COPAL COCOA *Info*

A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance

Issue No. 269 **4th – 8th February 2008**

Cocoa Producers' Alliance

ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (SDRs/tone)	ICCO daily price (US$/tone)	London futures (#/tone)	New York futures (US$/tone)
4th February	1501.91	2388.13	1234.67	2362.67
5th February	1502.61	2377.94	1235.67	2359.67
6th February	1513.23	2392.93	1245.33	2374.33
7th February	1511.77	2389.66	1251.33	2382.33
8th February	1533.82	2412.38	1265.33	2391.33
Average	**1513.00**	**2392.00**	**1246.00**	**2372.00**

In the News (from Newspapers worldwide)

Health and Nutrition

- Eating chocolate linked to reduce bone density
- A little dark chocolate can go a long way
- German chocolate: It's more than just a cake
- Valentine's Day Health Odds and Ends – Chocolate, Exercise Costs, Increasing Sexual Vitality with Exercise, Healthy V-Day Gifts and More
- Women Matter: Good Chocolate

Production & Quality

- Chocolate maker to put millions into producing more farmers
- Fine, flavour cocoa exporting countries grow
- Nigeria: Committee Approves 10 Agro-Chemicals for Cocoa
- Africa: Firms join cocoa certification system
- Nigeria Bans More Chemicals from Cocoa Farms
- Bonus sweet for TT cocoa farmers

The Market

- Speculators give a stir to coffee and cocoa prices
- For the week of February 4th, 2008
- The Cocoa Market Wants to Go Higher

Processing & Manufacturing

- Indonesian delegates visit CAMPCO's chocolate factory

Business & Economy

- FG pledges support for cocoa industry
- Askinosie to send chocolate across the pond
- Societe Generale says to watch coffee and cocoa in 2008
- Cadbury invests in sustainable cocoa production in Ghana
- Coffee, Cocoa Surge Raises Fundamental Questions
- Attention Chocoholics: Askinosie Chocolate Unveils Four New Ways to Savor Premium Single Origin Dark
- Mars, Nestlé, and ECOM Join Good Inside Cocoa Program
- Swiss Chocolate Sales Scale Matterhorn Heights
- US: Chocolate Confectionery Sales to Top $323 Million Valentine's Week

Labour Issues

- Blood Chocolate, Bloody Valentine
- Ivory Coast BCC cocoa bourse staff continue strike
- Ivory Coast Cocoa-Bourse Workers to Suspend Strike Tomorrow

Others

- Lack of incentives leaves local chocolate industry struggling

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ✓ ICCO DAILY COCOA PRICES
- ✓ LONDON AND NEW YORK FUTURES MARKETS UPDATE
- ✓ SPOT PRICES
- ✓ NEWS
- ✓ TIT BITS

Do your health a favour, drink Cocoa everyday

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

Monday 4th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	1208	1209	4	1212	1198	11,019
May 2008	1230	1235	7	1237	1222	4,950
Jul 2008	1258	1260	4	1263	1250	2,677
Sep 2008	1244	1243	3	1246	1237	357
Dec 2008	1250	1250	3	1254	1243	730
Mar 2009	1247	1247	4	1252S	1237	432
May 2009	1255	1259	6	1264	1255	142
Jul 2009		1269	6			0
Sep 2009		1279	6			0
Dec 2009		1294	6			0
Totals		**1255**				**20307**

Tuesday 5th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	1209	1210	1	1212	1198	8,633
May 2008	1234	1237	2	1239	1225	5,281
Jul 2008	1259	1260	0	1261	1250	2,213
Sep 2008	1244	1246	3	1246	1236	380
Dec 2008	1248	1253	3	1253S	1242	1,148
Mar 2009	1243	1250	3	1252	1241S	1,140
May 2009	1256	1263	4	1264	1253S	506
Jul 2009		1274	5			0
Sep 2009		1284	5			0
Dec 2009	1288	1299	5	1288S	1288S	200
Totals		**1258**				**19501**

Wednesday 6th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	1214	1221	11	1222	1212	4,846
May 2008	1240	1246	9	1246	1240	4,038
Jul 2008	1261	1269	9	1270	1261	1,124
Sep 2008	1252	1256	10	1257S	1252	501
Dec 2008	1258	1263	10	1264S	1256	418
Mar 2009	1258	1261	11	1261	1257	1,242
May 2009	1271	1274	11	1273	1270	93
Jul 2009		1285	11			0
Sep 2009		1295	11			0
Dec 2009		1310	11			0
Totals		**1268**				**12262**

Thursday 7th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	1221	1228	7	1256	1,209	8,079
May 2008	1247	1250	4	1279	1,233	11,250
Jul 2008	1271	1276	7	1298S	1,259	2,956
Sep 2008	1258	1263	7	1281	1251	925
Dec 2008	1265	1268	5	1295	1256	621
Mar 2009	1261	1267	6	1274	1261S	960
May 2009	1281	1280	6	1281S	1268S	35
Jul 2009	1293	1291	6	1293S	1280S	35
Sep 2009		1301	6			0
Dec 2009		1316	6			0
Totals		**1274**				**24861**

Friday 8th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	1225	1240	12	1247	1213	3,321
May 2008	1249	1265	15	1270	1237	4,519
Jul 2008	1268	1291	15	1296	1265	1,143
Sep 2008	1252	1276	13	1280S	1252	961
Dec 2008	1261	1283	15	1287	1261	343
Mar 2009	1262	1281	14	1286	1262	325
May 2009		1294	14			0
Jul 2009		1305	14			0
Sep 2009		1315	14			0
Dec 2009		1330	14			0
Totals		**1288**				**10612**

Average for the week	**1296**				**21886**
Total for the week					**87,543**

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

Monday 4th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	2331	2346	20	2349	2321	11885
May 2008	2353	2376	21	2376	2353	6618
Jul 2008	2389	2389	21	2389	2389	1359
Sep 2008	2389	2389	22	2389	2389	1223
Dec 2008	2392	2392	28	2392	2392	618
Mar 2009	2391	2391	30	2391	2391	240
May 2009	2400	2400	42	2400	2400	3
Jul 2009	2423	2423	42	2423	2423	-
Sep 2009	2427	2427	42	2427	2427	3
Dec 2009	2444	2444	35	2444	2444	229
Totals		**2398**				**22178**

Tuesday 5th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	2318	2338	-8	2339	2318	11784
May 2008	2358	2369	-7	2369	2354	8254
Jul 2008	2380	2380	-9	2380	2380	956
Sep 2008	2380	2380	-9	2380	2380	106
Dec 2008	2383	2383	-9	2383	2383	421
Mar 2009	2378	2378	-13	2378	2378	245
May 2009	2381	2381	-19	2381	2381	142
Jul 2009	2404	2404	-19	2404	2404	30
Sep 2009	2408	2408	-19	2408	2408	5
Dec 2009	2428	2428	-16	2428	2428	1
Totals		**2385**				**21944**

Wednesday 6th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	2348	2354	16	2354	2341	15210
May 2008	2376	2384	15	2390	2376	11034
Jul 2008	2390	2390	10	2390	2390	863
Sep 2008	2390	2390	10	2390	2390	162
Dec 2008	2395	2395	12	2395	2395	1266
Mar 2009	2390	2390	12	2390	2390	428
May 2009	2391	2391	10	2391	2391	245
Jul 2009	2414	2414	10	2414	2414	6
Sep 2009	2418	2418	10	2418	2418	-
Dec 2009	2441	2441	13	2441	2441	-
Totals		**2397**				**29214**

Thursday 7th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	2394	2334	-20	2400	2305	17266
May 2008	2421	2364	-20	2421	2364	13682
Jul 2008	2371	2371	-19	2371	2371	1530
Sep 2008	2371	2371	-19	2371	2371	355
Dec 2008	2377	2377	-18	2377	2377	713
Mar 2009	2376	2376	-14	2376	2376	247
May 2009	2378	2378	-13	2378	2378	108
Jul 2009	2401	2401	-13	2401	2401	-
Sep 2009	2405	2405	-13	2405	2405	-
Dec 2009	2428	2428	-13	2428	2428	-
Totals		**2381**				**33901**

Friday 8th February 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar 2008	2345	2378	44	2386	2345	17060
May 2008	2379	2409	45	2415	2373	13320
Jul 2008	2400	2416	45	2416	2400	711
Sep 2008	2413	2413	42	2413	2413	245
Dec 2008	2418	2418	41	2418	2418	576
Mar 2009	2413	2413	37	2413	2413	190
May 2009	2414	2414	36	2414	2414	2
Jul 2009	2437	2437	36	2437	2437	-
Sep 2009	2441	2441	36	2441	2441	-
Dec 2009	2464	2464	36	2464	2464	3
Totals		**2420**				**32107**

Average for the week	**2426**				**34836**
Total for the week					**139,344**

Spot Prices (US$ per tonne)

	4th February	5th February	6th February	7th February	8th February
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	2776	2778	2794	2774	2818
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	2663	2648	2664	2644	2688
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	2651	2636	2652	2632	2676
Superior Arriba	2873	2823	2839	2819	2863
Sanchez f.a.q.	2704	2716	2732	2712	2756
Malaysian 110	2346	2331	2347	2327	2371
Sulawesi f.a.q.	2543	2540	2556	2536	2580
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	4262	4169	4198	4162	4241
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	6882	6819	6866	6808	6936
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	1165	1083	1091	1081	1102

Source: Cocoa Merchants' Association

News

Health and Nutrition

Eating chocolate linked to reduce bone density
Food Consumer, IL
By David Liu, Ph.D.
FEB 2, 2008
(Foodconsumer.org) -- Eating chocolate daily may reduce bone density in older women, suggests an Australian study suggested published in the Jan, 2008 issue of American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Sugar-based foods are known to be bad for bone health as sugar is transformed into acids after being metabolized, which can dissolve calcium out of bone. The current study was meant to reveal the association between chocolate intake and bone density. For the study, Hodgson JM at the University of Western Australia School of Medicine and Pharmacology in Perth, Australia and colleagues surveyed 1460 women age 70 to 85 for the frequency of chocolate consumption - less than once a week, once to six times a week and more than or equal to 7 times a week.

