

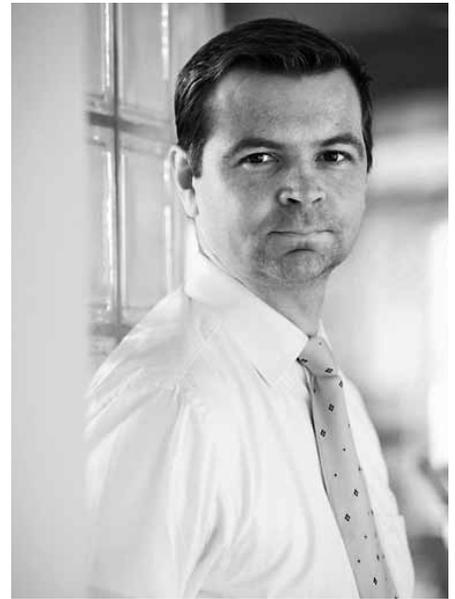


Naturally Sweet— with Stevia

A new chocolate innovation developed in a strong partnership

In October 2010, Barry Callebaut launched the first no sugar added chocolate with Stevia extract produced on industrial scale that does not cause any side effects, making it safe for all to enjoy. This particular innovative chocolate will be retailed exclusively by renowned Belgian chocolate maker Cavalier. In an interview, Felix Verdegem, the owner of Cavalier, explains why he is extremely excited about this latest innovation.

About Cavalier
Cavalier has been exclusively developing, producing and distributing chocolate products with no added sugar since 1996. The company is the only manufacturer in the world dedicated exclusively to healthy, sugar-free chocolate. Cavalier sells its products in more than 45 countries. For more information: www.cavalier.be.



Felix Verdegem, owner of the Belgian chocolate maker Cavalier

by Raphael Wermuth

Your company is specialized in chocolates with no added sugar. What was your motivation for starting this particular business?

Our family has a long heritage in the food business, starting with my grandfather. When founding Cavalier fifteen years ago, we identified two prerequisites for being successful: First, we wanted to offer high quality products. Secondly, with diabetes and obesity on the rise, we were convinced that there is a huge, unexplored market for indulgent, healthy chocolate products.

Usually, your products are based on maltitol. Why are you now launching chocolates sweetened with Stevia extract?

Maltitol is actually an excellent sugar replacer with a great taste, but we noticed that some customers still perceive it as something artificial – when in fact it originates from a natural source. Furthermore, chocolate products containing more than 10% maltitol need a warning on the packaging, since it may have a laxative effect. In contrast, Stevia extract is viewed as a natural sweetener without having a

laxative effect. That is why I decided to ask Barry Callebaut for support in developing a chocolate sweetened with Stevia extract.

Are sugar substitutes like Stevia extract just a means of reducing the overall amount of calories in chocolate?

Calorie reduction was and is still not my initial motivation for using Stevia extract in chocolate. The main issue is that we all consume too much sugar: Worldwide, the average daily intake of sugar is 2.5 times the amount recommended by



Barry Callebaut's chocolate with Stevia extract – and other sugar-reduced chocolates

The Stevia plant is cultivated throughout Asia and South America, where it has been used as a food ingredient for more than 200 years. Nowadays, it is also cultivated in Japan, Korea, and China. When refined, natural Stevia extract has between 100 and 400 times the sweetness of ordinary sugar – but no calories. This makes it an ideal sweetener for people seeking a healthier lifestyle.

Barry Callebaut has offered chocolate sweetened with Stevia extract since 2011. After first launching a dark variation, the company has now expanded its portfolio with a milk variation. In addition, a white chocolate with Stevia extract is currently in the late stages of development and will be launched soon.

Barry Callebaut has also marketed other sugar-reduced and low-calorie chocolates using different sweetener solutions since 2006. In addition, the company developed a specially processed chocolate sweetened with isomaltulose that prevents dental caries and is certified by the "Toothfriendly" organization and endorsed by dentists.

the World Health Organisation (WHO). Therefore, our focus is on substituting the sugar while keeping the healthy ingredients in chocolate that are naturally found in cocoa.

Why have you chosen to work together with Barry Callebaut to develop your new chocolate?

As a businessman, I like to work in proven partnerships. Cavalier has a long-standing, successful business relationship with Barry Callebaut. Besides, I realized that the potential partner for developing the Stevia chocolate I had in mind needed to be very experienced and knowledgeable in working with fibres – I knew this would be a key issue to solve. And with Barry Callebaut I found the right partner with these specific Research and Development skills.

What type of new chocolates will you now offer?

Cavalier will offer a comprehensive portfolio of chocolate products with Stevia extract. We have created tablets, bars as well as a comprehensive range of pralines, from low budget up to finest premium pralines.

When and where will you start selling your new chocolates?

Currently, there is no chocolate with Stevia extract from Cavalier on the shelves in Europe due to differing national legislation. However, this is changing as we speak. The product itself – in milk and dark variety – is ready for launch. As soon as Stevia extract receives EU regulatory approval, we will start selling our products in Europe. I expect this to happen by the beginning of December 2011. We have already begun to sell Cavalier chocolates with Stevia extract in the U.S. •