

# COPAL COCOA *Info*

*A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance*



Issue No. 313

8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Cocoa Producers' Alliance



## UP-COMING EVENTS

## IN THIS ISSUE

- ICCO DAILY COCOA PRICES
- LONDON (LIFFE) FUTURES MARKET UPDATE
- NEW YORK (ICE) FUTURES MARKET UPDATE
- FROM THE NEWS MEDIA
- TIT BITS

Do your health a favour, drink Cocoa everyday  
'It's nature's miracle food'

## In the News (from Newspapers worldwide)

<p><b><u>Health and Nutrition</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chocolate has many followers</li> <li>Dark chocolate can help you lose weight</li> <li>Eat chocolate for healthy heart</li> <li>Dark Chocolate Is More Filling Than Milk Chocolate And Lessens Cravings</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Production &amp; Quality</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breakthroughs in cassava, cocoa earn IITA global awards</li> <li>Uganda cocoa output still too low for value addition</li> <li>Training boosts quality cocoa</li> <li>Farmers told to adhere to cocoa officials' instructions</li> <li>Nigeria: FG Develops 10 Years Road Map for Cocoa Production</li> <li>Ivorian San Pedro cocoa arrivals 153,711 T by Dec 7</li> <li>SE Nigeria Main Cocoa Harvest Ending, Midcrop Good - Official.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>The Market</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foods and Softs Outlook for December 12, 2008</li> <li>Ivorian farmgate cocoa price continues steady rise</li> <li>SOFTS-Markets rise on weak U.S. dollar, firm oil</li> <li>MARKET TALK: ICE Cocoa Dips On Spillover, But Holds On Supply.</li> <li>SW Nigeria Graded Cocoa Rises To NGN250,000/Ton - Buyers.</li> </ul> <p>Technical Trader Special: ICE Cocoa Continues Rally.</p>	<p><b><u>Processing &amp; Manufacturing</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cadbury Recalls Chinese-Made Chocolate; Chemical Contamination Feared</li> <li>Dark details</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Business &amp; Economy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ICE Cocoa Review: Rises In Consolidative Trade.</li> <li>Commodity Exports Hit By Falling Prices</li> <li>US Oct Cocoa Imports +37.3% From Sep, - 13.5% From Yr Ago.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Environmental Issue</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cocoa farmers fear Saharan wind damage</li> <li>Unseasonal Cameroon rain a mixed blessing for cocoa</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Others</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chocolate may become the new wine</li> <li>Strike Stops Cocoa Exports From Ivory Coast's Port Abidjan.</li> <li>Senator Harkin and OTC Trades</li> </ul>
--	---

## ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (SDR/tonne)	ICCO daily price (\$US/tonne)	London futures (£/tonne)	New York futures (\$US/tonne)
8 <sup>th</sup> December	1543.54	2301.64	1562.33	2286.33
9 <sup>th</sup> December	1537.11	2290.51	1559.00	2279.00
10 <sup>th</sup> December	1603.25	2395.84	1623.33	2384.00
11 <sup>th</sup> December	1602.73	2416.33	1633.33	2394.67
12 <sup>th</sup> December	1594.32	2418.54	1645.33	2394.33
Average	1565.00	2203.00	1595.00	2195.00

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

**Monday 8th December 2008**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Dec 2008	1603	1732	97	1738S	1598	3,980
Mar 2009	1490	1558	68	1564	1490	7,323
May 2009	1494	1559	65	1566S	1494	1,011
Jul 2009	1511	1570	67	1572	1510	1,171
Sep 2009		1560	67			0
Dec 2009	1522	1530	72	1522	1522	3
Mar 2010		1525	67			0
May 2010		1534	67			0
Jul 2010		1534	67			0
Sep 2010		1534	67			0
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>1564</b>				<b>13,488</b>

**Tuesday 9th December 2008**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	1720	1756	24	1760	1718	3,251
Mar 2009	1557	1556	-2	1581	1537	7,734
May 2009	1553	1555	-4	1576	1544	1,590
Jul 2009	1570	1566	-4	1580	1555S	1,042
Sep 2009	1578	1556	-4	1578S	1558	8
Dec 2009	1540	1539	9	1550	1525	100
Mar 2010	1550	1534	9	1550	1550	2
May 2010		1543	9			0
Jul 2010		1543	9			0
Sep 2010		1543	9			0
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>1569</b>				<b>13,727</b>

**Wednesday 10th December 2008**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	1775	1825	69	1819S	1746	5,913
Mar 2009	1565	1625	69	1626	1552S	10,437
May 2009	1568	1620	65	1620	1558S	970
Jul 2009	1579	1631	65	1631	1569	530
Sep 2009	1570	1621	65	1580	1570S	47
Dec 2009	1548	1600	61	1600	1532	320
Mar 2010	1560	1595	61	1575	1560	60
May 2010		1604	61			0
Jul 2010		1604	61			0
Sep 2010		1604	61			0
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>1633</b>				<b>18,277</b>

### Thursday 11th December 2008

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	1810	1806	-19	1840	1801	4,565
Mar 2009	1623	1634	9	1654	1615	7,007
May 2009	1620	1629	9	1644S	1611	1,432
Jul 2009	1631	1637	6	1650	1620S	166
Sep 2009		1625	4			0
Dec 2009	1597	1596	-4	1609	1585	259
Mar 2010		1591	-4			0
May 2010		1600	-4			0
Jul 2010		1600	-4			0
Sep 2010		1600	-4			0
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>1632</b>				<b>13,429</b>

### Friday 12th December 2008

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	1806	1670	-136	1819	1670	597
Mar 2009	1623	1645	11	1650	1609S	4,552
May 2009	1615	1641	12	1647	1612S	1,245
Jul 2009	1625	1650	13	1654	1625	1,164
Sep 2009	1609	1638	13	1630S	1609	202
Dec 2009	1580	1609	13	1601S	1577	500
Mar 2010	1596	1604	13	1597	1596	40
May 2010		1613	13			0
Jul 2010		1613	13			0
Sep 2010		1613	13			0
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>1630</b>				<b>8300</b>

<b>Average for the week</b>	<b>1630</b>				<b>13444</b>
					<b>67,221</b>

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

**Monday 8th December 2008**

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008						
Mar 2009						
May 2009						
Jul 2009						
Sep 2009						
Dec 2009						
Mar 2010						
May 2010						
Jul 2010						
Sep 2010						
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>#DIV/0!</b>				<b>0</b>

**Tuesday 9th December 2008**

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	2300	2257	-32	2300	2257	1
Mar 2009	2285	2257	-32	2293	2240	7,919
May 2009	2274	2253	-29	2286	2238	1076
Jul 2009	2270	2254	-27	2283	2238	131
Sep 2009	2261	2247	-26	2270	2230	48
Dec 2009	2242	2229	-31	2265	2227	33
Mar 2010	2249	2249	-30	2249	2219	
May 2010		2211	-30	2211	2211	
Jul 2010		2211	-30	2211	2211	
Sep 2010		2211	-30	2211	2211	
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>2238</b>				<b>9208</b>

**Wednesday 10th December 2008**

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	0	2382	125	2382	2382	2
Mar 2009	2275	2382	125	2393	2260	4841
May 2009	2275	2378	125	2385	2265	575
Jul 2009	2278	2375	121	2380	2275	165
Sep 2009	2307	2366	119	2366	2307	206
Dec 2009	2252	2347	118	2348	2251	104
Mar 2010	2266	2337	118	2337	2264	2
May 2010		2329	118	2329	2329	
Jul 2010		2329	118	2329	2329	
Sep 2010		2329	118	2329	2329	
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>2355</b>				<b>5895</b>

