

# Press information

## Super compound delivers a premium consumer experience with lower raw material costs

AAK has developed ILLEXAO™, a range of fats suitable for making a 'super compound' that can replace up to 100% of the free cocoa butter in a chocolate recipe. In turn, this will enable chocolate manufacturers to reduce formulation costs by up to 40% with no decline in quality or product stability.

The main fat phase of the super compound comprises vegetable fats with a similar composition to cocoa butter. This means it is fully compatible with cocoa butter, which will allow chocolate manufacturers to use it in their products to reduce costs while continuing to add cocoa mass to their formulations. The super compound delivers equivalent taste, texture and meltdown properties, as well as a similar nutritional profile.

Traditionally, cocoa butter was the only vegetable fat used in chocolate, but a combination of increased demand, rising prices, varying quality levels and inconsistent supplies has led chocolate companies to seek alternatives. Standard compounds are more affordable, but the fat has a different composition to – and is not compatible with – cocoa butter, leading to sensory differences in the chocolate due to a lower cocoa mass content. Depending on the blend of vegetable fats in the compound, manufacturers may be forced to consider compromising the nutritional profile of their product by adding saturated and trans fats. Technical difficulties such as these have therefore limited the use of compounds largely to chocolate coatings.

However, by using the right vegetable fat, such as AAK's ILLEXAO™ range, to replace some or all of the cocoa butter in the chocolate recipe, it is possible to produce a super compound. This overcomes all of these obstacles, giving manufacturers the opportunity to create indulgent chocolate with excellent sensory properties and clean label credentials while saving 10-40% of ingredient costs. The exact amount of savings will depend on the recipe and raw material costs.

Additional benefits of using the super compound include increased scope for customization and improved shelf stability, bloom resistance and shape retention. Increased stability is more essential than ever during the COVID-19 crisis, because many more shoppers are ordering food over the internet. Even before the pandemic, 35% of shoppers said they had bought chocolate online, according to AAK research.<sup>1</sup> That figure is likely to have risen significantly in the wake of lockdowns worldwide that have forced people to stay at home for extended periods.

Marco Oomen, AAK's Global Business Director for Chocolate & Confectionery Fats, said: "Our research shows that the taste of chocolate is by far the most important factor for consumers.<sup>1</sup> This makes it important not to cut costs at the expense of taste by using ingredients that are cheaper than cocoa butter but inferior in terms of performance. AAK's ILLEXAO™ range of super compounds offers both a premium eating experience and lower raw material overheads, as well as a clean label and no difference in the nutrition profile of the finished product."

He continued: "Furthermore, the growth of internet shopping has highlighted the need for manufacturers to ensure product quality remains stable during transportation to consumers. When storage temperatures are not controlled or fluctuate during distribution, products are prone to turn grey, dull and unappealing. For manufacturers that rely on online sales, this is a risk to brand reputation they cannot afford to take. Consumers are likely to send it back with the next post, perhaps never to buy that brand again. This is where the high bloom resistance of the super compound comes into its own, making it well suited to web sales."

AAK's standard super compound solution is a blend of shea butter and palm oil. Alternative exotic fats can be incorporated in line with the chocolate manufacturer's preferences. "Based on AAK's Customer Co-Development approach, super compounds can be developed for all needs," said Marco Oomen. "That's a

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<sup>1</sup> AAK Consumer Survey 2019



major plus at a time of uncertainty on global markets, and it's perfect for budget-aware consumers who demand premium solutions and increasingly prefer to shop online.”

**For further information, please contact:**

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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.***