



Press information, 29 September 2021

AAK's AKOMEL™ fats offer gateway to growing premium caramel opportunity

AAK has developed a range of fats for chocolate and confectionery manufacturers that are looking to benefit from the growing popularity and premiumization of caramel. AKOMEL™ is a portfolio of clean-label and plant-based fats from sustainable sources. Non-hydrogenated, non-trans and low-saturated fat options are available.

Premium inclusion

Already a well-established classic, caramel is also one of the fastest-growing confectionery categories, according to Euromonitor, with value sales set to increase by about 5 percent between 2020 and 2023. This will outstrip volume growth over the same period (2.5 percent), indicating that caramel has established itself as a premium category. In addition, caramel is the fastest-growing flavor component in indulgent categories such as chocolate and confectionery.

This trend towards premiumization is further supported by Mintel data demonstrating that there has been an increase in the number of new launches of higher-priced caramel products. By contrast, the number of launches of cheaper caramel products is declining.

Improved process and cost control

The caramel category also covers toffee, fudge and nougat – with textures ranging from the hard and chewy to very soft and melt-in-the-mouth. The fat content in caramel is typically 5 to 15 percent and plays a major role in terms of its flavor, mouthfeel and texture. How the fat melts in relation to human body temperature is an important part of the taste experience. Apart from having the desired sensory quality, caramel must be stable enough to retain its shape at room temperature and ensure it does not stick to packaging.

Speciality vegetable fats can provide improved process control and lower costs without compromising clean label appeal. They are also vegan-friendly and aligned with demand for plant-based foods. Vegan and plant-based foods are strong trends and high in the top of mind of consumers nowadays. Consumers' awareness of products that are good for themselves but also good for the planet seems to be an important driver of their purchasing decisions.

Luxurious mouthfeel and rich taste

Luis Parra, Global Business Director Chocolate & Confectionery Fats at AAK, said: "Generally, we are seeing a movement towards more sophisticated, adult-oriented sweets that consumers would want to give as a gift on a special occasion. With its luxurious mouthfeel and rich taste, caramel delivers an indulgent experience that's in tune with this. AKOMEL™ solutions are tailored vegetable fats and therefore a particularly good choice when developing caramel products for the growing premium market, where high-quality ingredients and cleaner formulations are key drivers."

Rikke Mikkelsen, Customer Innovation Director at AAK added: "At AAK, we've got our finger on the pulse of the caramel market. We are ready to supply our extensively tested AKOMEL™ solutions for a



range of applications, and our co-development experts are always on-hand to support our customers' projects.”

For more information, please contact:

Luis Parra, Global Business Director Chocolate & Confectionery Fats
Phone number / email address: +45 2043 7420 / luis.parra@aak.com
www.aak.com

About AAK

Everything AAK does is about **Making Better Happen™**. We specialize in plant-based oils that are the value-adding ingredients in many of the products people love to consume. We make these products better tasting, healthier, and more sustainable. At the heart of AAK's offer is Customer Co-Development, combining our desire to understand what better means for each customer, with the unique flexibility of our production assets, and a deep knowledge of many products and industries, including Chocolate & Confectionery, Bakery, Dairy, Plant-based Foods, Special Nutrition, Foodservice and Personal Care. Our 3,900 employees support our close collaboration with customers through 25 regional sales offices, 15 dedicated Customer Innovation Centers, and with the support of more than 20 production facilities. Listed on Nasdaq Stockholm and with our headquarters in Malmö, Sweden, AAK has been Making Better Happen™ for 150 years.