



UP-COMING EVENTS

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

In the News (from Newspapers worldwide)

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ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (SDR/tonne)	ICCO daily price (\$US/tonne)	London futures (£/tonne)	New York futures (\$US/tonne)
29th December	1637.51	2548.99	1761.67	2537.67
30th December	1638.15	2535.54	1765.33	2529.00
31st December	1696.34	2612.82	1771.33	2638.33
1st January				
2nd January	1653.78	2540.4	1783.67	2503.67
Average	1656.45	2559.44	1770.50	2552.17

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

Monday 29th December 2008

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Mar-09	1792	1770	-13	1830	1760	4,600
May-09	1775	1755	-16	1810	1742	1,472
Jul-09	1781	1760	-14	1805	1755S	138
Sep-09	1775	1730	-28	1775	1769	28
Dec-09	1731	1688	-21	1737	1685	373
Mar-10	1731	1682	1	1731	1685	13
May-10		1692	2			0
Jul-10		1704	1			0
Sep-10		1716	1			0
Dec-10		1716	1			0
Totals		1721				6624

Tuesday 30th December 2008

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	1770	1774	4	1786	1753	3,209
May-09	1761	1760	5	1770	1745	725
Jul-09	1767	1762	2	1770	1750	245
Sep-09	1730	1745	15	1745	1720	162
Dec-09	1695	1700	12	1709	1688	720
Mar-10		1670	-12			0
May-10		1675	-17			0
Jul-10		1691	-13			0
Sep-10		1696	-20			0
Dec-10		1696	-20			0
Totals		1719				5,061

Wednesday 31st December 2008

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	1791	1781	7	1820	1772	1,989
May-09	1772	1765	5	1803	1763	408
Jul-09	1773	1768	6	1774S	1771	45
Sep-09	1745	1745	0	1745	1745	50
Dec-09	1705	1704	4	1721	1697	435
Mar-10		1675	5			0
May-10		1680	5			0
Jul-10		1696	5			0
Sep-10		1701	5			0
Dec-10		1701	5			0
Totals		1722				2,927

Friday 2nd Janaury 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	1774	1792	11	1811	1756	1,899
May-09	1765	1779	14	1791	1750	612
Jul-09	1770	1780	12	1780	1753S	32
Sep-09	1750	1757	12	1750	1742	70
Dec-09	1705	1716	12	1720	1699	144
Mar-10		1687	12			0
May-10		1692	12			0
Jul-10		1708	12			0
Sep-10		1713	12			0
Dec-10		1713	12			0
Totals		1734				2,757

Average for the week		1748				3474
Total for the week						17,369

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

Monday 29th December 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	2626	2551	-75	2692	2460	7,237
May-09	2609	2540	-79	2675	2472	1,273
Jul-09	2565	2524	-84	2622	2504	254
Sep-09	2555	2499	-90	2599	2491	116
Dec-09	2530	2465	-97	2561	2455	303
Mar-10	2435	2440	-100	2498	2426	37
May-10	2486	2432	-93	2494	2422	9
Jul-10	2490	2432	-96	2490	2490	2
Sep-10	0	2432	-96	0	0	0
Dec-10						
Totals		24796				9231

Tuesday 30th December 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	2551	2529	-22	2554	2507	4,426
May-09	2535	2520	-20	2541	2494	784
Jul-09	2523	2507	-17	2523	2477	1,050
Sep-09	2494	2482	-17	2494	2448	253
Dec-09	2455	2446	-19	2455	2420	123
Mar-10	2400	2420	-20	2400	2400	1
May-10	2391	2407	-25	2391	2391	1
Jul-10	0	2407	-25	0	0	0
Sep-10	0	2407	-25	0	0	0
Dec-10						
Totals		2458				6638

Wednesday 31st December 2008

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	2548	2665	136	2689	2540	3,604
May-09	2537	2657	137	2675	2533	281
Jul-09	2526	2646	139	2672	2520	172
Sep-09	2507	2623	141	2551	2493	84
Dec-09	2462	2592	146	2488	2453	92
Mar-10	2424	2557	137	2434	2421	25
May-10	2417	2545	138	2429	2413	5
Jul-10	0	2545	138	0	0	0
Sep-10	0	2545	138	0	0	0
Dec-10			0			
Totals		2597				4263

Friday 2nd January 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Mar-09	2649	2540	-125	2649	2494	5,772
May-09	2608	2532	-125	2608	2493	536
Jul-09	2533	2521	-125	2535	2484	101
Sep-09	2477	2505	-118	2477	2477	15
Dec-09	2445	2477	-115	2450	2445	54
Mar-10	0	2453	-104	0	0	2
May-10	0	2442	-103	0	0	1
Jul-10	0	2442	-103	0	0	0
Sep-10	0	2442	-103	0	0	0
Dec-10	0	2442	0	0	0	0
Totals		2480				6481

Average for the week		8083				6653
Total for the week						33,266

Spot Prices (US \$ per tonne)

	29th December	30th December	31st December	1st January	2nd January
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	3076	3054	3190		3065
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	2946	2924	3060		2935
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	2928	2906	3042		2917
Superior Arriba	2901	2879	3015		2890
Sanchez f.a.q	2948	2926	3062		2937
Malaysian 110	2646	2509	2645		2520
Sulawesi f.a.q	2801	2731	2867		2742
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	4280	4392	4628		4411
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	7151	7090	7471		7120
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	1207	1197	1261		1202

Source: Cocoa Merchant Association

News

Health and Nutrition

Can the men from Mars save our civilisation?

Herbert River Express (Australia), (ABTF), 1 -, 30 December 2008, p. 2, ISSN: N /A.

AT this time of year, one of the gifts most frequently given, most warmly received, and most commonly consumed is chocolate. Our love affair with chocolate dates back over a 1,000 years with cocoa residues having been found in relics from the Mayan civilisation of Central America. And it seems throughout its history chocolate has been taken as much for medicinal purposes as for taste. Even so, with regard to nutritional value, chocolate is a double-edged sword -- high in fat and sugar, but rich in antioxidants

Dark chocolate is considered to have the better health credentials because of its high content of raw cocoa. But, according to an article in New Scientist magazine (December 20-27, 2008), there is a looming dark side to chocolate production. The bad news for chocoholics is that without some intervention, the supply of chocolate could start to run low.

Chocolate is made from the fermented, roasted seeds of the Theobroma cacao (cocoa) tree. Africa grows 70 per cent of cacao -- mostly in Ivory Coast and Ghana -- but disease, deforestation and drought destroy a third of the world's cacao crop every year.

Nevertheless, there is some good news. The men from Mars could save the day. Scientists from the biggest chocolate company in the world, Mars Inc, have initiated a study, the results of which could lead to disease resistant trees and increased cacao yields.

So, it's no time to stop eating chocolate. In fact, the New Scientist article suggests that an extra reason to enjoy eating chocolate is that the 'active ingredients' are almost certainly grown on small farms in poor countries. 'When you buy chocolate, you help poor farmers feed their families'

Meanwhile back in Australia, the land of comparative plenty, there are still probably some pangs of guilt associated with eating (at least) large quantities of chocolate. And understandably so; 50 per cent of our population is overweight or obese.

