



COPAL COCOA *Info*

A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance

Issue No. 217

5th – 9th February 2007

Cocoa Producers' Alliance

ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (US\$/tonne)	London futures (£/tonne)	New York Futures (US\$/tonne)
5 th February	1726.23	912.67	1666.33
6 th February	1741.19	914.67	1684.00
7 th February	1791.71	942.67	1729.00
8 th February	1814.57	957.00	1757.00
9 th February	1804.22	955.67	1746.67
Average	1776.00	937.00	1717.00

Up-coming Events

- ✓ **34TH EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 9TH MARCH 2007, KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

In the News:

- Uganda: Cocoa Earnings Reach \$12m
- Nigeria: Cocoa Output up 18 pct/yr to 400,000T in 2006
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- Cocobod to institute incentive for top grade cocoa producers
- Obasanjo reiterates commitment to cocoa production
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- Sweet on Valentine's Day? Say it with chocolate
- Be Choosy About Your Chocolate
- Chocolate may be good for heart in two ways
- 2006, year of agricultural renewal – Minister
- Barry Callebaut boosts Ghana cocoa production
- Masterfoods to Stop Targeting Children Younger than 12

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- ✓ **ORDER FORM -14TH INTERNATIONAL COCOA RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

Have you had your cocoa today?

**International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE)
London Futures Market – Summary of Trading Activities
(£ per tonne)**

Monday 5th February 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Mar 2007	886	896	4	899	869	5,194
May 2007	905	914	5	916	887	2,344
Jul 2007	910	928	5	930	904	865
Sep 2007	915	941	7	943S	915	138
Dec 2007	919	940	8	943	913	140
Mar 2008	918	946	7	948S	918	130
May 2008	955	955	7	955S	955S	5
Jul 2008		964	7			0
Sep 2008		973	7			0
Dec 2008		979	7			0
Totals		944				8,816

Tuesday 6th February 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	896	898	2	906	896	4,886
May 2007	915	916	2	924	914	3,932
Jul 2007	928	930	2	938S	928	230
Sep 2007	945	943	2	948	944	116
Dec 2007	944	941	1	948	941	143
Mar 2008	950	947	1	954	948	182
May 2008		956	1			0
Jul 2008		965	1			0
Sep 2008		974	1			0
Dec 2008		980	1			0
Totals		945				9,489

Wednesday 7th February 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	900	926	28	927	898	13,076
May 2007	918	944	28	946	917	7,853
Jul 2007	932	958	28	960	931S	2,463
Sep 2007	947	971	28	970	945	1,926
Dec 2007	946	970	29	972	944	1,531
Mar 2008	952	973	26	973	952	612
May 2008	963	980	24	963	963	3
Jul 2008	979	989	24	984S	979	14
Sep 2008	988	997	23	996	988	29
Dec 2008	1005	1005	25	1005	1005	12
Totals		971				27,519

Thursday 8th February 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	930	942	16	944	929	8,723
May 2007	948	958	14	960	947	6,521
Jul 2007	963	971	13	973	962S	1,402
Sep 2007	979	984	13	986	975S	504
Dec 2007	973	983	13	985	972S	752
Mar 2008	973	989	16	990	973	552
May 2008		997	17			0
Jul 2008		1005	16			0
Sep 2008	1007	1014	17	1007	1007	2
Dec 2008	1016	1019	14	1016	1016	15
Totals		986				18,471

Friday 9th February 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	945	940	-2	948	931	4,166
May 2007	961	957	-1	964	948	3,045
Jul 2007	975	970	-1	977	963	453
Sep 2007	990	983	-1	990	976	206
Dec 2007	988	980	-3	988	974	189
Mar 2008	990	987	-2	990	979	481
May 2008	993	995	-2	993	993	2
Jul 2008		1005	0			0
Sep 2008		1011	-3			0
Dec 2008	1025	1026	7	1026	1025	11
Totals		985				8,553

Average for the week	966					14570
Total for the week						72,848

New York Board of Trade
(New York Futures Market – Summary of Trading Activities)
(US\$ per tonne)

Monday 5th February 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	1610 1618	1634	3	1640	1610	6194
May 2007	1652 0	1671	5	1675	1650	6969
Jul 2007	0 1675 ^A	1694	5	1700	1674	344
Sep 2007	0 0	1714	5	1701	1701	203
Dec 2007	0 0	1734	5	1739	1718	246
Mar 2008	0 0	1754	6	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1773	6	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1795	5	0	0	0
Sep 2008	0 0	1818	5	0	0	0
Dec 2008	0 0	1830	6	0	0	0
Totals		1742				13956

Tuesday 6th February 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	1637 1642	1653	19	1660	1637	10060
May 2007	1675 1680	1689	18	1696	1675	8623
Jul 2007	1700 ^B 1710 ^A	1713	19	1715	1700	591
Sep 2007	0 0	1733	19	0	0	27
Dec 2007	0 0	1754	20	1756	1752	824
Mar 2008	0 0	1773	19	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1791	18	0	0	3
Jul 2008	0 0	1814	19	0	0	0
Sep 2008	0 0	1837	19	0	0	0
Dec 2008	0 0	1851	21	0	0	60
Totals		1761				20188