**Thursday 11th December 2008**

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	2497	2400	18	2497	2400	
Mar 2009	2390	2400	18	2417	2371	8,083
May 2009	2377	2393	15	2407	2366	1498
Jul 2009	2373	2389	14	2400	2360	716
Sep 2009	2364	2378	12	2380	2362	100
Dec 2009	2344	2365	18	2375	2333	324
Mar 2010		2353	16	2353	2353	15
May 2010		2345	16	2345	2345	
Jul 2010		2345	16	2345	2345	
Sep 2010		2345	16	2345	2345	
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>2368</b>				<b>10736</b>

**Friday 12th December 2008**

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2008	2515	2418	18	2515	2418	2
Mar 2009	2380	2396	-4	2405	2340	5,636
May 2009	2362	2393	unch	2400	2352	602
Jul 2009	2362	2385	-4	2388	2356	394
Sep 2009	2354	2372	-6	2375	2345	239
Dec 2009	2337	2353	-12	2355	2325	411
Mar 2010	2328	2341	-12	2341	2323	65
May 2010		2333	-12	2342	2333	
Jul 2010		2333	-12	2342	2333	
Sep 2010		2333	-12	2342	2333	
<b>Average/Totals</b>		<b>2366</b>				<b>7349</b>

<b>Average for the week</b>	<b>2366</b>				<b>8297</b>
					<b>33,188</b>

**Spot Prices (US \$ per tonne)**

	8 <sup>th</sup> December	9 <sup>th</sup> December	10 <sup>th</sup> December	11 <sup>th</sup> December	12 <sup>th</sup> December
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	2802	2770	2895	2913	2909
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	2669	2637	2762	2780	2776
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	2652	2620	2745	2763	2759
Superior Arriba	2631	2599	2724	2742	2738
Sanchez f.a.q	2686	2654	2779	2797	2793
Malaysian 110	2282	2250	2375	2393	2389
Sulawesi f.a.q	2499	2467	2592	2610	2606
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	3990	3935	4153	4184	4177
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	6394	6305	6654	6704	6693
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	1137	1121	1183	1192	1190

Source: Cocoa Merchants' Association

# News

## **Health and Nutrition**

### **Chocolate has many followers**

Valley Courier Online, CO

BY: Nelda Curtiss

Dec 10th, 2008

Children are followers. The Easter Bunny always brings a huge chocolate bunny in white or milk chocolate. As a kiddo living in Spain, I remember savoring each bite of that chocolate. Sometimes I would hide under the bunk bed to enjoy the taste in private or I might sit along the curb with a chunk of chocolate and “un pan” (Spanish for bread).

At this time of year, we see children scampering for that hollow or solid milk chocolate St. Nick. Santa Clause would also bring lots and lots of chocolate with him and leave French or German candies in our stockings. Sometimes the chocolate came packaged around marshmallow snowmen or Santas.

It wasn't until I read *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel did I appreciate the many aspects of the chocolate craving. In her book, Esquivel ties cooking and baking to the notion of love and caring. The saga of that one family is rolled up into the preparing of the chocolate wedding cake; and in my graduate class on Women's Literature, I learned that adults are followers of chocolate, too.

According to the University of Michigan Interactive Medicine, Chocolate has healing properties, too.

The site defines chocolate as a bean that is collected from the cocoa tree. Extracted from their pods, the beans are dried, roasted and ground — much like we know the coffee bean is. Just one ounce of dark chocolate has 136 calories, 1.19 grams of protein, 8.51 grams of fat, 9 milligrams of calcium, 33 milligrams of magnesium, 37 milligrams of phosphorus, 103 milligrams of potassium, and 18 milligrams of caffeine.

U of M cites concerns about dark chocolate which include the fact that it has caffeine, a natural stimulant and diuretic. People with digestive problems might want to steer clear of chocolate as it increases stomach acid, too.

Dark chocolate is also linked to migraine headaches. They also note that milk chocolate doesn't have the antioxidant value that dark chocolate does. So when you're baking those chocolate chip cookies — the semi-sweet chocolate morsels might have the best value.

In the movie, *Chocolat* starring Juliette Binoche we learn this, too.

In these movies, the viewers are enticed into being followers of chocolate — especially dark chocolate. The diabetic grandmother in *Chocolat* eats the dessert without any concern for her rising blood sugar. The milk chocolate has increased fats and sugars that the pure cocoa or dark chocolate doesn't have.

For my son's birthday last week, I wanted to make him an organic chocolate cake. I felt like I might have been whisked into Esquivel's novel for a moment or two.

At first I had set out to make a Vegan chocolate cake, but rapidly became aware that all vegan ingredients would be difficult to find. I settled for an all organic rendition of the recipe instead. I bought eggs that were made from cage free hens; organic flour, vanilla, confectioner's sugar, powdered sugar and even butter. His exclamation when we cut and tasted the chocolate cake was “It tastes healthy!”

As a mom, I was glad for those words and happy to know that perhaps I hadn't poured in as much sugar as a boxed mix might have, and the sugar wasn't processed like other sugar products and that cocoa was organic and not destroying trees in its harvest.



As I'm moving on into the Christmas season, I now know that followers of chocolate get some of their elevated feelings from the pure cocoa bean and the antioxidants it carries, and that these connoisseurs may live for another taste of chocolate, perhaps some Schokinag German Chocolates or Delavidua chocolates from Spain.

### **Dark chocolate can help you lose weight**

NewsLite

December 11, 2008 2:06 PM

Scientists have got an early Christmas present for chocoholics, the news that eating dark chocolate can help you lose weight. Research has found that dark chocolate is far more filling than milk chocolate, lessening your craving for sweet, salty and fatty foods.

The boffins from the University of Copenhagen say this means eating dark chocolate may be an efficient way to keep your weight down over Christmas. I don't know about you but I suddenly have a new found respect and liking for academics from Copenhagen.

They got volunteers - there are always plenty when the test includes eating chocolate - to fast for 12 hours before eating 100g of either dark or milk choc. Two and a half hours later they were offered pizza and told to eat until they felt comfortably full (being a subject in this research keeps sounding better and better). After the meal, the individuals' calorie intake was registered and it was found those who had eaten the dark chocolate has stuffed themselves with 15 percent less pizza.

"The results were significant. The calorie intake at the subsequent meal where they could eat as much pizza as they liked was 15 per cent lower when they had eaten dark chocolate beforehand," said one of the researchers.

It was also discovered that those who ate dark chocolate were less likely to crave salty and fatty foods meaning their overall diet improved.

### **Eat chocolate for healthy heart**

Gold Coast News, Australia - 12 Dec 2008

December 12th, 2008

ANTIOXIDANTS such as chocolate could have a role to play in fighting cardiovascular disease, according to a Victorian researcher. Dr Indu Singh, a lecturer in haematology at RMIT University, studied antioxidants such as cocoa, olive leaf extracts and vitamin E, and found that they could potentially reduce the risk of heart disease. "Unhealthy lifestyles lead to oxidative stress, which greatly increases the risk of developing cardiovascular disease," Dr Singh said. "My research looked at ways we could prevent some of the risk factors by using natural dietary supplementation rich in antioxidants.

"The antioxidants in foods rich in cocoa, olive and vitamin E have the potential to combat oxidative stress-induced cardiovascular diseases."

Dr Singh said that while further research was needed, it could be concluded that there were distinct benefits to foods rich in antioxidants. "Healthy eating is the answer and a diet that includes good amounts of olive, nuts and green leafy vegetables - and some high quality dark chocolate - will help you lower your risk of developing heart disease."

### **Dark Chocolate Is More Filling Than Milk Chocolate And Lessens Cravings**

ScienceDaily (Dec. 10, 2008) — New research at the Faculty of Life Sciences (LIFE) at the University of Copenhagen – shows that dark chocolate is far more filling than milk chocolate, lessening our craving for sweet, salty and fatty foods. In other words, eating dark chocolate may be an efficient way to keep your weight down over the holidays.

We have known for a long time that it is healthier to eat dark chocolate, but now scientists at the Department of Human Nutrition at LIFE, University of Copenhagen, have found that dark chocolate also gives more of a feeling of satiety than milk chocolate.