Of course, we can't just blame chocolate. During the festive season, general over indulgence in food and drink seems almost normal and accepted behaviour. The season to be jolly can have some jolly unwanted consequences. Perhaps our New Year's resolutions, from February onwards, can include more moderation with our eating and drinking and more exercise as well. For the more immediate problems of heartburn and indigestion, your pharmacist can now provide you with some even more effective relief and also some good advice on preventing the hangover effects of too much of a good thing. And maybe it's worth trying one more piece of chocolate, just to help the world's economy.

Production & Quality

Cameroon November Cocoa Beans Exports up 19 Percent

Source: Reuters

Yaounde, Dec 29, 2008 - Cameroon's cocoa bean exports between August and November were 75,949 tonnes, up 19 percent on the same period last year, according to data released late on Wednesday by cocoa bodies in the world's fifth biggest grower. Shipments in the first four months of the 2007/08 season were 63,713 tonnes, and cocoa officials expect this season's harvest to exceed last year's.

Exports in November, the fourth month of the 2008/09 season, were up 16 percent year-on-year at 37,134 tonnes, figures from the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (NCCB) and the Cocoa and Coffee Interprofessional Board (CCIB) showed.

"This confirms what we have said before, that production will be higher this 2008/09 season compared to the previous campaign thanks to very favourable weather conditions," said the NCCB's chief of operations, Andre Marie Lema.

Cameroon's cocoa season runs from August 1 to July 31 of the following year.

SW Nigeria Graded Cocoa Price Up At NGN320,000/Ton - Buyers.

IBADAN, Nigeria, Dec 30, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

The price of graded cocoa in southwestern Nigeria Tuesday was 320,000 naira (\$2,289) a metric ton, up from NGN300,000 last week due to the depreciation of the currency against the dollar, buyers said.

The manager of a cooperative produce marketing union in Ibadan, capital of Oyo state, said NGN320,000 was being paid by exporters for cocoa delivered to Lagos by Local Buying Agents.

LBAs buy cocoa from farmers for exporters. Graded cocoa has been inspected and certified fit for export.

"The cocoa price is rising in the local market because of the depreciation of the naira. It has been going up since the naira started losing value against the U.S. dollar about a month ago, " he told Dow Jones Newswires. The naira which stood at NGN139.67/dollar last week had depreciated to NGN139.81/dollar Tuesday.

He said main crop cocoa volume was "still high" in the market and the price is not going up because of beans scarcity. A buyer in Ile-Ife, an important cocoa town in Osun state, said graded cocoa was also selling in the state at NGN320,000/ton.

He said farmers in the southwest were selling their cocoa at NGN300,000 but threatening to hoard beans if the price fails to rise further in the new year. "Farmers complain that the prices of food, medicine and general goods have gone up in the past three weeks because of the depreciating value of the naira. They want more money for cocoa, " he said.

The southwest cocoa belt accounts for 70% of Nigeria's annual cocoa production of 242,000 tons.

Brazil's Bahia Cocoa Trees Lose Puff After Drought

Source: Reuters

31/12/2008

Sao Paulo, Dec 30 - Arrivals from Brazil's main cocoa crop have slipped behind last year's pace, Bahia Commercial Association said on Tuesday, after a long dry spell that has taken a toll on trees. Cocoa arrivals from Bahia and other states so far during the 2008/09 (May/April) main crop reached 2.85 million 60-kg bags by Dec. 28, down 2 percent from 2.91 million bags delivered by the same period a year ago, it said.

Bahia, Brazil's main cocoa producing state, delivered 33,508 bags in the week ending Dec. 28, down from 44,117 bags during the same period last year. A dry spell from September there that lasted nearly two months was hard on the trees.

"Arrivals from Bahia were disappointing and the probability of meeting the 750,000 bags target for the main crop becomes more and more distant," said cocoa analyst Thomas Hartmann. Other areas however were producing a quarter more than last year, he said.

The figure of 750,000 bags Hartmann referred to was one of several estimates for 2008/09 cocoa production in Bahia state.

In November some analysts including Hartmann thought Brazil's main cocoa state could turn out around 800,000 tonnes during the main crop, but the effects of a prolonged dry spell have made them more pessimistic since then.

Hartmann said Bahia was expected to be dry during the week but that rains could arrive by Sunday. Temperatures would be within the range of 19-31 degrees Celsius.

Farm gate prices in Bahia rose from the 100-102 reals range per arroba (15 kg) last week to close at 96-98 reals on Wednesday, equivalent to \$2,745-\$2,800 per tonne, he said.

"Weaker terminal quotes and a weaker dollar against the Brazilian real caused farm gate prices in Bahia to end the year lower," Hartmann said.

949 Farmers Get N161million Micro Credit.

AllAfrica.com English, (ALGY), 29 December 2008.

Dec 29, 2008 (Leadership/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX News Network) --

About N161 million micro-credit loans have been disbursed to 949 Akwa Ibom farmers under the Inter-ministerial Committee on Micro-credit Scheme by the state government.

The state governor, Chief Godswill O. Akpabio, who announced this at the presentation of next year's budget proposal of N195.31billion against N265.15 billion budgeted for 2008, to the state House of Assembly. Chief Akpabio noted that the government would have done more next year but for the shortfall in oil revenue, attributing this to the global economic recession that led to a drastic drop in oil prices from an all high of \$141 per barrel in six months to less than \$40 a barrel in six weeks.

"In line with the current reality a \$ 45 per barrel benchmark has been adopted for the 2009 budget against the corresponding benchmark of \$59 used for the 2008 budget", the governor added.

He further hinted that N146.2 million agricultural loans were given to 163 farmers through Nigeria Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB), pointing out that under the Integrated Farmers Scheme by the government, 600 graduate farmers were trained and a N500, 000 loan facility was given to each beneficiary to commence production.

He revealed that the government purchased and distributed 18,000 metric tonnes of assorted brands of fertiliser valued, at N945, 509,375 to farmers at a subsidised rate.

Under the Community Plantation Development Scheme, the governor said 4,288 hectares of oil palm, 443 hectares of rubber and 349 hectares of cocoa were planted in the 31 local government areas of the state.

On revenue collection, Chief Akpabio said as at September this year, N187.39 billion against approved estimate of N236.22 billion, representing an achievement had been collected of 79.3 per cent, while another N0.091 billion was realised from other capital receipts.

The state chief executive disclosed that the government spent N36.66 billion on recurrent services while N111.33 billion was expended on capital projects during the period under review.

The governor highlighted achievements of his administration to include, playing host to the first Akwa Ibom Infrastructure Summit in Uyo, organised to draw investors' attention to basic infrastructure begging for upgrading, massive educational infrastructural development and massive road construction and bridges, contract awarded for construction of cottage hospitals in Eastern Obolo, Ibeno, Essien Udim, Ukanafun and Ika Local Government Areas as well as renovation of Eket, Ikot Ekpene, and Oron General Hospitals.