Wednesday 7th February 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	1664 1666	1697	44	1698	1664	10930
May 2007	1702 1705	1733	44	1734	1699	15344
Jul 2007	1722 0	1757	44	1758	1722	1659
Sep 2007	1742 ^B 1748 ^A	1778	45	1783	1742	2316
Dec 2007	0 0	1799	45	1799	1779	480
Mar 2008	0 0	1818	45	0	0	200
May 2008	0 0	1834	43	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1848	34	0	0	0
Sep 2008	0 0	1869	32	1857	1844	29
Dec 2008	0 0	1890	39	1876	1876	12
Totals		1802				30970

Thursday 8th February 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	1710 1715	1727	30	1730	1702	8649
May 2007	1744 1745	1761	28	1763	1735	12942
Jul 2007	1765 ^B 1775 ^A	1784	27	1790	1761	1597
Sep 2007	1785 0	1806	28	1806	1780	629
Dec 2007	0 0	1826	27	1823	1809	259
Mar 2008	0 0	1844	26	1843	1828	819
May 2008	0 0	1862	28	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1877	29	1863	1862	68
Sep 2008	0 0	1899	30	1874	1874	2
Dec 2008	0 0	1918	28	1913	1892	37
Totals		1830				25002

Friday 9th February 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2007	1705 1709	1717	-10	1725	1701	9593
May 2007	1743 1750	1751	-10	1758	1732	13098
Jul 2007	1765 0	1775	-9	1779	1756	1628
Sep 2007	0 0	1796	-10	1796	1786	1247
Dec 2007	0 0	1816	-10	1813	1798	272
Mar 2008	0 0	1834	-10	1834	1820	601
May 2008	0 0	1852	-10	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1868	-9	1855	1855	32
Sep 2008	0 0	1890	-9	0	0	0
Dec 2008	0 0	1909	-9	1902	1900	11
Totals		1821				26482

Average for the week	1791					29150
Total for the week						116,598

Spot Prices (US \$ per tonne)

	5 th February	6 th February	7 th February	8 th February	9 th February
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	2019	2038	2052	2112	2102
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	1907	1926	1940	2000	1990
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	1894	1913	1927	1987	1977
Superior Arriba	2427	2446	2460	2520	2510
Sanchez f.a.q.	1891	1910	1924	1984	1974
Malaysian 110	1636	1655	1669	1729	1719
Sulawesi f.a.q.	1674	1693	1707	1767	1757
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	3192	3229	3256	3373	3354
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	4363	4414	4451	4611	4584
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	850	860	867	898	893

Source: Cocoa Merchants' Association

News

Uganda: Cocoa Earnings Reach \$12m

New Vision (Kampala)

February 6, 2007

Macrines Nyapendi

Kampala

COCOA export earnings increased to \$11.6m (sh21b) last year from \$8.7m (sh16b) in 2005, industry sources have said. The \$11.6m was realised from 7,350 metric tonnes, while the \$8.7m was from 6,000 metric tonnes. John Muwanga, the national coordinator of the Cocoa Development Project, said stable prices and continued interest from farmers had boosted production. In an effort to diversify exports, in 2001, the Government started a campaign to plant one million cocoa trees annually for 10 years.

The Government procures the seedlings and transports them to 15 districts. There are 12 organic cocoa exporting countries worldwide. A premium of between 15% and 25% of the value is offered to certified cocoa depending on the market. "Although the industry is still in its infancy, it has been growing steadily with more farmers and investors. It has potential for further growth based on investment in processing and value addition," Muwanga said.

Cocoa exports are projected to hit 13,350 tonnes by 2009, earning over \$20m. "We shall venture into value addition when production hits 10,000 tonnes. The market for powdered cocoa and paste is available locally and regionally," a processor said. Two processing plants have been set up in Bundibugyo by Esco Uganda and Olam Group of Companies. Bundibugyo produces over 60% of Uganda's cocoa. Of the 16,898 hectares planted with cocoa, 6,054 are productive, 7,490 have young cocoa trees that were planted between 2001 and 2006, while 3,354 were abandoned in the forest reserves.

Nigeria: Cocoa Output up 18 pct/yr to 400,000T in 2006

Source: Reuters

Tuesday, 6 February 2007,

Lagos, Feb 5 - Nigeria's cocoa output grew at an average of 18 percent a year in the last three years to 400,000 tonnes in 2006, President Olusegun Obasanjo said on Monday. Obasanjo said in a speech at the third National Cocoa Day celebration that Nigeria's cocoa production would reach the half million tonnes mark next year, while the world's fourth biggest grower aims to become number two by 2010, overtaking Ghana.

Nigeria launched an ambitious cocoa development programme in 2005, aiming to rapidly expand production by supplying improved seedlings free to farmers and subsidising agro-chemicals. The programme aims to promote the local processing of cocoa and lift domestic consumption by next year. "Since we embarked on the national cocoa rehabilitation programme, our production has increased at an average annual growth rate of about 18 percent," Obasanjo said. "We have doubled our production ... to about 400,000 metric tonnes in 2006 ... By 2010, we must move to the second producer position," he said.

Obasanjo said Nigeria has developed a high yield cocoa variety that flowers within 18 months instead of the traditional 3-8 years for the common species. Funds have been earmarked for the establishment of seed gardens in Nigeria's 14 cocoa producing states to propagate the high yield cocoa seedlings, Obasanjo added. Estimates by farmers and traders put Nigeria's annual cocoa production at between 180,000-210,000 tonnes.

