



UP-COMING EVENTS

- ❖ The 2nd Victor Iyama Cocoa Lecture, September 3, 2009 in Akure, Southwest Nigeria. Special presentation by Her Excellency, Erelu Olusola Obada, Deputy Governor of Osun State. "Making Poverty Reduction Work: The Role of Cocoa in Sustainable Development".
- ❖ 72nd General Assembly and Council of Ministers Meetings,, Lome, Togo, 7 – 11 September, 2009
- ❖ 2009 COPAL Cocoa Day. Theme: 'CONSUME MORE COCOA FOR BETTER HEALTH AND A BETTER GHANA', 1st October, 2009, Ghana.
- ❖ 16th International Cocoa Research Conference, Hyatt Hotel, Nusa Dua, Denpasar, Bali – Indonesia, 16 – 21 November, 2009.

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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)
17 th August	1820.38	2821.28	1769.33	2755.00
18 th August	1825.06	2834.06	1753.33	2766.00
19 th August	1916.47	2977.45	1835.67	2921.00
20 th August	1916.71	2988.50	1852.67	2921.67
21 st August	1944.62	3043.39	1881.00	2982.67
Average	1885.00	2933.00	1818.00	2869.00

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

Monday 17th August 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Sep 2009	1781	1739	-46	1789	1737	2,004
Dec 2009	1810	1767	-45	1814	1765	5,356
Mar 2010	1810	1771	-47	1819	1770	956
May 2010	1794	1770	-46	1794S	1771S	111
Jul 2010	1802	1765	-46	1802	1773	15
Sep 2010	1772	1764	-45	1772S	1767	17
Dec 2010		1761	-46			0
Mar 2011		1759	-46			0
May 2011		1767	-46			0
Jul 2011		1767	-46			0
Average/Totals		1763				8,459

Tuesday 18th August 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	1744	1722	-17	1753	1710	2,061
Dec 2009	1774	1750	-17	1781	1738	4,972
Mar 2010	1776	1755	-16	1780S	1744	1,255
May 2010	1776	1755	-15	1776S	1746S	496
Jul 2010	1770	1750	-15	1775	1740	31
Sep 2010	1768	1748	-16	1775	1767S	39
Dec 2010		1745	-16			0
Mar 2011		1743	-16			0
May 2011		1751	-16			0
Jul 2011		1751	-16			0
Average/Totals		1769				8,854

Wednesday 19th August 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	1713	1811	89	1820	1712	2,038
Dec 2009	1741	1832	82	1848	1736	5,298
Mar 2010	1742	1837	82	1847	1742	765
May 2010	1745	1838	83	1836S	1745	476
Jul 2010	1739	1830	80	1837S	1739S	75
Sep 2010	1737	1829	81	1834S	1737S	146
Dec 2010	1735	1826	81	1768	1735S	51
Mar 2011		1824	81			0
May 2011		1832	81			0
Jul 2011		1832	81			0
Average/Totals		1829				8,849

Thursday 20th August 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	1815	1833	22	1835	1799	2,157
Dec 2009	1823	1849	17	1854	1817	3,535
Mar 2010	1832	1854	17	1855	1827	714
May 2010	1834	1855	17	1858S	1830S	747
Jul 2010	1850	1848	18	1850	1850	10
Sep 2010	1834	1846	17	1849S	1834	14
Dec 2010		1843	17			0
Mar 2011		1841	17			0
May 2011		1849	17			0
Jul 2011		1849	17			0
Average/Totals		1847				7,177

Friday 21st August 2009

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	1819	1872	39	1885	1819S	4,492
Dec 2009	1835	1882	33	1890	1835	7,401
Mar 2010	1839	1881	27	1888S	1839S	1,891
May 2010	1850	1880	25	1890	1848S	1,456
Jul 2010	1860	1873	25	1878	1858	144
Sep 2010	1856	1873	27	1886S	1856S	272
Dec 2010		1870	27			0
Mar 2011		1868	27			0
May 2011		1876	27			0
Jul 2011		1876	27			0
Average/Totals		1875				15,656

Average for the week	1875				9799
					48,995

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

Monday 17th August 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	2812	2722	-98	2820	2720	3,374
Dec 2009	2817	2723	-120	2827	2715	11,761
Mar 2010	2840	2748	-119	2841	2740	923
May 2010	2830	2761	-118	2833	2774	151
Jul 2010	2781	2771	-119	2783	2781	122
Sep 2010	0	2774	-121	0	0	0
Dec 2010	0	2783	-120	0	0	0
Mar 2011	0	2783	-120	0	0	0
May 2011	2807	2789	-120	2807	2807	1
Jul 2009	0	2801	-116	0	0	100
Average/Totals		2766				16432

Tuesday 18th August 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	2722	2744	22	2761	2700	180
Dec 2009	2730	2746	23	2772	2698	6,509
Mar 2010	2772	2772	24	2789	2725	1,189
May 2010	2795	2788	27	2795	2742	432
Jul 2010	2802	2797	26	2812	2802	60
Sep 2010	2779	2800	26	2779	2779	44
Dec 2010	2796	2810	27	2796	2796	1
Mar 2011	0	2810	27	0	0	0
May 2011	0	2822	33	0	0	0
Jul 2009	0	2827	26	0	0	0
Average/Totals		2742				8415

Wednesday 19th August 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	2718	2868	124	2954	2695	237
Dec 2009	2730	2878	132	2955	2699	9,413
Mar 2010	2731	2902	130	2969	2731	1,312
May 2010	2750	2917	129	2942	2750	167
Jul 2010	2950	2926	129	2950	2927	22
Sep 2010	2831	2929	129	2978	2831	17
Dec 2010	2835	2939	129	2835	2835	106
Mar 2011	0	2939	129	0	0	0
May 2011	0	2947	125	0	0	0
Jul 2009	0	2954	127	0	0	0
Average/Totals		2920				11274

Thursday 20th August 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	2874	2908	40	2916	2874	51
Dec 2009	2885	2915	37	2925	2879	4,641
Mar 2010	2910	2936	34	2942	2900	555
May 2010	2947	2947	30	2951	2918	116
Jul 2010	2935	2957	31	2935	2935	18
Sep 2010	0	2961	32	0	0	4
Dec 2010	0	2974	35	0	0	0
Mar 2011	0	2971	32	0	0	0
May 2011	0	2977	30	0	0	0
Jul 2009	0	2984	30	0	0	0
Average/Totals		2953				5385

Friday 21st August 2009

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Sep 2009	2931	2949	41	2982	2923	71
Dec 2009	2911	2960	45	2985	2898	6,659
Mar 2010	2950	2980	44	3002	2949	740
May 2010	2960	2990	43	3003	2960	143
Jul 2010	2965	2999	42	3018	2965	94
Sep 2010	3012	3001	40	3012	3012	30
Dec 2010	3010	3006	32	3010	3010	30
Mar 2011	0	3004	33	0	0	0
May 2011	0	3016	39	0	0	0
Jul 2009	0	3020	36	0	0	0
Average/Totals		2993				7767

Average for the week		2997				1412
						1412

Spot Prices (US \$ per tonne)

Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1					
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1					
Main Crop Nigerian, 1					
Superior Arriba					
Sanchez f.a.q					
Malaysian 110					
Sulawesi f.a.q					
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor					
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter					
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake					

Source: Cocoa Merchant Association

News

Health and Nutrition

New Study Finds Chocolate Could Save Your Life

YumSugar.com

By YumSugar

08/17/2009



Chocolate has certainly been known to save the day. But did you know that eating chocolate might just save your life? A study to be published in the September issue of the Journal of Internal Medicine suggests that eating chocolate can prevent death in heart attack survivors.

