



## Kiwi icons get chocolate twist

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An iconic Kiwi dessert is tempting tastebuds around the country after being given a new twist by a group of Christchurch secondary school girls.

Rangi Ruru Girls' School's Fernza Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) team has developed Kiwi Chokolova, a milk chocolate block filled with dried kiwifruit chunks and crunchy pavlova pieces.

Year 13 pupils Kelly Hay, Nicole Chime, Catherine Hair, all 17, and Tulsi Rames, 18, have the 100 gram chocolate blocks retailing at about a dozen Christchurch and South Island souvenir, tourist and grocery stores. They are also working with businesses in the North Island to stock the product.

“Everyone just loves it,” Hay said. “They love the packaging, they love the idea and love the taste. We’ve had so much positive feedback.”

After settling on developing a chocolate block for their entry into the secondary school entrepreneurial scheme, the girls said they racked their brains for a good, New Zealand flavour.

“We decided that you couldn’t get much more uniquely Kiwi than pavlova and kiwifruit,” Hay said.

They each put \$1000 into the company and had the bars made by Hamilton company Donovan's Chocolates, while Christchurch printing and packaging firm Pakworld developed the 100 per cent recycled packaging.

The first run of Chokolova saw 2500 blocks manufactured, but another run is expected in coming months.

Developing and marketing the product had been fun and exciting, but “full-on”, the girls said, as they did not expect the success they had with finding retailers. Face-to-face marketing had been key to getting the chocolate into stores, they said.

Long-term the team said they hoped to develop a 50g convenience bar and market their products in Australia and North America where pavlova will be branded as meringue.

Kathy Cron, Rangi's teacher in charge of YES, said Fernza had been one of the most successful products the school had ever had in the scheme.

The bars, which are also available on Fernza's website [www.fernza.com](http://www.fernza.com), retail for between \$4 and \$7 dollars.