Analysts say like many state programmes in graft-plagued Nigeria, the cocoa revival programme has not met its targets. "These are just government figure, the reality on the ground shows that the crop has been consistently short in the last three or more years," one Lagos-based exporter told Reuters. Analysts say Nigeria's cocoa plantations have suffered from decades of neglect, and many produce at below capacity because of a shortage of chemicals, poor maintenance and loss of skills.

The International Cocoa Organisation forecast last September that Nigeria's 2006/07 output would decline to 170,000 tonnes from around 200,000 tonnes the previous year. Estimates by exporters for the 2005/06 cocoa arrivals to the port city of Lagos indicated a 17 percent decline to 161,000 tonnes from 193,450 tonnes in the previous year. About 20 percent of Nigeria's cocoa output is processed locally. "Where is the balance going? The discrepancy in the figures is obviously too wide," another international trader said. Nigeria's cocoa output peaked at 400,000 tonnes a year in the 1970s when agriculture was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. The

government began to neglect the industry with the advent of oil and the decline accelerated when the sector was deregulated in 1986.

This Valentine's Day, Your Heart Will Love You

CocoaVia(R) Milk and Dark Chocolates Satisfy Taste Buds and Help Promote Heart Health

February 5, 2007 /PRNewswire/

HACKETTSTOWN, N.J., -- Chocolate lovers are in luck this Valentine's Day -- they can enjoy the romantic tradition of chocolate and be good to their hearts at the same time. CocoaVia(R) milk and dark chocolate snacks combine the rich taste of chocolate with heart-healthy cocoa flavanols and plant sterols, making CocoaVia the perfect heartfelt gift.

Of all the traditional Valentine's Day presents, from flowers to jewelry, chocolate was rated the favorite gift to receive by both men and women alike, according to the recent "CocoaVia(R) Great Chocolate Debate survey."(1) The poll found that 75 percent of the respondents prefer milk chocolate to dark chocolate. However, more than half of the 25 percent of people who choose dark chocolate only do so because of the associated health benefits. Now chocolate lovers can enjoy either CocoaVia Dark or Milk Chocolate without having to choose -- it's not milk vs. dark debate, but the amount of cocoa flavanols and natural plant extracts that provide the potential heart-healthy benefits.

CocoaVia: Perfect for Heart-Filled Holidays

It may come as a surprise to chocolate lovers that it's not the "milk" or "dark" chocolate that influences the amount of potentially heart-healthy cocoa flavanols in chocolate, but it's the way the chocolate is processed. A common misconception is that only dark chocolate with a higher percentage of cocoa is rich in flavanols. However, Mars, Incorporated has researched cocoa for more than 15 years and found that it is the level of flavanols in the cocoa used in the chocolate, not the percent of cocoa, that truly matters.

Through its research, Mars, Incorporated has found a way to keep both milk and dark chocolate lovers happy this Valentine's Day by pioneering a new technology to retain much of the naturally occurring cocoa flavanols. CocoaVia milk chocolate products have the same levels of cocoa flavanols as CocoaVia Dark Chocolate products. All CocoaVia milk and dark chocolate products contain at least 100 milligrams of cocoa flavanols per serving, the natural compounds in cocoa beans that help to promote heart health.

"Knowing that milk chocolate is a traditional American favorite, we didn't want to leave anyone out. So we used our exclusive Mars Cocoapro(R) process and achieve the same levels of heart-healthy flavanols in both CocoaVia milk and dark chocolates," said Eddie Rapp, vice president of research and development, Mars Nutrition for Health & Well-Being. "This way, people who prefer dark chocolate can enjoy the original CocoaVia products, and those who prefer milk chocolate can try new milk chocolate CocoaVia, knowing they are getting the same potentially health-promoting ingredients, including natural plant sterols."

The Great Chocolate Debate Continues

The CocoaVia survey unearthed more facts about America's love affair with chocolate:

- Chocolate knows no gender - men and women might differ on many choices but chocolate preferences are not one of them. Milk chocolate is preferred by 41 percent of women and 47 percent of men, while dark chocolate is preferred by 25 percent of women and 26 percent of men.
- Chocolate preferences might have something to do with your age – Milk chocolate is preferred by 62 percent of 18-24 year olds but when people reach the age of 35 years, 45 percent of people prefer dark chocolate to milk chocolate.
- There's no need to debate over the great gift this Valentine's Day – it turns out that chocolate is the number one gift to receive, beating out flowers and cards.(1)

The Science behind CocoaVia

Mars has taken a leadership role in expanding the growing body of research that links consumption of cocoa flavanols to numerous potential cardiovascular benefits, including improved blood flow and blood pressure.

Recently, Harvard researchers found that drinking a flavanol-rich cocoa beverage improved several measures of vessel function, especially in older participants. The study, published in the July 2006 issue of the Journal of Hypertension, was the first of its kind to suggest that consumption of flavanol-rich cocoa beverage, which was made with Mars Cocompro cocoa, may improve age-related loss of vessel function. The Journal of the American College of Cardiology named another study of cocoa flavanols and blood vessel function, which was conducted by a collaborative group of researchers in Germany, the University of California-Davis and Mars, "one of the major advancements in cardiovascular research in 2005."

Research Shows that CocoaVia Snack Bars Lower Cholesterol

Research published in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association found that including CocoaVia snack bars as part of a heart-healthy diet helped significantly lower both total and LDL or "bad" cholesterol levels, without impacting HDL or "good" cholesterol.