Scientists found that those who ate chocolate two or more times a week were three times less likely to die from heart disease than those who never ate chocolate. The results are likely due to cocoa's antioxidant levels, according to study coauthor Dr. Kenneth Mukamal. In other chocolate news, Swiss candy maker Barry Callebaut, the world's largest chocolate manufacturer, has announced it is developing a chocolate that withstands temperatures up to 131°F before melting. While heat-resistant chocolate has long been a staple in both Swiss and American

armies, this is the first time the variety will be available commercially.

"Volcano," as the candy will be called, melts on contact with saliva, has a crunchy texture, and, unlike the military version, will be made with cocoa butter. Not only will it be a boon to areas of the world prone to sweltering heat, but food scientists have discovered that the chocolate naturally contains fewer calories.

Alas, I find myself with yet another excuse to enjoy chocolate before bed. Since I'm always paranoid about melting chocolate, I can't wait to try the heat-resistant kind! What about you?

The sweet science of chocolate

Media Newswire (press release)

20/08/2009

(Media-Newswire.com) - Ahhhh, Chocolate. For some connoisseurs it's a delightfully sweet treat. for others, a sinful obsession.

Either way, fanatical devotion is not a recent phenomenon. Chocolate's universal appeal dates back 2000 years to the ancient civilizations of the maya and aztec people. Both cultures believed that cacao, the tropical plant that produces chocolate, was imbued with divine powers And used it as a religious offering to the gods. Cacao seeds were also used as currency, as a general health tonic, and even as an aphrodisiac.

But that was a long time ago. Nowadays we recognize chocolate only for its guilty pleasure. or do we? The exciting news with our study is we found that small daily doses of dark chocolate could actually improve vascular function.

In 2004, Mary Engler, a professor in the School of Nursing at the University of California San Francisco, conducted a clinical trial. her purpose was to investigate the effects of the antioxidants found in dark chocolate.

Dark chocolate is within the one category of flavonoids called flavonols. Within that group are a number of compounds that have catechin or epicatechin within the product.

Those two compounds, catechin and epicatechin, are naturally occurring chemicals that can increase the levels of nitric oxide in your bloodstream. and it's the nitric oxide level that makes your arteries dilate and relax, promoting better blood flow. We know that heart disease, you have narrowing of the arteries and blood flow can't get through. So blood flow's very important to help prevent any kind of cardiac event.

But not just any chocolate is good for your heart.

When you're looking at the differences between dark, milk and white, dark chocolate is much better because of the high content of the cocoa flavanol.

And how does dark chocolate compare with other flavanol-rich foods?

Dark chocolate is immediately the highest. Even in comparison to say, cherries, red wine and tea, dark chocolate is the highest.

And that's just one chocolate's potential health benefits.

There are a number of compounds that are also in dark chocolate, besides the heart healthy cocoa flavonols. And they include many minerals, so magnesium, even potassium, copper, calcium. And they found, too, that you can raise your serotonin levels, and that's why you get the good feeling that you do after having dark chocolate.

But usually when you think about chocolate, health isn't the first thing that comes to mind. It's all about taste. extremely refined taste.

So that's what the final chocolate looks like.

And finding and perfecting that taste is timothy childs' mission. he's the chief chocolate officer at san francisco's designer chocolatier tcho. as a former software developer on the space shuttle orbiter program, childs is just the guy to meld silicon valley know-how with willy wonka whimsy.

Chocolate's an incredibly complex system. It goes beyond just hard science. You also have to integrate art and a lot of intuition, too, at the same time. So it's a really interesting combo.

Any delicious bar of fine chocolate begins with the cacao tree. A mature tree produces about 20 fruits, or pods, each of which contains about 40 beans. about 500 beans are needed to produce a pound of chocolate so an average tree produces about two pounds a year. After the beans are extracted from the pods, they need to be fermented.

One of the big mysteries of chocolate is a lot of people don't realize that you actually have to ferment the beans, right? You have to do it with coffee as well as beer, all sorts of stuff gets fermented.

Fermentation halts the seed's growth and it also develops the cacao's complex flavors.

The traditional style of fermentation is in big piles. And that doesn't have proper kind of even cooking of the beans, and so we try to encourage our farmers to go to a more of a box method.

Instead of a big pile that on the outside it's cold and in the center it's warm, you can mix them as they go from one box to another. You actually can control it a lot better so consistency is really important.

After fermenting, the beans need to be dried. traditionally, growers would dry their beans on concrete, but that simply won't do for today's high-tech chocolatiers.

When the beans are drying, they're out gassing what we call volatiles, which are pretty much acidic acids and other undesirable flavors. But if you're out-gassing on plastic or concrete, it bounces right back into the bean. If you actually dry on bamboo racks or anything that's got air moving underneath it, those acidic acids combine with the oxygen and blow away. But how do you maintain quality control if your beans are a 12-hour flight away? Childs came up with an innovative device to bridge this physical gap with his growers in peru.

We've pretty much took an off-the-shelf weather system and did some custom modifications to it. This weather system sends weather data wirelessly to a laptop, and that laptop's hooked up to a cellular modem that sends it up to the internet.

Childs correlates this weather with the fermentation data to track how each batch of beans was grown and processes. Then, when he gets a superior batch of beans from his growers, he knows exactly what conditions produced it.

Over 90% of the people that actually grow beans, which are mostly small family farms, they've never tried chocolate or cocoa mass from their beans before. And you kind of go huh? So there's no feedback loop there. We're educating our partners about coming up with common language of sensory analysis. Basically, what does it taste like as well as methodologies on how to measure how well it's fermented.

When they arrive, Childs does a cut test of his beans that helps him grade the cacao by size, shape, color and texture - all indicators of the quality of the fermentation.

I'm just going to take it and cut. Isn't that a great sound? Cuts 50 beans at a time.

So basically there's a couple of things to look at. Look at this right here. See this great definition? How really well-formed it is, it starts breaking apart. That's a really great-tasting bean. And let's find one that's little under fermented. Like, look at this one right here. This one's a little what I call slaty. See it? Doesn't have a lot of definition to it. That's under fermented. Look at the difference in the texture. See how's it doesn't have a lot of definition to it? This tastes good, this does not taste good.