### Chocolate experiment

To compare the effects of dark and milk chocolate on both appetite and subsequent calorie intake, 16 young and healthy men of normal weight who all liked both dark and milk chocolate took part in a so-called crossover



experiment. This meant that they reported for two separate sessions, the first time testing the dark chocolate, and the second time the milk chocolate.

They had all fasted for 12 hours beforehand and were offered 100g of chocolate, which they consumed in the course of 15 minutes. The calorific content was virtually the same for the milk and dark chocolate.

During the following 5 hours, participants were asked to register their appetite every half hour, i.e. their hunger, satiety, craving for special foods and how they liked the chocolate.

#### Results

Two and a half hours after eating the chocolate, participants were offered pizza ad lib. They were instructed to eat until they felt comfortably satiated. After the meal, the individuals' calorie intake was registered.

The results were significant. The calorie intake at the subsequent meal where they could eat as much pizza as they liked was 15 per cent lower when they had eaten dark chocolate beforehand.

The participants also stated that the plain chocolate made them feel less like eating sweet, salty or fatty foods.

So apart from providing us with the healthier fatty acids and many antioxidants, dark chocolate can now also help us steer clear of all the sweet, salty and fattening Christmas foods.

-----  
Adapted from materials provided by University of Copenhagen, via AlphaGalileo.

### ***Production & Quality***

#### **Breakthroughs in cassava, cocoa earn IITA global awards**

The Punch, Nigeria

By Suleiman Adenaekan

10 Dec 2008

Major research breakthroughs in cassava and cocoa that have helped in fighting hunger and poverty in Africa have earned the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture global awards.

The global awards given to IITA by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research included that of Outstanding Agricultural Technology in sub-Saharan Africa and Outstanding Communications, IITA said in a statement on Tuesday.

The CGIAR is a strategic alliance of members, partners and international agricultural centre that mobilise science to benefit the poor. Dr. Lateef Oladimeji of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, received the 2008 CGIAR Regional Award for Outstanding Agricultural Technology in sub-Saharan Africa.

According to CGIAR at its annual conference in Maputo, Mozambique, Sanni's expertise in drying technologies has contributed to considerable income and employment gains for numerous small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria and several other West African countries.

For example, Sanni initially designed a rotary dryer that increased production of cassava flour to 300 kilogrammes every eight hours. The technology was then passed on to cassava processing facilities in South West and South East Nigeria. More recently, within IITA's Integrated Cassava Project, he assembled a team of engineers that designed a "flash" dryer capable of drying 250kg of cassava flour per hour. His work has helped to increase the use of locally-manufactured flash dryers in Nigeria from two units before 2003, to over 60 units today. Sanni was presented the award after a short video showcasing his work.

### **Uganda cocoa output still too low for value addition**

East African, Kenya

By DAVID MUSOKE

December 6 2008

Low production volumes have been a major stumbling block to Uganda's plans to add value to its cocoa crop before export. The country produced 13,000 tonnes of the commodity in the 2007/08 season that ended on September 30, and output is projected to rise to about 15,000 tonnes in the 2008/09 and to 17,000 tonnes in 2009/10. But according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, private investors invited to run joint value-addition projects have said that these will only be viable with a production of 25,000 metric tonnes and over.

John Muwanga Musisi, co-ordinator of the Support for Tea/Cocoa Project, said the ministry had planned to invite investors when national production hit the 10,000 metric tonnes, but those plans will now have to be shelved. "Our production reached the 10,000-tonne target about two years ago, but the private sector-partners say we should aim at 25,000 tonnes per annum in order to make value addition viable," said Mr Musisi. But Uganda's cocoa production is only expected to hit 25,000 tonnes in the year 2012/2013, said Mr Musisi, although current production is better than anticipated. "We had expected production of 8,500 tonnes of cocoa by the year 2006/2007, but we were surprised to get to 10,600 tonnes," he said. Trading sources said Uganda could easily produce and export over 50,000 tonnes of cocoa annually without distorting the prices on international market since its exports are too small to affect the world supply.

Uganda has 17,890 hectares under cocoa production and the government plans to fund planting of 1,000 more hectares by July 1 and June 30 next year. Cocoa prices on the world market registered a record high of \$3,200 per metric tonne in July, but in the past four months, have fallen to \$1,800 per tonne, a 43 per cent drop was attributed to the current world financial crisis. Due to the high demand for cocoa and its by-products, prices on the world market have been rising steadily. However, it has been forecast that the current financial crisis could result in a two per cent drop in world demand. The sharp drop in the world prices of cocoa has also negatively affected the prices of cocoa paid to farmers.

### **Training boosts quality cocoa**

Solomon Star, Solomon Islands

13 December 2008

OVER 300 cocoa farmers and final year students of St. Martin Rural Training Centre and School of Natural Resources are now able to produce better quality cocoa for export. This came after they attended 11 Cocoa Processing, Quality Assurance and Trading Courses funded by the European Union Micro Project II from November 2007 to December 2008. The courses were conducted by Commodities Exporting Marketing Authority (CEMA), each lasting a week.

Course participants acquire knowledge on the importance of quality product for export, what affects cocoa quality, proper fermenting and drying techniques and procedures as well as using properly-designed processing units and driers. "With the funding from the Income-Generating Component of the Micro Project, we were able to run nine courses for farmers and cocoa traders," CEMA said in a statement.

Three courses were run on Malaita, two in Makira, one in Temotu, two on Guadalcanal, one on Central, and two for St. Martin RTC and School of Natural Resources students. Micro Project said it will continue to support CEMA to conduct another five courses for up to 150 farmers from January to April next year. These will be held for Western, Choiseul, Isabel and Guadalcanal cocoa farmers. CEMA says it is also planning to conduct more courses for cocoa farmers for the rest of 2009 subject to availability of funds.

These courses were developed and mounted by CEMA as urgent corrective measures after the cocoa industry nearly lost its overseas markets in 2005 due to the export of poor quality beans. But CEMA said importers of Solomon Islands cocoa beans are now happy the dramatic improvements since CEMA started conducting these courses late 2005 and this year with the support of European Union.

### **Farmers told to adhere to cocoa officials' instructions**

Modern Ghana, Ghana

By GNA

Fri, 12 Dec 2008

The Birim Central Municipal Cocoa Officer, Mr. Albert Akomaning, has called for regulation and control of activities of cocoa purchasing companies. "The desire of some of the companies to buy even 'not thoroughly dried' beans had caused the increase in the stealing of the beans in most cocoa growing areas".

Mr. Akomaning, who was speaking in an interview with the GNA, appealed to cocoa farmers who benefited from fertilisers to pay for them to enable others also to benefit from the scheme. He advised farmers to clear their farms before spraying the cocoa trees in order to have a high yield, adding that swollen shoot disease was hampering the efforts of cocoa farmers. Mr Akomaning appealed to traditional authorities to educate cocoa farmers to allow their infested cocoa trees to be cut down for replanting. He said if diseased cocoa trees were not cut down they could infect other trees.

### **Nigeria: FG Develops 10 Years Road Map for Cocoa Production**

Yunus Abdulhamid & Victoria Awom

12 December 2008

AllAfrica.com, Washington - 12 Dec 2008

The minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr Sayyadi Abba Ruma yesterday said the ministry has developed a ten year road map to ease and enhance cocoa production as an export produce from the country. He said a technical committee and stakeholders in cocoa production are currently going through the document which is expected to give a direction to the country from 2009 to 2018.

Abba Ruma was speaking in Abuja at the opening of 47th meeting of the National Cocoa Development Committee where he was represented by his minister of state, Demola Seriki.

He said the committee has been reorganised to galvanise private sector participation in the production of cocoa which used to be one of the major export for Nigeria before the discovery of crude oil.

