

Cadbury, Fairtrade and Cocoa Life

From the sweeties.net wiki

In 2009, Cadbury made a commitment to source Fairtrade cocoa for Dairy Milk, and the Fairtrade mark went on the front of the wrapper. In November 2016, under its American owner Mondelez International, Cadbury announced it was going back on that commitment.

What changed

Instead of Fairtrade, Dairy Milk would be covered by Cocoa Life, Mondelez's own cocoa sustainability programme. In the UK, plain Cadbury Dairy Milk dropped the Fairtrade mark from the front of the pack from May 2017, with other countries following in 2018. The front of the wrapper would carry the Cocoa Life logo instead, while the Fairtrade Foundation's logo could still appear on the back, as part of a deal struck with the foundation.

What is Cocoa Life?

Cocoa Life was launched by Mondelez in 2012 as a ten year, \$400m programme covering 200,000 farmers in six countries, aiming to at least double its levels of sustainably sourced cocoa by 2018. Mondelez said the change meant five times more Cadbury chocolate in the UK and Ireland would be made with sustainably sourced cocoa, including brands such as Twirl and Flake.

Fairtrade's side

Surprisingly to some, the Fairtrade Foundation backed the arrangement. Under the deal, Fairtrade would help strengthen farmer cooperatives, support farmers in dealing with climate change, and independently check the programme, with payments to farmers built into Cocoa Life. A Fairtrade spokesperson described it as an entirely different way of working with a company.

The critics

Others were far less happy. They saw a global food company swapping an independent, recognised certification for a scheme it ran itself, which it could shape and promote as it chose. One critic, David Marshall, founder of the Meaningful Chocolate Company, called it a classic Cadbury's fudge, arguing that the company hoped to keep the Fairtrade logo on its bars after dropping Fairtrade ingredients.

Not just Cadbury

Cadbury was not alone. In June 2020 Nestlé announced that KitKat would end its relationship with Fairtrade and source cocoa from farms certified by the Rainforest Alliance instead. Big chocolate makers have

increasingly moved towards their own schemes or other certifications.

Why it matters

Cocoa is grown mostly by small farmers, many of them in West Africa, where poverty and child labour remain serious problems. How the big chocolate companies buy their cocoa, and who checks their promises, affects millions of people. See [child labour and the cocoa trade](#) and [why chocolate got so expensive](#).

This was one of several changes that made some people question what had happened to Cadbury since its sale to Kraft in 2010: see [how Cadbury was sold to Kraft](#).

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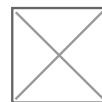
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