

Press information

AAK launches COBAO™ Pure, a breakthrough chocolate bloom retarder based on pure cocoa butter

COBAO™ Pure is a new cocoa butter from AAK that delivers significantly improved bloom-retarding effects in all kinds of applications including milk and dark chocolate tablets, coated and filled products, and dark chocolate with nuts. It delays migration and heat-related bloom, extending the shelf life with between 50 and 400 percent depending on recipe, processing techniques and storage conditions.

It is anticipated that the new ingredient will be particularly beneficial in the premium chocolate segment. Sales of premium chocolate are growing three times faster than standard chocolate, presenting an excellent market opportunity. Consumers pay more for high-end chocolate and expect the product to reach them in perfect condition¹ which means avoiding blooming and maintaining an attractive appearance for longer is essential.

Milk fat is commonly-used as a bloom retarder but presents a number of challenges that COBAO™ Pure helps to solve. Unlike milk fat, for example, COBAO™ Pure will not change the sensory qualities of the end product or cause excessive softening. This means it is especially suitable for dark chocolate applications. It is also free from lactose and other allergens, providing an excellent option for the growing free-from category. With 19 percent of free-from consumers saying they avoid lactose or dairy products, this offers significant potential.²

COBAO™ Pure is a fully deodorized 100 percent cocoa butter that is compatible with other cocoa butters and needs only to replace an amount of the existing cocoa butter in a recipe. On-pack, it should be labelled 'cocoa butter', in contrast to milk fat and other anti-blooming agents like cocoa butter equivalents and emulsifiers, which require a separate declaration on the ingredients list. More than two thirds of consumers (69 percent) say reading labels has an impact on their purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of using natural ingredients that will not disrupt a clean label.³

Blooming, a common problem in chocolate, is a whitening that can occur over the shelf life of a product, especially if it is stored at varying temperatures – something that is difficult for chocolate manufacturers to control once the product has left their factory. While it is not dangerous, blooming is unsightly and may be unappetizing for consumers. It also has a negative impact on the overall sensory quality of the chocolate.

The shelf life of a standard dark chocolate is usually set at around 10 to 12 months, but tests show this can fall to as low as one to three months when storage temperatures rise by just 2–3°C. However, the addition of COBAO™ Pure in the recommended range of 8 to 12 percent of the used cocoa butter retards blooming, extends shelf life and significantly reduces a product's sensitivity to higher storage temperatures.

Marco Oomen, AAK's Global Business Director for Chocolate & Confectionery Fats, said: "Consumers expect products to look as good as they taste so blooming poses a risk to revenue and brand perception. As a product moves down the supply chain, storage temperatures can fluctuate, so an effective bloom retarder is a must. COBAO™ Pure delivers excellent bloom-retarding capabilities without the formulation and labelling drawbacks of some other ingredients. It's an exciting new solution that is set to make a real, positive difference in the chocolate category."

ENDS

¹ Euromonitor

² Mintel, 2017

³ C+R Research. Your guide to the clean label revolution (2017)



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*AAK is a leading provider of value-adding vegetable oils & fats. Our expertise in lipid technology within foods and special nutrition applications, our wide range of raw materials and our broad process capabilities enable us to develop innovative and value-adding solutions across many industries – Chocolate & Confectionery, Bakery, Dairy, Special Nutrition, Foodservice, Personal Care, and more. AAK's proven expertise is based on more than 140 years of experience within oils & fats. Our unique co-development approach brings our customers' skills and know-how together with our own capabilities and mindset for lasting results. Listed on Nasdaq Stockholm and with our headquarters in Malmö, Sweden, AAK has 20 different production facilities, sales offices in more than 25 countries and more than 3,400 employees. **We are AAK – The Co-Development Company.***