"We recognise the challenges of cocoa production in the country at the moment which ranges from planting to harvesting, and we are working towards having zero burdens on the farmers. In the next ten years, the roadmap being worked upon gives the direction to achieve this," he said.

He said it is not true as speculated in some quarters that the ministry was not serious about the growth and development of cocoa but that all is being done to have better investment in the cash crop, saying, all stakeholders must and be seen to be serious without which the anticipated success will not be achieved.

### **Ivorian San Pedro cocoa arrivals 153,711 T by Dec 7**

ABIDJAN, Dec 12 (Reuters) - Cocoa arrivals at Ivory Coast's port of San Pedro reached 153,711 tonnes from Oct. 1 to Dec. 7, according to data from the Coffee and Cocoa Bourse (BCC) obtained by Reuters on Friday.

That compared with 249,941 tonnes delivered to the port during the same period of the 2007/08 season, the data showed. The figures showed 25,493 tonnes arrived at San Pedro port from Dec. 1-7, down from 31,545 tonnes in the same period of the 2007/08 season. Data for the port of Abidjan were not immediately available.

### **Ivorian cocoa arrivals 301,000 T by Dec 7 -exporters**

ABIDJAN, Dec 9 (Reuters) - Cocoa arrivals at ports in No.1 grower Ivory Coast totalled 301,000 tonnes from Oct. 1 to Dec. 7, sharply down from 530,044 tonnes received in the same period last season, exporters estimated on Tuesday. According to the rough weekly estimate, 50,000 tonnes of beans arrived at the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro between Dec. 1 and Dec. 7, down from 70,868 tonnes in the same week a year ago and about the same quantity as last week's deliveries.

### **SE Nigeria Main Cocoa Harvest Ending, Midcrop Good - Official.**

IBADAN, Nigeria, Dec 11, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

The end of the 2008-09 (October-September) main crop cocoa harvest in Nigeria's southeastern region is nearing and should finish next month, a cocoa official said Thursday.

"The peak main crop harvest season is dropping down, farmers are rounding up their harvest, " Tanghan Mbeki, national publicity secretary of the Cocoa Association of Nigeria told Dow Jones Newswires.

The southeastern cocoa belt accounts for a quarter of Nigeria's annual cocoa production of 242,000 metric tons. The main crop cocoa harvest in the southeastern cocoa belt, which comprises Cross Rivers, Abia and Akwa Ibom states, started in late August a month ahead of the schedule because of good rainfall. Mbeki couldn't say how much had been harvested but said it has been good so far.

A member of the National Cocoa Development Committee said farmers' attention was turning to the southeast midcrop cocoa, which "is doing well because the region is receiving ample rainfall." Mbeki confirmed the region had received substantial rainfall, adding that harvesting should begin in February or March.

"Last week, rainfall came twice in the southeast cocoa belt. This has left some moisture in the soil for midcrop cocoa development, " Mbeki said.

## ***The Market***

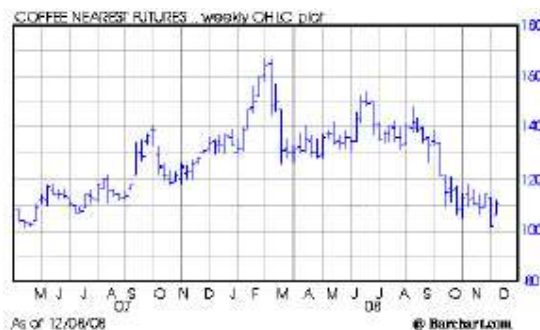
### **Foods and Softs Outlook for December 12, 2008**

Friday, December 12, 2008

by [CRB Research Team of Commodity Research Bureau](#)

Foods and Softs Outlook - **An Excerpt from CRB'S Futures Market Service**

**COFFEE**—March Nybot Arabica coffee prices fell to a 1-1/2 year nearest-futures low, down 37% from a 10-yr high in Feb. Bearish factors include (1) Brazilian coffee exports up +14% in Nov y/y, (2) weakness in the Brazilian real, prompting coffee producer selling, (3) the +1.8% increase so far this year in global coffee inventories to 4.55 mln bags, (4) ICO's forecast for a 12% hike in global coffee production in 2008/09 to 132.5 mln bags from 118 mln bags in 2007/08, and (5) the USDA's forecast of a 36% y/y rise in Brazil's harvest starting July to 51.1 mln bags. Bullish factors include (1) speculation Brazil may subsidize its coffee farmers to ensure a minimum price, and (2) ICO's forecast for an 8 mln bag world coffee deficit for 2009/10. As of Dec 2, large specs held a small short position of 8,267. USDA coffee summary: 2007-08 world coffee production 117.8 mln bags (-4.7% vs 2006-07's 122.9 mln); 2007-08 world ending stocks at a record low 18.3 mln bags.



**COCOA**—March cocoa prices have recovered to a 2-month high from October's 1-year low. Bullish factors include (1) supply concerns with the -30% drop in cocoa deliveries to Ivory Coast ports between Oct 1 and Nov 30, (2) and (2) ICO's upward revision of its global cocoa deficit forecast to 77,000 MT (from 41,000 MT) due to a cut in its 2007-08 global cocoa crop forecast to 3.65 mln tons. Bearish factors include (1) dollar strength and general commodity liquidation, and (2) the -16% y/y drop in Q2 US cocoa bean processing, the 6th straight quarterly decline. Large specs as of Dec 2 increased their small long position to 9,775.



**SUGAR**—March sugar prices continue to consolidate between their recent 2-1/4 month high and October's 6-month low. Bearish factors include (1) increased Brazilian producer selling due to the 40% plunge in the Brazilian real to a 3-year low against the dollar, (2) the collapse in crude oil prices to a 4-year low, undercutting ethanol and sugar prices, and (3) fears of weakening demand as a global recession looms. Bullish factors include (1) ISO's forecast of a 3.6 MMT global deficit and an overall 4% cut in global sugar production in 2009, and (2) USDA's forecast for Brazil to use 59% of its current sugar-cane crop for ethanol, up from 55% last year. As of Dec 2, large specs increased to a now large long position of 103,796. USDA Sugar crop summary: 2008-09 world production 158.8 MMT (-4.7% y/y vs 166.6 MMT in 2007-08), consumption 162.1 MMT (+3.2% y/y from 157.1 MMT in 07-08), ending stocks 38.6 MMT (-9.6% y/y from 42.7 MMT in 07-08).



#### **Ivorian farmgate cocoa price continues steady rise**

ABIDJAN, Dec 11 (Reuters) - High demand and a shortage of cocoa beans drove farmgate prices in Ivory Coast higher last week, farmers and exporters said on Thursday. Up-country prices in many of the top cocoa producer's growing areas rose to more than 600 CFA francs (\$1.21) per kilo as traders continued to compete for relatively few beans and buying houses offered higher prices at ports.

The 2008/09 cocoa season, which began in October amid administrative wrangling and after poor weather, has been much less successful than last year. About 300,000 tonnes of beans ready for shipment arrived at Ivorian ports from Oct. 1 to Dec. 7, compared with 530,044 tonnes in the same period last year.

"There is a lot of pressure on demand," said a purchases manager of a European exporter based in main city Abidjan.

"We go to buy but there is still not enough. At the beginning of December last year, there was cocoa everywhere. That is not the case this year," he added.

Benchmark New York cocoa futures <CCH9> were steady on Thursday, trading at \$2,398 per tonne in early dealing after concerns over the size of the Ivorian crop helped pushed prices to a two-month peak on Wednesday.

"The prices have risen in the bush to reach an average of 625 francs per kilo because of the price at the ports which is linked to the international price," the manager said.

The start of the season was disrupted by strikes and executive in-fighting that followed the arrest earlier this year of senior cocoa administrators accused of corruption.

Poor weather and the spread of disease forced new cocoa administrators to slash this year's crop forecast to 1 million tonnes, down from 1.36 million harvested last season.