Others, according to him, are contracts signed for the construction of Ibom Tropicana and Amusement Galleria, establishment of Ibom Urban Transport Scheme, construction of Ultra-modern e-library along IBB Avenue, Uyo, and release of take-off grant for free, compulsory education at primary and post-primary levels, and completion of Ibom Power Plant as well as Akwa Ibom International Airport Project.

DJ Cameroon's Aug-Nov 08 Cocoa Beans Exports 75,949 Tons - NCCB.

YAOUNDE, Cameroon, Dec 29, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

Cameroon exported 75,949 metric tons of cocoa beans between August and November of the current 2008-09 season, up from 63,713 tons in the same period in the previous season, statistics released to Dow Jones Newswires Monday by the National Cocoa and Coffee Board show.

The NCCB is Cameroon's quality control watchdog for commodities. The figures indicate that the country exported 37,135 tons of the beans in November, compared with 32,142 tons in November 2007. Cameroon produced a record 187,532 tons of cocoa beans during the 2007-08 season, which runs from August to July, 2% more than the previous season.

DJ Ivory Coast Oct 1-Dec 23 Cocoa Export Declarations -15% On Yr.

ABIDJAN, Dec 31, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

From the Oct. 1 start of the 2008-09 season to Dec. 23, Ivory Coast's shippers and cocoa processors declared 339,269 metric tons of cocoa for export, down 58,178 tons, or 15%, on the 397,447 tons declared in the same period last season, official data obtained by Dow Jones Newswires showed Wednesday.

Export declarations in the 14 days to Dec. 23 were 107,059 tons, almost twice as much as the 54,053 tons registered in the preceding two weeks, reflecting the gathering of speed of harvesting of the 2008-09 main crop.

Declarations included 228,165 tons of "raw" beans, down 28% on last season's 317,079 tons, due to a slow start of harvesting and increased local cocoa processing capacity. The bean equivalent of cocoa products was 18,796 tons, up 62% on last season's 11,571 tons.

INDONESIAN CACAO EXPORTS EXPECTED TO DROP 30 PCT IN 2008.

Asia Pulse, (AGJX), 31 December 2008.

MAKASSAR, Dec 31 Asia Pulse - Indonesia's cacao exports in 2008 are expected to drop 20 per cent compared to last year when they reached a total volume of 532,000 tons, an industry spokesman said.

"The decline in cacao exports is projected because production from year to year has decreased and there is the impact of the global crisis," Halim Razak, chairman of the South Sulawesi branch of the Indonesian Cacao Association (Askindo), said on Tuesday.

According to available data, national cacao production reached 900,000 tons in 2006 and it dropped to 532,000 tons in 2007 while the figure for 2008 was projected at 490,000 tons. Meanwhile, domestic demand stood at an average of 230,000 tons per year.

With production decreasing while domestic demand remained constant, the allocations for exports would go down.

The situation was worsened by a downward trend in the commodity's world market price during the last six months. Last September the world market price was US\$2,600 per ton but it had since dropped to US\$2,100 per ton. Cacao's domestic market price was Rp 35,000 (US\$3.3) per kg in September but it was now down at Rp 18,000 per kg.

Elaborating on the continuing decline in cacao production, Razak said production in West and South Sulawesi was now an average of only 500 kg per hectare per year whereas ideally it should be around 1.5 tons per hectare per year. "Most of the plants are over 15 years old so that they are less productive and often affected by cacao plant diseases," he said.

To improve the situation, Razak said, the local administrations should soon implement a cacao plants revitalization program and help farmers fight the plant diseases.

The local government's assistance was necessary because South and West Sulawesi provinces accounted for around 70 per cent of the country's cacao exports every year.

SOUTH SULAWESI'S EXPORTS DROP 55PCT TO US\$1BLN.

MAKASSAR, South Sulawesi, Dec 31 Asia Pulse - South Sulawesi's exports in the January-September 2008 period dropped 55.40 per cent to US\$1.560 billion, from US\$2.816 billion in the same period a year earlier, an official said.

The head of South Sulawesi's Trade and Industry Office, Amal Natsir, said here on Monday that the decline in the export value of South Sulawesi province was partly due to the fall in foreign exchange earnings from the region's nickel exports.

Nickel is South Sulawesi's chief export commodity, and exports until September this year reached only US\$1.132 billion, he said. In a progress report he delivered to the South Sulawesi governor's office on Monday, Natsir said that exports of about 40 agricultural commodities since January had earned the state US\$300.1 million.

Exports rose 19.21 per cent from those in the corresponding period in 2007, which stood at US\$251.7 million, he said. In the meantime, South Sulawesi Governor Syahrul Yasin Limpo said last week that the province was planning to export 200,000 tons of rice to Malaysia next year.

"South Sulawesi is ready to export rice to Malaysia because the province, with a population of eight million, has a stock surplus of about two million tons, " the governor told reporters. He said that South Sulawesi had decided to export rice to Malaysia after the

Malaysian government and businesses gave a good response to a South Sulawesi solo exhibition in the neighboring country recently. During the 'Sulsel Expo' the province displayed a number of its primary commodities such as cacao, rice, maize, sea weed and even cows.

Ghana Cocoa Beans To Be Smuggled Into Ivory Coast - Buyers.

BETTIE, Ivory Coast, Dec 31, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News Select via Comtex) --

Buyers in the eastern cocoa belt are expecting tens of thousands of metric tons of beans from neighboring Ghana to be smuggled into Ivory Coast in the coming six months. "We can pay them (the Ghanaian farmers) 750 CFA francs (\$1.65) while over there the price is XOF650, " a leading buyer told Dow Jones Newswires in his warehouse in Bettie, 30 kilometers from the Ghana border, during a field trip Tuesday.

All buyers in the area also said they were looking forward to receiving beans from Ghana. "They are good quality and we can mix them in with our beans to boost the overall quality, " said another buyer. All said tens of thousands of tons would flow to the Ivorian side of the border.

In Oct-Dec, the first three months of the 2008-09 season there has been no smuggling as prices paid at the Ivorian farmgates were about the same as in Ghana. In preceding seasons cross-border smuggling has been between 30,000 and 50,000 tons.

With an average annual output of 1.3 million tons, Ivory Coast is the world's leading grower, followed by Ghana with 650,000 tons.

The Market

ICE Cocoa Review: Consolidates Lower As Supply Concerns Ease.

NEW YORK, Dec 29, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

ICE futures U.S. cocoa consolidated lower Monday as support from the behind-schedule incoming Ivory Coast crop recedes. March cocoa settled down \$75 at \$2,551 a metric ton and the May contract settled \$79 lower at \$2,540.

March futures opened flat and drifted sideways to lower in early trade. Analysts attributed a steep, mid-session drop to the \$2,460 level, an eight-session low, to a suspected ordering error. In reaction, futures bounced up to the session high of \$2,692 and settled back into a sideways-to-lower trend. Cocoa settled off of lows but still down on the day.

March may trade back to the \$2,500 level, followed by \$2,250 support, said Jimmy Tintle, analyst at Transworld Futures in Tampa. The market seems to be ignoring the typically influential U.S. dollar and concentrating solely on supply and demand, Tintle said.