Childs evaluates beans in the flavor lab, which simulates the production process of a chocolate factory. it's equipped with a modified turkey oven that roasts raw cacao beans. childs then cracks the beans and uses another homemade contraption to separate the nibs, or the meat of the bean, from the shell. he then grinds the nibs with a repurposed Indian curry dal maker.

It'll turn into a paste like this, which is cocoa mass, ok?

Tcho roasts, winnows, and grinds its beans off-site, but refining happens at its factory in San Francisco. this is the stage that influences the chocolate's texture and creates the smooth "mouth-feel" that aficionados savor. then the chocolate is conched, or heated and cooled repeatedly, to fine-tune its most subtle flavors. still, for childs, the real magic happens during the tempering stage.

You temper chocolate just like making tempered glass or tempered steel. You start with a molten fluid. You seed it with a piece of already crystallized material. You're actually creating this molten lattice crystal structure that's flowing, and then if you mold it and you cool it just right, what ends up happening is all these little fat molecules kind of line up and they get tighter and tighter and tighter, till it goes "Whoosh!" and it fuses in this crystal. And that's what gives chocolate its snap.

Crystallization is key, so if you don't have it well-tempered, it doesn't melt in the same rate and all the flavors get all mashed together.

Every step of the way, tcho works to change the game with their silicon-valley approach to "chocolate science." their first batch of chocolate in 2007 was even dubbed a "beta" release.

We do a beta and we get friends and family feedback. We slightly tweak the formulations based upon that feedback. And then once we're done with that, we ship 1.0.

So what will chocolate 2.0 look like? For starters, tcho is in the process of creating a virtual chocolate tour for curious consumers. also being perfected is 'satchel,' a database that stores tcho's research information.

And more high-tech help is on the way. in 2008, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partnered with IBM and the chocolate company MARS to sequence and analyze the entire cocoa genome in the hopes of breeding a more disease-resistant cacao tree. the research will be freely available as the 5-year project progresses.

But in the mean time, some food for thought...

Well, since our study, I've changed. I've switched from milk chocolate to dark chocolate. And I feel that when I do have a treat on occasion that I'm eating a more heart-healthy product. And I can feel my arteries dilate. I think we're seeing everyone switching over to the dark side.

Treat Clients to Cocoa Butter-based Massage Lotions **Massage Magazine**

By Jean Shea
8/20/2009



What sets you apart from the competition? Surely it's the quality and range of services you offer. But did you realize you also have a significant opportunity to distinguish yourself from your competitors by the products you use in your practice? Today massage lubricants offer such a wide range of ingredients and benefits, they actually can help you differentiate your service offering, not to mention satisfy the special needs of your clients.

As you look across the market landscape for new massage lubricants, lotions with cocoa butter are ones you might want to seriously consider. The versatile, smooth-textured natural fat derived from the cocoa bean has been used in the manufacture of skin-care products and toiletries for years, not to mention cocoa powder and chocolate. Now, cocoa butter is beginning to make its

mark on the massage lubricant marketplace and for good reason.

For starters, you couldn't sing the praises of cocoa butter without first mentioning its subtle cocoa scent. Even nonfood products containing cocoa butter smell good enough to eat. What client could resist a massage enhanced with the delicious aroma of this natural emollient, which also can help ease the mind?

As if the scent weren't enough to please any client, cocoa butter is considered the ultimate moisturizer. That's because its naturally rich in vitamin E---as well as a number of other vitamins and minerals---which helps soothe, hydrate and balance the skin. Vitamin E also assists in the production of collagen, so it aids in diminishing wrinkles and other signs of aging as well.

Cocoa butter also is a very stable, highly concentrated natural fat, and because it melts at body temperature, it easily absorbs into skin. It not only helps retain moisture, it helps protect sensitive skin against environmental conditions.

Cocoa butter also may have significant health benefits based on research. Like chocolate, it contains a lot of cocoa mass polyphenol (CMP). Research from Japan indicated CMP can slow the growth of cancer cells. There also is some evidence that CMP in cocoa butter may help prevent heart disease and ease arthritis.

Clearly, cocoa butter has a wealth of properties that make it an attractive ingredient for a lot of personal care and food products. Now, new cocoa butter-based massage lotions provide another "tool of the trade" to make massage sessions even more beneficial, not to mention a delightfully aromatic pleasure.

Jean Shea, MASSAGE MagazineJean Shea is founder and CEO of BIOTONE, a leading manufacturer of superior quality professional massage oils, cremes, lotions and gels, as well as spa-body and facial-treatment products. Shea founded the company in 1980 and today continues to help create and manufacture all of the company's formulas.

Production & Quality

Cameroon 08/09 cocoa exports up 10 pct to new high

Reuters Nigeria

Aug 18, 2009



YAOUNDE (Reuters) - Cameroon exported 178,592 tonnes of cocoa beans during the 2008/09 season, up 10 percent from the previous season, according to statistics released on Tuesday by the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (NCCB).

The full season's figure, confirmed by the Cocoa and Coffee Interprofessional Board (CCIB), represents an increase of 16,372 tonnes over the 2007/08 season, taking exports to a new high. "This year represents a third year consecutive increase in cocoa bean exports from Cameroon, an indication that government efforts since 2005 to revive the sector are paying off," said Trade Minister Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana.

The cocoa season in Cameroon, the world's fifth biggest producer, runs from August 1 to July 31.

Total cocoa bean production was 187,533 tonnes in the 2007/08 season, up from 183,277 tonnes in the previous campaign, and is expected to hit a new record of over 200,000 tonnes this year when local processing quantities are added to exports.

Cameroon tightens Cocoa Industry Rules to improve Bean Quality

Bloomberg

By Pius Lukong

Aug. 18, 2009

(Bloomberg) -- Cameroon tightened rules governing its cocoa industry to improve the quality of beans. The government has banned cocoa buyers from imposing a single price and disallowed the practice of mixing cocoa beans of different qualities in stores and warehouses, Trade Minister Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana said in a decree signed on Aug. 14 and obtained by Bloomberg News yesterday.

Cameroon's cocoa exports declined 16 percent to 2,647 metric tons last week because of poor quality, the Cocoa and Coffee Board said. The country has slipped back to fifth position behind Nigeria on the list of the world's biggest producers of the chocolate ingredient. Ivory Coast, Ghana and Indonesia's are the three biggest producers.

Cocoa buyers in Cameroon will need to apply for a card allowing them to operate in the 2009-10 season, which runs from Aug. 1 to July 15 next year, Mbarga Atangana said. The card, to be issued by the country's Cocoa and Coffee Inter-professional Council, will help weed out fraudulent operators, he said.

