



Press Release

HRH the King visits Belgian chocolate manufacturer Barry Callebaut

The Barry Callebaut production unit in Wieze is the world's largest chocolate factory

Wieze, 7th February 2006 – HRH the King today honoured the Barry Callebaut factory in Wieze with a visit. The factory in Wieze is an important branch of the international Barry Callebaut group and the world's largest chocolate factory. A world record was made in this production unit in September last year. 250,000 tons of liquid chocolate was produced for the first time: top quality Belgian chocolate. Barry Callebaut in Wieze does not only produce the authentic Belgian Callebaut chocolate; they have also become a world-renowned training and innovation centre. The chocolate and cocoa products produced in Wieze are exported worldwide.

HRH King Albert II arrived at around 9:45 in Wieze. Groups of school children and other curious onlookers waited for him in the East Flanders municipality. HRH the King was greeted by a delegation from Barry Callebaut led by Patrick De Maeseneire, the Belgian CEO of Barry Callebaut and Patrick Hautphenne, Vice President Food Manufacturers. HRH the King then participated in a work meeting, a visit to the chocolate factory and a closing reception.

Barry Callebaut has its roots in Belgium: the company was started under the name Callebaut in 1850 as a malt and milk production company. Since 1925, Callebaut has been producing reputable Belgian chocolate and the site in Wieze still represents the very best of Belgium today. As well as the production unit in Wieze, there are two other Barry Callebaut factories situated in Belgium: in Eupen and Thimister – together with over 1000 employees.

In 1996 Callebaut merged with Cacao Barry to form the international group Barry Callebaut. The company was given an international dimension, but remains firmly anchored in Belgium. Wieze is a strategic production and export unit for the group and a world-renowned training and innovation centre. Various international functions, such as R&D, Pricing, Controlling, IT and Marketing are centred in Belgium. The Belgian CEO Patrick De Maeseneire is at the head of Barry Callebaut.

2005 was an exceptionally successful year for Barry Callebaut. The company set a world record with the production of 250,000 tons of liquid chocolate: a one-off in the chocolate industry. The popularity of chocolate and chocolate products is still growing every year worldwide. Chocolate is also a tasty product that is sought after in Belgium: Belgian people each consume an average of 7 kilos of chocolate every year. This makes them large consumers, when you consider that people from France and the Netherlands only have an average of 4.5 kilos of chocolate a year.



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Barry Callebaut is the only fully vertically integrated couverture chocolate producer that is active worldwide. With branches in various cocoa-producing countries, the group even coordinates the provision of a large number of the ingredients. This means Barry Callebaut can guarantee quality throughout the whole production process. This quality brings with it a clear market advantage: a worldwide market share of 42% in the industrial chocolate sector, and a worldwide market share of 35% for traditional and professional consumers.

Innovation is one of Barry Callebaut's spearheads. 1000 R&D projects are started every year, of which 300 are completed successfully. These projects allow the changing wishes of consumers to be met pro-actively. The combination of enjoyment and health is central to this. Every year Barry Callebaut sells no less than 1650 different recipes.

Patrick De Maeseneire, CEO of Barry Callebaut: *“Innovation is crucially important for Barry Callebaut: we will only continue to grow by keeping up with the times and surprising people. As well as innovation, expansion is also a point of particular interest: we are expanding our presence in a well-thought out way in interesting markets outside Europe and North America. Barry Callebaut still links innovation and expansion with sophisticated cost controls. By combining these three cornerstones in our operation, we will be able to grow twice as fast as the market in the coming years.”*

Patrick Hautphenne, Vice President Food Manufacturers, adds to this: *“Barry Callebaut is world market leader and has evolved from being an ingredients supplier into being an integrated solutions provider for the whole food industry. Highly technological production of top quality plays an important role here. Last year in Wieze we broke a world record by producing 250,000 tons of liquid chocolate. We are proud that we hold a leading position and contribute positively to the image of being one of the most important export producers in Belgium.*

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About Barry Callebaut:

With annual sales of more than CHF 4 billion for fiscal year 2004/05, Zurich-based Barry Callebaut is the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa, chocolate and confectionery products – from the cocoa bean to the finished product on the store shelf. Barry Callebaut operates more than 30 production facilities in 23 countries and employs more than 8,000 people. The company serves the entire food industry, from food manufacturers to professional users of chocolate (such as chocolatiers, pastry chefs or bakers), to global retailers. It also provides a comprehensive range of services in the fields of product development, processing, training and marketing.

www.barry-callebaut.com

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