Ivory Coast cocoa arrivals have stopped falling, which erases some of the bullishness that pushed cocoa in its December rally, said Jack Scoville, vice president of Price Futures Group in Chicago.

The most recent data shows cocoa arrivals to ports for export in Ivory Coast, the world's leading cocoa producer, down 37% from Oct. 1 to Dec. 21, comparable to the 38% reduction in the October-November period. Farmers

there expect more cocoa to be available to the market in January and February, though crop experts note in inundation of beans would only partially make up for Ivory Coast earlier losses.

Futures should see buying on price dips, Scoville said. Liffe March cocoa futures settled down GBP13 at GBP1,770, a ton and May contract settled GBP16 lower at GBP1,755.

ICE cocoa open interest decreased by 31 positions Friday to total 115,539, the exchange reported.

Volume was estimated at 7,952 contracts, according to exchange data. In options, approximately 650 calls and 166 puts traded.

	Close	Change	Range
Mar	\$2,551	-\$75	\$2,460-\$2,692
May	\$2,540	-\$79	\$2,472-\$2,675
Sep	\$2,499	-\$90	\$2,491-\$2,599

Cocoa Rises, Topping Commodities, Amid Global Supply Shortage

By Shruti Date Singh

Dec. 31 (Bloomberg) -- Cocoa futures in New York rose, becoming the top-performing commodity this year, as global demand is expected to exceed supply for a third straight year.

Cocoa rose 31 percent in 2008, the largest gain among 19 raw materials in the Reuters/Jefferies CRB Index. Global demand will exceed supply by 45,000 metric tons in the year ending Sept. 30, Fortis Bank and VM Group said in a report Dec. 22. Stockpiles will drop 3.1 percent to 1.43 million tons this marketing year, according to the report.

"Cocoa has the best fundamentals of any commodity except maybe tin," Lars H. Steffensen, a managing partner at Ebullio Capital Management LLP in Southend-on-Sea, U.K., said in an e-mail today. "They share a low-inventory story, straight deficits and limited ability for production increases, along with supply pipe problems."

Cocoa futures for March delivery rose \$136, or 5.4 percent, to \$2,665 a metric ton on ICE Futures U.S. in New York. The most-active contract gained for the third straight year amid the supply deficit and a reduced crop in Ivory Coast, the biggest grower of the beans used to make chocolate.

The price rose 24 percent last year, and 8.7 percent in 2006.

Ivory Coast's main crop will total 1.05 million tons, 70,000 less than forecast in November, according to Fortis and VM Group. The main crop, the larger of two annual harvests, is gathered from October through March.

"Throw the unstable situation in the Ivory Coast in and you have a market that is very dangerous to be short of," Steffensen said.

Ivory Coast was divided into a rebel-held north and a government-controlled south after a revolt in 2002. Elections are expected to be held next year.

SW Nigeria Graded-Cocoa Price Steady At NGN320,000/Ton -Buyers

IBADAN, Nigeria, Jan 02, 2009 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) -- The price of graded cocoa in southwestern Nigeria remained steady at 320,000 naira (\$2,289) a metric ton, buyers said Friday.

"Cocoa price has not moved up or down since it peaked at NGN320,000 last week. Marketing has been slow because of the Christmas and New Year holidays," according to a buyer in Akure, capital of Ondo state, the largest cocoa producer in the country.

He said local buying agents who buy cocoa from farmers for exporters, had "substantial" cocoa in their warehouses for delivery to exporters in Lagos for shipment.

He said cocoa delivery trucks were insufficient and there would be a "scramble for the available trucks," as the buying agents try to send cocoa Lagos to meet delivery schedules.

This, he added, may push up costs of transporting graded cocoa, which has been inspected and certified fit for export, to Lagos.

Another buyer in Ile-Ife, an important cocoa-growing and marketing town in Osun state, said farmers have begun harvesting their last bit of main crop cocoa.

"I think the harvest should be over by the end of the month or early in February and farmers would shift attention to the midcrop cocoa," he said.

Harvesting of the main crop in the southwest usually starts in September/October and ends in January or February while the midcrop harvest runs from March/April to July or August. He said there have been some rains since the dry season began in November and these have helped the development of the midcrop.

"We expect some new rainfall in late January and part of February to further help the development of the midcrop," he said. The southwest cocoa belt accounts for 70% of Nigeria's annual cocoa production of 242,000 tons.

SOFTS-London cocoa surges 66 pct in 2008 on tight supplies

By David Brough

LONDON, Dec 31 (Reuters) - London cocoa futures surged by 66 percent in 2008, driven by tight global supplies, making them an outstanding performer among the major financial markets.

Robusta coffee futures prices shed 19 percent in 2008, due to ample availability, and white sugar ended the year just 0.95 percent higher than the last trading day of 2007 despite huge volatility in the 12 months, triggered by investment funds.

After an abbreviated London session, London benchmark second-month cocoa

The settlement was up 5 pounds from Tuesday in thin volume of 408 lots.

Dealers were divided over whether cocoa would head higher, with some saying the commodity was vulnerable to sell-offs by investors to lock in profits.

"There are quite a few people who say that cocoa is very topky at the moment," one dealer said.

ICE March cocoa was up \$32 or 1.3 percent to \$2,561 per tonne at 1312 GMT.

Dealers digested fresh data underscoring slow arrivals of cocoa beans to ports in top producer Ivory Coast.

Cocoa arrivals at ports in Ivory Coast reached 357,936 tonnes by Dec. 7, down from 530,044 tonnes in the same period a year ago, according to aggregated data from exporters obtained by Reuters on Wednesday.

Arrivals from Brazil's main cocoa crop have slipped behind last year's pace, Bahia Commercial Association said on Tuesday, after a long dry spell that has taken a toll on trees.

The loss in London robusta coffee futures prices in 2008 was driven by ample supplies against a backdrop of steady demand, dealers said.

"There seems to be a reasonable supply of robustas," one London dealer said. "Downward pressure (in prices) may continue in the new year."

Traders said activity on Wednesday had been dominated by Against Actuals (AAs, a form of hedging).

London March robustas ended 2008 at \$1,546 per tonne, down \$22 or 1.4 percent from Tuesday, in slack turnover of 876 lots.

ICE March arabicas were down 0.1 cent to \$1.0745 per lb.

In sugar, futures prices appeared to be more in tune with market fundamentals after a volatile year driven by funds that piled into the sweetener early in 2008 and later sold off after a collapse in oil prices on a grim global economic outlook.

"The funds, which were the instigators of the price rally, headed for the exits," said David Sadler, a senior sugar futures trader, summing up the volatile trading conditions in 2008.

"We came back to more realistic levels (in price)."

Dealers said they expected funds to reduce allocations to sugar by some 40,000-45,000 lots in January 2009.

Sugar has proven resilient so far to the gloomy outlook for the global economy, reflecting stable demand for the sweetener as a staple in diets.

London front-month white sugar, which ended 2007 at \$315.00 per tonne, added just \$3.00 by the end of 2008, settling at \$318.00 per tonne.

The settlement was \$2.0 or 0.6 percent above Tuesday's close in light volume of 564 lots.