The researchers found the reduction of bone density was inversely associated with the frequency of chocolate consumption, showing a linear relation. Daily consumption of chocolate was linked to a 3.1 percent reduction in the whole-body bone density compared to those who ate chocolate less than once a week. The magnitude of the bone density reduction is similar in the total hip, femoral neck, tibia, and heel. When other potential factors were considered, the associations did not change.

The researchers concluded "Older women who consume chocolate daily had lower bone density and strength. Additional cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are needed to confirm these observations. Confirmation of these findings could have important implications for prevention of osteoporotic fracture." Some chocolate lovers may argue that the study did not consider the difference between dark chocolate and white or milk chocolate, suggesting that dark chocolate containing high levels of flavonols is better than milk chocolate.

Flavonols can be found in cocoa products, which have been touted as antioxidants for its potential heart-healthy benefits. But cocoa is not the plant fruit that contains the antioxidant. Many plant foods contain flavonols or similar antioxidants including whole unprocessed, preferably organic fruits like blueberries, apples, and grapes, and most vegetables, including broccoli, greens, and onions.

Milk chocolate certainly may not be good as dark chocolate in terms of the level of antioxidants. Milk protein also is believed to be able to bind to the antioxidants to prevent them from be absorbing. But all these do not mean that dark chocolate has no fault to find with.

According to Mars, Incorporated, the chocolate company, not all cocoa products contain the same level of flavonols. In certain products such as milk chocolate, flavonols are non-existent. To gain some marketing edge, Mars has created some products with high flavonols.

The drawback of dark chocolate is that the high level of sugar. That does not mean that you cannot indulge yourself a couple of times with the food that has been claimed to please women easily, making them more feminine. But obviously eating too much of whatever type of chocolate too often does the body no good.

Furthermore, lead pollution in cocoa products may be a hidden threat. A 2005 study published in Environmental Health Perspectives showed that processed chocolate could be contaminated with extremely high quantities of lead, up to 60 times high than the level that could be caused by pollution of leaded gasoline and car exhausts, suggesting that the processing of cocoa or chocolate may be at fault.

Although dark chocolate which contains relatively high concentrations of flavonols and other goodies has been linked to better glucose metabolism, blood pressure and cardiovascular functions, food consumers should not eat chocolate as a preventative or medicine. Too much fat and or sugar may already outweigh the potential benefit.

A little dark chocolate can go a long way
Nashua Telegraph, NH
Lynda Murray : dietitianmagician@mchsi.com
February 6, 2008
As a child I saw the movie "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." Every kid that saw the matinee was awarded a shiny gold souvenir ticket to take home. I used to daydream about my golden ticket. In the movie, the kid who overindulged in chocolate met his demise as the chocolate river swept him away. I calculated that my wildest dreams would come true if I was allowed to drink all the chocolate I wanted from a chocolate river.

Historically, the thought of chocolate being a health food was quickly swept away. This notion was dismissed quicker than the polar icecaps melting in the face of global warming. But nutrition is a science, dynamic and fluid. But now, as many would agree, eating chocolate is one of life's greatest pleasures, and more evidence proves that it's good for your heart.

Dark chocolate may help reduce levels of LDL, or bad cholesterol, and raise HDL, or good cholesterol. This may help reduce your risk of heart disease. The reason: Dark chocolate is richer in cocoa than milk chocolate and cocoa contains flavonoids, natural antioxidants that help prevent cancer and heart disease. A recent study by researchers at Cornell University found a glass of cocoa contained more antioxidants per serving than red wine, green tea or black tea.

Dark chocolate may actually improve blood pressure and reduce the risk of developing hypertension. Cocoa beans are naturally filled with flavonols, an antioxidant-rich compound that promotes healthy circulation and healthy blood vessels while lowering blood pressure.

How much should we eat? Researchers are still not sure. But the best advice is to eat a small amount almost every day. That notion alone is enough to make chocolate lovers thrust their fists in the air and shout, "All right!" A single bite of chocolate can be so relaxing and mood lifting. Now researchers have confirmed that rich chocolate stimulates the chemicals in the brain known as neurotransmitters. Serotonin and endorphins are the two most noted neurotransmitters. Serotonin is thought to make people calm and relaxed while endorphins help people feel good.

Even the fat in chocolate isn't as bad as it could be. One-third of the fat found in chocolate is steric acid. This type of fat seems to have no effect on blood cholesterol. Another third of the fat in chocolate is oleic acid, a monounsaturated fat also found in olive oil that has been found to be beneficial for heart health. Despite this sweet news, eating too much chocolate does have its drawbacks.

Chocoholics should be aware of their portion size to avoid consuming too many calories. A little bit of chocolate can go a long way. Make it an occasional indulgence and choose the best chocolate instead of cheap candy. Pick your favorite, and eat it slowly and savor the taste, smell and texture. Another way to savor the taste of chocolate is to combine chocolate with a filling dessert such as strawberries, and you'll feel twice as satisfied.

The sweet science of CHOCOLATE
Local chefs have a different appreciation of our favorite Valentine's Day treat.
Tucson Citizen, AZ
TOM STAUFFER
06/02/2008
As if we needed scientific reasons to deepen our love for chocolate, study after study touts its near-magical health powers. One recent study even found that chocolate contains a chemical similar to the one our own bodies release when we fall in love. No wonder it's so popular for Valentine's Day.

The passion inspired by the cacao-bean-based wonder literally strays all over the map, though die-hard afficionados and chefs often cite the "Big Three" - Belgium, Germany, and Austria - as having the best chocolatiers, says chef Bruce Sy, head of the culinary arts program at the new Art Institute of Tucson. "Belgian chocolate is usually seen as the best in quality, though Austria and Germany also have really good chocolate," says Sy, a chef for 40 years who in 1996 founded the Arts Institute of Phoenix's culinary arts program. "Basically, European chocolate is just higher quality chocolate. It's just made better."

Tucson chef Jeff Glomski, who assembles custom chocolate creations for customers of Barrio Food and Drink, echoes Sy's statements. "I use only Belgian chocolate. It's the best," says Glomski, owner of Barrio, 135 S. Sixth Ave. "I use two or three brands, but it's always from Belgium." Though enjoying chocolate is as easy as unwrapping a good bar, cooking and baking is an entirely different story, particularly with couverture chocolate, an ultrarich type often used by professional chefs, says Thayer Johnson, executive chef at the Lodge on the Desert, 306 N. Alvernon Way, whose dessert menu one day last week featured chocolate truffles, chocolate cake and a Mexican brownie with habanero. "It's a really fickle product to work with,

really sensitive to heat and cold," Johnson says of working with chocolate in general. "The difference between making something amazing and something terrible can be pretty small."

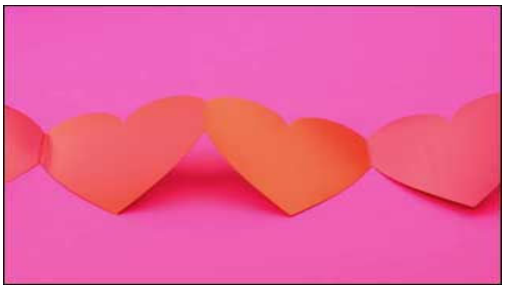
Though Johnson also prefers European chocolate, he opts for a Mexican variety he favors when he wants to infuse his baking with a Southwestern edge. "I love Ibarra Mexican chocolate, which you can get at just about any grocery store," he says. "It's infused with chile and cinnamon, and it's not good for everything, but it's just absolutely amazing for hot chocolate and brownies."

Valentine's Day Health Odds and Ends – Chocolate, Exercise Costs, Increasing Sexual Vitality with Exercise, Healthy V-Day Gifts and More

KPIC, OR

By Charles Stuart Platkin

Feb 6, 2008



Valentine's Day is coming, which means chocolates, gifts and an assortment of other goodies. Below is a collection of odds and ends to help you and your partner have a healthy, enhanced celebration.

Chocolate Bottom Line

Is chocolate good for you? Hmm, not the way you probably eat it — with all kinds of added ingredients, including loads of sugar (and fat) to compensate for the bitterness of cocoa and to enhance the flavor. Yes, chocolate has flavanols, but the truth is that almost all plant foods in their natural states have antioxidants that can help fight off free radicals. And most health professionals argue that the high calories of chocolate offset any potential health gain. Dark chocolate with a high cocoa content, such as 70 percent (it tells you on the package), is the most likely to offer the heart-health benefits you're looking for. But you should still eat it as a treat, not medicine.

Here are a few chocolate gifts that are lower in calories.

- Metromint Chocolate Mint Water — just pure water, cocoa essence and real mint — nothing else. And it has no calories. (five-bottle sampler pack $8, www.metromint.com)

- Vitalicious VitaMuffin Hearts – 12 deep-chocolate heart-shaped muffins that are only 100 calories each. ($32, www.vitalicious.com)

- Gayle's Miracles Perfect Chocolate Truffles – created by a nutritionist, each truffle is only 30 calories. (18-piece box $30, www.gaylesmiracles.com)

Alternative Gifts for Healthy Living

Do your Valentine's Day gifts always have to be flowers or chocolate? Here are a few other ideas:

- Massage: Find a licensed massage therapist in your area by checking the state licensing board. Then pick your style: Swedish, sports, deep tissue, shiatsu, Thai, etc.