The researchers studied 67 men and women with elevated cholesterol (>200 mg/dl total cholesterol) who were randomly assigned to one of two groups. One group was instructed to consume the CocoaVia snack bar twice daily, while another group was instructed to consume a placebo product (matched in its design but formulated without plant sterols) for six weeks. At the end of six weeks, total cholesterol levels had decreased, on average, by 4.7 percent, and LDL levels, on average, had decreased by 6 percent in the group who regularly consumed the CocoaVia snack bar formulated with plant sterols. Those who consumed the placebo did not experience any significant reduction in either total or LDL cholesterol levels.

CocoaVia bars are enriched with cholesterol-lowering plant sterols from soy extracts. Each CocoaVia snack bar used in the study contains 1.5 grams of plant sterols, a minimum of 100 milligrams of cocoa flavanols and 80 calories per serving. No other product is specially formulated to provide this unique combination of plant sterols and cocoa flavanols.

About the Products

Each serving of all CocoaVia products contains at least 100 milligrams of cocoa flavanols. And while each serving is packed with potentially heart-healthy flavanols, CocoaVia brand snacks have less fat and fewer calories compared to many regular, larger-sized chocolate bars.

CocoaVia Milk Chocolate Bars contain 110 calories, CocoaVia Snack Bars contain 80 calories, and the Original CocoaVia Chocolate Bars contain 90-100 calories per serving. Additionally, CocoaVia(R) brand snacks are fortified with calcium and a mix of heart-healthy nutrients, including folic acid, vitamins B-6, and B-12, as well as antioxidant vitamins C and E.

Look for CocoaVia products in both milk and dark chocolate varieties, as well as CocoaVia Rich Chocolate Indulgence beverage in the health and nutrition aisle in grocery, drug, convenience stores and mass merchandisers. For more information on CocoaVia(R) or to find a store near you, visit <http://www.cocoaVia.com/>.

Mars Nutrition for Health & Well-Being, a division of Mars North America, develops new foods, snacks, beverages and lifestyle support to better serve the nutritional and well-being needs of the consumer. The mission of the division is to be a trusted partner in healthy lifestyles, enabling consumers to look, perform and feel their best every day. Mars Nutrition for Health & Well-Being is based in Hackettstown, N.J.

Editors' Notes:

- Flavanol is spelled with two a's and one o. It is often confused with another compound spelled flavonol, which is not found in cocoa.
- When referring to heart, circulatory or cardiovascular benefits refer to the compounds as cocoa flavanols, not as antioxidants nor flavanol antioxidants.
- Contrary to repeated reports, the percent cacao or cocoa does not guarantee cocoa flavanol content. Only careful handling of the cocoa bean can help to retain cocoa flavanol content.

(1) Survey of 1,000 adults conducted by Opinion Research Corporation's Caravan Services, January 18, 2007 on behalf of Mars, Incorporated *Website: <http://www.cocoaVia.com/>*

Cocobod to institute incentive for top grade cocoa producers

Nyankumase-Ahenkro (C/R),

February. 7, 2007

GNA- Mr Ben Ankomah-Sey, Cape Coast District Officer of the Quality Control Division of Cocobod, on Tuesday announced that with effect from next purchasing season, Cocobod would reward cocoa farmers who produce grade 93A" cocoa. He has therefore tasked all cocoa farmers to work hard to enable them qualify for the award, which he said went with 93attractive prizes".

Mr Ankomah-Sey, was addressing an educational forum for cocoa farmers and others stakeholders in the cocoa industry, in the district, to enhance awareness about the essence of maintaining the quality of the crop at Nyankumase-Ahenkro in the Assin-south district. He echoed calls on farmers to refrain from using child labour on their farms to the neglect of the children's education, and advised that such children could rather accompany them to the farms during weekends. He also repeated calls on them to endeavour to sell their produce only to the Produce Buying Company (PBC) to enable the company achieve its purchasing targets and also for the farmers to qualify for available incentives.

Mr Peter Tandoh, Deputy Central Regional Manager of the division, also stressed the need for cocoa farmers to help maintain the quality of Ghana's cocoa to sustain the high premium placed on it on the international market. He said it is only through this that the government would continue to earn more foreign exchange to accelerate the socio-economic development of the country to improve the living standards of the citizenry.

Mr Tandoh, further pointed out that the bonuses paid to them as well as the scholarships awarded to their children by the government, in addition to other incentives they enjoy, were as a result of the money accrued from the sale of Ghana's quality cocoa. He exhorted them to adhere to the traditional methods of fermentation, to maintain the quality of the cocoa beans. Mr Owusu Boadi, a representative of the Cocoa Swollen-Shoot Virus Disease Control Unit, advised them to endeavour to promptly report to his outfit anytime they detect the diseases on the farms. In an address read for her, the District Chief Executive, Ms Millicent Alice Korankye, underscored the importance of cocoa and urged the farmers to attach importance to the industry. She advised the farmers to register with the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) to enable them enjoy quality and affordable health care delivery.