ICE March raw sugar was up 0.10 cent or 0.9 percent from Tuesday to stand at 11.39 cents per lb at 1255 GMT. (Reporting by David Brough; editing by Anthony Barker)

SW Cameroon Cocoa Prices Hit 8-year High Of XAF1,050-1,200/Kg

YAOUNDE, Cameroon, Dec 31, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) -- The price of cocoa beans hit an eight-year high of 1,050-1,200 CFA francs (\$2.31-\$2.64) a kilogram in Cameroon's chief cocoa region of Southwest Province, up from XAF900-950/kg a fortnight earlier, farmers and traders said Wednesday. At least half of Cameroon's annual cocoa output of around 180,000 metric tons comes for the Southwest province, government and industry data show.

Traders and farmers said the surging prices are due to a shortage of cocoa at local markets.

"There's still cocoa on the farms, but there is a bit of a scarcity of cocoa in the markets because traders even come to ask us to sell them cocoa at home," said farmer Peter Ndep in the big cocoa-growing town of Mamfe. Ndep, who doubles as middleman trader, said: "It's because of the high demand that farmers began pricing their cocoa higher at XAF1,000/kg last week, then now at XAF1,050/kg. But right now a kilogram of cocoa sells at XAF1,200 in Kumba.

Kumba is the key cocoa-growing and trading town in the province.

"Some of the warehouses are already getting empty, and they need cocoa to fill them up, this seems to be why there is high demand for cocoa," said Joseph Chick Mbah from nearby Kwakwa village, on return from selling his six tons of cocoa in Kumba.

SW Nigeria Graded-Cocoa Price Steady At NGN320,000/Ton -Buyers.

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ICE Cocoa Review: Sinks On Charts, But Supply Concerns Support.

NEW YORK, Jan 02, 2009 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

ICE Futures U.S. cocoa slid back from recent highs in light holiday trade Friday with pressure from weakening technicals but underlying support from supply concerns.

March cocoa settled down \$125 at \$2,540 a metric ton and the May contract also settled \$125 lower at \$2,532. For the week, March cocoa lost \$86.

March cocoa opened lower and slid through most of the session before finding support at the \$2,494 level. The contract's inability to hold above the \$2,700 level after the Dec. 19 close of \$2,711 led to Friday's chart-based selling.

Futures trimmed some losses but still settled sharply lower on the day. Tight physical cocoa supplies are expected to lend underlying support in continued range trade, analysts said.

The delayed Ivory Coast main cocoa harvest supports futures unless implications of declining demand surface, said Bill Raffety, analyst and broker at Penson GHCO in New York.

The incoming crop in Ivory Coast, the world's main cocoa producer, is delayed and prices are relatively stronger as a result. Ivory Coast export declarations were down 15% on the year for the Oct. 1-Dec. 23 timeframe. However, export declarations in the 14 days to Dec. 23 were almost twice as much as the amount registered in the preceding two weeks, reflecting the gathering speed of harvesting of the 2008-09 main crop.

March will continue trading from \$2,400 to \$2,700 in the near term while seasonal selling could continue into next week, said Jack Scoville, vice president at Price Futures Group in Chicago. The losses are a minor setback in a major run up and not extremely influential on broader market direction, Scoville said.

February cocoa options expire with the close of Friday's session. Liffe March cocoa futures settled up GBP11 at GBP1,792 a ton and the May contract settled GBP14 higher at GBP1,779.

ICE cocoa open interest decreased by 246 positions Wednesday to total 116,395, the exchange reported.

Volume was estimated at 5,638 contracts, according to exchange data. In options, approximately 580 calls and 257 puts traded.

	Close	Change	Range
Mar	\$2,540	-\$125	\$2,494-\$2,649
May	\$2,532	-\$125	\$2,493-\$2,608
Sep	\$2,505	-\$118	\$2,505-\$2,505

ICE cocoa slumps in retracement of year-end gains

Reuters, Friday January 2 2009

By Marcy Nicholson and Nigel Hunt

NEW YORK/LONDON, Jan 2 (Reuters) - Cocoa futures on ICE tumbled around 5 percent Friday, giving up Wednesday's sharp gains on profit-taking while thin, post-holiday trade heightened the market's volatility.

Arabica coffee prices on ICE also retraced lower after a large surge on Wednesday while raw sugar edged higher, boosted by a strong rebound in crude oil after early sharp losses.

The agricultural markets were closed Thursday for New Year's Day.

"Looks like we're getting some definite profit-taking in here because we had that big run-up and technically that market is beginning to break down a bit," said Sterling Smith, vice-president for FuturesOne in Chicago.

"I think you may have some traditional funds getting a little bit nervous about how quick this market is and how unstable it's been, even though it is thin volume," Smith said.

Volume remained thin following the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, and ahead of the weekend, with market players expected to return to their desks Monday.

March cocoa on ICE fell \$125, or 4.7 percent, to close at \$2,540. The benchmark contract surged 5.4 percent Wednesday.

Prices in London, where the market was shut when the rally gathered steam on Wednesday, were more stable with May finishing 14 pounds higher at 1,779 pounds a tonne.

Dealers said sterling weakness helped to underpin prices in London while it pressured the U.S. market. The U.K. currency fell against the euro and the dollar.

Arabica coffee futures on ICE were lower, giving up some ground after a sharp jump on Wednesday.

March was off 1.15 cents to close at \$1.1090 per lb. The contract climbed 4.50 cents on Wednesday.

Robusta coffee in London was higher, however, as the market adjusted to the jump in values in New York late on Wednesday.

March robustas finished up \$44, or 2.9 percent, at \$1,590 a tonne.

Dealers noted a further widening in the premium for front month January, which has been buoyed by talk a major trade house may be looking to take delivery of a large tonnage.

Raw sugar futures on ICE were slightly higher as crude oil reversed early losses and moved higher. Sugar, which is used in Brazil to produce biofuel ethanol, often tracks trends in the crude oil market.

Oil prices rose more than 3 percent in volatile trading as fog delayed Gulf Coast tankers, Wall Street strengthened, and tensions between Russia and Ukraine and Gaza violence in the Middle East all provided lift.

March raws on ICE inched up 0.04 cents to settle at 11.85 cents.

"Funds seem to be doing some end- and first-of-the-year pricing," said Jack Scoville, a vice-president with brokers Price Group in Chicago.

White sugar futures on Liffe rose, with prices marked higher to reflect the late rally in ICE raws on Wednesday.

March whites closed up \$11.20 a tonne at \$329.20 after peaking at \$330.40, its highest level in more than one month. (Additional reporting by Rene Pastor in New York; editing by Jim Marshall) Printable version | larger | smaller Business

Processing & Manufacturing

Chocolate industry hit by surging cocoa prices

World Radio Switzerland, Switzerland - 29 Dec 2008

Last week cocoa prices hit a 23-year high – a move that bodes ill for the Swiss chocolate industry and chocolate lovers everywhere. The price surge comes amid fears of falling cocoa production in Africa. So what impact will this have on consumers, as well as Swiss chocolate makers such as Lindt & Sprüngli, Barry Callebaut and Nestlé? WRS's Mark Butcher spoke to Dr Franz Schmid, director of chocosuisse, the Association of Swiss Chocolate Manufacturers.

