



Media Release  
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## **ROBERN MENZ LEADS AUSTRALIA'S CONFECTIONERS**

### **NOT JUST ANY OIL!**

South Australia's Robern Menz, in an Australian first for confectionery manufacturers, is proud to announce that all products that contain palm oil leaving its Glynde factory will be manufactured using 100% fully segregated, Certified Sustainable Palm Oil (CSPO).

Robern Menz General Manager of Operations, Richard Sims said "As a member of the International Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil\* (RSPO), Robern Menz is committed to sustainable palm oil production and to its corporate values as a pro-active, solution-oriented and socially responsible organisation."

"We are aware that the issues surrounding deforestation and Palm Oil are complex and in some areas, quite controversial. We don't profess to have the answers but we are very proud to have joined the RSPO and to be the first Australian confectioner to be certified and make these positive changes. We hope Australians can be proud too now that when they purchase our products off the supermarket shelves, that they will be supporting sustainable practices to aid the world in which we live" said Richard.

An edible vegetable oil produced from the fruits of oil palms, this oil is among the world's most used ingredients and can be found in about half of all packaged food products. Because of its distinct properties, it is used in a wide range of foods such as margarine, bakery goods, chocolate and ice cream. Palm oil derivatives are also used in soaps and cosmetics.

The use of palm oil has been a hot topic with unsustainable palm oil cultivation in many areas having negative impacts on the environment, including indiscriminate forest clearing, habitat loss for threatened and endangered species.

Furthermore, the use and demand for palm oil is increasing.... With deforestation the greatest threat to orang-utans. They and 3,000 endangered species of flora and fauna such as the Sumatran rhino and tiger need the rainforest to survive.

The greatest benefit to the Australian consumer as a result of the change will be with respect to their choc coated honeycomb products of which they are the largest supplier in Australia.

The changes and price premium for using certified sustainable palm oil will not be passed on to the consumer at the check-out, assures Richard. "We will be absorbing the costs as part of our ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability" he said. (Robern Menz have also recently completed a \$1.1 million overhaul of the business' refrigeration plant and warehousing infrastructure reducing CO2 emissions by 248 tonne annually)

\*The RSPO is an organisation established to promote environmentally sensitive and socially ethical palm oil cultivation and use through the prohibition on the conversion of valuable forests.

### **What is sustainable palm oil?**

RSPO has defined 8 principles and 39 practical criteria to define sustainable production of palm oil. They ensure that fundamental rights of previous land owners, local communities, plantation workers, small farmers and their families are respected and fully taken into account, that no new primary forests or high conservation value areas have been cleared for palm oil production since November 2005, and that mills and plantation owners minimize their environmental footprint. A full listing of principles, criteria and indicators is given in the RSPO document Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil available at the Roundtable's website ([www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org)) under 'Key documents'.

### **Wouldn't it be better to remove palm oil from consumer products altogether?**

Switching from palm oil to other vegetable oils may seem like an easy solution, but it really is not. Demand would shift to other vegetable oils, increasing the sustainability problems connected to those particular crops. What's more, compared to other crops like soy bean, sunflower or canola, oil palms produce by far the most vegetable oil per hectare of land, so switching to other vegetable oils may very well result in more primary forests being converted into agricultural land, not less. So for sustainability reasons, it is better to switch to sustainable palm oil than to other vegetable oils.

### **What does the RSPO want to achieve?**

The Roundtable aims to ensure that no primary forests or other high conservation value areas are cleared for new palm oil plantations, that oil palm plantations minimize their environmental footprint and that basic rights of local land owners, farm workers and indigenous people are fully respected. About 40 million tonnes of palm oil is produced worldwide. Roundtable members currently represent about half of that volume, so the RSPO's efforts can potentially have a major impact. While in due course the RSPO aims to see all palm oil certified, sustainable palm oil will initially make up less than 10 percent of total palm oil volumes. Over the next few years, that percentage should grow significantly. Ultimately, the Roundtable aims to have the entire world's palm oil produced in a sustainable way.

### **Where does Robern Menz Palm oil come from?**

Robern Menz palm is purchased solely from United Plantations which has over 11 Plantations and 6 Mills in the Northern parts of Malaysia. United Plantations was awarded as the world's first certified producer of sustainable palm oil by The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) on the 26th August 2008.

[www.robernmenz.com.au](http://www.robernmenz.com.au)

[www.rspo.org](http://www.rspo.org)

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