Nana Appiah Nuamah, Gyasehene of Assin Atandanso traditional area, who presided, appealed to the government to ensure that only the children of genuine cocoa farmers were awarded scholarships to boost their morale

Obasanjo reiterates commitment to cocoa production

• Thursday, February 8, 2007

President Olusegun Obasanjo has said the country will build cocoa storage facilities and increase local consumption of cocoa to make the price of the commodity competitive. Obasanjo said at the 3rd National Cocoa Day, organised by the National Cocoa Development Committee in Oshogbo, that the project would enhance the livelihood and income of farmers. He said that the Federal Government had carried out some institutional frameworks to boost cocoa production and that if the level of local utilisation of the commodity was not raised, there would be excess supply of cocoa. "We do not want to experience glut based on the various initiatives in the production of cocoa," he said. He said that part of the measures to raise cocoa production was the introduction of improved seedlings, agrochemicals, credit to farmers and the assistance from extension workers.

Obasanjo said that the Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) had developed high yielding cocoa seedling with 18 months gestation as against the old seedlings with gestation period of about four to eight years. According to him, the initiative will encourage healthy competition among the 14 cocoa producing states. He said that the efforts of government had resulted in the increase of cocoa production from 107,000 tonnes to 400,000 and that the country was occupying the third position behind Ghana with 800,000 tonnes and Cote d'ivoire with about 1.3 million tonnes. "Nigeria will soon move up to the second position," he said, adding that Nigeria has achieved annual growth rate of seven per cent in the agricultural sector.

In his remarks, the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Mr Adamu Bello, said that more than 6 million seedlings of high yielding cocoa varieties had been distributed to farmers. He said that the government had awarded contracts worth over N250 million for agrochemical and inputs to be distributed to farmers at 50 per cent subsidised rate. The minister, who gave an insight into the Harmonised Special Report based on the adoption at the All Africa Heads of States Cocoa producing countries summit in Abuja in 2006, said that the

presidential committees recommended increase in local consumption of cocoa, sourcing of new markets in China, Asia and Russia apart from the existing cocoa markets.

Earlier in a welcome address, Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of Osun State said that the farmers field school programme and serving pupils with cocoa drinks had taken off in the state. He said that the idea would help to catch them young and inculcate the habit of cocoa drinking among the children. He said that the state government had privatised the cocoa processing factory in Ede, Osun State to encourage expansion and capacity utilisation. "This step will no doubt enhance poverty reduction, job creation and socio economic development," he said.

The NCDC publicity chairperson, Mrs Olushola Obada, said that the theme for NCDC 2007 Cocoa Day - "Have you had your Cocoa today for health and vigour was to ensure that Nigerians consume the produce.

RI, Coabisco agree to develop cocoa-based industries

February 8, 2007

Jakarta (ANTARA News) - Indonesia, the world's third biggest cocoa producer has agreed to cooperate with the Association of the Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionary Industries of the European Union (COABISCO) in developing cocoa-based industries in the country, a minister said. "We have reached a cooperation agreement in the sense that as an association, (COABISCO) has a lot of information on market demand in the European Union," Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Elka Pangestu said on Wednesday.

A team of COABISCO officials visited cacao plantations and cocoa-based industries in Indonesia some time ago to give inputs on how to produce high quality cocoa, she said. In addition, the association would also help Indonesia get the same treatment as African countries in terms of import duties on processed cocoa, she said. "Basically, African and Asian countries are the same. However, as the majority of African countries are least developed ones they have special agreements with EU. So, we must try to get the same treatment as the African countries," she said. Indonesia which produces around 400,000 tons of cocoa a year is the world's biggest cocoa producer after Ivory Coast and Ghana. Around 70 percent of Indonesia's cocoa production is exported. (*)

Sweet on Valentine's Day? Say it with chocolate

February 8, 2007

By Heather Blackmore Correspondent

Life is sweeter now that chocolate has been deemed a health food. Research shows that just two ounces a day of dark chocolate with 70 percent cacao is all you need to experience those healthful benefits. In moderation, chocolate is a boon to the cardiovascular system, offering protection against high blood pressure and heart disease. Its cancer-fighting ability is comparable to a 5-ounce glass of red wine.

All chocolate, however, is not equal. The research applies only to dark chocolate, which contains higher levels of flavanol, a plant-derived antioxidant also found in teas, blueberries and red wines. The concentration of flavanol is higher in the cocoa bean, which translates to greater health benefits. Naturally, chocolate manufacturers have jumped on the advertising bandwagon to get the word out. The percentage of cacao in a chocolate product is crucial when deciphering its benefits. Many labels include this information, often using it to attract buyers. The percent of cacao indicates the amount of ingredients (specifically cocoa powder, cocoa butter and chocolate liquor) derived from the cocoa bean and used in the actual chocolate product.

For example, Hershey's new Extra Dark chocolate contains 60 percent cacao, which offers a more intense flavor with less sweetness and possibly greater health benefits than milk chocolate, which has 30 percent cacao. Baking chocolate is 100 percent cacao, with no added sugar, but it has a very unpalatable, bitter flavor. The Chocolate Manufacturers Association is quick to point out that this percentage and the actual flavanol content don't always jibe. The amount of flavanol varies depending on the way the chocolate is used in a recipe, the origin of the beans, and how they were processed and handled during shipment and after purchase.

The percentage serves more as an indicator of the product's flavor intensity. While milk chocolate is the perennial favorite in America, palates are maturing and developing a taste for the more intense, roasted flavors of its relative. Even vitamin supplements have incorporated it. Viactiv and CocoaVia have taken the richness of dark chocolate and incorporated it into vitamin supplements. Neither supplement can be found in the candy aisle, because they're marketed as products that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Chocolate lovers beware. Despite its benefits, overindulging can pack on the pounds. Just three small squares of Hershey's Extra Dark packs a whopping 210 calories and 13 fat grams.