DJ Barry Callebaut Cameroon Buys 17,383 Tons Cocoa Beans Aug-Nov

YAOUNDE, Cameroon, Dec 29, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) -- The Cameroon subsidiary of Switzerland-based Barry Callebaut AG (BARN.EB) bought 17,383 metric tons of cocoa beans for grinding between August and November of the current 2008-09 season, up from the 11,075 tons it bought in the same period last season, a statement from the National Cocoa and Coffee Board, or NCCB, said Monday.

The cocoa season in Cameroon officially runs from August through July of the next year.

The statistics show the company bought 6,880 tons of cocoa beans in November alone.

Known locally as Societe Industrielle Camerounaise des Cacaos SA, or Sic Cacao, the grinder has the capacity to process 30,000 tons of cocoa beans a year.

The Swiss firm owns a 70% share and the rest is held by the Cameroon government and local private individuals.

Barry Callebaut Cameroon bought 21,000 tons of cocoa beans for processing in the 2007-08 season, down from 21,865 tons in the previous season, government and industry data indicate.

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Business & Economy

CocoaPhil, Success Alliance, govt to rehabilitate cocoa postharvest facilities

Written by Jennifer A. Ng / Reporter

Sunday, 04 January 2009

Business Mirror, Philippines

NONprofit organization Cocoa Foundation of the Philippine (CocoaPhil), together with the government and other nongovernment organizations, local government units (LGUs), and participants of the Success Alliance Program, will undertake a P60-million rehabilitation and modernization of postharvest facilities for cocoa.

Edward David, president of CocoaPhil, said the rehabilitation and modernization of postharvest facilities for cocoa is part of efforts to ensure that the local cocoa produced by farmers is on a par with international standards.

"The funds will come from various sources like CocoaPhil, the government, LGUs and other NGOs," said David in a telephone interview.

The CocoaPhil chief said stakeholders in the local cocoa industry are working double time to rehabilitate cocoa farms, put up nurseries and train farmers so that the Philippines can start cashing in on the cocoa trade.

Aside from training 5,000 more cocoa farmers this year and rehabilitating postharvest facilities, an additional 400,000 hectares of farmlands will be opened up to cocoa this year.

"While the government, LGUs and other partners are very supportive, the industry still needs more support," said David.

For this year, CocoaPhil noted that production of cocoa will remain significantly small as the industry is still in the process of building up its capabilities. He said the industry is expected to reap the fruits of its labors by next year.

In a paper presented by CocoaPhil in a meeting last December in Quezon City, the group noted that demand for cocoa will increase and that there will be new consumers of dark chocolate and other new cocoa-based products in India, Europe and even China.

CocoaPhil noted that the popularity of cocoa products like chocolate is due to the presence of antioxidants called flavonoids, a potent plant compound. Studies noted that flavonoids slow the processing of "bad" LDL cholesterol into material that clogs the arteries, and, at the same time, make blood platelets less likely to clump and cause clots.

The group is part of the Success Alliance Phase Program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The three-year project was launched on October 27, 2006. It aims to train 150 trainers and 15,000 smallholder farmers in cocoa production, postharvest processing, pest and disease management, and marketing through the farmer field school, methodology and participatory extension methods.

Commodity Boom Turns Bust in 2008 as Worldwide Economy Crumbles

By Pham-Duy Nguyen

Jan. 1 (Bloomberg) -- Commodity prices in 2008 plunged the most in five decades as demand for energy, metals and grains tumbled in the second half because of the recession.

From July to December, the slumping economy drove crude oil, gasoline, copper, corn, and wheat down from records in the first half. In 2008, the Reuters/Jefferies CRB Index of 19 raw materials fell 36 percent, the most since the gauge debuted in 1956, to 229.54. It rose to a record 473.97 on July 3. On Dec. 5, the measure dropped to the lowest since August 2002.

The worldwide economy crumbled last year. Home prices plummeted, investment banks collapsed and credit froze. U.S. consumer spending plunged, pushing the nation's automakers to the brink of bankruptcy. Growth in China and other emerging markets withered.

"Macroeconomically, we're in a free fall," said [John Brynjolfsson](#), the managing director and chief investment officer at hedge fund Armored Wolf LLC in Aliso Viejo, California. "That's a complete destruction in industrial production and demand, and this is likely to keep pressure on the commodity sector in general."

In 2008, 15 prices dropped in the CRB, led by gasoline and nickel. Only four climbed, paced by cocoa.

"The recession will stretch for at least the next six months," [Marc Faber](#), the managing director of Marc Faber Ltd. in Hong Kong and publisher of the "Gloom, Boom and Doom Report" said in an interview on Bloomberg Television on Dec. 26. "2009 will be a write-off in terms of economic activity."

Gasoline, Cocoa

In 2008, gasoline dropped 59 percent, the most among CRB components. Cocoa climbed 31 percent, the biggest increase. Sugar, gold and hogs were the only other commodities to post gains.

Gasoline futures declined to \$1.0082 a gallon last year on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The price climbed to a record \$3.631 on July 11. The 2008 low was 78.5 cents on Dec. 24.

Crude oil futures tumbled a record 54 percent to \$44.60 a barrel last year on the Nymex. The price rose to an all-time high of \$147.27 on July 11. On Dec. 19, it touched \$32.40, the lowest since February 2004.

Oil may rebound to average \$60 in 2009 as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries makes record production cuts to counter the deepest economic slump since World War II.

Copper futures declined 54 percent to \$1.41 a pound in 2008 on the Comex division of the Nymex. The price rose to a record \$4.2605 on May 5. On Dec. 26, the metal touched \$1.255, the lowest since October 2004.

'Better Next Year'

"Things are going to be a lot better next year than people think," [Lars Steffensen](#), the founder and managing director of Ebulio Capital Management LLP, a commodity hedge fund based in Southend-on-Sea, U.K., said yesterday. "The U.S. is going to print the dollar to get out of the recession, and anything tangible, like industrial metals, is going to be worth more."

Cocoa futures in 2008 jumped 30 percent to \$2,665 a metric ton on ICE Futures U.S. in New York. A smaller crop in Ivory Coast, the world's biggest producer, eroded inventories, contributing to a global deficit.

"Cocoa has the best fundamentals of any commodities, except maybe tin," Steffensen said. "They share a low-inventory story, straight deficits and limited ability for production increases, along with supply problems."

Gold futures rose 5.5 percent to \$884.30 an ounce last year on the Comex division of the Nymex, marking the eighth-straight annual increase. The metal reached a record \$1,033.90 in March. Gold may benefit as U.S. government policies result in inflation in the long term, said [Chip Hanlon](#), the president of Delta Global Advisors Inc. in Huntington Beach, California.

Inflation

The Federal Reserve "believes it has to prop up the financial system," Hanlon said. "The move toward quantitative easing to fight what they perceive as deflation ultimately will lead to higher rates of inflation."

The U.S. government has pledged more than \$8.5 trillion to help ease the credit crisis. The Fed slashed its benchmark interest rate to near zero to help stimulate the economy.