Prices must now be negotiated between the buyer and the grower based on the quality of the beans and the reference price fixed by government through its organizations, Mbarga Atangana. "Door-to-door buying of the beans has been banned," he added. Beans are deemed to be of good quality if they have been dried on either clay soil or a cemented arena, are free of

foreign bodies, the beans are free from smoke and pesticide odors, and have a humidity rate of less than 8 percent, according to the decree. *To contact the reporter on this story: Pius Lukong in Yaoundé via Johannesburg on amonteiro4@bloomberg.net*

Nigeria Cocoa Farmers Slow Cocoa Harvesting to Curb Mould **Bloomberg**

By Vincent Nwanma

Aug. 20, 2009

(Bloomberg) -- Nigerian cocoa farmers are slowing the rate of harvesting of their beans as a means of reducing the incidence of mould infestation, caused by high rainfall in the main growing areas. "There is mould all over the country because of the weather," Victor Iyama, chairman of the board of trustees of the Cocoa Association of Nigeria, said by phone late yesterday from Ikom, in Cross River state, southern Nigeria. There isn't enough sunlight for farmers to dry their beans, he said.

Nigeria ranks behind the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Indonesia as the world's largest cocoa producer, according to the Web site of the International Cocoa Organization. The Nigerian government has boosted output by providing farmers with quick-maturing seedlings and fertilizers at subsidized prices since 2005, while improved farming methods have also helped.

The infection rate of beans in western Nigeria is about 10 percent, double the internationally accepted rate, Iyama said. Farmers in most of the rest of the country have managed to contain the rate of infestation because the rain hasn't been as heavy as in previous years, he said.

In the south, the rate is currently up to 13 percent, according to Neji Abang Neji, general secretary of the cocoa association. The rate was as high as 40 percent in other years, which meant "a lot of losses" to the farmers, said Iyama, who is also the chairman of council of the London-based International Cocoa Association. Nigeria has managed to reduce the rate by a combination of improved weather and delayed harvesting, he added.

Overripe Beans

Picking the crop late has its own problems, Neji said. "When you delay in harvesting, the pods get overripe, which leads to loss of weight in the beans," he said by phone from Calabar, in southern Nigeria.

With the current level of mould infestation, most farmers are waiting for better harvests to allow them to blend to achieve the internationally acceptable 5 percent level of mould in beans, he said. Those who sell now are forced to do so at discounted prices, he added.

Cocoa futures for December delivery rose \$17, or 0.59 percent, to \$2,895 a metric ton on ICE Futures U.S. in New York as at 6.48 a.m. local time. *To contact the reporter on this story: Vincent Nwanma at vnwanma@bloomberg.net*

West Ivory Coast Cocoa Farmers Fear Poll Turmoil

Source: Reuters

20/08/2009

Koudouyo, Ivory Coast, Aug 20 - Cocoa growers in the key western region of Ivory Coast fear a presidential election set for Nov. 29 could revive land disputes and hurt plantation operations, farmers said on Thursday. The prospect raises the possibility of slimmer output from the world's biggest supplier during the main harvest. "We are very afraid of the next presidential election," said Adama Some, a farmer from Burkina Faso who has been growing in the Soubre region at the heart of the cocoa belt for 16 years.

Ivory Coast's western region, which produces the bulk of the country's cocoa, has a history of conflicts between local people and the many farmers who come from other regions or from neighboring countries. Many of the growers in the cocoa belt are from Ivory Coast's central and northern regions.

Farmers fear tensions stemming from the long-awaited poll in the country, still smarting from a 2002-03 civil war, could rekindle anti-foreigner sentiment. "At the end of November we will be in the countryside and we're worried that the election could trigger problems that lead to youths tearing us away from our lands, or confiscating our beans as they dry," said Some.

Diplomats, some international organisations and market commentators remain sceptical over whether the long-delayed election will take place this time, despite an assurance by President Laurent Gbagbo this month that it would.

In a research note this week, investment house UBA Capital put the chances of the election going ahead as scheduled at 60-70 percent, citing continued logistical obstacles.

YOUTHS TROUBLE

The polls are seen as a necessary precursor for much-needed reforms of the cocoa sector, which is struggling with ageing plantations, allegations of corruption at administrative level and farmer complaints of excessive taxation.

Another farmer in the region said youths were already causing trouble in town. "As soon as someone gives them the word, they come to cause trouble in the village. Many of us plan to send our families out of the country before the elections," said Ali Drabo, who also came to Ivory Coast from Burkina Faso.

Uncertainty ahead of the elections may also cause some plantation owners to put off investments or upgrades in their lands until next year, something that could exacerbate Ivory Coast's persistent quality issues. "Because of the situation this year, I haven't invested at all in my plantation this season fertilizer and pesticide because I don't know if I'll be able to keep my plantation or benefit from my harvest," said Some.

West Ivorian Cocoa Main Crop Seen up from Last Year

Source: Reuters

20/08/2009

Daloa, Ivory Coast, Aug 19 - The 2009/10 cocoa main crop in Ivory Coast's Daloa region is expected to be bigger and longer than last year as a spell of good weather keeps disease at bay, farmers and cooperative heads said on Wednesday.

Harvesting of the main crop in the western Daloa region, which by itself accounts for around a quarter of total output in the world's biggest producer, is due to start slowly next month before picking up speed from October onwards. Several plantations visited by Reuters showed few signs of the black pod disease that hit last season's crop. Trees were full of big, well-formed pods that were almost ripe, with plenty of smaller pods. "We'll have more cocoa in the main crop this year because the weather has been less humid since July, compared to the same time last season," said Yao Kouakou, who farms 5 hectares in Diglikro, 11 km (6.5 miles) from Daloa town. "The weather has not helped black pod develop. Look -- on this tree there are around 50 big pods...last year nearly half the pods were already rotten at this stage," he said, pointing out a healthy tree with his machete.

Kouakou estimated that he personally would harvest around 1.5 tonnes from the main crop this season compared to just one tonne last year.

Black pod is one of several diseases which cause cocoa pods to rot. It is caused by a fungus which spreads rapidly when there is too much rain or humidity, and a lack of sunshine.

Ivory Coast's cocoa season is divided into the October-April main crop and a smaller one from April to September.

Sector officials said earlier this year they expect the total 2008/09 harvest to be around one million tonnes, down from 1.36 million in the season before.

LACK OF TRAINING

A Daloa-based cooperative manager said many farmers caught out by black pod last year had this time taken the precaution to treat their crops with chemicals. "We think the main crop is on the road to being better than last year's but we should remain cautious as the weather will be crucial in September and beyond. If it is dry, the main crop will be safe but black pod could still emerge if it is wet," said Kouadio N'Guessan who has 250 members in his cooperative.

N'Guessan said he had noticed some cases of black pod in plantations, but the scale was well below last year levels.

He nonetheless complained about delays in the distribution of free chemicals promised to farmers by sector bodies.

Others noted that the quality of the local crop would be held back by persistent problems related to lack of correct training for farmers, and poor road access to growing zones. "In the field there are very few farmers that are respecting standards on harvesting, fermentation and drying because of lack of training," said N'Zebo Malan, manager of the 711-member Cagrida cooperative.

