lead several plants through Plant Managers, harmonising processes while respecting local realities.
- Strong people leadership, able to motivate teams across countries and create clarity, ownership and accountability.
- Experienced in change management, continuous improvement, organisational alignment and structured execution.
- Solid financial acumen : budgets, operational KPIs, investments and performance follow-up.
- Hands-on, pragmatic and accessible, yet comfortable operating at strategic level while supporting growth and scale-up initiatives.
- Willing to travel regularly to foreign sites and maintain a close presence on the shop floor.
- Adaptable and culturally aware, essential for steering a diverse European production network.
- Fluent in Dutch and English, both spoken and written; knowledge of other languages (Italian, Spanish or Portuguese) is a plus.



INTERESTED ?

Send your application letter and CV to **Search & Selection** for the attention of Mr. Marc Van Beethoven :
m.vanbeethoven@searchselection.com.

You can also register on-line on www.searchselection.com and apply directly for this vacancy by following reference number : 16495.



OFFER

- A key leadership role within a growing and internationally oriented company, where your contribution will have a tangible impact on both local and group-wide performance.
- An attractive and competitive remuneration package, complemented by a range of additional benefits.
- The opportunity to make a real difference at operational and strategic level, in a context of strong expansion and continuous professionalisation.
- A culture built on entrepreneurship, trust and collaboration, where initiative is valued and decision lines are short.