Hog futures climbed 5.2 percent to 60.875 cents a pound last year on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. The global economic slowdown set the stage for cutbacks in supplies.

"We're going to have 3 percent to 4 percent less pigs next year, and that should be very supportive to higher pork prices," [Mark Greenwood](#), who manages about \$1 billion of loans and leases to swine producers for AgStar Financial Services in Mankato, said last month.

2008	% drop		% drop	2008	% gain
Gasoline	59	Natural gas	25	Cocoa	31
Nickel	55	Silver	24	Sugar	9.1
Crude oil	54	Soybeans	18	Gold	5.5
Copper	53	Coffee	18	Hogs	5.2
Orange juice	53	Corn	11		
Heating oil	47	Cattle	11		
Aluminum	36	S&P 500	38		
Wheat	31	CRB Index	36	MSCI World	42
Cotton	28				

Labour Issues

Research and Development

Promotion

Others

Ivory Coast sends army to secure cocoa-growing area

By Ange Aboa

ABIDJAN, Dec 31 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast has sent hundreds of soldiers to bolster security in its cocoa-growing west, but farmers caught up in simmering land disputes say that won't lure them back to fields they abandoned during years of conflict. The west of the world's top cocoa producer was the scene of some of the most violent clashes during and since a brief 2002-2003 war, in which rebels seized the north, dividing a country that was once the most stable in West Africa.

Disputes over land and who has the right to Ivorian nationality have been at the heart of a crisis that continues today.

Elections meant to consolidate a tortuous peace process have been repeatedly delayed, largely due to the slow issuing of identity papers and delays disarming rebels and pro-government militia.

"The hierarchy has announced the dispatching of 700 men, of which 300 are gendarmes," Colonel Rene Sako, the army's head of planning, told Reuters on Wednesday.

"These men have a mission to secure the borders with Liberia, fight against bandits and help the allogenes return to their cocoa fields," he added.

"Allogenes" is a term used to describe "outsiders", both foreign and Ivorian, in western Ivory Coast.

Liberal land policies under which land belonged to those "who worked it" helped attract millions of migrants to Ivory Coast in the decades following independence from France in 1960.

IMMIGRANT SOCIETY

The National Rural Development Association estimates that foreigners, often from Burkina Faso and Mali, have been farming around 90 percent of the country's western cocoa fields. But a 1990s commodity price slump, nationalistic political rhetoric and the chaos of the war, sparked local clashes, occasional massacres and the flight of many allogene farmers. Some 700,000 people were displaced by Ivory Coast's war. "I am making every last effort to ensure that those who have not yet returned to their fields do so. Securing the farms is our concern today. I will not let you down," President Laurent Gbagbo said when he announced the initiative at the weekend. "As we are now returning to normality, everyone must return to their farms," he said.

Various organisations are trying to restore confidence between communities. The government launched an initiative in September to demarcate rural land to try to end rows over land. However, tensions simmered on and there were several clashes in October and November around the volatile town of Guiglo, near the border with Liberia, when allogenes tried to return to their fields. At least three were killed in one spat.

A refugee camp that had housed 10,000 allogene farmers in Guiglo officially closed in July, but nearly 800 remain. Some complain that pro-government militia have not been disarmed. "We are still in the camp and no one has said what the (army) operation is about," said Issa Koma, an allogene spokesman. "If they leave soon afterwards, that won't change anything because we know the youth around here. When the soldiers have gone, they will start harassing us again ... and it will be even worse during the elections," he added.

Having already missed several deadlines, it is not yet clear when post-war elections will take place. Diplomats and analysts say they are unlikely before the end of 2009 due to delays in identifying millions of voters and disarmament.

New COCOBOD Chief Executive Appointed

Saturday, 03 January 2009 15:37

Peace fm Online

Mr. Anthony Fofie, Deputy Chief Executive in- charge of Agronomy and Quality Control of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), has been appointed as Chief Executive of the Board. A release issued by the Public Affairs Department of the Board said the appointment, which was made by President John Agyekum Kufour on December 16, 2008, takes effect from January 1, 2009, in accordance with section 12 (2) of the Ghana Cocoa Board Act, 1984 PNDC Law 81.

Mr. Fofie replaces Mr. Isaac Osei who resigned as Chief Executive of the Board effective December 31, 2008 following his election as Member of Parliament for the Subin in the Ashanti Region.

Mr. Fofie, who hails from Kete Krachi in the Volta Region, who has served for 34 years in the cocoa industry, joined COCOBOD in 1974 as an Agricultural Officer and rose through the ranks to become the Regional Manager for the Volta and Western Regions of the Cocoa Services Division between 1991 and 2000.

In 2000 he was promoted to the position of Executive Director of Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease Control Unit of the Board, a position he held until 2004 when he was appointed the Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Agronomy and Quality Control. The release said being the most senior Deputy Chief Executive, he always acted as the Chief Executive in the absence of the substantive Chief Executive.

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Mr. Fofie had his secondary education at Bishop Herman College, Kpando, from 1963 to 1970 and continued his education at the University of Science and Technology where he obtained a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Agriculture in 1974. He had a Certificate of Planning and Appraisal of Rural Development Projects at the University of Bradford, United Kingdom in 1979.

He is a member of a number of local and international boards/committees including the Sustainable Tree Crops programme, Tema Chemicals Limited, Cadbury Cocoa Partnership Programme, International Cocoa Verification Board, Impact Ghana Coordination Group – Mars Incorporated.

The release said as the Deputy Chief Executive in-charge of Agronomy and Quality Control, Mr. Fofie has contributed immensely to the recent increase in cocoa production the country has attained. He is married with four children.

SOFTS HIGHLIGHTS: Top Stories Of The Day

BETTIE, Ivory Coast, Dec 31, 2008 (Dow Jones Commodities News via Comtex) --

Ghana Cocoa Beans To Be Smuggled Into Ivory Coast - Buyers

Buyers in the eastern cocoa belt are expecting tens of thousands of metric tons of beans from neighboring Ghana to be smuggled into Ivory Coast in the coming six months.

SUGAR

Russia Produces 3.438M Tons Sugar From 2008 Beet To Dec 29

MOSCOW (Dow Jones)--Russia produced 3.438 million metric tons of refined sugar to Dec. 29 from beet harvested this year, compared with 3.095 million tons on the same date last year, sugar producers' association Soyuzrossakhar reported Wednesday.

ICE Sugar Review: Ends Higher; US Dlr Buys In Range-Bound Mkt

ICE Futures U.S. March sugar futures ended higher Tuesday for a second straight session. The market opened with a firm tone amid early weakness in the U.S. dollar and maintained the strength despite weakness in the crude oil market.

COCOA

East Ivory Coast Cocoa Trees Heavy With Cocoa Pods

BETTIE, Ivory Coast (Dow Jones)--Cocoa trees in the eastern cocoa belt are carrying heavy pod loads and farmers expect an excellent 2009 midcrop.

SW Nigeria Graded Cocoa Price Up At NGN320,000/Ton - Buyers

IBADAN, Nigeria (Dow Jones)--The price of graded cocoa in southwestern Nigeria Tuesday was 320,000 naira (\$2,289) a metric ton, up from NGN300,000 last week due to the depreciation of the currency against the dollar, buyers said.