In the centre-western region of Daloa, which produces about 25 percent of national output, average prices rose by 20 francs to 620 francs per kg as buyers raised prices in warehouses to collect more beans. "The prices have risen to 650 francs in the bush because the traders are delivering at nearly 700 in town," said farmer Magloire Gnankan. "There are no complaints about the quality at the moment but it is the quantity that is lacking this year," Gnankan added.

In the southern region of Agboville, the average price jumped by 85 francs during the week. "There are lots of merchants who have come from Abidjan to buy and we sold for at least 650 francs per kilo," said farmer Jerome Patende.

In the western region of Soubre, meanwhile, the average price jumped by 35 francs to 630 CFA francs. "The warehouse buyers have raised their prices. They want lots of cocoa before the end of year holidays," said farmer Salam Kone. "The minimum price farmers are getting is 600 francs. More cocoa is coming out but traders aren't happy."

Below are average farmgate prices in CFA francs per kg for Dec 1-7, as quoted by private buyers, cooperatives and shippers, and published by the Coffee and Cocoa Bourse (BCC).

Included are prices paid on delivery at San Pedro and Abidjan ports.

	Dec 1-7	Nov 24-30		Dec 1-7	Nov 24-30
Abengourou	n/a	585	Aboisso	575	535
Adzope	n/a	n/a	Agboville	650	565
Bongouanou	615	560	Daloa	620	600
Divo	665	620	Gagnoa	n/a	n/a
San Pedro	585	530	Sassandra	n/a	n/a
Soubre	630	595			
Abidjan (port)	n/a	n/a	San Pedro (port)	705	585

#### **SOFTS-Markets rise on weak U.S. dollar, firm oil**

12.11.08,

By Marcy Nicholson and David Brough

NEW YORK/LONDON (Reuters) - Coffee, sugar and cocoa futures rose Thursday on investor buying fueled by firmer oil prices and a weak U.S. dollar. The dollar fell under pressure from increased risk appetite over the last few sessions, in part on the view that central bank efforts to thaw credit markets are starting to have a positive impact.

"It almost becomes in vogue when the buck's taking it on the chin, it becomes hip to be in commodities. It's just a classic hedge against inflation, softs included," said Ralph Preston, futures analyst with HeritageWestFutures.com in San Diego.

"I believe today's breakdown in the buck is going to be critical and instrumental in giving us direction in the softs market," Preston said, referring to the U.S. dollar.

ICE March raw sugar closed up 0.27 cent, or 2.3 percent, at 11.89 cents a lb. The market has risen more than 1 cent in less than one week.

London white sugar was also higher, with March settling up \$9.90, or 3 percent, to \$328.60 per tonne in thin volume.

Dealers said sugar futures were supported by the weaker dollar and firmer oil prices.



U.S. crude oil surged more than \$5 to around \$49 a barrel on the weaker dollar and expectations that OPEC will cut more supply.

Commenting on thin volumes in white sugar, one soft commodities trader, referring to the global financial crisis, said: "A lot of people are constrained by financial conditions. Funds just don't have the money they had a few months ago."

Coffee futures were also firm on industry and fund buying against origin and investor selling, while book-squaring ahead of the end of 2008 boosted arabica volume, dealers said.

ICE March arabicas settled 1.65 cents stronger at \$1.1270 per lb, marking gains for the fourth straight day since setting a contract low of \$1.0215 last Friday.

London March robusta coffee extended gains to finish up \$15 to \$1,685 per tonne.

Dealers expected the market to remain in a range in the near term at \$1,600 to \$1,700 with demand support on the downside.

"I don't think consumption of coffee will be very much affected," one trader said.

Cocoa continued higher after it looked to consolidate earlier after Wednesday's steep advance, the strongest settlement since Oct. 7. Benchmark ICE March climbed \$18 to finish at \$2,400 a tonne. London March cocoa settled up 9 pounds at 1,634 pounds per tonne.

Dealers said the recent run-up in cocoa was fueled by aggressive fund buying against the backdrop of concern about slow port arrivals in top producer Ivory Coast. Volume should be boosted by further rolling forward of positions out of the December contract in London which expires Friday.

#### **MARKET TALK: ICE Cocoa Dips On Spillover, But Holds On Supply.**

Dec 12, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

ICE cocoa futures are modestly lower in consolidation as outside market weakness runs into underlying fundamental support, an analyst says. Equities and commodities, led by crude, are lower on the day on bearish news that the U.S. Congress failed to pass a bailout for ailing automakers.

Most-active March cocoa is down \$16 at \$2,384 a metric ton, and the nearby Dec contract is bid \$99 higher at \$2,499 ahead of its last trading day Monday. Lagging supply from the Ivory Coast main crop harvest, as well as a dock workers' strike there that halted cocoa exports Friday, is "going to keep some of the (pressure from outside markets) off of cocoa's back," says Jimmy Tintle, analyst at Transworld Futures in Tampa. A March close above Thursday's \$2,417 high could open the door to a rally to the \$2,600-\$2,700 range, Tintle says. But failure to surpass resistance could send the contract back to the \$2,250 level in the short term, he says. ICE cocoa warehouse stocks increased by 17,912 145-pound bags Thursday to total 1.88 million, according to exchange data. Volume is estimated at 3,881 lots, the exchange reports..

#### **SW Nigeria Graded Cocoa Rises To NGN250,000/Ton - Buyers.**

IBADAN, Nigeria, Dec 12, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

The price of graded cocoa in southwestern Nigeria has risen further Friday to 250,000 naira (\$1,853) a metric ton, up from last week's level of NGN235,000-NGN240,000, buyers said.

The manager of an indigenous commodity trading firm in Ile-Ife, Osun state, said NGN250,000 was being paid by exporters for cocoa delivered to Lagos by Local Buying Agents, or LBAs. LBAs buy cocoa from farmers for exporters.

"Exporters, especially those backed by overseas funds, have stepped up the purchasing of beans, the market has become more active as we move nearer to the Christmas holidays," he told Dow Jones Newswires. He said the exporters said they still have orders to fulfill overseas and had to buy more cocoa as the main crop harvest season was coming to an end.

Akin Omotayo, manager at the Cooperative Produce Marketing Union in Ibadan, Oyo state, attributed the rise in the price of graded cocoa to more demand for beans and the depreciation of the naira. The naira stood at

NGN127.87 to the U.S. dollar at the end of trading last week but it had depreciated further to NGN134.94 against the dollar Friday.

Omotayo said: "cocoa prices will continue to rise in the local market as the value of the naira falls against the dollar."

He said there was still substantial main crop cocoa in the market and "active trading will continue in the next 10 days before the market is closed for the Christmas holidays."

Farmers are being paid NGN230,000-NGN235,000 for their cocoa, Omotayo said. The southwest cocoa belt accounts for 70% of Nigeria's annual cocoa production of 242,000 tons.

#### **Technical Trader Special: ICE Cocoa Continues Rally.**

Dec 11, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

ICE Futures U.S. March cocoa futures are firmer Thursday amid follow-through bullish action. The technical trend has turned positive in recent days as the market broke an old swing high on the daily chart and broke a downtrend that had been in place since early July.

ICE March cocoa futures last traded up \$19 at \$2,401 per metric ton. November saw several bullish technical developments for the cocoa market. After hitting a fresh bear market low at \$1,884 on Oct. 24, the market retested that area in mid-November but failed to make a lower low. That was the first sign that the bear market was losing momentum. From there, March prices rallied through a very steep declining bear trendline drawn off the Sept. 25 and Oct. 29 highs, which is a bullish technical signal.

But the most important bullish development occurred on Nov. 26 when the market rallied and closed above the Oct. 29 high at \$2,209. That action broke the pattern of lower lows and lower highs on the daily chart and confirmed a minor bottom on the daily chart. The near- and intermediate-term technical trends are now up.

