



Ministerie van Economische Zaken,
Landbouw en Innovatie

RESEARCHING HEALTH CLAIMS FOR CHOCOLATE

*The Dutch bakery and confectionary sector investigates
with a view to product innovation.*

Cocoa contains a number of compounds which seem to be valuable and even necessary for our health. VBZ, (The Dutch Association of the Bakery and Confectionary Industry) and its members needed an overview of the scientific facts of chocolate's health benefits to support manufacturers in their innovation process. The positive effects of cocoa on health could lead to new possibilities for cocoa products in the area of 'nutrition and health'.

However, presenting cocoa products with a health claim depends on European Regulation on Nutrition and Health Claims. The question of cocoa and chocolate products complying with European nutrient profiles is an ongoing discussion.

This project hopes to assist **cocoa manufacturers, suppliers, producers** and **governments** by giving an overview of the scientific literature on cocoa and health. The information could support manufacturers of chocolate products in their product development and marketing. Communication about the health effects could stimulate a positive attitude among consumers about chocolate, leading to increased sales in the chocolate supply chain.

The knowledge centre TNO has analysed various studies. They found that most research focuses on the relation between cocoa and the following health issues:

- Cardiovascular disease,
- Mood,
- Brain function,
- Skin health,
- Diarrhoea,
- Reduction of cholesterol levels,
- Anti-inflammatory properties.

There is serious evidence of the possibility of positive health benefits of chocolate and therefore implications for product innovation. However, presenting cocoa products with a health claim depends on European Regulation on Nutrition and Health Claims. Further research is needed. However, it seems that chocolate will be excluded from making claims because of its nutrient profile. This is making companies reluctant to invest in research. The situation is further complicated by the perception of chocolate as a 'treat' by consumers and their inability or unwillingness to link chocolate



Ministerie van Economische Zaken,
Landbouw en Innovatie

with health claims. Never the less VBZ endorses the importance of further research through the cocoa and chocolate sector.

Organisation	VBZ (Dutch Association of the Bakery and Confectionary Industry) and participants of the VBZ Chocolate Platform
Contact Person	T. Baas / E. Ijspeert
Address	Sir Winston Churchillaan 366, 2285 SJ Rijswijk, The Netherlands
e-mail	e.ijspeert@vbz.nl
Telephone	+ 31 70 3554700
website	www.vbz.nl
Partner	TNO Kwaliteit van Leven - Zeist

This project was implemented with financial support from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation in the Netherlands. The financial support was made available from the subsidy programme for sustainable development of the cocoa and chocolate sector (also known as ‘the Buffer Stock Fund’). The responsibility for the implementation of the project and its outcomes lies with the project partner(s). The outcomes of the project do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Ministry. The Ministry is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained in this project summary and other documents related to this project.