- Spa day or spa getaway: Check out Spafinder.com, which lists 4,000 spas.

- E-mail a free heart-healthy booklet: Send your girlfriend, wife or the woman you love The Healthy Heart Handbook for Women, published by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). It includes statistics, quizzes and charts, and it's free: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/hhw/hdbk_wmn.pdf

- Personal trainer sessions: Give a 10-pack of one-on-one sessions with a trainer certified by the American Council on Exercise, the American College of Sports Medicine or the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

- Gym membership for two: Couples who work out together help one another stay motivated, so they tend to lose more weight and stay healthier.

- Cook a healthy, romantic dinner: Pick a healthy menu, buy the ingredients, prepare the meal and create the setting — all very fun, romantic and bonding.

How Many Calories Does Sex Burn?

Here are a few popular Valentine's Day treats and how much sex (or walking) it would take to burn them off (in minutes). You just might be surprised by the amount you would need to do.

Food: Chocolate-Dipped Strawberries
Amount: 1
Calories: 45
Walk: 12 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 25 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 29 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 38 Minutes

Food: Chocolate Martini
Amount: 6 ounces
Calories: 360
Walk: 93 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 203 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 235 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 306 Minutes

Food: Russell Stover Dark Truffle
Amount: 1
Calories: 80
Walk: 21 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 45 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 52 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 68 Minutes

Food: Russell Stover Butternut Crunch
Amount: 1
Calories: 200
Walk: 52 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 113 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 131 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 170 Minutes

Food: Hershey's Almond Kiss
Amount: 1
Calories: 25
Walk: 6 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 14 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 16 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 21 Minutes

Food: Caviar
Amount: 2 tablespoons
Calories: 80
Walk: 21 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 45 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 52 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 68 Minutes

Food: Chocolate-Covered Cherries
Amount: 1
Calories: 55
Walk: 14 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 31 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 36 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 47 Minutes

Food: Champagne
Amount: 3 glasses
Calories: 315
Walk: 81 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 178 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 206 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 268 Minutes

Food: Godiva Chocolate Liqueur
Amount: 2 ounces
Calories: 90
Walk: 23 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 51 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 59 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 77 Minutes

Food: Heart Shaped Box
Amount: 8 candies
Calories: 600
Walk: 155 Minutes
Sexual activity (vigorous effort): 339 Minutes
Sexual activity (moderate effort): 392 Minutes
Sexual activity (passive, light effort, kissing, hugging): 511 Minutes

Take a Healthy-Heart Test

It's heart health month, so do something for your heart and take this test. Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital studied blood samples from almost 25,000 women ages 45 and older to see what risk factors led to heart attack or stroke more than 10 years later. From this the researchers developed the Reynolds Risk Score. It measures traditional risk factors like age, smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol. To take the test, go to www.reynoldsriskscore.org and make sure you know your systolic blood pressure (the "top" number), total cholesterol, HDL ("good" cholesterol) and high-sensitivity C-reactive protein scores.

Exercise More

If you're looking to increase your "love" factor, get out there and exercise more. There's convincing research to indicate that exercise and increased physical activity improve your sex life. For instance, an article appearing in the Electronic Journal of Human Sexuality reported that those who exercise often feel better about themselves, believe that they're more sexually attractive, and enjoy sex more. And another article in the Annals of Internal Medicine associates physical activity with a lower

risk for erectile dysfunction. It all makes sense, because when you exercise you feel better and have more self-confidence, and that translates to increased satisfaction.

Have Good Scents

Researcher Alan Hirsch, M.D., director of The Smell & Taste Treatment & Research Foundation in Chicago, has found that the combined odors of lavender and pumpkin pie had the greatest positive effect on sexual arousal in men, increasing it by 40 percent. The next most effective was a combination of black licorice and doughnuts, which increased arousal by 31.5 percent. As for women — get this — Good & Plenty candy (sugar-coated licorice) and cucumber increased arousal by 13 percent, and lavender and pumpkin pie by 11 percent. Stay away from charcoal barbecue meat and cherries, which decrease a woman's desire by 14 percent and 19 percent respectively.

What About Aphrodisiacs?

"Food and sex are the two things humans need for survival. But they also help us to tune into sensuality — the pleasures of stimulating our senses with sights, tastes, smells, sounds and touch," says Amy Reiley, author of Fork Me, Spoon Me: The Sensual Cookbook (Life of Reiley, 2006). However, not all food fits the bill. "Look for foods that have fragrant spices, creamy consistency and visual allure. Really heat things up by serving finger foods, feed a bite to your lover and let the seduction begin," says Diane Brown, author of The Seduction Cookbook (Innova Publishing, 2005). Chilies, curries and other spicy foods have been known as somewhat effective aphrodisiacs because of the body's reaction, which includes increased heart rate and sweating. Other edibles that make the "love connection" include ginseng, figs and oysters — apparently, because they resemble genitalia. And there's always chocolate, which contains phenylethylamine, a chemical linked to mood enhancement and increased energy. According to Reiley, the most promising of the bunch: oysters. They are a "great source of zinc (good for blood flow) and lean protein. Also evidence that they have the potential to raise sexual hormone levels. Chili peppers raise body temp, flush cheeks, make lips swell and look seductive. Ginger also raises body temp, makes lips swell, tongue tingle and aids in digestion."

CHARLES STUART PLATKIN is a nutrition and public health advocate, founder and editor of DietDetective.com, the health and fitness network and author of The Diet Detective's Calorie Bargain Bible (Simon & Schuster, 2007). Copyright 2008 by Charles Stuart Platkin. All rights reserved. Sign up for the free Diet Detective newsletter and iTunes podcast at www.DietDetective.com

Women Matter: Good Chocolate

KPTM-TV, NE

Amanda Mueller

07/02/2008

Omaha (KPTM) - Research shows certain types of chocolate are more than just delicious - they're also good for you. But for many, it's hard to eat just one small piece. "I tried so many times to give it up, it is just not something I can stay away from," Tara Lea said. Not being able to kick the chocolate habit may actually be a good thing, at the right amount.

To get that right amount, many women are turning to the spa. "I have always heard chocolate was bad for you so to hear that it is actually good in a way is amazing," Lea said.

Estetician Brooke Pressler says the anti-oxidants found in dark chocolate are good for you - inside and out. "The vitamins are very good for your skin and with this wrap it is going to just dissolve into your skin and make it soft and healthy," Pressler said. Omaha's Velvet Chair Salon and Day Spa provides chocolate pedicures complete with a glass of hot chocolate.

Skin Care specialist Larisa Hines says to get the most benefit, the chocolate has to be pure. "It has the chocolate and cocoa and chocolate extracts not imitation actually getting true chocolate in the products," Hines said. Nutritionist say if you must indulge your urge for chocolate, try a small amount of dark chocolate. They recommend only eating about an ounce, which is roughly the size of a Hershey Kiss. "But if it only makes them want to eat eight more pieces only something they should save for very special occasions," said dietician Toni Kuehman. Nutritionist also say make sure cocoa or chocolate is the first ingredient, not sugar, when choosing which dark chocolate to eat.

Production and Quality

Chocolate maker to put millions into producing more farmers

Press-Enterprise, CA

February 2, 2008

ACCRA, GHANA - Chocolate maker Cadbury Schweppes PLC plans to spend millions during the next few years to boost cocoa yields and to improve the lives of cocoa farmers, a move intended to guarantee a long-term supply of the most important ingredient in its signature candies. The investment will affect an estimated 1 million cocoa farmers primarily in Ghana, but also in India, Indonesia and the Caribbean, all areas where Cadbury gets cocoa candies.

Research by the University of Sussex in England and funded by the candy maker has shown that the average production for a cocoa farmer has dropped to only 40 percent of potential yield and that cocoa farming has become less attractive to the next potential generation of farmers, according to a statement by the company.

The money Cadbury plans to spend on schools, libraries and wells is intended to attract the next generation to cocoa farming. "In Ghana, there is a phrase 'Coco obatanpa,' which means 'Cocoa is a good parent. It looks after you,' " James Boateng, managing director of Cadbury Ghana, said in a statement. "We hope with this initiative, Cadbury and our partners can be a good parent to cocoa."

In the coming year, Cadbury will invest almost $2 million to establish the cocoa partnership, including $1.2 million to build 850 wells, Matt Shattock, one of Cadbury's regional presidents, said at a news conference. "This program will encourage the next generation to be interested in cocoa production," said Daouda Toure, the local representative of the United Nations Development Program, which is working with Cadbury on the effort.

U.S. and European companies have faced heavy criticism for their business practices in developing countries. The British charity Oxfam has accused coffee giant Starbucks Corp. of keeping Ethiopia from earning millions a year by blocking its bid to trademark three types of coffee beans: Sidamo, Harar and Yirgacheffe.

Last year, Starbucks and the Ethiopian government agreed to work together to promote the prized specialty coffees, and Starbucks said it would open a farmer support center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, to help growers improve the quality of their coffee crops. Sportswear giant Nike Inc also has invested heavily in community development in nations where its products are made in a global strategy intended to counteract earlier allegations of "sweatshop" labor.

Fine, flavour cocoa exporting countries grow

AP-foodtechnology.com, France

By Laura Crowley

05/02/2008 - A panel of experts recommend that more countries be recognised as fine or flavour cocoa producing countries in order to provide new opportunities for trade. The suggestions were put forward by industry experts during a review of the International Cocoa Agreement, 2001, which recognises 17 countries as producers of either exclusively or partially fine or flavour cocoa.