Sri Lanka plantations companies enticed by spice

Lanka Times

Source :The Island

Aug 22, 2009

Sri Lanka's listed plantations companies are getting into spice cultivation, drawn by the opportunities offered by their vast land holdings and the reputation for the island's crops, officials said. As many as 12 of the 18 plantation companies listed on the Colombo bourse have diversified and gone into the production of spices, said Chris Fernando, vice chairman of the Spices & Allied Products Producers' & Traders' Association (SAPPTA). The companies, which grow mainly tea, rubber and coconut, have diversified into cultivation of cinnamon, pepper, cashew and cardamoms.

The association, which represents the spice trade's different players - from producers and processors to traders and exports - has long tried to lobby for plantations companies to do more spice cultivation. Officials said the firms could make use of their land holdings to grow spice crops not only for the local market, which faces shortages in certain spices such as cocoa and cashew, but for export as well.

For instance, Sri Lankan confectionary manufacturers continue to import cocoa beans and cocoa butter to meet their requirements. "This is the ideal time for plantations companies to go into cocoa production and for the small holders to improve their production and productivity," a SAPPTA official said.

In export markets Sri Lankan spices are also known for their distinct characteristics brought about by a combination of the island's location, the effect of two monsoons, and soil conditions and elevations at which crops are grown. "For instance, our pepper has more pepperine content than those of other origins - the pungency is more," said M C M Zarook, a former chairman of the association.

Fernando said that so far about 1,965 hectares under the listed plantation companies spread over Balangoda, Malwatte Valley, Chilaw, and Kurunegala in the central and north-central regions are presently under spice cultivation. Fernando said his own plantations company, Malwatte Valley Plantations, has now started pepper cultivation. It has 175 hectares of pepper in Hali-Ella, in the central hills, and another 500 hectares of cashew in north-western Puttalam. "SAPPTA was able to get 12 plantations companies to diversify into spices," Fernando said. "Now they've realised they can generate extra income through spices." The companies were also looking in to the possibility of growing cinnamon, the island's best known spice, in upcountry estates.

Sri Lanka accounts for 90 percent of the world's production of true cinnamon. But the plantations companies also face problems in diversifying, as they often make losses when prices of their main products, tea and rubber, fall, as their costs are high. The long gestation period for spice crops, fluctuations in prices and lack of funding are the main obstacles, according to SAPPTA.

The companies also have to face theft of produce from their vast estates and uncertainty over land leased from government. Irregular rainfall and drought also affects harvests along with pest attacks. "Crops are also dependant on weather," said Fernando. "In the past three years we've had very irregular rainfall which affects crops. Also there are a lot of pest attacks which is very expensive to control."

The Market

Uganda: Cocoa Farmers gain from high prices

AllAfrica.com

By Frederick Womakuyu

18 August 2009

Kampala — BUNDIBUGYO is known for its mouth-watering melons, bananas and coffee. The Bamba and Bakonjo people are likely to remember their district as "the bread basket of western Uganda" because it was the region's main source of coffee and fruit exports.

However, after a five-year-old war by the Allied Defence Forces (ADF) that ended in 1999, coffee plantations shut down. As a result, farmers turned to cocoa growing and are harvesting a lot of money from it.

Yakobo Baluku is enjoying his first bumper harvest of 10 tonnes of cocoa beans and the market is assured. The price of raw cocoa beans has increased from sh1,000 to sh1,500 and that of dried cocoa has increased from sh2,000 to sh5,000, a kilogram. "I save about sh10m annually. I also use sh5m to pay fees for my children and general upkeep," Baluku says.

Previously, Bundibugyo had one company called Bakwanye that bought cocoa from farmers. However, there are five more companies now - ESCO, OLAM Uganda, Organic Watch, COSTA and UGACOFF.

These have increased competition leading to an increase in cocoa price. With all this going on, there is still a problem. "Farmers are not organised in cooperatives to bargain for a good price. They are at the mercy of the buyer, who dictates the market price," Bundibugyo District senior commercial officer Jackson Ruhweza says.

Processing & Manufacturing

Zealand Stops Using Palm Oil in Dairy Milk Chocolate and Returns to Cocoa Butter Only Recipe

Source: Cadbury New Zealand

17/08/2009

Cadbury today announced it is responding to consumers by returning Cadbury Dairy Milk to a recipe containing only cocoa butter. The move follows hundreds of letters and emails in which consumers told the company they didn't approve of a new recipe where a small proportion of the cocoa butter was replaced with vegetable fat, including palm oil.

Cadbury New Zealand Managing Director, Matthew Oldham, said the decision to go back to using only cocoa butter in Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate was in direct response to consumer feedback. "At the time, we genuinely believed we were

making the right decision, for the right reasons. But we got it wrong. Now we're putting things right as soon as we possibly can, and hope Kiwis will forgive us. Cadbury Dairy Milk's quality is what's made it one of New Zealand's most trusted brands for many years. Changing the recipe put that trust at risk and I am really sorry."

Mr Oldham said that Cadbury remains committed to its product quality and environmental and ethical sourcing commitments. "Cadbury is a responsible business and we purchase certified sustainable palm oil – one of the few companies in New Zealand to do so. But Kiwi consumers have told us they don't want palm oil in their Cadbury Dairy Milk, so it's going," he said.

Production will begin within a few weeks and Cadbury Dairy Milk will shortly, once again, contain only cocoa butter. The wholesale price of Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate will not be affected as a result of this decision.

Cadbury removes palm oil **Melbourne Herald Sun**

By Sally Glaetzer
August 20, 2009



Purists' pressure ... Cadbury has pledged to remove palm oil from its Tasmanian-made blocks / AP / No Source

CADBURY has caved in to pressure from outraged chocolate fanatics and pledged to remove palm oil from its Tasmanian-made blocks. The company had tried to persuade Cadbury lovers its new recipe, replacing some cocoa butter with palm oil, would make its chocolate smoother, The Mercury reports.

But consumers were not convinced and Cadbury has been forced to apologise and revert to the original recipe, after being flooded with complaints. "We are removing palm oil and returning to a cocoa butter only recipe for Cadbury's entire moulded block chocolate range, including our flagship Cadbury Dairy Milk brand and product lines such as Old Gold and Dream," Cadbury Australia managing director Mark Callaghan said yesterday. "We will soon commence the production of a cocoa butter only recipe at Claremont in the coming weeks."

Cadbury changed the Dairy Milk recipe earlier this year, at the same time as it downsized its chocolate blocks and changed its packaging. Rather than a money-driven decision, the company insisted it was adding palm oil to make the chocolate softer to bite. The Mercury website was inundated with comments from once-loyal Cadbury fans who vowed never to buy it again. "Why do Cadbury imagine we would prefer an adulterated, second-rate product?" one reader said.

Hobart chocolate lovers Maggie Abraham and Nina Middleton-Tubb yesterday hailed Cadbury's backflip as a sign of people power. "If people can change chocolate, they can change the world," joked Miss Abraham. Miss Middleton-Tubb said: "It is good that they listened to the fact that people didn't like it."

Business and Economy

Nigeria Cocoa Exports may fall on 'Massive' Jute-Bag Shortage

Bloomberg

By Vincent Nwanma
Aug. 19, 2009

(Bloomberg) -- Nigeria faces a "massive" shortage of jute bags used to export cocoa, which may result in the West African country's beans being rejected by buyers, an industry official said.

