



Cadbury won't dare milk Fair Trade gong

By CLARE KERMOND

CADBURY has scored a coup by winning ethical accreditation for its flagship Cadbury Dairy Milk brand, but it won't be telling consumers, for fear of a cynical backlash.

Cadbury's has shied away from any marketing to trumpet its recently won Fair Trade certification, believing that Australian consumers are poorly informed about ethical and environmental accreditation and so cynical that any such claims could leave the brand open to claims of "green-washing".

Speaking at a forum on green

branding this week, Daniel Ellis, corporate affairs manager for Cadbury's owner, Kraft Foods, said despite the well-known chocolate brand fulfilling all the requirements for the ethical certification, it would not use this in any marketing strategies.

"If we come out and say,

'isn't our chocolate great and now its Fair Trade', there would be so much cynicism that it's just another marketing ploy," he said.

Mr Ellis also said Australian consumers were five to 10 years behind Britain and Europe in their understanding of environmental and ethical certification.

He said that in Britain, about 75 per cent of consumers recognised the Fair Trade label and understood what it stood for; in Australia that figure was about 30 per cent.

Products with the Fair Trade label must pay a fair wage to producers as well as demonstrating high social and environmental stand-

ards, such as not sourcing goods from rainforests and other environmentally sensitive areas.

In Britain, Cadbury's products also have the Carbon Footprint label, telling consumers how much carbon per 100 grams each product produces over its life cycle, and committing the manufacturer to reducing this.

Mr Ellis said Cadbury in Australia had sought the Fair Trade accreditation in response to pressure from consumers and lobby groups such as World Vision to act ethically, particularly in the farming practices used by its suppliers.

Paul Allen, general manager of

marketing for Australian Paper, said there was a huge need for accreditation that people recognised and understood straight away. And Nick Savaidis, founder of ethical footwear and sporting goods brand ETIKO, said accreditation that had consumers' confidence would cut the need for businesses like his to explain the complexity of what they did to meet ethical standards.

But Mr Allen warned that companies had to be wary of so-called "green squash" where they were so concerned about consumers being cynical that they didn't act to be more sustainable.

Also speaking at the green-brands forum was Adam Werbach, global CEO of advertising giant Saatchi & Saatchi. Mr Werbach, who spoke via a video link from New York, said companies that greenwashed, or falsely claimed environmental credibility, would not survive in the long term.

He used the examples of BP, which used the advertising tag line, "beyond petroleum", when it was investing in only about 8 per cent sustainable energy production; and Fiji Water, which flew drinking water from Fiji to the US and put it in plastic bottles while claiming "every drop is green".