The aim of this agreement is to promote international cooperation in the world economy, to provide an appropriate framework for discussing related issues, and to contribute to strengthening the national cocoa economies of member countries. Last month, an Ad hoc panel of experts on fine or flavour cocoa met in London to draw new conclusions on those countries exporting cocoa. The most important recommendations made by the panel were:

* For the first time, the Dominican Republic was recognised as a fine or flavour cocoa producing country, with a recommended share of 40 per cent of exports.
* Following a decrease to 25 per cent in 2005, Papua New Guinea's share was reinstated to 75 per cent of fine and flavour cocoa exports. This is the same level it was at in 1993.
* Ecuador maintained its 74 per cent share of fine or flavour cocoa exports.
* Trinidad and Tobago maintained its 100 per cent share.

The International Cocoa Council will decide on the recommendations at its 77th regular session in May.

According to the International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO), the share of fine or flavour cocoa in the total world production of cocoa beans is just under 5 per cent per annum. Virtually all major activity over the past five decades has involved bulk cocoa. Overall cocoa futures prices experienced a strong increase during 2007, reaching levels 19 per cent higher in London and 23 per cent higher in New York at the end of the year compared to a year earlier.

ICCO said the prices were influenced mainly by the small volumes produced by the 2007 mid crops in West Africa; the relatively strong demand for cocoa; the level of forward fixed priced coverage of cocoa processors and chocolate manufacturers; and the increased interest of investment funds in the cocoa market. In the first half of 2008, most of these factors are expected to prevail. The main difference may be related to the production level of cocoa, expected to be significantly higher, said ICCO.

Nigeria: Committee Approves 10 Agro-Chemicals for Cocoa
AllAfrica.com, Washington -
Leadership (Abuja)
6 February 2008
Only 10 of the more than 30 agro-chemicals in the market have been approved by the Ministerial Action Committee on Pesticides, according to an official. Mrs Kehinde Ajao, the secretary of the committee, made this known yesterday in Abuja in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). Ajao said the restriction was in line with European Union standard that a product should have maximum residue limit".

"A lot of these chemicals have residue in the food. We have to make sure that the residue has a specific limit and meet the standard.

"We realise that it would not be fast to set up our own maximum residue because it involves setting up laboratories," she said.

"We are recommending what is called 'zero limit' which gives about maximum residue of 0.1mg per kg of cocoa in the short period.

"So when we have our laboratories and other things in place, we will have our own maximum residue limit because every country should have its own standard," she explained.

Ajao further explained that Nigeria had decided to use the EU standard because we export most of our cocoa, we don't consume them. The secretary also recommended specific agricultural practices such as good chemical application and wearing of protective gears while applying these chemicals. She said efforts were being initiated by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water resources to promote a training school for farmers. She called on cocoa farmers to buy the right chemicals and apply them correctly to increase their produce. The committee was set up on August 15, 2007 to look into effect of agro-chemicals on food crops.

Africa: Firms join cocoa certification system
AfricaNews, Netherlands
6 February 2008
Mars, Inc., Nestlé and ECOM Agroindustrial have joined the UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside Cocoa Program to work towards sustainability in mainstream cocoa production. These three companies join Cargill, Heinz Benelux, Ahold and Solidaridad, who announced the start of this program in October 2007. The initiative is also supported by Oxfam Novib.

The UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside Cocoa Program will implement a credible certification system for mainstream cocoa production to enable the industry and consumers to know their cocoa is produced in a sustainable and responsible manner. This will be achieved by strengthening the capacity of farmer groups and through independent certification of improved agricultural, social and environmental practices.

Frank Pronk, Executive Director of UTZ CERTIFIED: “We are very pleased that Mars, Nestli and ECOM have joined the program, as they are important players in the cocoa industry. We believe that UTZ CERTIFIED’s experience in mainstream coffee certification and traceability, and the experience and commitment of all the organisations involved, will enable us to work towards a more sustainable cocoa sector.”

The program partners are currently working on the development of a Code of Conduct for sustainable cocoa production, together with different stakeholders from the cocoa industry and local and international non-governmental organisations. A representative team has travelled to Côte d’Ivoire to better understand local conditions and challenges.

The sustainability criteria in the Code of Conduct will be put into practice in that country through pilot projects in 2008 and early 2009. In the following years, UTZ CERTIFIED plans to test and roll out the certification program in other cocoa producing countries. The first ‘Good Inside’ cocoa is expected to be available in the second half of 2009.

The UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside Cocoa Program continues to actively seek co-operation with other interested companies and stakeholders in the cocoa supply chain. Other partners are invited to join the program and participate in the pilot phase to further define the program. *More information on the UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside Cocoa Program is available at: www.utzcertified.org/cocoa*

Nigeria Bans More Chemicals from Cocoa Farms
Source: Reuters
06/02/2008
Lagos - Nigeria has banned cocoa farmers from using about 20 agro-chemicals in a bid to comply with European Union quality regulations, the state news agency reported on Tuesday.

The International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) threatened last year to blacklist beans and other cocoa-based products from Nigeria, the world's number five grower, over the use of copper sulphate and other banned agro-chemicals used to preserve beans. In response, Nigeria stopped subsidising the import of some agro-chemicals and set up a committee in August to look into the effect of the farm inputs on cocoa and other crops.

Europe is the main market for Nigerian beans and cocoa products. Nigeria has approved only 10 out of more than 30 chemicals available in the market. Most of them leave residue in beans and cocoa-based products, the committee secretary Kehinde Ajao said in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria. "A lot of these chemicals have residue in the food. We have to make sure that the residue has a specific limit and meets the standard," Ajao said.

For now, the committee has recommended "zero limit", which allows maximum residue of 0.1 mg per kg of cocoa, Ajao said. The long-term plan is to establish a laboratory in Nigeria and use standards determined in Nigeria. Nigeria has seen a sharp increase in output since 2005 when it launched an ambitious cocoa development programme to lift production by supplying improved seedlings free to farmers and subsidising agro-chemicals.

The programme also aimed at encouraging local consumption of cocoa-based products to help depress global supply with the hope of raising international prices. But while production is rising, domestic consumption remains low and Nigeria exports most of its beans and cocoa-based products to Europe.

Bonus sweet for TT cocoa farmers
Trinidad News, Trinidad and Tobago
February 7, 2008
Over 1,700 cocoa farmers are now reaping the benefits of growing one of the island's highly favoured exports, as the Cocoa and Coffee Industry Board (CCIB) implemented its bonus cheque distribution for cocoa farmers. Cocoa farmers have been eagerly looking forward to bonuses as just reward for ensuring Trinidad and Tobago's global reputation as a reliable supplier of fine flavour cocoa, considered by most internationally renowned chocolatiers as the best in the world.

CCIB is responsible for over 70 per cent of all cocoa products exported, with private exporters accounting for the remaining 30%. Eighteen cocoa farmers were presented with their bonus cheques during a special ceremony held at the Mandela Hall of The Centre of Excellence, Macoya. The CCIB said it was committed to ensuring that the remaining cheques will be distributed to all qualifying cocoa farmers

Arnold Piggott, Minister of Agriculture, delivered the feature address as he led a line-up of high profile guests who showed their support for the nation's cocoa farmers. These included Philippa Forde, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Jacqueline Rawlins, Chairman of CCIB and Chief Executive Officer of the Agriculture Development Bank; and other senior members of the industry.

Piggot pointed to events on the horizon, noting that the international governing body for cocoa, the ICCO indicated at their annual meeting in London that they are contemplating having their next conference in Trinidad and Tobago, which should be later in 2008 or early 2009. This, he said, augurs well for the future of the industry. As for the bonus, the chairman indicated that farmers have now received 74% of the market price of their cocoa. Cocoa farmers' bonuses are as a result of premium prices enjoyed by Trinidad and Tobago's cocoa received on the international market owing to its unique fine flavour profile. The bonus incentive is one of the strategies put in place by CCIB to revitalise the local cocoa industry, which has suffered a decline in the production of marketable cocoa in the last two decades, said the CCIB. However, over the last few years, thanks to the innovative strategies and strategic alliances of the CCIB, the industry has seen a resurgence, with annual production on a steady increase, a press statement said.

Established in 1962, the CCIB is responsible for regulating the cocoa and coffee industries. The CCIB under the Act, has direct responsibility for the domestic and international marketing of TT's cocoa. The CCIB is also mandated to ensure the standards and specifications by which cocoa is graded and must certify the quality of all cocoa exported. Through supporting agencies like UWI and the Cocoa Research Unit, the CCIB facilitates as well as monitors ongoing quality testing for contaminants, offers guidance to cocoa farming communities and certifies the standards required by the international market and other stakeholders

The Markets

Speculators give a stir to coffee and cocoa prices
Financial Times, UK
By Chris Flood
February 5 2008
Agricultural and soft commodity prices rose strongly yesterday, strengthened by fresh buying by hedge funds and speculators who consider these sectors to be relatively immune from the possibility of a global economic downturn and turbulence in financial markets.

Cocoa prices rose as suppliers from the Ivory Coast, the world's top producer, have been unable to register new shipments for export due to strike action affecting its coffee and cocoa bourse. The main cocoa growing areas have also been without rain for more than a month. Liffe May coffee rose £7 to £1,235 a tonne.