Know your chocolate

Unsweetened, bittersweet, semisweet -- the more you know about chocolate, the more you can enjoy the popular treat.

The following is a break-down of chocolate's many forms and uses:

Unsweetened chocolate: Also known as baking chocolate, it has no added sugar and is extremely bitter. No good for munching.

Bittersweet chocolate: Unsweetened chocolate with a small amount of sugar. It's a dark chocolate with up to 75 percent cocoa solids. Contains added vanilla, lecithin and more cocoa butter (fat present in the cocoa bean that melts at body temperature) than the unsweetened variety. Interchangeable with semisweet chocolate in baking.

Semisweet chocolate: A little sweeter than bittersweet with more cocoa butter. Commonly used by home cooks for frostings, fondues and fillings.

Milk chocolate: No good for baking because high temperatures change the proteins in the added milk, which affects the texture of the finished item. Most often used in candy bars.

White chocolate: Is it or isn't it? The debate wages on. The real deal is made of cocoa butter, sugar, milk and vanilla. Great for fondue and candy coatings. It's very fragile and requires a watchful eye when melting. Some white chocolate contains partially hydrogenated oils instead of cocoa butter, which means it has no connection to the cocoa bean and, therefore, is not chocolate at all. Read the ingredients to be sure you're getting true white chocolate.

Cocoa: Powder produced when most of the cocoa butter is removed from chocolate liquor. Liquor is made by grinding the center of the cocoa bean (also known as the nib) to a liquid consistency.

Destination: Chocolate

Valentine's Day could be extra nice for your sweetie. Ever wish chocolate could be an experience as well as a special treat? Why not take your loved one on a chocolate date?

Chicago is ripe with chocolate lounges.

One such must-see is Moonstruck Chocolate Cafe on Michigan Avenue. Moonstruck is a destination location, not just a corner coffeehouse, said Delmar Fuhrman, CEO of Moonstruck Chocolate Co. From milkshakes to hand-decorated truffles, the cafe has a chocolate confection for every palate. Best sellers are the milk chocolate and cat- and dog-shaped truffles. Even the lattes can be infused with a truffle. "In most cases, the cafes have become a meeting place for customers to congregate," Fuhrman said. "Moonstruck is unique because it's a destination focused on chocolate."

Just a few steps down the road will land you in Hershey's Chicago, a 3,600-square-foot megaplex offering Reese's and Kit Kats, or gourmet cookies and brownies. San Francisco-based Ghirardelli has set up shop across the street. In addition to chocolate confections, the menu offers shakes and sundaes. Farther down the road, you will find Andersson's Chocolates/Patisserie, offering a selection of Belgian, Italian, Swiss and French chocolates and pastries.

For those who wish to venture off the beaten path, head to Ethel's Chocolate Lounge on Armitage Avenue. Truffles, candied apples and toffees are among the offerings.

Margie's candies on Western Avenue dares anyone to tackle its turtle sundae. This sundae is as massive as its \$35 price tag. Come ready to eat and bring friends ... lots of them.

Chocolate Cafe Chicago on Randolph Street offers truffles, fudge and an assortment of ice cream combos with names such as "The South Side Sundae" and "The Buckingham."

The whole family can get in on a chocolate extravaganza Saturday and Sunday at the Garfield Park Conservatory's eighth annual Chocolate Fest. In addition to free samples, kids will have a ball designing their own candy bar wrappers and Valentine's Day cards.

Closer to home, Gayety's offers an assortment of truffles, toffees, clusters and pecan muddles, as well as ice cream in its Lansing parlor.

At Cupid Candies, in Orland Park, Chicago and Oak Lawn, chocolate runs the gamut from hand-dipped bon bons and mint meltaways to hot fudge ice cream toppings.

Be Choosy About Your Chocolate

Feb. 8 /CNW/

<< Save the Children Canada Calls for End to Exploitation of Childre in the Cocoa Industry >>

TORONTO, - Despite commitments made by Canadian chocolate companies and the Canadian government to clean the cocoa supply chain from the worst forms of child labor, hundreds of thousands of children are still being exploited in the West African cocoa farms, Save the Children Canada said today. "For five years, we have waited for governments and the global chocolate industry to change child labor practices on the ground in the growing and harvesting of cocoa. We are now calling on Canadians to sign a petition on our web site to tell the government as Canadian consumers of chocolate that we want to do our part in cleaning up cocoa supply chains. In addition, we need a tracking system to clearly identify where our cocoa beans are coming from and the conditions under which they are grown," said Anita Sheth, Senior Policy Analyst for Save the Children Canada.

Cocoa is traded on commodity exchanges in London and New York, thousands of kilometers from the fields where over 1 million children work in West Africa every day to produce it. While the work enables these children to make modest contributions to their family income, they have the right to work for a decent wage and in conditions that are not exploitative. It is estimated that over 312,000 children are currently working in the worst form of child labor in these cocoa farms. "Since Canada imports cocoa beans from Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), we believe all Canadians have an obligation to respect, protect and fulfill these children's rights," said David Morley, President and CEO of Save the Children Canada, who recently returned from visiting cocoa farms in West Africa.