However, price is bumping up against the upper edge of the top Bollinger line, which should offer good resistance near term. That comes in at \$2,414 on Thursday.

Overall, the trend is up. A major upside technical target lies at \$2,499/\$2,500 near term.

Veronique Lashinski, technical strategist at Newedge, said that "as long as it remains above the short-term uptrend line, it is positioned to continue higher, towards resistance around \$2,500-\$2,540, then \$2,600 and \$2,800." She drew the short-term uptrend line on the daily chart off the Nov. 13 low. That support line comes in roughly at \$2,239 on Thursday.

However, Lashinski advised traders to monitor the market's behavior around support. "A close below \$2300 would be a first sign of weakness," she warned.

Regarding the longer-term picture, Lashinski analyzed the monthly ICE cocoa chart and concluded: "Cocoa is bouncing from strong support around \$1,850 and is positioned to test \$2,420, then \$2,500 and \$2,720/\$2,750."

### ***Processing & Manufacturing***

#### **Cadbury Recalls Chinese-Made Chocolate; Chemical Contamination Feared**

Attorney at Law - 11 Dec 2008

British candy maker Cadbury has recalled 11 chocolate products made in China after tests found the candies contained melamine, a toxic industrial chemical that recently has been found in infant milk and other Chinese food products.

Cadbury said the brands of candy, including Cadbury Eclairs and Dairy Milk chocolate, were distributed in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Australia.

Melamine is a chemical used in the manufacturing of plastics, but it can be used to mimic food proteins and deceive food-quality tests, officials said. Four Chinese infants have died and an estimated 54,000 have been sickened after drinking baby formula containing melamine.

Cadbury officials said while preliminary tests showed melamine in the items, it is too early to say how much of the chemical is in the chocolates.

### **Dark details**

Chandigarh Newline, India

Dec 11, 2008

Barry Callebaut's technical advisor in India tells us the finer nuances of "real" chocolate

It's one long journey that starts somewhere in Western Africa, close to the equator before finding its way all over the globe. It's a journey of a cocoa pod to liquid chocolate that spans both time and distance. But not all chocolate that you finally eat is actually "real" chocolate. Surprised? "Well, for a chocolate to be called a chocolate it must boast of any one or all ingredients such as cocoa butter, cocoa powder and chocolate liquor," spoke Chef Abhiru Biswas as he ripped open a bag, dug his hands in and pulled out little solid drops of chocolate. "Please taste this and tell me what you feel," this man donning a Chef's ensemble stepped forward to say. One bite and you say, "bitter." "Oh, that must be a 70 per cent," said Biswas before opening another bag. The same exercise followed, only this time there was a sweet taste on the tongue that didn't stay too long. "Signs of good chocolate," remarked Chef Abhiru Biswas and it's time we tell you who he is.

Technical Advisor for Barry Callebaut's Chocolate Academy in India, Biswas is a leading chocolatier and patisserie Chef who is part of the prestigious Chocolate Ambassador Club of the world. In the city to conduct a workshop on chocolate-making for students of Chitkara School of Hospitality, the Chef was forthcoming with his nuggets of information on the world of chocolates.

"It's the percentage of cocoa in chocolate that makes it bitter which is why the 70 per cent tastes that way," tells Biswas who finds Indians now forthcoming in trying different flavours of chocolate. "Cocoa from different parts of the world tastes different. For example this one from Ghana is more woody than the one from Mexico," explained the Chef who admits to being "passionate" about cocoa. "I spend all day infusing herbs and spices in chocolates to come up with something innovative," and that's where you find him listing his chocolate with garam masala recipe! "Every quarter, Barry Callebaut technical advisors from across the world meet and discuss new recipes. My endeavour has been to present chocolate infused with Indian herbs and spices," mentions Biswas who compares chocolate with fine wine. "And real chocolate is good for health too. On an average I eat about 200 gms of chocolate every day," the Chef smiles to say. While you can't get Barry Callebaut chocolates off the shelves since they work only with premium bakeries and hotels, you can look for real chocolate by looking for the right ingredients!.

## ***Business & Economy***

### **ICE Cocoa Review: Rises In Consolidative Trade.**

NEW YORK, Dec 11, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

ICE Futures U.S. cocoa made modest gains Thursday as the market paused to digest the recent rally spurred by ongoing supply concerns. Most-active March cocoa settled \$18 higher at \$2,400 a metric ton and the nearby December contract also settled up \$18 at \$2,400.

Cocoa opened higher and moved choppy higher throughout the sessions. Futures were overbought, which eased the rally as the market paid little heed to the weaker U.S. dollar, which typically boosts cocoa prices. Commodities rallied, though cocoa stuck near unchanged for most of the session. March ended at a two-month-high close but gained little on the day.

Cocoa has seen stout support from the slower Ivory Coast 2008-09 main crop harvest. Arrivals of beans to ports for export are lower at an estimated 36% reduction from last season. The first round of Ivory Coast cocoa export declarations for the 2008-09 main harvest crop are down 45% on the year from Oct. 1-Dec. 9.

"Psychologically, \$2,400 may be difficult for the bulls to push above in the very short run, " said Dan Vaught, futures analyst at Wachovia Securities in St. Louis. Trading cues from the greenback and energy sector could spill over into the market.

After the recent runup - such a big move - March could retest in the near term at \$2,300, Vaught said. Futures are getting slightly overbought, though prices could rise as high as \$2,500-\$2,700 as supply tightness continues, said Rob Kurzatkowski, futures analyst at optionsXpress in Chicago. "Once we keep on posting gains in cocoa, then you're going to see more of the outside market forces creeping in because less money is being allocated to commodities in general because of inflationary concerns, " Kurzatkowski said.

Most-active Liffe March cocoa futures settled up GBP9 at GBP1634, a ton and nearby December settled GBP19 lower at GBP1,806. ICE cocoa open interest increased by 188 positions Wednesday to total 111,711, the exchange reported. Volume was estimated at 7,304 contracts, according to exchange data. In options, approximately 901 calls and 445 puts traded.

	Close	Change	Range
Dec	\$2,400	+\$18	\$2,400-\$2,497
Mar	\$2,400	+\$18	\$2,371-\$2,417
May	\$2,393	+\$15	\$2,366-\$2,407

### **Commodity Exports Hit By Falling Prices**

Graphic Online, Ghana - 9 Dec 2008

Commodity exporting countries in West Africa are being hit by the global financial crisis as raw materials prices fall, an African finance chief, has said.

Many African countries are reliant on exports of crops and minerals for income, and as prices on world markets drop, exporters' revenue shrinks, said Henri Phillipe Dakoury Tabley, Governor of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO).

"We are seriously threatened and the effects are already being felt in some of our countries where export receipts are down, such as for cocoa, coffee, wood and peanuts," Dakoury Tabley said.

The bank serves eight former French colonies in West Africa - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo which use the CFA.

Dakoury Tabley was speaking to journalists in the Ivorian capital after a meeting of French-speaking West African members of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Cote d'Ivoire is the world's top exporter of cocoa, prices of which have fallen by around a third since July, despite a recent rebound.

"The risk is not indirect, it is direct," Dakoury Tabley said, referring to the impact of the global financial crisis on West African economies.

"When you talk about export receipts falling, you are saying that it is economic activity in our countries that is heading for a recession," he said.

Expected growth rates across the world's poorest continent have been cut as a severe recession in the economies of rich nations elsewhere in the world grows more likely.

The International Monetary Fund(IMF), recently cut its projections for sub-Saharan Africa to six per cent for 2008 and 2009 from 6.5 per cent in 2007. African bankers last month lowered expected growth across a six-nation central African bloc in 2008 to 5.3 per cent from an original 5.8 per cent. — Reuters

### **US Oct Cocoa Imports +37.3% From Sep, -13.5% From Yr Ago.**

OsterDowJones, (ALMF), 11 December 2008, ISSN: N/A.