For the week of February 4th, 2008
FXstreet.com The Futures Market, Spain
By Jamie Fink, Matthew Pierce, Frank Martin
Tue, Feb 5 2008

The Softs Pit Review

Coffee is flying high as fund buying broke the market out of its recent highs and is triggering some stops along the way. Cocoa continues to look impressive as a technical break to fresh highs compliments weather fundamentals in Africa along with renewed strike issues in the Ivory Coast. Cocoa soared to 5 year highs because dry weather in West Africa and is now benefiting from continued strikes in Ivory Coast curbing supply for export. This is the mid-crop for cocoa which is a smaller yielding crop, but the market is sensitive to any supply issues at these price levels. Trees in Ivory Coast and Ghana are being stressed by a lack of rain. The Harmattan, which is a desert wind that blows from the Sahara, is also causing pressure on the crop as it mixes with the dry weather to create sand and wind storms. Add to that the weakness in the US dollar/euro relationship and the market is fully capable of squeezing shorts another couple of hundred points. Calls are recommended. Sugar is congesting and selling premium here is not a horrible idea, but the puts will get a volatility pop on continued downside. News came out today that the India crop yield is going to come in better than expected. Cotton is congesting ahead of the ginnings report on Friday. Get long with calls…Premium subscribers check for this incredible trading opportunity in my instant messenger alerts this week!

The Cocoa Market Wants to Go Higher
Inside Futures, IL
By Jurgens Bauer of RJO Futures
February 06, 2008
Cocoa prices were down this morning, liable from profit taking. I guess some folks just cannot believe that this upward move is sustainable. Sure, longs have reason to be concerned as it seems like a correction is due (today's settlement is down 7 in the May, the first down day after 5 up). But after the option close, cocoa prices rallied again to new highs. I say option close, because outcry will soon be dead-with ICE closing the pits at the end of the month. Such action after the close suggests that there is more still on the upside.

Open interest is shifting out of the March contract, and into the May and July. The rolling of these positions has transactions focused on the screen, and not much seems directed to the pit. That situation may change a little, or may not as the roll becomes more aggressive. I've noticed that when positions get rolled in other markets, the pits get used more. But with the pit closing, I guess folks are going to have to depend on the screen. So maybe rather than a last hurrah, they're going to get used to their new tool. As of Tuesday morning, the number of contracts in March stood at 76288 (-7316), while May was 52177 (+

2950) and July was 20,910 (+ 1072). The H/K spread widened a little more, but still has room. I suggest 40 points is a good level to look for, although it may go further.

Buying dips may seem a difficult task, but I believe such a strategy will prove worthy. It worked today, as prices held their dip and improved-especially after the option close. Options have been seeing increased participation, and July call spreads seemed to benefit from a possible recommendation. I think it wise to own upside calls. While they may seem expensive, my experience has always proven that options become expensive for a reason. Perhaps this is a reason that call spreads were being bought Tuesday. A call spread has definable risk (the premium paid), but the maximum profit is the difference between the two strikes minus what you paid for the position.

Another way to play is by getting long volatility. Being long volatility means simply that you are long more options than you are short. And so while buying a call spread may be a comfortable method of being long, selling that same call spread and then buying twice (or three times as many of the higher strike call) allows you to benefit from a swift move in either direction. Such a strategy is called a back spread.

Anyway, I still favor that cocoa prices will move up. I suggest buying dips and do understand that a correction may be imminent. Corrections are healthy for markets, as they ease the stress. Cocoa hasn't been stressed enough yet in my book though. I think it is gaining players. And once the rolling of positions is done, I fully expect open interest to grow. Funds are only now bringing their chips to the table.

Basis May, I see Support: 2350-46, 2320-2313, 2283, Resistance: 2367-2400, then 2650-2700?

Cocoa Comments
While I secretly expect March coffee to revisit the 140 level before week's end, I cannot help but be impressed with coffee's renewed strength. It pushed up looking to see what might be above 144 (making it to 143.70), before it decided to back off. The drop came swiftly and had the chance to gain momentum in the early dealings, with outcry and options open in Tuesday's trading. But it didn't get any lower than 141. From there, it moved sideways in dull trading.

With options expiring on Friday, it looks as if we'll stay close to 140. I still feel that funds are going to add positions in a big way, especially if prices perform. Growers who need to sell should do so by scaling into short positions. Dips will find buyers and rally sellers, but the range will be higher than what we dealt with last month. Funds are really beginning to like this market. Technically it looks poised to move higher.

I'm not suggesting that a violent shake out won't happen-last time March saw 144, it dropped a dime. Am I expecting a repeat? I wasn't expecting the first trip down, and neither were many others. So now that all the work to rebuild the support has been done, it looks as if the base for a nice move up is in place. For the next few days until the options expire, I lean toward sideways movement.
The Information and opinions contained herein comes from sources believed to be reliable, but certainly not guaranteed as to accuracy or completeness. No responsibility is assumed with respect to any statement, nor with respect to any expression of opinion herein contained. All views are the opinions of the author at the time of writing and are subject to change without notice. No statement should be construed as an offer to buy or sell a commodity. This publication is for information purposes only.

Processing and Manufacturing

Indonesian delegates visit CAMPCO's chocolate factory
Newindpress, India
February 8 2008

Vice Governor Muhammad Nazar addressing business heads at the KCCI Hall.

MANGALORE: A nine-member delegation of high-ranking officers led by Aceh province in Indonesia Vice Governor Muhammad Nazar visited the CAMPCO's chocolate factory in Puttur on Thursday and later interacted with business heads in the city highlighting business opportunities in Aceh.

CAMPCO officials took the team around the chocolate factory. During an interaction, CAMPCO officials said they were finding it hard to procure cocoa beans. Annually, the chocolate factory required over 4,500 tonnes of cocoa beans.

During an interaction with business heads at the Kanara Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) hall, entrepreneurs expressed interest in setting up processing units for coffee, timber availability, investment in land and setting up educational institutions. Spokespersons of MCF expressed interest in exporting fertilizers to Aceh province which boasted of an agrarian economy.

Earlier, Vice Governor Muhammad Nazar addressing the gathering said they were strengthening capacity of local companies with private partnership. He said they had opened up trade and many sectors were waiting to be tapped. "Our focus is on long term economic development of Aceh province," he stressed and informed that trade could avail further information at their investment outreach office.

KCCI president Kumble Narasimha Prabhu, vice president Srinivas S Kamath, honorary secretary M Shekhara Pujari, G G Mohandas Prabhu and treasurer Ahmed Bawa were also present on the dais.

Business & Economy

FG pledges support for cocoa industry
Nigerian Tribune, Nigeria
By Sola Fadare, Lagos
Feb 4, 2008

Abba Ruma, Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources

The Federal Government has pledged its commitment to building a strong economic base through support for tree crops production, marketing, research and local consumption. To this end, it is prepared to collaborate with the private sector to achieve real growth.

The Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Dr. Sayyad Abba Ruma, made this pledge at the swearing-in ceremony of a new national executive for Cocoa Association of Nigeria. Dr. Victor Halim Iyama handed over to Chief Joseph Affun Adegbulu as the National President of the Association at a well attended and colourful ceremony graced.

According to the Honourable Minister, Government has injected huge amounts of money to subsidize cocoa production through a 50 per cent subsidy on all agro-chemicals and other inputs needed by cocoa farmers. Dr. Ruma, who was represented by Mr. Olu Ayoade, stated that "since the inception of the National Cocoa Development Committee many farmers who abandoned Cocoa farms have gone back to their farms. Many of them have been trained. Seedlings have been raised and given to farmers free of charge."

Also speaking at the occasion, Governor Olusegun Agagu of Ondo State reiterated the state's commitment to improved conditions for cocoa farmers and other practitioners through the provision of free cocoa seedlings and interest-free loans for small scale traders. While acknowledging the vital role of cocoa to the economy of the state, Dr. Agagu stated that his administration has raised over three million cocoa seedlings which had been distributed free to farmers across the state and another two million sold at over 70 per cent subsidy.

Represented by the Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Agriculture, Mrs. Moji Adesuyi, Governor Agagu urged Chief Adegbulu, who was the founding president of the Ondo State Farmers Congress, to utilize his wealth of experience win uniting all farmers associations in the cocoa sector across the country. The Governor added that this was the only way that Government support could be easily monitored.

In his speech, outgoing President, Dr. Victor Iyama thanked President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and governors of cocoa producing states for the immense support given to cocoa through the National Cocoa Development Committee. He, however, called for greater collaboration between Government and the private sector to ensure greater positive developments in the multi-billion naira cocoa industry.

In his acceptance speech, the new President, Chief Affuns Adegbulu, pledged the commitment of Cocoa Association of Nigeria to the overall development of the Nigeria Cocoa industry. He thanked his predecessor who he described as man of wisdom who tuned around his fortunes of the association and the Nigerian Cocoa industry through dogged determination.

Chief Adegbulu called on all practitioners in the Nigeria cocoa industry to team up with association to consolidate on the achievements recorded so far. He made a pledge to be a team player, challenging anyone with good ideas to come forward with such.

Dignitaries at the event included Hon. Lucky Imasuen, Deputy Governor of Edo State and representatives of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Ondo State Governor.

Askinosie to send chocolate across the pond
Springfield Business Journal, MO
Friends and fans of Askinosie Chocolate on Friday sign boxes of chocolate on a pallet destined for Sweden.
By Matt Wagner
4/2/2008
This week, Askinosie Chocolate will ship its first – and largest – order to Scandinavia. The Springfield-based small-batch manufacturer of premium dark chocolate is scheduled to send the order to Swedish specialty foods distributor ScandChoco today. Owner Shawn Askinosie and his staff celebrated the accomplishment Friday afternoon at the chocolate factory, 514 E. Commercial St.