With the global cocoa season beginning on October 1, Nigeria should have concluded arrangements for the supply of the bags by now, Sona Ebai, secretary-general of the Cocoa Producers' Alliance, whose members are responsible for About 75 percent of world production, said by phone late yesterday. "This is not the time to start running around for jute bags," he said from Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital. "This should have been taken care of by now."

If Nigeria, the world's fourth-biggest producer of cocoa, fails to procure food-grade jute bags for cocoa-bean exports, farmers could be forced to "lay hands on what is have readily available -- old or infested bags," which may see the beans being rejected, said Ebai. "That will force a reduction in the volume of marketable cocoa from Nigeria," Robo Adhuze, a consultant to the Cocoa Association of Nigeria, said by phone from Akure in western Nigeria.

London-based International Cocoa Organization says on its Web site that contracts for the shipment of cocoa beans generally require the bags to be "new, non-returnable, clean and sufficiently strong," and that hydrocarbons in jute bags "can contaminate cocoa beans."

Ebai said the Nigerian government could waive the import duty on jute bags or subsidize their cost to the farmers. Government could also apply the international practice of exempting bags imported for use in export of commodities from import duties, he said.

Bag Prices Double

The price of the bag has more than doubled in the last 12 months, from about 140 naira (88 U.S. cents) per bag to 300 naira now, Neji Abang Neji, general secretary of the Cocoa Association of Nigeria, said by phone from Calabar in southern Nigeria late yesterday. "This will affect the income of farmers because any cocoa buyer that supplies the bags will first deduct the cost of the bags." When government subsidized the cost of the bags, they cost 70 naira, he said.

The Nigerian government, through the National Cocoa Development Committee, stopped supplying subsidized bags to farmers two years ago, a government official who didn't want to be identified, said in a telephone interview today.

The official said that there are plans for cocoa industry operators to meet with the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources. "If the problem is brought to government's attention, it may be moved to do something about it," the official said.

Abang said the Cocoa Association of Nigeria is scheduled to meet on the issue on August 25, after which the association will take the matter to President Umaru Yar'Adua, "because it is a serious problem."

Cocoa shipments from the West African country fell 22 percent to 6,074 metric tons from a year earlier, the Lagos-based Federal Produce Inspection Service said on Aug. 12. Cocoa for September delivery rose 0.9 percent to 1,738 pounds (\$2,847.37) on the Liffe Exchange in London at 10:40 a.m. local time. Cocoa prices have gained 16 percent over the past year.

SOFTS-Cocoa soars on fund buying in London and NY

Forbes –

By Sharon Lindores

08.19.09

LONDON, Aug 19 (Reuters) - Cocoa futures jumped by nearly 8 percent in New York and 5 percent in London on Wednesday, boosted by fund-led buying, dealers said.

Sugar futures rose with traders still bullish due to expected demand from No. 1 consumer India and tight supplies from top producer Brazil. Coffee futures were little changed.

London December cocoa futures jumped to a session high of 1,848 pounds per tonne and New York's December cocoa soared to a daily peak of \$2,955 per tonne, after buy stops were triggered.

There were some trades on ICE at even higher levels, with a peak of \$2,980 a tonne but the exchange subsequently cancelled those transactions.

"Stops were triggered and it bolted," a London-based dealer said. "Arbitrage between the two markets kept London tied to New York."

Lars Steffensen, managing director of UK-based commodities fund Ebullio Capital Management said the move was spurred on by some new money and the weaker dollar.

"It's pushing up to \$3,000 (per tonne in New York)," Steffensen said. "But I think there are a number of funds that are very happy to take profit at \$3,000, so I think that caps it for the moment."

"Cocoa fundamentally should probably be around \$2,000 to \$2,100 and the rest is financial froth created over the last four to five months," he said, noting a lot of investment money has come in to cocoa, sugar and other commodities lately.

Liffe December cocoa rose 85 pounds to 1,835 pounds a tonne at 1604 GMT. ICE December cocoa was up \$159 to \$2,905 a tonne.

Luke Chandler, a senior soft commodities analyst with Rabobank, told Reuters television earlier that he expects prices to ease in the coming months as new production comes on board.

"Whilst current conditions do look like they are going to be favourable in West Africa, there are ongoing risks of the El Nino (weather) pattern, and what that will mean for production," Chandler said.

The 2009/10 cocoa main crop in Ivory Coast's Daloa region is expected to be bigger and longer than last year as a spell of good weather keeps disease at bay, farmers and cooperative heads said on Wednesday.

SUGAR RESUMES ADVANCE

Sugar futures were higher as the market moved back up towards last week's record peaks in whites and the highest levels in nearly three decades in raws. "It's still very much in an uptrend," one trader said.

Sugar has rallied this year due to tight supplies in leading growers Brazil and India and resilient demand. The outlook for India's sugar output in 2009/10 is not promising, and the government may ask mills to increase supply of low-priced sugar for public distribution, the farm minister said on Wednesday. The sugar trader said the global deficit was seen at 6 million to 8 million tonnes for 2010 and weather was still under close scrutiny in Brazil, the world's top sugar exporter, where there was still plenty of cane to cut in the coming months.

However, Ebullio's Steffensen said he expects prices to fall substantially in the autumn if investment money is pulled out of the sweetener.

ICE October raw sugar futures were up 0.64 cent at 22.42 cents a lb. Liffe front-month white sugar futures rose \$10.70 to \$558.00, still below a record \$589.90 touched on Aug. 13.

Coffee futures were little changed in low volumes.

"Coffee is very much going along with other commodities," a trader said, noting funds were more active in arabicas than robustas.

Liffe November robusta coffee futures rose \$7 to \$1,386 a tonne, while ICE December arabicas were up 0.15 cent to \$1.2840 a lb.

Bad beans to weigh on Ivory Coast cocoa prices

Reuters Zimbabwe

By Loucoumane Coulibaly

Aug 21, 2009

DALOA (Reuters) - Ivory Coast's upcoming cocoa crop may exceed last season in size, but not quality, as a lack of investment continues to dog the No. 1 world supplier - setting the stage for softer prices next year. Quality issues during the current mid-crop harvest have already started hitting local prices in Ivory Coast.

A kilogram of cocoa at the port of Abidjan fetched between 640 CFA and 670 CFA, from between 670 CFA and 700 CFA the previous week, due to improperly dried beans, a purchases manager of a European cocoa exporter said. "Ivory Coast is the Middle East of cocoa," said Ralph Preston, analyst at Heritage West Futures in San Diego. "When the beans are of poor quality, to the extent that it is serious, that will tend to put downward pressure on the futures market."

The country, still suffering the after-effects of a 2002-03 civil war, launched a programme in March aimed at improving cocoa quality as some 17 percent of the nation's beans are exported in poor condition.