ICE Cocoa Review: Dips In Consolidation As Mkt Eyes Supplies

NEW YORK (Dow Jones)--ICE Futures U.S. cocoa consolidated lower Tuesday as the overbought market steadied with Ivory Coast supplies in light holiday trade.

COFFEE

Brazil Dec 1-29 Green Coffee Exps At 2,579,418 Bags-Cecafe

SAO PAULO (Dow Jones)--Brazilian green coffee exports for Dec 1-29 hit 2,579,418 60-kilogram bags, according to preliminary figures issued by the Brazilian Green Coffee Exporters Council, or Cecafe.

ICE Coffee Review: Futures Reverse Some Of Monday's Losses

U.S. coffee futures ended at firmer levels Monday, as the market erased a portion of Monday's light volume declines. Traders pointed to support at Monday's low at \$1.0625, basis March, and said the market's bounce from that zone was seen as bullish from a technical perspective.

TIT BITS

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

Commodities mostly slide in 2008

LONDON (January 04, 2009): Commodities rode a rocky ride in 2008, with crude oil, gold and base metals hitting historic peaks on supply woes, before tumbling as a global financial crisis sparked demand worries. "Commodity markets have had to cope with a complete reshaping of the economic landscape, and in a very short space of time have priced in expectations of a recession in both the global economy and demand," Barclays Capital analysts wrote in a research note.

US cocoa futures sink

NEW YORK (January 04, 2009): US cocoa futures fell on Friday, giving back all of the steep gains made the last day of 2008, in chart-based dealings made more volatile by thin volume following the New Year's Day holiday, traders said. The market was closed Thursday for New Year's Day. Benchmark March sank \$125, or 4.7 percent, to end at \$2,540 per tonne. Wide range from \$2,494 to \$2,649.

US MIDDAY: cocoa, coffee plummet

NEW YORK (January 03, 2009): US cocoa futures sank more than 6 percent in early trade on Friday, while arabica coffee also corrected lower as both markets retraced strong end-of-year gains, traders said. ICE Futures US agricultural products trading was closed Thursday for New Year's Day. Arabica coffee for March delivery down 1.65 cent at \$1.1040 per lb by 9:16 am EST (1416 GMT).

After worst year ever, commodities may lag recovery

SINGAPORE (January 02, 2009): Commodities, until six months ago the darling of investors and an out-performing asset class, sealed their worst year on record with accelerating losses in the fourth quarter of the year, data showed on Thursday.

US cocoa soars

NEW YORK (January 02, 2009): US cocoa futures surged to a strong finish in thin volume Wednesday, ending 2008 up 31 percent, on late-day book-squaring while the market remained underpinned by supply concerns, traders said. ICE Futures US agricultural futures and options will close Thursday for New Year's Day, and will reopen for regular trade Friday.

Brazil cocoa trees lose puff after drought

SAO PAULO (January 02, 2009): Arrivals from Brazil's main cocoa crop have slipped behind last year's pace, Bahia Commercial Association said on Tuesday, after a long dry spell that has taken a toll on trees. cocoa arrivals from Bahia and other states so far during the 2008-09 (May-April) main crop reached 2.85 million 60-kg bags by December 28, down 2 percent from 2.91 million bags delivered by the same period a year ago, it said.

US MIDDAY: cocoa, coffee up

NEW YORK (January 01, 2009): US cocoa and arabica coffee futures moved higher in early trade on Wednesday, in thin volume on the last trading day of 2008, traders said. ICE Futures US agricultural products will trade in regular hours Wednesday, close Thursday for New Year's Day and reopen for regular trade Friday.

London cocoa soars by 66 percent in 2008

LONDON (January 01, 2009): London cocoa futures surged by 66 percent in 2008, driven by tight global supplies, making them an outstanding performer among the major financial markets. Robusta coffee futures prices shed 19 percent in 2008, due to ample availability, and white sugar ended the year just 0.95 percent higher than the last trading day of 2007 despite huge volatility in the 12 months, triggered by investment funds.

Ivorian cocoa prices up

ABIDJAN (January 01, 2009): cocoa farmgate prices in most of Ivory Coast's growing regions rose last week, fuelled by buying on speculation that prices will spike next year due to supply shortages, farmers and exporters said on Wednesday. Average prices published by the top grower's Coffee and cocoa Bourse (BCC) pointed to further increases in all but one growing area cited, and sales at the port of San Pedro touched 800 CFA francs (\$1.71) per kg for the first time this season.

London cocoa, coffee, sugar up

LONDON (December 31, 2008): London cocoa futures edged higher on Tuesday after investors took profits from a recent rally and coffee rose on rollover business, while sugar inched up in thin pre-holiday dealings buoyed by a weak dollar. "There is profit-taking in this market (cocoa)," said Romain Lathiere, Switzerland-based fund manager with Diapason Commodities Management.

US MIDDAY: cocoa falls, coffee up

NEW YORK (December 31, 2008): US cocoa futures moved quietly lower in early trade on Tuesday, on follow-through weakness after a volatile session Monday, while arabica coffee futures inched higher with a boost from the weak dollar, traders said. ICE Futures US agricultural products will trade in regular hours Wednesday and will close Thursday for New Year's Day.

London cocoa reverses early gains, sugar rises

LONDON (December 30, 2008): London cocoa futures reversed early gains in holiday-thinned investor dealings on Monday, and remained below last week's 23-year peak, while a weaker dollar and firmer oil prices underpinned sugar. London robusta coffee closed lower on arbitrage and investor trade after spending most of the session higher, pressured by the dollar and oil.

US MIDDAY: cocoa tumbles

NEW YORK (December 30, 2008): US cocoa tumbled in volatile dealings early Monday, but recovered after falling 6.3 percent on selling amid thin volume that triggered sell-stops, while arabica coffee seesawed around the unchanged mark, traders said. Arabica coffee for March delivery was down 0.30 cent at \$1.0810 per lb by 9:07 am EST (1407 GMT). Trading band from \$1.0805 to \$1.0935.

Ivorian cocoa arrivals steeply down

ABIDJAN (December 30, 2008): cocoa arrivals at ports in No 1 grower Ivory Coast reached 446,000 tonnes from October 1 to December 28, steeply down from the 763,816 tonnes in the same period of the previous season, exporters estimated on Monday. According to the rough weekly estimate, 50,000 tonnes of beans were delivered to the West African state's two ports between December 22 and December 28, down from 62,138 tonnes in the same week a year ago.

Cameroon grinder cocoa purchases up

YAOUNDE (December 30, 2008): Cameroon's only cocoa processing firm, SIC-Cacao, bought 17,383 tonnes of beans in the first four months of the 2008/09 season, up 57 percent from the same period last year, according to data from cocoa bodies at the weekend. The firm, a subsidiary of Switzerland-based Barry Callebaut, had bought 11,075 tonnes by the same time last year, according to the National cocoa and Coffee Board (NCCB) and the cocoa and Coffee Interprofessional Board (CCIB).