U.S. cocoa bean imports rose 37.3% in October from a month ago, but was down 13.5% from the previous year, the Commerce Department reported Thursday.

## **Environmental Issue**

### **Cocoa farmers fear Saharan wind damage**

BusinessWorld Online, Philippines

December 11, 2008

ABIDJAN — The first signs of the harmattan, a seasonal wind that can damage crops, appeared last week in Ivory Coast's main cocoa-growing regions, farmers and analysts said on Tuesday.

Disease and disorganization have blighted the first two months of the 2008/09 season in the world's biggest producer, and arrivals at ports of beans ready for export are far below what they were at this time last year, factors which have supported prices on world markets.

In the eastern region of Abengourou, near the border with no. 2 producer Ghana, farmers said they felt the first stirrings of the harmattan, a dry, dusty wind that sweeps down from the Sahara from December to March. The wind, which can harm the crop by withering flowers and buds on the branches, is already blowing in the north. "Every morning you can feel a light, dry wind which seems like the harmattan. We still hope that it won't be strong when it arrives, because if it is then our harvests are going to be very weak," said farmer Joseph Amani. "There will be cocoa up to February, but given what we see on the trees, quantities will be low after January," he said.

In coastal regions of Sassandra and San Pedro, farmers and analysts reported abundant rainfall. "We had one heavy spell of rain last week. We still have lots of pods to harvest by the end of the year," said farmer Gerard Pale Sie, who has a 7-hectare plantation on the outskirts of Sassandra.

Concerns about the size of the Ivorian harvest have boosted cocoa prices on world markets. The benchmark contract as traded on the New York futures market closed on Monday at \$2,289 per ton, 15% higher than at start of November. — Reuters

### **Unseasonal Cameroon rain a mixed blessing for cocoa**

Mon 8 Dec 2008,

By Tansa Musa

YAOUNDE (Reuters) - Unseasonal heavy rain over the last week in many of Cameroon's cocoa growing areas will boost the coming mid crop but disrupted open-air drying of beans, leaving some damaged, farmers said on Monday.

Cameroon's wet season usually runs from mid-March through to mid-October but heavy rain began on November 30 in Yaounde and spread across the Centre, South-West, South, East and Littoral regions. The central African nation is the world's No. 5 cocoa grower and produced 187,355 tonnes in the 2007/08 season, which ended on July 31, up from 179,239 tonnes during the previous season.

One official said the rain could even mean the country hits a strategic target of producing 200,000 tonnes a year early. "I have been growing cocoa now for 23 years but never before have I seen rain falling in the dry season and in the middle of the main crop harvest as now," said Emmanuel Nguile, a major cocoa farmer in Bafia, 135 km (84 miles) north of Yaounde. "With this we can expect a better harvest in the mid-crop season this year," he added after a trip to the fields.

Joseph Nde of Cameroon Marketing Commodities agreed that the rain pointed to a healthy crop. "It is very good news for the farmers," he said from the leading cocoa growing region of the South-West. "Everywhere I went to purchase produce this last week ... I saw many plants flowering. We can only look forward to a bountiful harvest in this year's mid-crop season," he added.

But Nde said the out-of-season rain could disrupt proper drying of beans and would further damage already poor roads.

The sudden rain caught by surprise many farmers who were drying beans in the open. "I and my wife were harvesting produce in our farm about two km away from home when it suddenly started raining," said

Emmanuel Nnogo Akolo, a farmer in Emana, 70 km (44 miles) north of Yaounde. "By the time we rushed back home it was too late, the five (60kg each) bags worth of beans which were almost completely dry were soaked," he added. "So this month I will have very few beans for the market."

Bean exports between August and October were 38,815 tonnes, up 23 percent on the same period last year. October monthly shipments alone were 27,360 tonnes, up 63 percent year-on-year.

The Cocoa and Coffee Inter-professional Board (CCIB) believes the rain adds to already positive news about the main crop harvest, which runs from November to January. "We are just one month into the heart of the main crop harvest and reports from the field are very encouraging," said CCIB President Apollinaire Ngwe. "From all indications, we may hit the 200,000 tonnes target just with the main crop harvest," he added.

Cameroon was aiming to increase cocoa production to 200,000 tonnes during the 2009/2010 campaign. The whole growing season lasts from August 1 to July 31 of the following year.

## **Other**

### **Chocolate may become the new wine**

Peggy Rose, , Contributor, , Jakarta  
Jakarta Post, Indonesia - 13 Dec 2008

Just as the little black dress has yielded to the winds of whim, with fashionista's variously claiming that "pink", "gray" or "purple" are "the new black", it seems -- if the current buzz in certain circles of the foodie community is to be believed -- the intense interest in wine tasting of the past couple years is abating in the wake of recent shortages, with chocolate -- of all things -- all things -- purportedly poised to jump in to fill the gap.

Of the two indulgences, imbibing in a chocolate treat while waiting for the three-in-one traffic to subside after office hours might certainly be the safest; the worst side effect one might expect being an extra hour in the gym or few more laps in the pool.

Certainly, it would beat stumbling home in one's stilettos and risking a sprained ankle after an evening of sipping samples of red, white and rose wine. Also, fewer eyebrows are bound to be raised at a cup of cocoa than at a glass of wine (if that is a consideration in one's milieu or age group).

According to the grapevine -- while your friends may still be stuck in the wine or Starbucks gourmet coffee paradigm -- there is just the place to learn more about chocolate and at the same time sample a wide range of high quality chocolate in various shapes and forms.

Jose "Joy" Pelo, originally of the Philippines and more lately from teaching at one of the finest culinary schools in Australia, is holding "Chocolate Appreciation" miniseminars at Creole Chocolaterie and Patisserie on the second floor of FX Lifestyle Center on Jl. Sudirman every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday between Dec. 7, 2008, and Jan. 4, 2009.

These Chocolate Appreciation and Afternoon Tea gatherings are designed to accommodate groups of friends or organizational or corporate colleagues who want to relax and socialize while learning something of contemporary interest -- but if planning to go, remember to book in advance.

"So many people here seem to think that chocolate is a bad thing; something to feel guilty about eating, or to steer clear of. I want to better inform people about its many benefits, and to put to rest the mistaken idea that chocolate is not good for you because it is said to cause weight gain and pimples," Joy said at the recent launching of the seminars, which are strategically held at high tea time, alias weekday to avoid the three-in-one traffic jams downtime, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

The energetic, slim and fit-looking chef -- with a flawless complexion -- who claims his love affair with the devilishly enticing brown confection began in his chocolate-loving mother's womb, raised his arms and spun around, while declaring, "Would you believe that I eat four to seven pieces of chocolate a day? I simply can't do without it."



He then went on to explain that it was not chocolate itself that could lead the unwary to pack on the pounds or break out with acne, but rather the less expensive ingredients, such as milk solids, sugar, peanuts and other fillers that are mixed into many chocolate dishes. Pure, dark chocolate actually fights cholesterol and reduces the risk of blood clots.

"Chocolate does not cause acne, as shown in several medical studies. Acne is usually due to an improper diet or hormone imbalance," Joy said. "It also does not make you fat; choice and moderation are the keys. It is the sugar in some chocolate products that piles on the calories."

Joy then had his staff serve steamy cups of a Belgian chocolate brew and little plates of small chunks of various kinds of chocolate to give seminar participants an idea of how to differentiate among a wide variety of chocolate flavors.

The first sample chocolate on offer was "milk chocolate" with only 12 percent cocoa mass (the element that gives chocolate its wonderful distinctive flavor). This first sample tasted very much like a typical chocolate bar one can find at grocery store checkouts; very sweet, milky and kind of boring.

"Now, chew, just let it melt on your tongue. That is the correct way to enjoy chocolate to the fullest.

"Once you have set that flavor in your mind, don't forget to cleanse your palette with water, so you can try the next sample."

