

4. Must & Should:

We transparently monitor our work and progress

4.1 Transparency, transparency, transparency

We have nothing to hide. Open communication is one of the pillars of our business. This charter lists many criteria that we deem important to mention and to monitor. We regularly check if our communication (on the packaging, flyers, shop, website,...) is up-to-date.

Let's face it: we are small-sized enterprises and don't have a communications department. But we try to do our best.

4.2 Must & Should: our transparent peer-review system

Nearly every point in this charter translates into action points for us members. We classify the into 'Must' and 'Should' criterias. If a 'Must' criteria isn't fulfilled for a certain bar, it can not obtain the "Belgian Bean-to-Bar" label. "Should" criterias are mid-term objectives for us to achieve. The table with with "Must/Should" criteria has to be updated once per year and made public on the member's website. A peer-review system makes sure the info and data is verified. The report of this verification will also be published on the website.

4.3 Sustainability goals: we can always get better

We are small chocolate-makers but that shouldn't prevent us from getting better wherever possible. We believe in sustainability and that we all have the responsibility to leave behind our children a planet worth living.

The should criteria includes topics like: fair/clean transport, ecological packaging, zero-waste, renewable electricity, energy-efficient machinery, water-saving, ecological friendly cleaning products, paperless administration.

The list is discussed and adapted at our annual General Assembly.

4.4 We might use **organic** certification. And we talk about it.

Opting for organic cacao is a choice of the chocolate-maker. The global certification has a good reputation of traceability. It is definitely helpful for marketing. But it comes with extra costs for the farmers, importer and chocolate-maker. Many cacao producer are applying organic practices but can't afford certification. We talk about them.

4.5 We communicate and advertise honestly

We refrain from non-sense and bla-bla advertising. No “Healthy”, “anti-aging”, “light” or “New Formula”. Even the term “raw” is often used wrongly in our opinion. The taste of our products and our open concept speaks for itself.

Furthermore, too many chocolate businesses (not necessarily “chocolate-makers”) focus on PR keywords, flashy packaging and aggressive marketing. It’s sad that they could be mistaken for one of us. This is one of the reasons why we set up this charter, association and label: there is too much false communication and, hence, confusion amongst consumers.

Belgian Bean-to-Bar Charter

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