Those in attendance were encouraged to sign boxes neatly stacked atop the pallet bound for Ramlosa, Sweden, and to munch on Swedish pancakes. ScandChoco owner Martin Jorgenson, whom Askinosie met while learning how to make chocolate in Ecuador, briefly spoke about the business partnership via webcam from Sweden. "I'm really glad to be able to buy his chocolate," Jorgensen said, adding that samples at a recent trade show were popular with Swedes. "People thought it was really good and looked nice."

Askinosie said the shipment, which weighs in at nearly 1 metric ton, includes everything his business sells, including chocolate bars and morsels, cocoa nibs (kernels) and powder. Askinosie said he expects to send about five or six more similarly sized shipments to ScandChoco this year.

Through Jorgenson's connections, Askinosie said he also hopes to line up another distribution agreement with a distributor in Munich, Germany. He said the company's objective is to make its products widely available throughout Europe. "We're pushing that," he said. "It's a big strategy for us."

Askinosie said the shipment was cost-effective for ScandChoco in light of the dipping value of the U.S. dollar. Native Swede Jan Stahle, a Harry Cooper Supply employee who attended today's event, said a dollar was worth about 11 Swedish crowns six years ago. Today, a dollar is worth about 6 crowns, he said. Stahle said he's impressed by the potency of Askinosie's chocolate bars, which are at least 70 percent cocoa. "I'm confident the Swedes are going to love this chocolate," he said.

Societe Generale says to watch coffee and cocoa in 2008
Resource Investor, VA
By Jon Nones
05 Feb 2008
Societe Generale SA's Jean-Pierre Jentile, director of soft commodities at the bank, says investment in commodities is set to rise in 2008, especially in agricultural commodities.

Among agricultural commodities, he predicts the greatest gains for coffee, cocoa, grains and soyabeans, because of supply shortages caused by drought and competition for land use from other crops. Coffee and cocoa may gain as much as 10% this year, he said.

Cadbury invests in sustainable cocoa production in Ghana
CSR Asia, China
Jolly Cheng
6 February 2008
Chocolate maker Cadbury Schweppes PLC announced on Monday an investment in sustainable cocoa production in Ghana. The investment will impact an estimated 1 million cocoa farmers located primarily in Ghana, but also in India, Indonesia and the Caribbean, all nations where Cadbury sources its cocoa. The move intended to guarantee a long term supply of cocoa and attracted the next generation in cocoa farming by investing in quality of life measures, building schools and libraries. More here

Coffee, Cocoa Surge Raises Fundamental Questions
Source: Reuters
06/02/2008
London, Feb. 6 - Investment funds are pouring money into soft commodities as they cut exposure to struggling stock markets, driving prices of cocoa and coffee to multi-year highs despite market fundamentals that could spoil the party.

Robusta coffee futures in London hit their highest levels in more than 10 years this week, while cocoa has risen to almost a five-year high. The soft commodity rally materialised during a speculative and fund-led shopping spree in commodities that took several resources to record highs. Further gains are inevitable in the short term, many investors argue.

"At the moment it is a self fulfilling prophecy. The more coffee and cocoa are bought the better the technicals look, the better the technicals look the more people buy," said Lars Steffensen, managing director of commodity trading at Ebullio Capital Management. "It is a wall of investment money that is meeting a relatively illiquid market," he added.

Grains and oilseed markets have also benefited from a huge inflow of fund money this year and wheat prices on the Chicago Board of Trade climbed to a record peak on Wednesday. Analysts said, however, that their advance is much more strongly underpinned by market fundamentals, with wheat stocks at a 30-year low.

RISING PRODUCTION
The fundamental picture on soft commodities is less rosy. World coffee production could rise to a record 137.0 million (60-kg) bags in 2008/09, up from 123.6 million in 2007/08, analysts CoffeeNetwork forecast last month. That outlook, however, was based on Brazilian output rising to 48 million bags, far above the official government forecast of 41.3 million to 44.2 million bags.

On cocoa, investment bank Fortis has forecast a global cocoa surplus of 74,000 tonnes in 2007/08 but that assumed West Africa's mid-crop would be at least average. Others say dry weather has diminished production prospects. And sugar faces a global supply glut.

Global economic slowdown could also hurt consumption. "Cocoa and coffee are luxury commodities. They are not necessary for living. It is a very different from the situation in the grains where you still need to feed animals and feed people," said Mehdi Chaouky, research analyst with Swiss-based fund Diapason Commodities Management.

Analysts said the fundamentals on coffee and cocoa could turn bullish, however, later this year if unfavourable weather reduces production prospects. "What we are looking for is shortfalls in production. If we get problems then the (fund) money will be right. The jury is out on whether these prices are sustainable," Steffensen said.

SUGAR SETBACK
The global glut has already taken the gloss off sugar, which also rose sharply early this year on heavy buying by investment funds. White sugar futures in London rose to a 13-month peak in mid-January but have fallen back during the last couple of weeks although some analysts believe the commodity is undervalued.

Shawn Hackett, president at Hackett Financial Advisors says he is generally bullish on most softs and grains but singles out sugar as the likely front-runner in a recession. "Sugar remains my best commodity idea in the entire commodity complex for the 2008/2009 timeframe," he said, adding fundamentals should start to improve later this year.

Edward Hands, head of alternative investments at Commerzbank, also believes sugar is a good bet. "It would be my contention that it has very limited downside from here, probably less downside than potentially other commodities because it is at or slightly below the cost of production," he said.

But others questioned whether a rise in sugar prices would be sustainable. The last major advance in 2005/06 led to a large increase in production which the market is still struggling to absorb. "I think a lot of the commodities are unable to respond quickly to high prices because of long lead times. One that can is sugar," Steffensen said.

Attention Chocoholics: Askinosie Chocolate Unveils Four New Ways to Savor Premium Single Origin Dark
PR-USA.net (press release), Bulgaria
07, February 2008
As part of the ongoing mission to delight chocophiles the world over, Askinosie Chocolate (www.askinosie.com) introduces its delectable dark chocolate in new forms for sipping, baking, tasting, and treating. Specializing in bean to bar premium dark

chocolate, Askinosie Chocolate goes beyond the bar to introduce Single Origin Sipping Chocolate, Single Origin Natural Cocoa Powder, the C-Ration™- Month's Supply of Chocolate, and the Chalk-late Box™.

From the rich flavors to the unique packaging, the new delights from Askinosie Chocolate continue to deliver an experience for all of the senses. Askinosie Chocolate Sipping Chocolate is made with real morsels of single origin dark chocolate and is available in two varieties--70% San Jose Del Tambo and 75% Soconusco. It needs only to be combined with milk to provide a warm, indulgent treat. The authentic Single Origin Natural Cocoa Powder is a unique product to American chocolate makers as Askinosie Chocolate is the only small-batch maker in the U.S. to manufacturer it. Made right in their factory from the same beans used to make the San Jose Del Tambo dark chocolate, it is unsweetened, non-alkalized and perfect for baking.

The new C-Ration™-Month's Supply of Chocolate is another way Askinosie Chocolate is delighting the senses. According to Dr. Norman Shealy, one of the world's leading experts in pain management, "Pure dark chocolate has more bliss and health benefits per ounce than any other food. A serving a day beats apples and broccoli. A day without dark chocolate is a day of lost bliss." The C-Ration™ makes it easy to take Dr. Shealy's advice. It contains a ration (three-7 gram bars) of dark chocolate for every day of the month, plus four extra rations for emergencies. If that isn't enough, Askinosie Chocolate presents the new Chalk-late Box™, containing four Single Origin Chocolate Bars. The Chalk-late Box™ comes with chalk and a blank chalkboard top creating a unique way to personalize a gift of bliss for Valentine's Day or any day in need of chocolate.

Askinosie Chocolate, a small batch chocolate manufacturer located in Springfield, Missouri, sources 100% of their beans directly from the farmers. Shawn Askinosie, founder and chocolate maker, shifted his focus after 19 years as a criminal defense lawyer. In search of re-wirement outside the courtroom, Shawn began baking. His obsession with cupcakes turned into a passion for making chocolate from scratch. Now Shawn travels to regions of Mexico and Ecuador to work directly with the farmers and source cocoa beans for his chocolate. This allows the chocolate to be traced to the source and labeled Authentic Single Origin Chocolate. It also enables Shawn to profit share with the farmers, giving them a Stake In the Outcome™. Askinosie Chocolate exists to create great tasting chocolate made by people who love the noble craft. Their intention is not to win "the best chocolate in the world" award. But they do aim to be the best little chocolate factory in the world. For more information, or to order visit www.askinosie.com.

Mars, Nestlé, and ECOM Join Good Inside Cocoa Program
Source: UTZ CERTIFIED
07/02/2008
Mars, Inc., Nestlé and ECOM Agroindustrial have joined the UTZ CERTIFIED – Good Inside Cocoa Program to work towards sustainability in mainstream cocoa production. These three companies join Cargill, Heinz Benelux, Ahold and Solidaridad, who announced the start of this program in October 2007. The initiative is also supported by Oxfam Novib.

The UTZ CERTIFIED – Good Inside Cocoa Program will implement a credible certification system for mainstream cocoa production to enable the industry and consumers to know their cocoa is produced in a sustainable and responsible manner. This will be achieved by strengthening the capacity of farmer groups and through independent certification of improved agricultural, social and environmental practices.

Frank Pronk, Executive Director of UTZ CERTIFIED: “We are very pleased that Mars, Nestlé and ECOM have joined the program, as they are important players in the cocoa industry. We believe that UTZ CERTIFIED’s experience in mainstream coffee certification and traceability, and the experience and commitment of all the organisations involved, will enable us to work towards a more sustainable cocoa sector.”