The next plate set before the eager tasters offered an entirely different experience. The sampler contained 55 percent cocoa mass, with just enough sugar to cut the bitter edge that the purer, darker forms of chocolate can have. Comparatively, the second sample was light years closer to the "ambrosia" which the Greek pantheon is fabled to have imbibed in, than was the first sample.

Joy also clarified to the crowd of avid listeners that chocolate, in its purest form, helps burn fats and was full of the flavonoids that were beneficial to the heart -- meaning that it was much healthier to ingest than most people believe.

He then served up little slivers of "96 percent cocoa mass" chocolate that was black and sharp tasting, yet somehow truly delightful (that is if you like bitter things).

"Basically there are three varieties of chocolate products: Dark, milk and white. White actually shouldn't be called chocolate at all because it has no cocoa mass and is made of cocoa butter, milk and sugar.

"Of course, dark chocolate is the healthiest," Joy said, as his waiting staff served full-sized pieces of the "75 percent cocoa mass ganache chocolates" that he offers at the Creole chocolate shop at FX.

The seminar participants were then invited to wash this down with either a cup of his warm and delightfully rich "pure blend" cocoa specialty of the house that is to chocolate what espresso is to coffee, or a wine glass of "an iced chocolate drink" with a small scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Next followed a platter of chocolate-dominated Creole cakes with a few palette-clearing fruit-based confections.

While the seminar participants imbibed in the trays of goodies to their hearts' content, Joy demonstrated how to heat chocolate to a liquid state and then to "temper" (manipulate and cool) it to the consistency and shine expected of the finest of best chocolates.

As he went about manipulating the liquid chocolate on a slab with spatulas, Joy also provided his audience with a plethora of interesting informational tidbits (only a few of which can be shared in this limited space) -- not only about the technical aspects of producing chocolate candies, but also about the cacao bean's ancient history and its contemporary importance in international trade.

"It might surprise you to know that although Indonesia now produces 15 percent of the world's chocolate, its origin is in Central America, and that the name 'chocolate' came from a local tribal word that meant, literally, 'bitter water'," explaining that chocolate was initially served as a drink.

"It was not until the 1800s that the first chocolate bars were introduced in the United Kingdom."

This master chocolate and pastry chef then closed his lively and informative tea-time talk with his trademark 1,000-watt grin and the reminder that, "A life without chocolate is a life without joy."

To sign up for a Chocolate Appreciation and Afternoon Tea session, please contact the Creole Chocolaterie and Patisserie on the second floor of FX Lifestyle Center on Jl. Sudirman:

Telephone: (021) 25554048 (please call in reservations between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. daily)

Minimum attendance: 10 people

Maximum attendance: 20 people

Cost per person: Rp. 65,000 (weekday sessions) and Rp. 80,000 (Sunday sessions).

#### **Strike Stops Cocoa Exports From Ivory Coast's Port Abidjan.**

ABIDJAN, Dec 12, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

A dockers' pay strike blocked cocoa exports from Ivory Coast's main port of Abidjan Friday, port sources said.

"Only a few boats are working (loading, unloading)," said a manager at the main stevedoring company SAGA-SDV.

Business at the southwestern port of San Pedro was continuing as normal. The world's top cocoa grower exports 4,000-8,000 metric tons a day, with Abidjan accounting for 60% and San Pedro 40%.

The port employers' association SEMPA and the dockers' CNDD trade union were negotiating a pay rise and the annulment of layoffs earlier this year, strike leader Jean Landry Atse and the SAGA-SDV manager said.

#### **Ivorian S. Pedro Oct-Nov cocoa product exports jump**

ABIDJAN, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Exports of semi-finished **cocoa** products from Ivory Coast's San Pedro port in October to November of the 2008/09 season totalled 14,627 tonnes, up more than 232 percent on the same period last season, port data showed on Thursday. Following are the official figures in tonnes:

	Nov 08	Oct 08	Nov 07
San Pedro	8,955	5,672	2,042
Cumulative	14,627	5,672	4,403

NOTE - Installed grinding capacity in Ivory Coast is 350,000 tonnes per year, less than a third of overall **cocoa** bean output. Data for the country's other port of Abidjan were not yet available.

#### **Senator Harkin and OTC Trades**

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) Introduces Legislation To Regulate Over-the-Counter Trading.

US Federal News, (IJGI), 26 November 2008.

ARLINGTON, Va., Nov. 26 -- The Petroleum Marketers Association of America issued the following news release:

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, has introduced legislation that would bring greater transparency, integrity and accountability to over-the-counter financial derivatives and commodity futures trading. The Derivatives Trading Integrity Act of 2008 (S. 3714) would require all swap transactions to clear on a regulated exchange. In other words, swap transactions must trade on a regulated board of trade.

S. 3714 would amend the Commodity Exchange Act by eliminating the exclusion of swap transactions, and would prevent the CFTC from exempting swap transactions in the future. Senator Harkin states, "By restoring reasonable safeguards and regulation of swaps, including credit default swaps, along with all futures contracts, this legislation will go a long way toward ensuring confidence in the markets and reestablishing soundness and integrity that the financial system needs." PMAA applauds Senator Harkin's efforts to bring transparency to the unregulated swaps market.

## TIT BITS

(Source: Business Recorder – [www.brecorder.com](http://www.brecorder.com))

### **London coffee, sugar move up**

LONDON (December 12, 2008): Coffee and sugar futures rose on speculative buying underpinned by firmer oil prices and a weak dollar on Thursday. London cocoa was steady, supported by slow bean arrivals to ports in top grower Ivory Coast and a weak pound. The dollar fell on Thursday under pressure from increased risk appetite over the last few sessions, in part on the view that central bank efforts to thaw credit markets are starting to have a positive impact.

### **Coffee dips, sugar ends in London flat**

LONDON (December 12, 2008): London coffee futures eased on Wednesday as the market struggled to maintain momentum after a sharp rebound early this week, while raw sugar edged up underpinned by steady oil prices, dealers said. cocoa inched higher supported by slow arrivals of beans to ports in Ivory Coast, the world's top grower.

### **US MIDDAY: coffee rallies, cocoa flat**

NEW YORK (December 12, 2008): Arabica coffee continued to climb in early trade on Thursday in heavy volume, buoyed by the weak dollar, while US cocoa was steady after jumping nearly 6 percent Wednesday, traders said.

### **Coffee, sugar and cocoa fall in London**

LONDON (December 13, 2008): Coffee was mostly lower on Friday along with sugar and cocoa futures which fell on investor and fund selling after the collapse of a \$14 billion rescue plan for US automakers deepened worries over global recession. "It (failure of bailout) soured the tone a little bit," said Nick Hungate, a soft commodities trader with Rabobank.

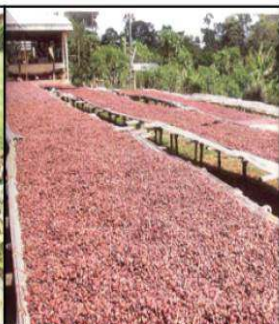
### **US MIDDAY: coffee, cocoa down**

NEW YORK (December 13, 2008): Arabica coffee and US cocoa futures retraced gains from the past two days in early trade on Friday in thin dealings pressured by global equities after the US automaker bailout plan failed, traders said. Arabica coffee for March delivery was down 1.90 cents at \$1.1080 per lb by 9:19 am EST (1419 GMT), with volume light at 1,916 lots.

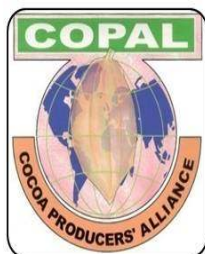


***Wishing you a Merry  
Christmas and a  
Prosperous New Year***

**Give a gift of chocolate for health and vitality**







***Vous souhaitant Joyeux  
Noel et Heureuse  
Nouvelle Année***

**Offrez du chocolat pour la santé et la vitalité**

