

savour moments of happiness to accompany their value seeking chocolate purchases. Small scale, artisan production methods are ideally placed to serve and to benefit from the growing consumer demand for premium chocolate products.

18.2.3 Sustainability

The chocolate industry has seen growing pressure to ensure that crops, sourcing and methodology are more sustainable (see also Chapter 2). Consumer demands have identified growing opportunities in mature markets for brands and products that identify and feature sustainable sourcing techniques. Products that identify origin of beans (Figure 18.1), certification of sustainable practices, provenance of ingredients and traceability are increasingly important.

18.2.4 Nostalgia and tradition

Quality is increasingly becoming a feature with consumers selecting quality of product over quantity. There has also been a growth in demand for products that use perceived higher quality and traditional ingredients. Small businesses and artisan craftsman are ideally suited to revisit traditional confectionery and chocolate making techniques as consumers increase demand for nostalgic products that remind them of their childhood with simpler ingredients and manufacturing processes.

18.2.5 Health and wellbeing

An increase in consumer concern with health and wellbeing has seen high growth in sales of dark chocolate, and products with higher content of cocoa solids have the highest growth (see also Chapter 22). The general perception



Figure 18.1 Product declaring origin of ingredients as well as species of cocoa beans. Reproduced with permission of Duffy Sheardown, Red Star Chocolates.

that dark chocolate is better for you together with an increased awareness of the flavour profiles and health benefits of certain components of dark chocolate has seen a shift away from milk chocolate consumption towards dark chocolate; in the UK this currently represents 24% of chocolate consumption. This is an area that generally focuses on the higher quality, premium market where growth in demand has given greater profitability.

18.3 Selecting the right product lines to make

Starting out selling chocolates may seem an exciting, yet overwhelming prospect with endless choices. There are increasing opportunities for artisan producers creating hand-made chocolates that respond to changes in consumer behaviour, to growing demand for sustainable chocolate with high quality ingredients and for a premium indulgent treat.

Chocolate can be an attractive and versatile ingredient to work with and to create a whole range of products. The following list of suggestions is not intended to be exhaustive for all possible product lines or suitable markets, but is confined to the traditional remit of a chocolatier rather than that of a confectioner or patissier making fresh baked products with chocolate.

18.3.1 Filled chocolates

Filled chocolates are ideally sold boxed in the gift market and represent 22% of UK chocolate consumption. Chocolates can be moulded using high quality moulds, filled with an array of fillings, alternatively cut or cast and set centres can be hand-dipped in chocolate. Filled chocolates can include:

- *Ganache*
 - Ganache is a mixture of chocolate and cream or butter. Additional flavours can be easily incorporated into ganache based chocolates by combining with or substituting the liquid cream for other liquid flavours. Ganache can be piped into moulded chocolate shells, can be piped and hand-shaped, or can be set firm and cut into segments before being hand-dipped in chocolate. The shelf life of ganache filled chocolates can vary depending upon how the chocolates are sealed. Quality products with no air bubbles will last longest, but their shelf life is still shorter than the distribution chains of big confectionery companies. Additional preservatives can be added to ganache based chocolates using inverted sugars such as liquid glucose to maintain texture and reduce the water activity (see Chapter 4).
- *Pralines*
 - Praline is the Belgian word for filled chocolates, traditionally the name refers to nuts that are preserved by caramelising them in sugar. The preserved nuts are ground and blended into a smooth paste that can then be added to chocolate. As the nuts naturally contain oils they can be combined with chocolate to create a smooth consistency that can set firm but not brittle (see Chapter 7).