The program partners are currently working on the development of a Code of Conduct for sustainable cocoa production, together with different stakeholders from the cocoa industry and local and international non-governmental organisations. A representative team has travelled to Côte d’Ivoire to better understand local conditions and challenges. The sustainability criteria in the Code of Conduct will be put into practice in that country through pilot projects in 2008 and early 2009. In the following years, UTZ CERTIFIED plans to test and roll out the certification program in other cocoa producing countries. The first “Good Inside” cocoa is expected to be available in the second half of 2009.

The UTZ CERTIFIED – Good Inside Cocoa Program continues to actively seek co-operation with other interested companies and stakeholders in the cocoa supply chain. Other partners are invited to join the program and participate in the pilot phase to further define the program.

About UTZ CERTIFIED

Since 2002, UTZ CERTIFIED sets the world standard for professional coffee growing and sourcing with care for local communities and the environment. UTZ CERTIFIED cooperatives, estate farms and producer groups comply with the UTZ Code of Conduct and are annually inspected by independent third party auditors. As an independent international non-profit organization, UTZ CERTIFIED is a credible instrument for coffee farmers, cooperatives and producer groups to show their buyers that their coffee is produced in a professional way, with socially and environmentally appropriate growing practices and efficient farm management. In addition, it provides roasters and brands a tool to incorporate and credibly demonstrate responsible sourcing practices for their entire coffee range. UTZ CERTIFIED is expanding into other commodities, like cocoa, with the ambition to become the leading certification and traceability program for these commodities as well in the coming years.

About Mars, Inc.

A family owned company, Mars, Incorporated produces some of the world's leading confectionery, food, pet food, health and beverage brands, and operates in more than 65 countries. Headquartered in McLean, Virginia, Mars, Inc. employs close to 40,000 associates worldwide with 100 manufacturing facilities globally. In Europe, Mars, Inc. employs more than 15,000 associates. The company owns some of the world's favourite brands including MARS®, M&M'S®, SNICKERS®, DOLMIO®, UNCLE BEN'S®, PEDIGREE® Brand Food for Dogs and WHISKAS® and SHEBA® Brand Food for Cats. The company's global sales exceed USD 21bn. annually.

About Nestlé

Nestlé, with headquarters in Vevey, Switzerland was founded in 1866 by Henri Nestlé and is today the world's biggest food and beverage company. Sales for 2006 were CHF 98.5 bn, with a net profit of CHF 9 bn. We employ around 265,000 people and have factories or operations in almost every country in the world. The Company's strategy is guided by several fundamental principles. Nestlé's existing products grow through innovation and renovation while maintaining a balance in geographic activities and product lines. Long-term potential is never sacrificed for short-term performance. The Company's priority is to bring the best and most relevant products to people, wherever they are, whatever their needs, throughout their lives.

About ECOM Agroindustrial

From a family owned cotton trading company which started operations in Barcelona in 1849, ECOM Agroindustrial Corporation Ltd. has grown into a global commodity company. ECOM is headquartered in Switzerland with sourcing operations primarily in agricultural commodities such as cotton, coffee and cocoa, in 26 different countries and with sales worldwide. ECOM has hands-on involvement in commodity origination and processing, which enables it to offer value-added services and also control risk throughout the value chain. Ecom has a strong commitment to sustainable agricultural development and the provision of extension services to producers.

Swiss Chocolate Sales Scale Matterhorn Heights

Source: Reuters

08/02/2008

Geneva, Feb. 8 - Swiss chocolate sales soared to a record of nearly 1.7 billion Swiss francs ($1.55 billion) last year, breaking records at home and abroad, the industry said on Friday. The 9 percent rise in revenues was fueled by a surge in exports to European neighbors and tourists, Chocosuisse (the Association of Swiss Chocolate Manufacturers) said in a statement. The Swiss contributed to the boom, eating an average of 12.3 kilos of chocolate each, 400 grams more than the previous year.

Swiss traditionally rank first worldwide in average per capita consumption of chocolate, although the figures include purchases of tourists visiting Switzerland, the group says. "We think the cold summer and wet autumn were responsible for the increase. Nobody will have more in terms of per capita consumption," Chocosuisse's director Franz Schmid told Reuters with confidence. In all, 181,266 metric tons of Swiss chocolate -- milk, dark and white -- were sold worldwide last year, in the form of chocolate bars, pralines and other delights.

Christmas business was "gratifying", rounding off the year which began with a slump in Easter sales due to warm weather. Exports of Swiss chocolates, which rose by 13.8 percent in value terms, accounted for slightly over half of overall annual revenues (833 million Swiss francs). Germany, followed by Britain, France and the United States are the biggest fans.

US: Chocolate Confectionery Sales to Top $323 Million Valentine's Week
Source: FLEXNEWS
08/02/2008
US consumers are forecast to splurge more than $323 million on chocolate sweets during Valentine's week, according to The Nielsen Company. Valentine's week ranked number one for chocolate confectionery sales in 2007 with $322.7 million, and third for all sweets sales behind Halloween and Easter with $414.6 million.

Labour Issues

Blood Chocolate, Bloody Valentine
Pacific Free Press, Canada
Christian Parenti
07/02/2008
If you buy chocolate this Valentine's Day, chances are much of it was made with child labor. West Africa produces 70% of the world's cocoa supply -- the raw ingredient of chocolate. Fully 40% of the world's cocoa comes from one country, Cote D'Ivoire. And in Cote D'Ivoire, grinding poverty, violence and child labor are epidemic.

This isn't supposed to be the case. For seven years there has been a much ballyhooed industrial agreement in place, designed to stop the exploitation of children in the chocolate industry.

Buying chocolate for your lover on Valentine's Day or just your own chocolate "fix" is likely a purchase of human misery. Just like "blood diamonds" and illegal timber, the cocoa trade of Africa is mired in exploitation -- of children -- war, and corrupt profits by big business.

Almost ten years ago, a series of journalistic exposés revealed that cocoa from war-torn West Africa was being made by impoverished children.Cocoa had become another "conflict resource" like "blood diamonds" and illegal timber. The crop's wealth fueled local gangsters, warring militias, and transnational corporations like Cargill, Archers Daniel Midland, and Barry Callebaut. The "blood chocolate" controversy led to the Harkin-Engel protocol, a voluntary, self-policing pact designed by the chocolate industry with the help of two American politicians -- Senator Tom Harkin (D) of Iowa and Congressman Eliot Engel (D) of New York. The protocol was supposed to eliminate child labor in the cocoa industry by 2008. Some NGO players -- like the unseemly media-hound Kevin Bales of "Free The Slaves" -- hail the protocol as the model for addressing poverty and exploitation in developing economies. Bales would like to see similar protocols in other industries. Alas that is a ridiculous idea -- it would do nothing to improve workers' standard of living.

In autumn of 2007, I traveled through Cote D'Ivoire's cocoa belt for two weeks with a photographer. What we found suggests that the high-minded rhetoric of the Harkin-Engle protocol has not been matched by real efforts on the ground. The protocol is at best a failure, at worst a pile of sordid lies. We found numerous examples of child labor: Working kids are everywhere. We found them literally walking down main roads carrying pesticides and toiling in cocoa groves with machetes during the middle of school days. Some children were scarred from work-related injuries; one child had a bandaged shin from a recent machete blow. Most were totally illiterate, living in mud-floored shacks with no access to medicine.

But the cheap cocoa they produce helps make the owners of Cargill and other foreign firms very rich: Last year, Cargill made profits of $2.34 billion -- up 36 percent from the year before. One child we interviewed was only seven. His name is Sami. He doesn't go to school. "I cannot afford the fees," explained his father Otou Sery as we lingered on a dirt road near the village of Le Ssiri. To eat, Sami must work.

We also discovered examples of large foreign corporations, including Minnesota-based Cargill, violating Ivorian law in several ways, including illegally jailing cocoa farmers who had fallen into debt. One of the people jailed on orders of Cargill was a young man, Lucien Adje, who had been the Accountant for a co-op called CEVACO.

- "They took me to San Pedro, and put me in a small cell," says Adje. "You had to do everything in one place -- you know, urinate, defecate. I couldn't eat much. It was so filthy." Adje's arrest was illegal -- in Ivory Coast debtors can't be jailed, only their collateral can be taken. But as one farmer explained, "In Cote D'Ivoire, the illegal is normal."

We also found that Cargill and other foreign exporters were operating illegal warehouses and cocoa buying stations deep in the interior. This is considered unfair competition against the small Ivorian firms. Cargill does it anyway and the government looks the other way. The Harkin-Engels protocol works through the International Cocoa Initiative, a Geneva-based NGO. The ICI in turn works on the ground in Côte d'Ivoire through an NGO called MESAD (Movement for Education, Health and Development) which provides accommodation and education to homeless street children. But when we visited MESAD, the director explained that no children from the cocoa sector stay at the

shelter, and that the ICI has in the past supported only eight underage former cocoa workers who lived at the shelter for periods of between one and four months. MESAD's facilities are a squalid mess, smelling of urine. A few filthy children slept on the concrete floors.

The real solution here would involve robust government action -- both in the United States and in Cote d'Ivoire. But the government of Ivory Coast is considered one of the most corrupt in the world. Much of the taxes collected from the cocoa industry is simply stolen. It is unrealistic to think the government of Côte d'Ivoire will take on the gigantic agricultural companies. What needs to happen is for governments in rich countries to start imposing standards on the lawless chocolate industry. It is the responsibility of politicians in Europe and America to stand up to their candy industries -- which is to say their campaign contributors.

Ivory Coast BCC cocoa bourse staff continue strike
07 February 2008
ABIDJAN
Staff at Ivory Coast's Coffee and cocoa Bourse (BCC) went on strike for a second working day on Monday to protest against the return of the body's sacked director, a union official said. "We're carrying on with the strike this," chief union negotiator Alexis Nezzi told Reuters by telephone.