The multi-billion dollar chocolate industry is dependent on West African cocoa which produces roughly 70% of the world demand. Cocoa prices have dropped to 1/4 of their value over the last 10 years making farming families extremely poor. To maintain their margins, farmers look for the cheapest source of labor - and increasingly they find it in the worst forms of child labor.

Children looking for seasonal work across West Africa are sometimes trafficked across the borders of Mali and Burkina Faso into Côte D'Ivoire to work on cocoa farms. Children are lured by the promise of steady work, good wages, and even the chance to go to school. "We must start with understanding where our cocoa in our chocolate comes from, and get choosy about whether or not we agree with the methods used to produce it," explains David Morley. "We are calling for greater investment in the communities where cocoa farms exist. We want governments, chocolate manufacturers, and individuals to work with us to fund schools, livelihood training and cocoa farm-safety monitoring to change the options available for children and their families."

Save the Children Canada will continue to work with community groups, youth, parents, teachers, transporters and Government officials in the region to build schools and improve education as alternative to exploitative work, create a network of child protection agents to help child victims, and lobby for an end to child trafficking and exploitative child labour.

Note to Editors

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- Save the Children has been working in West Africa since 1985.
- Save the Children Canada is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance. With 27 members and operational programs in over 110 countries, the Alliance is the world's largest global movement for children.
- Save the Children has been working both overseas and in Canada for over 85 years to improve the quality of children's lives through the realization of their rights. Save the Children fights for children's rights. We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.
- In November 2001, world cocoa industries including the Confectionary Manufacturers Association of Canada (CMAC), signed a joint statement acknowledging the need to comply with standards set by the International Labour Organization's to protect children. The industry agreed to identify and eliminate the worst forms of child labour and forced labour with respect to the growing and processing of cocoa beans

by July 2005. Five years later, this willingness to prevent the exploitation of children has produced very little in the way of change.

- For more information please visit www.savethechildren.ca.

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Chocolate may be good for heart in two ways

By Bonnie Coblenz

Feb. 8, 2007

MISSISSIPPI STATE -- Chocolates and roses are good gifts for Valentine's Day, and as long as the chocolate is not eaten all at once, it can be good for the heart, too. Brent Fountain, human nutrition specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, said chocolate contains compounds known as flavonoids that are basically phytonutrients, or nutrients produced by plants. "Phytonutrients provide some benefit to the plant, such as sun protection, and then when we eat those substances, we get a different kind of benefit," Fountain said. "We know there are benefits, but we don't know what amount is needed to provide these benefits."

There are thousands of phytonutrients found in plants, and researchers have only studied several hundred of them. "The flavonoids found in chocolate have been shown to decrease blood pressure and improve circulation," Fountain said. "Some studies have shown they are antioxidants that reduce the amount of potentially cancer-causing free radicals in the body."

Fountain said many studies have been done on chocolate to learn its health benefits. He cautioned that some of these studies were funded by chocolate companies, and if these findings are excluded, chocolate's healthful benefits get mixed reviews. "The chocolates considered to offer the most benefit are dark chocolates, which contain the most cocoa," Fountain said. "Milk chocolate is a Valentine's chocolate, and semi-sweet chocolate is used in cookies, but the dark chocolate, which is consumed less, seems to have the most benefit."

While chocolates do contain beneficial flavonoids, Fountain said the best sources of helpful phytonutrients are fruits and vegetables. For instance, oranges contain almost 200 different types of phytonutrients in a single fruit. "As consumers, it is important not to get caught up in benefits of single nutrients. Instead, focus on the entire food and all its ingredients," Fountain said. "Make sure you're getting the proper nutrients you need from a well-balanced diet."

When Valentine's Day comes around and chocolates are tempting, make adjustments in that day's diet to meet the body's nutritional needs while still saving room for chocolate. "The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans talk about discretionary calories. These are similar to discretionary money in your budget," Fountain said. "If you're able to get all the vitamins and minerals you need and consume less than the recommended calorie amount for your weight, age and activity level, the rest are discretionary calories that you can use to eat some chocolate." Fountain said the best way to increase the amount of discretionary calories available in a day is to exercise, but he cautioned consumers against replacing needed nutrients with sweets.

Peggy Walker, Extension nutrition area agent based in Panola County, said chocolate is made from cocoa beans, which are removed from their pods, fermented, dried, roasted and cracked. They are then ground to extract the cocoa butter, a natural vegetable fat. "That leaves a thick, dark brown paste called chocolate liqueur," Walker said. "This liqueur is processed and ingredients are added to make chocolate."

While the cocoa in chocolate is good for the heart, ingredients like sugar, butter, nuts, caramel and cream make it less than ideal for overall health. She urged gift-givers to be creative when selecting Valentines gifts for loved ones. "Chocolate is good, but there are other good things for Valentine's Day. Give them their favorite music, give your Valentine a romantic dinner for two followed by a moonlit walk, take them to a performance or give them roses," Walker said.

Contact: Dr. Brent Fountain, (662) 325-0849

2006, year of agricultural renewal – Minister (Nigeria)

• Friday, Feb 9, 2007

Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Adamu Bello has described 2006 as a year of agricultural renewal for the country. He spoke in Abuja at the 2006 ministerial press briefing. Bello said the sector received global boost

by playing host to many national and international conferences and summits in the year. He said, continued implementation of various presidential initiatives, notably rice, cassava, vegetable oil, cocoa, cotton, livestock and tropical fruits, contributed to the renewal.

