

Chocolate Check 2016

14 storebrand chocolates were tested regarding their social and ecological quality by EEB and Düdwind in the Chocolate Check 2016.



Green-Social: The product is certified with a label that has comprehensive social criteria (Fairtrade+Fairtrade Cocoa Programme)

Orange-Social: The product is certified with a label that includes basic social criteria (utz, rainforest alliance) or has positive social effects (organic)

Red-Social: The product has no label with social criteria or positive social effects.

Green-ecological: The product is certified with a label that has comprehensive ecological criteria (organic)

Half-green-ecological: The product is certified with a label that has good ecological criteria but is not organic (rainforest alliance)

Orange-ecological: The product is certified with a label that has basic ecological criteria (Fairtrade+Fairtrade Cocoa Programme, UTZ)

Red-Ecological: The product has no label with ecological criteria

Labels currently in use for chocolates in Belgium



FAIRTRADE International defines itself as an association of producer organizations from southern countries and campaigners for fair trade in consumer countries. In the umbrella organization FAIRTRADE International, standards, FAIRTRADE premiums and Fairtrade minimum prices are being determined collectively. The FAIRTRADE-Standard for cocoa applies to small holders only, there is no FAIRTRADE-certification for plantations. In order to obtain the FAIRTRADE certification mark, blended products must contain ingredients that are produced according to FAIRTRADE criteria and are sourced from FAIRTRADE sources. The end product must contain at least 20% of FAIRTRADE certified ingredients and all ingredients that are available on FAIRTRADE terms have to be bought on this terms. The exact amount of FAIRTRADE certified ingredients is indicated on the product package.



In 2014, FAIRTRADE introduced its own cocoa certification programme for companies, focussing only on the core ingredient. The FAIRTRADE cocoa programme only demands that the cocoa that is used shall be obtained from FAIRTRADE sources, whereas the FAIRTRADE certification mark requires all raw materials be sourced from FAIRTRADE certified producers. When it comes to chocolate, it means that in accordance with the programme, 100% of the cocoa must be sourced from FAIRTRADE cooperatives, but the sugar can be beet sugar from Europe or sourced from non-fairtrade production.

Assessment:

Chocolate with Fairtrade or Fairtrade Cocoa Programme label have been rated green in the social field because of comprehensive social standards, the guaranteed minimum price and the premium. In the ecological field it has been rated with orange as environmental friendly agriculture by small holder farmers is compulsory.



UTZ is primarily a sustainability programme that was developed to assist producers by means of trainings to increase their turnover and efficiency as well as make sure that sufficient cocoa beans are produced for the processing sector.

Chocolate products with the UTZ certification must contain at least 90% of certified cocoa. Other ingredients, like sugar or vanilla, do not have to be cultivated according to sustainable standards.

There are no minimum prices and premiums.

Assessment:

Chocolate with the UTZ label has been rated orange in both ecological and social fields as it only sets ecological and social minimum standards and it is already given if only 90% of cocoa included is UTZ certified



Not one of the certification marks above meets the high ecological requirements for an organic-certification mark. This is why it is important to pay particular attention if additionally a European organic certification mark is present.

Assessment: Chocolate with the organic label was rated green in the ecological field and orange in the social field, as organic agriculture means a higher price for the farmers and no toxic pesticides so it also has positive social effects.

Own sustainability initiatives of chocolate producers and supermarkets that are not independently certified were not taken into account for the chocolate check, as also the consumers cannot recognize them on the product. Nevertheless we do welcome these sustainability initiatives as first steps but they cannot be a replacement for independent certification.