But cooperative managers, agronomists and exporters told Reuters during a tour this week of Ivory Coast's main growing regions the problem of poor quality will linger next season due to a lack of expertise among farmers, impassable roads, and fierce competition among exporters. "The quality problem will continue next season because very few farmers comply with the standards for harvesting, fermentation and drying due to a lack of training," said N'Zebo Malan, manager of a 711-member growing cooperative. Continued...

The issue could prevent Ivory Coast farmers from cashing in on what is expected to be a robust main crop harvest of over 900,000 tonnes, thus restricting re-investment in their farms. "Growing cocoa requires an understanding of how to properly maintain a field, from how to pick all the way to how to conserve," said agronomist and analyst Albert Konan. "This isn't the case for most growers in Daloa," he said of one of Ivory Coast's top growing regions.

Benchmark cocoa futures on ICE climbed to a one-year high of \$2,999 a tonne earlier this month, boosted by fund buying and concerns that the El Nino weather pattern could have an adverse impact on global production.

Prices remain within striking distance of that peak, trading around \$34 higher at \$2,949 a tonne on Friday.

STRUCTURAL DECLINE?

The lack of expertise and investment threatens to make Ivory Coast's quality problems a long-term issue. "There's a huge issue of aging trees, disease-prone trees, and a lack of husbandry," said Kona Haque, an analyst for Macquarie Bank in London. "They could end up in structural decline. I don't think they will because it's too valuable a sector in terms of exports, but it is a very trouble-prone commodity in Africa." Continued...

Several roads in the centre-western cocoa region have become impassable after years of heavy rains. Trucks are reluctant to go in those regions, leaving beans to deteriorate on the bush. "Many villages around Daloa have a lot of cocoa, but these villages are difficult to access because the roads have not been maintained for several years," Malan said. "The trucks will not go there for fear of being damaged. The result is deteriorating cocoa in the bush or farmers trying to get supply out by bicycle or scooter," Malan added.

A purchasing manager of a European exporter based in Daloa added that fierce competition between exporters had led some of them to buy cocoa of poor quality. "Because of the intense competition between exporters, many buyers are taking beans from the planters that are not properly dried and drying them in their ovens," said the exporter. That trend only encouraged small growers to do a poor job of drying their beans, he added.

Labour Issues

Beware of slavery in chocolate, says Trade Aid

Stuff.co.nz

JOHN SELKIRK/Dominion Post

22/08/2009



BITE BACK: Trade Aid general manager Geoff White tries out a bar of Slave Free Fair Trade Dark Chocolate at the organisation's Ponsonby Road store.

A fair trade advocate wants New Zealanders to boycott chocolate made on the back of child slavery. Trade Aid General Manager Geoff White said child slavery was widespread in cocoa farms in Africa where much of the raw ingredients for chocolate comes from.

He wants consumers to ask chocolate makers if their chocolate is slave free.

"I would urge all consumers not to buy from any manufacturer who cannot answer simply 'Yes'."

"Slavery is abhorrent and a dark stain on humanity. It is hard to think of a viler act perpetrated by one person on another. That a product such as chocolate, a favourite of children everywhere, is reliant on child slavery to produce profits is a sorry indictment on all those involved," he said.

"Children as young as 10 or 11 are being bought by cocoa plantation owners and forced to work 12 hours a day under extreme conditions. At night they're locked up in tiny rooms together with hardly any light or ventilation and only a tin can as a toilet. These kids are being forced to carry massive loads jeopardising their health, and if they can't manage they're savagely beaten," said Mr White.

He said chocolate makers should put a 'slave free' label on their bars so consumers can make ethical choices when they buy, he said. His call follows the back down by Cadbury this week from using palm oil in its chocolate - the palm oil industry is blamed for destroying rain forests, killing orang-utans.

In this case, Cadbury, one of New Zealand's major chocolate makers, supports Mr White's call for consumers to buy ethically produced chocolate. Its chocolate bars this month started bearing a Free Trade label in the UK and Ireland which signifies cocoa and all other ingredients such as sugar were slave free and ethical.

Daniel Ellis, Cadbury corporate communications manager for New Zealand and Australia, said the company planned to gain Free Trade certification globally and it would be coming for all its bars sold in New Zealand.

Philip Poole, marketing manager for Whittakers Chocolates, said it too was confident its chocolate was slave free. This Sunday happens to mark International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, which is why Trade Aid has started its boycott campaign.

Mr White cited an International Labour Organisation report from 2005 claiming there were more than 150,000 children working in the cocoa industry in the Ivory Coast alone, many as child slaves.
Ad Feedback

An estimated 12,000 of those children had been trafficked, according to the report. Child slavery on cocoa farms in Ivory Coast became prevalent after cocoa prices fell during the 1980's and '90's, Mr White said. Before then cocoa farmers were protected by a government supported price system but this was dismantled in a structural adjustment programme enforced by the IMF as a condition of World Bank loans, he said.

Living standards for farmers declined markedly and in an effort to cut production costs the use of child labour became widespread. Continuing low prices led eventually to the use of child slaves predominately trafficked across the border from Mali, Mr White said.

Mr White said child slavery was now also creeping into neighbouring Ghana. "It is no longer possible to say purchasing from Ghana ensures no child slaves are involved in the supply chain," he said.

Mr Ellis said Cadbury acknowledged child slavery problems in Africa but believed there were no problems on the farms it bought from. It purchased the bulk of its cocoa from Ghana, with some from South East Asia and ensured stringent and regular audits of the farms it bought from.

The company formed community partnerships in Ghana, putting money in to build infrastructure and improve the quality of life - it actively wanted to lift prices paid for cocoa and improve living standards.

"We pay a social premium for our cocoa," said Mr Ellis. "That's the right thing to do."

"There is a responsibility for all chocolate makers to make sure ingredients are ethically sourced. We've put a lot of work into this," Mr Ellis said.

"If a company like Cadbury can achieve that, other companies can do the same. We certainly encourage people to be vigilant in terms of the product they are looking for," he said.

Mr Poole said Whittakers also worked with the Ghanaian authorities to eliminate any slavery practices. "There is a will amongst chocolate manufacturers and the government [of Ghana] to end abusive labour practises," Mr Poole said.

Mr White said if consumer action could stop Cadbury using palm oil to save the rainforests and the Indonesian orang-utan, then consumer action could force ethically sourced chocolate.

Cadbury caused a furore when it was revealed it had substituted cocoa butter with vegetable fat including palm oil.

Palm Oil is a contentious ingredient with reports blaming its plantations for huge contributions to global warming and intensive habitat destruction leading to the deaths of orang-utans in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Cadbury New Zealand managing director Matthew Oldham said he was "really sorry" about the decision to use palm oil and the reversal of that decision was a response to consumer feedback, including hundreds of letters and emails.

"At the time, we genuinely believed we were making the right decision, for the right reasons. But we got it wrong," he said.

Mr White said: "While concern for the environment and animals is justified it is unfortunate that a bigger scandal involving chocolate companies continues to fly under the radar," he said.