Exporters in the world's top cocoa grower, producing about 40 percent of global supply, said they had been unable to register new shipments of cocoa for export with the BCC since the strike began on Friday.

Ivory Coast Cocoa-Bourse Workers to Suspend Strike Tomorrow
Bloomberg
By Marianne Stigset
Feb. 7, 2008
(Bloomberg) -- Striking workers at the Coffee and Cocoa Bourse in Ivory Coast, the world's largest cocoa producer, will return to work tomorrow after an agreement on payments with management, a union official said. ``The strike has been suspended'' until Tuesday, Jeannot Kouadio, second secretary of the cocoa and coffee workers union and head of the bourse's logistics department, said by telephone from the commercial capital Abidjan. ``People will start working again tomorrow.''

Workers walked out Feb. 1, preventing exporters getting the permits they need to ship cocoa. Union members, in their third strike since December, demanded the dismissal of bourse Managing Director Tanoh Kassy, improved conditions and pay, and the re- instatement of a bonus paid at the end of the harvest.

The bonus, which hasn't been paid since the 2003 harvest, ranged from one to three months' salary, Kouadio said. ``We're asking for two months,'' Kouadio said. ``They've agreed to pay out the bonus for the 2007 harvest. They've got until Tuesday to implement it.''

Managers at cocoa industry agencies will keep their jobs until the chief prosecutor completes an investigation into alleged corruption, the Ministry of Agriculture said today in a statement.

The statement, published in the state-owned Fraternite- Matin and signed by Agriculture Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, appealed for calm after turmoil in the cocoa industry. Kassy declined to comment when contacted by Bloomberg News yesterday.

The strike has helped push up the price of cocoa beans by 18 percent since the beginning of the year. Ivory Coast accounts for 40 percent of world cocoa output and supplies chocolate makers including Nestle SA and Barry Callebaut AG.

Cocoa for March delivery rose 15 pounds, or 1.2 percent, to 1,236 pounds ($2,399) a metric ton by 4:12 p.m. on London's Liffe exchange, the highest compared with closing prices since May 2003. *To contact the reporter on this story: Marianne Stigset in London at mstigset@bloomberg.net*

Others

Lack of incentives leaves local chocolate industry struggling
Jakarta Post, Indonesia
Novia D. Rulistia, The Jakarta Post, Jakarta
04/02/2008
Silver Queen and Beng Beng are among the few locally produced chocolate bars that have gained any kind of following with Indonesians, while other local brands have ceased to exist or struggle simply to survive. As the world's third largest producer

of cacao beans, it is ironic that there are no Indonesian chocolate brands able to compete with high-profile brands such as Cadbury of Britain or Hershey's of the U.S., whose home countries do not have cacao plantations.

Local cocoa and chocolate associations blame the absence of incentives for local farmers to produce fermented cocoa beans as the primary reason behind the failure to develop the country's downstream chocolate industry. "The reason (for the underdeveloped local chocolate industry) is that most beans harvested here are not fermented," chairman of the Indonesian Cocoa and Chocolate Entrepreneurs Organization, Sonny Satari, told The Jakarta Post recently. "Farmers choose to sell their beans directly after harvest without fermenting them first because the process requires more effort and time, while the difference in price with unfermented beans is not that high," he said.

In the process of making chocolate, cacao beans must first undergo fermentation before drying in order to create the special aroma of chocolate. "Fermented cocoa beans have a higher added value in the market because they have better quality," Sonny said.

Indonesia Cocoa Association (Askindo) chairman Halim Razak said the difference between the price of fermented and non-fermented beans was around Rp 1,500 (15 U.S. cents) per kilogram. He said that of the total domestic cacao output of around 520,000 tons last year, only 5 percent was fermented. The limited availability of fermented beans has forced chocolate companies to import cacao beans of good quality.

Askindo secretary-general Zulhefi Sikumbang said that besides the lack of fermented beans, local chocolate producers, most of which make semi-processed products, also faced problems in developing their brands. Semi-processed products include cocoa butter and powder, while fully processed products usually comprise chocolate bars and candy.

The domination by large multinational manufacturers of fully processed chocolate products is another factor discouraging local producers from competing head-to-head in the local chocolate bar or candy business. "It's like committing suicide if semi-processed chocolate producers jump directly into the manufacturing of fully processed products because brand image still comes into play," said Zulhefi. He added that the outdated machinery operated by local producers hampered innovation in the industry.

Only a few locally made chocolate bars have managed to become favorites among Indonesians. Most people here tend to eat chocolate manufactured by international brands, including products made from cacao beans imported from Indonesia. Zulhefi predicted that in 2008 there would be no new domestic producers of fully processed chocolate, partly because of low chocolate consumption at home despite the abundant stock of cacao beans. According to Askindo, Indonesia's chocolate consumption is just 0.6 kilograms per capita per year, far lower than 16 kilograms per capita per year in Europe. The association said the country's cocoa consumption reached 220,000 tons last year. Zulhefi said that of the 14 chocolate companies in Indonesia, only three make fully processed products.

Rully Junaidi, corporate secretary of PT Davomas Abadi, Indonesia's second biggest chocolate company, said the firm would continue focusing on semi-processed products due to high demand on the international market. Semi-processed products are also used as intermediaries for making fully processed chocolate. Rully said the firm exported cocoa butter and powder to countries in Europe and the United States at US$6,000 per ton. That price is far higher than the raw bean price of around $2,000 per ton.

According to Askindo, Indonesia is the third largest producer of cacao beans in the world, with total production of around 560,000 tons a year. It trails only the Ivory Coast, which produces around 1.3 million tons, and Ghana with around 700,000 tons. Askindo reported that Indonesia saw an 11.8 percent decrease in cacao beans production in 2007 to 520,000 tons from 590,000 tons in 2006, due to the late arrival of the rainy season which hurt the harvest. It saw an even steeper decline of 38.7 percent in exports to around 300,000 tons last year from around 490,000 in 2006. The three main destination countries for Indonesia's cacao beans were Malaysia, the United States and Brazil.

Halim said the poor skills of farmers meant Indonesia's cacao yield was a low 0.7 tons per hectare. He said ideally Indonesia should produce 2.5 tons per hectare per year from its almost one million hectares of cacao plantations. "But there have been several training programs for farmers regarding proper planting systems, so I hope this year's harvest can increase to 590,000 tons," Halim told the Post. He said increasing cocoa production was important to take advantage of the rising prices for the commodity. Prices rose to $2,100 per ton this week from around $1,600 per ton in January last year, as demand continues to outstrip supply, he said. Global demand for cocoa was increasing by around 3.5 percent per annum while supply was rising by only 2.5 percent, he said

TIT BITS

(Source: Business Recorder – www.brecorder.com)

Ivory Coast BCC cocoa bourse staff continue strike
ABIDJAN (February 05, 2008): Staff at Ivory Coast's Coffee and cocoa Bourse (BCC) went on strike for a second working day on Monday to protest against the return of the body's sacked director, a union official said. "We're carrying on with the strike this," chief union negotiator Alexis Nezzi told Reuters by telephone.

US MIDDAY: coffee, cocoa down
NEW YORK (February 06, 2008): ICE arabica coffee futures hovered around a recent eight-year high in early trade on Tuesday, while cocoa slipped but sat around five-year-high levels, with position-rolling out of the spot contracts into May boosting volume, traders said.

London coffee and cocoa slip
LONDON (February 06, 2008): London coffee and cocoa flirted with Monday's multi-year highs before slipping and consolidating in light trade, dealers said. White sugar was also slightly lower.

New York cocoa settles at five-year high
NEW YORK (February 06, 2008): US cocoa futures finished at a five-year high on Monday, buoyed by speculative buying and a firm sterling with further gains capped by profit taking, dealers said.

London cocoa rises; sugar and coffee fall
LONDON (February 07, 2008): A weak pound supported London cocoa futures on Wednesday, while robustas eased on profit-taking and white sugar futures fell due to a lack of physical offtake, dealers said. A weak pound, dragged lower by expectations of a Bank of England rate cut, drove benchmark May London cocoa futures to a new four-and-a-half year high of 1,244 pounds, and traders noted active position rolling.

US MIDDAY: cocoa gains, coffee little changed
NEW YORK (February 07, 2008): ICE arabica coffee futures were little changed in early trade on Wednesday, ahead of March options expiration at the end of the week, while spreading kept cocoa futures firm, dealers said.

New York cocoa falls
NEW YORK (February 07, 2008): US cocoa futures ended weak but remained at five-year-high levels Tuesday, pressured by the weak sterling and heavy position rolling out of the March contract into May, dealers said. "Specs and maybe some industry buying held it up against some arbitrage selling," one cocoa trader said, pointing out other factors impacting the market.

London coffee and cocoa set new highs, sugar falls
LONDON (February 08, 2008): London coffee and cocoa futures set multi-year highs on Thursday as roasters and chocolate manufacturers came into the markets as buyers, giving added momentum to a rally led by investment funds, dealers said.

New York cocoa ends higher
NEW YORK (February 08, 2008): US cocoa futures closed firm on Wednesday, while electronic trades continued northward to another five-year peak, on steady support from position rolling and short-covering, dealers said. "Every day the market goes up shorts are having to throw in the towel.

Ivory Coast cocoa prices remain high
ABIDJAN (February 08, 2008): Farm-gate prices in Ivory Coast's cocoa regions were well above the 500 CFA francs ($1.12) per kg guideline from January 28 to February 2, amid fierce competition for limited supply, farmers and exporters said on Thursday.