

## EATING CHOCOLATE, DOING GOOD

By stocking Ben Tre, you can offer world-class chocolate and support Action Against Hunger's vital work, says food critic CHARLES CAMPION



Vietnamese chocolate... whatever next? Part of the charm of judging at the Great Taste Awards is there are so many surprises, and one of this year's most startling newcomers was an astonishing chocolate made using cocoa from Ben Tre Plantations in Vietnam. It took a maximum three gold stars.

This cocoa is the vintage 2010 crop produced by a Vietnamese co-operative, set up to help a community still suffering from the long-term effects of chemical weapons deployed during the Vietnam war.

The sugar used is unrefined and sourced from a family-owned plantation in Peru and the transformation from bean to chocolate is by an old-style third generation chocolatier based in Avignon, France, using a recipe created by London-based artisan chocolatier Marc Demarquette.

With a pedigree like that, those chaps at the Guild of Fine Food decided it was too good for anyone other than delis, food halls and farm shops to stock. So they got together with Action Against Hunger (AAH) to produce limited edition 2010 vintage Ben Tre bars in aid of the food aid charity. The result is two very special bars – one 70% cocoa and the other a milk chocolate at 40% – that are exclusive to the speciality independent retail trade, with £1 from every bar sold going to the charity.

Action Against Hunger is an international organisation that specialises in feeding starving children. For over a decade it has worked in partnership with leading restaurants on its annual Fight Hunger: Eat Out campaign.

For 2010, Ben Tre will be part of this activity. It will be launched at this month's London Speciality & Fine Food Fair amid a high profile PR campaign supported by many of the country's leading celebrity chefs.

Ben Tre will benefit everyone, from sustainable,

small-scale producers in Vietnam to the family sugar business in Peru and the 5 million people Action Against Hunger supports every year. I urge every deli, farm shop and food hall to stock these bars because the quality is impeccable, the charity's objective totally laudable and those people at the Guild have put together a marketing package to help small shops score points over supermarkets while doing good.



**TASTING NOTES:** Both the 70% and 40% Action Against Hunger bars have a good snap and excellent mouthfeel. They are richly flavoured with a faint spiciness and exotic hints underpinned by smoothness and a satisfyingly long finish. The quality of the chocolate is outstanding and won a three star gold at the 2010 Great Taste Awards – astonishing recognition when you consider this is one of only two bars at the 2010 awards to achieve that distinction. As one of the tasting panel said: "This could be the world's best chocolate."

### Here's the deal

Stock Ben Tre through October and November and:

- Your store will be listed as a stockist on the Great Taste Awards website.
- Your store will be listed in 250,000 copies of *Taste Gold 2010/11*, the guide to GTA-winning foods.
- Your store will be mentioned as a local stockist in all regional press releases for Ben Tre.
- You make 20% profit-on-return and the charity makes £1 from every bar.

### Prices and case sizes

Ben Tre is supplied in point-of-sale display boxes of 20 x 70g bars, containing 10 dark and 10 milk varieties.

The wholesale price per box is £61.00 inc VAT (£3.05 per bar, inc VAT). VAT is not payable on the £1 of the price going to the charity) RRP is £3.99 (inc 45p VAT)

### How to order

Add Ben Tre to your regular order from:  
 Petty, Wood & Co 01264 345500  
 Hider Foods Imports 01482 504333  
 Anthony Rowcliffe & Son 01892 838999

### OR

If you do not expect to order from any of these companies over the coming four weeks, please call Charlie Westcar at the Guild of Fine Food:  
 ☎ 01963 824464.