Giving the overview of the initiatives, Bello said the demand for Nigeria 'cassava, has increased the production appreciably. He said the production capacity in 1999 was 32.69 million metric tonnes before the cassava initiative. By 2006, the production increased to 50 million metric tonnes. The minister said government was determined to increase the production with the target earning of five billion dollars from exports in seven years. Government, he added, set a target production of 150 million metric tonnes of cassava per annum by the end of 2010. Bello said that as at 2006, annual production of cassava tubers had increased from 33 million metric tonnes in 1999 to 49 million metric tonnes in 2006.

Within the period, some 43 newly improved cassava varieties were produced. The minister said a committee was put in place to restore, improve and revive cocoa production in the country. He said within a short time, the committee revived cocoa production, which increased from 170,000 metric tonnes in 1999 to 500 million metric tonnes in 2006. Bello said the demand for the nation's maize was high, with a projected estimate of 14 million metric tonnes. He put current production of the commodity at seven million metric tonnes. The minister said to increase the current level, a committee was put in place last year to work out programmes that would lead to the doubling of maize production by 25 per cent.

Bello also said to achieve the target, over 5,000 metric tonnes of improved maize seeds and 60,000 litres of agro-chemicals had been produced for distribution to farmers. He said: "As part of efforts to boost cotton production, and revive all the textile industries, and in pursuit of the one million metric tonnes target, a presidential committee was set up last year." Bello said through federal government intervention, N50 billion was facilitated as textile rehabilitation fund to give the sector a major boost and revive the textile industries nationwide. He said by the initiative, the output of cotton seed, had increased from 150,000 metric tonnes in 1999 to 350,000 metric tonnes last year.

The minister said more than 1,800 hectare was cultivated for varieties of cotton. He said the cumulative effect of the various presidential initiatives boosted Nigeria's ranking as one of the leading producers of various commodities. He said the survey was conducted in 2006 by the Food and Agricultural Organisation's world ranking of major agricultural and food commodities production. The commodities surveyed were cassava, citrus, cowpeas, millet and cocoa beans amongst others.

Barry Callebaut boosts Ghana cocoa production

By Catherine Boal

09/02/2007 - Major Swiss cocoa processor Barry Callebaut has expanded operations at a factory in Ghana - doubling the facility's bean processing capacity. Five years after the plant in Tema first opened, a new processing line has upped capacity from 30,000 tonnes to 60,000 tonnes. Ghana is the world's second largest cocoa producing region and the country's government has pledged to increasing bean production to over 1 million tonnes. According to the International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) the country's commercial crop in 2005/2006 reached a record high of 646,000 tonnes.

Speaking at the official inauguration ceremony, Barry Callebaut CEO Patrick De Maeseneire said: "Through our activities and investments in origin countries such as Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon or Brazil we strive to improve the quality of our cocoa beans and at the same time we are making a contribution to the economic development of this country."

Total investment at the facility amounts to more than \$10m (€7.7m) and has been used to expand a finished products warehouse, administrative building and a social block to accommodate the growing number of workers. According to the Ghana Cocoa Board (Cocobod) rival cocoa processor Cargill is also expected to begin production at Tema with a factory due to open by the end of this year. The proposed development will produce cocoa butter, liquor and powder. A statement from Cocobod confirms that capacity for the plant will initially be 60,000 tonnes but has the potential to increase to 120,000 tonnes

Masterfoods to Stop Targeting Children Younger than 12

Source: FLEXNEWS

05/02/2007

5 February 2007 - In reaction to the growing concerns about the links between advertising and childhood obesity, Masterfoods, the confectionery firm behind Mars and Snickers, has decided that it will stop marketing its products to children under 12 before the end of the year. According to the 'Financial Times', the move is "the biggest shift in marketing policy by a large food group since European officials threatened companies with regulation two years ago".

Masterfoods already has a policy of not advertising to children under six, adds the business paper.

The move comes 3 months after British regulator Ofcom announced that television advertisements for food and drinks with high salt, sugar or fat content would be banned from programmes designed for children.

TIT BITS

(Source: Business Recorder – www.brecord)

Nigerian cocoa output up 18 percent

LAGOS (February 06, 2007): Nigeria's cocoa output grew at an average of 18 percent a year in the last three years to 400,000 tonnes in 2006, President Olusegun Obasanjo said on Monday.

New York cocoa settles modestly higher

NEW YORK (February 07, 2007): US cocoa futures contracts closed firm on Monday, with late-day short-covering and light fund buying boosting prices off the session's lows, traders said.

Ivorian cocoa farmgate prices higher

ABIDJAN (February 07, 2007): Buyers continued to pay higher than usual rates for cocoa in Ivory Coast from January 29 to February 4, data from the Coffee and cocoa Bourse (BCC) showed on Tuesday, as main crop supplies fell further.

New York cocoa rises

NEW YORK (February 08, 2007): US cocoa futures contracts settled firm on Tuesday on a technically driven bounce led by speculative and fund buying uncontested by origin selling, traders said.

Cocoa futures rise

NEW YORK (February 09, 2007): Benchmark May cocoa futures settled up 2.6 percent in open-outcry trade Wednesday, after surging to a near seven-month high on fund and trade buying, traders said. "Ghana, who was in the market last week selling a bit, seemed to withdraw today. So that gave us an opportunity as well to move higher," one cocoa trader said.

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