Environmental Issues

Research & Development

New study shows that cocoa flavanols can be preserved during cooking and baking innovations report

nächste Meldung
18.08.2009

In a study published this month in the Journal of Food Science, scientists from The Hershey Company and Brunswick Laboratories (Norton, MA) showed that over 85% of the cocoa flavanols were preserved in recipes for chocolate frosting, hot cocoa drink and chocolate cookies. In chocolate cakes, antioxidant activity and cocoa flavanols could be largely retained by using a combination of baking powder and baking soda.

The scientists initially saw that 50 to 95% of the flavanols were lost in making chocolate cakes. After further investigation, they found that the use of baking soda in the chocolate cake recipe was associated with increased pH of the cake, darker color, and a loss of flavanols and antioxidant activity during the baking process.

Use of only baking powder in the cake recipes allowed complete retention of the antioxidant activity and cocoa flavanols, but resulted in a flat cake. By partially substituting baking powder for the baking soda, the cake pH was moderated and almost all of the flavanols were retained while still resulting in a cake with acceptable color and height.

According to the published report, numerous studies have reported on the fate of naturally occurring flavanols during cocoa bean fermentation and roasting, but there's been little investigation into what happens during cooking with cocoa powder. In this study, researchers selected recipes from cookbooks for a variety of cocoa-containing foods such as chocolate frosting, hot cocoa drinks, chocolate cookies and chocolate cakes. The recipes were prepared using Hershey's Natural Cocoa Powder and then measured for antioxidant activity, total polyphenols, and flavanols.

"According to our estimates, approximately one third of cocoa ingredients used in the United States is cocoa powder, which is used in a diverse array of chocolate-flavored foods including beverages, cookies, cakes, snack bars and ice cream. Natural cocoa powder, like most dark chocolates, is a concentrated source of naturally occurring flavanols and can be a significant dietary source of flavanols" says David Stuart, Ph.D., Director of the Hershey Center for Health and Nutrition.

Although previous studies have reported on the effect of fermentation and roasting on cocoa flavanols, this is the first paper to report on the effect of common cooking processes on cocoa flavanols in a wide variety of products ranging from a hot cocoa drink to chocolate frosting and chocolate cake. This study showed that the choice of leavening agent and its effect on pH during baking is a key factor in the levels of antioxidant activity and flavanols in a baked product.

About The Hershey Company

The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY) is the largest producer of quality chocolate in North America and a global leader in chocolate and sugar confectionery. Headquartered in Hershey, Pa., The Hershey Company has operations throughout the world and more than 12,000 employees. With revenues of more than \$5 billion, Hershey offers such iconic brands as Hershey's, Reese's, Hershey's Kisses, Kit Kat, Twizzlers and Ice Breakers as well as the smooth, creamy indulgence of Hershey's Bliss chocolates. Hershey is a leader in the fast-growing dark and premium chocolate segment, with such brands as Hershey's Special Dark and Hershey's Extra Dark. In addition, Artisan Confections Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Hershey Company, markets such premium chocolate offerings as Scharffen Berger and Dagoba. For more than 100 years, The Hershey Company has been a leader in making a positive difference in the communities where we live, work and do business. The Milton Hershey School, established by the company's founder in 1909, provides a nurturing environment, quality education, housing, and medical care at no cost to children in social and financial need. The School is administered by the Hershey Trust Company, Hershey's largest shareholder, making the students of Milton Hershey School direct beneficiaries of Hershey's success. Please visit us at www.hersheys.com.

Promotion & Consumption

Others

Does Cheaper Chocolate make a difference in Recipes?

Hartford Courant

By KATHLEEN PURVIS McClatchy Newspapers

August 20, 2009

Q: I recently received a baking book that suggests using the best possible chocolate, like Scharffen Berger Home Baking Bar 62 percent or Jacque Torres Milk Chocolate Bars. How much difference will it make if I use a less-expensive brand or if I don't use the same percentage chocolate? Will the recipes work?

A: Good chocolate is an indulgence, both in taste and in price. Baking books specify a percentage of cacao for precision, to make it more likely you'll get the same results the authors got when they tested the recipe.

However, I asked Wanda Cropper, the assistant dean of the baking program at Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte, about using less-expensive chocolates. There are many variables, both in taste and consistency, she says. But for most home baking — say brownies or a cake — you usually can get away with less-expensive chocolate and not harm the outcome.

Where it would really make a difference, she says, is in candies, such as truffles, or delicate desserts, such as mousses. More expensive chocolates have higher percentages of chocolate, cocoa and fat, and are known as couverture chocolates. Since couverture chocolate is higher in butterfat, it's thicker when melted, and it can be tempered — melted and held at a precise temperature that will allow it to harden again. You need to stick with that for things like dipping truffles or making ganaches.

In mousse, Cropper says the fat content also can make a difference. Cheaper chocolate has less butterfat, so it might clump or separate when it is combined with the whipped cream.

When you buy less-expensive chocolate, check the label to make sure it actually is chocolate. There are things like chocolate-flavored coating, sometimes call candy coating or bark, that aren't really chocolate. They don't have to be tempered to set up at room temperature, but the taste is definitely not as rich and it won't give the same results.

TIT BITS

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

London sugar and coffee down; cocoa up

LONDON (August 21, 2009): Raw sugar futures fell on Thursday but still looked poised to test last week's 28-1/2 year high in the near future, underpinned by strong demand from India and tight supplies. cocoa futures rose, with some traders seeing the ICE market potentially testing key psychological resistance in December at \$3,000 per tonne, while arabica coffee was lower.

London sugar and coffee lower; cocoa rises

LONDON (August 22, 2009): Sugar futures were mixed on Friday in choppy trading as the market searched for direction following the highs hit last week on strong demand from top consumer India and weak global supplies. cocoa futures rose on investor buying and short-covering, while robusta coffee edged lower, but was seen rangebound, traders said.

US MIDDAY: coffee and sugar lower; cocoa up

NEW YORK (August 22, 2009): Summaries of the ICE Futures US cocoa, coffee and sugar markets early on Friday. December arabica coffee contract down 0.25 cent to \$1.2555 per lb at 11:12 am EDT (1512 GMT). Session range from \$1.2540 to \$1.2850. Market turned mildly lower as the US dollar pared its losses and other commodities came off their highs, said traders.

Ivory Coast cocoa prices mostly lower

ABIDJAN (August 22, 2009): Ivory Coast cocoa prices were mostly lower last week because of poor quality beans, some of which were mouldy and not properly dried, farmers and exporters said on Friday. Prices at the port fell to between 640 CFA francs (\$1.39) per kg and 670 compared with 670 and 700 the previous week, a purchases manager at a European cocoa exporter said.

Indonesia to ship cocoa beans to USA

JAKARTA (August 22, 2009): Indonesia will ship out around 18,000 to 20,000 tonnes of cocoa beans in the next two weeks from its main growing island of Sulawesi to the United States, a sign of improving demand, traders said. "Two ships, Star Ismene and Supertramp, are due to arrive in Makassar in the next two weeks. Our shipment is on one of the two," said a cocoa trader in Jakarta.