



COPAL COCOA Info

A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance

Issue No. 203

30th October – 3rd November 2006

Cocoa Producers' Alliance

ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (SDRs/tonne)	ICCO daily price (US\$/tonne)	London futures (£/tonne)	New York futures (US\$/tonne)
30 th October	1053.68	1561.70	845.67	1513.33
31 st October	1056.52	1563.68	844.00	1515.67
1 st November	1040.55	1545.51	835.33	1495.33
2 nd November	1056.41	1569.00	847.67	1519.00
3 rd November	1052.67	1563.55	846.00	1517.67
Average	1,051.97	1,560.69	843.73	1,512.20

Up-coming Events

- Meeting on Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD) for West and Central African Countries, 13th – 14th November 2006, Accra, Ghana.

In the News:

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Have you had your cocoa today?

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

**30th
Monday
October 2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Dec 2006	832	830	1	837	827	4,026
Mar 2007	849	847	1	855	845	2,877
May 2007	865	860	2	865	857S	643
Jul 2007	872	871	2	877	868S	1,418
Sep 2007	885	882	2	888	882	1,313
Dec. 2007	898	894	1	900	895	322
Mar-08		906	0			0
May-08		915	0			0
Jul-08		926	-1			0
Sep-08		930	-1			0
Totals		886				10,599

**31st
Tuesday
October 2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	832	828	-2	836	825	2,561
Mar 2007	851	846	-1	853	843	1,982
May 2007	862	858	-2	866	858S	389
Jul 2007	876	868	-3	876	869	428
Sep 2007	886	879	-3	889	879	355
Dec. 2007	895	891	-3	898	894	635
Mar-08	911	903	-3	911	911	50
May-08		913	-2			0
Jul-08		923	-3			0
Sep-08		929	-1			0
Totals		884				6,400

**1st
Wednesday
November 2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	832	820	-8	832	818	5,655
Mar 2007	849	837	-9	849	836	2,108
May 2007	859	849	-9	859S	849	337
Jul 2007	869	861	-7	869S	860	1,744
Sep 2007	880	872	-7	880S	871	325
Dec. 2007	890	885	-6	890	884S	248
Mar-08		897	-6			0
May-08		905	-8			0
Jul-08		914	-9			0
Sep-08		922	-7			0
Totals		876				10,417

**2nd
Thursday
November 2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	820	832	12	835	817	4,486
Mar 2007	841	850	13	853	835	2,397
May 2007	851	861	12	863	850	880
Jul 2007	860	873	12	873	860	464
Sep 2007	871	884	12	885	871	266
Dec. 2007	884	897	12	897	884	100
Mar-08		909	12			0
May-08		919	14			0
Jul-08		929	15			0
Sep-08		939	17			0
Totals		889				8,593

**3rd
Friday
November 2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	831	830	-2	842	828	4,491
Mar 2007	850	848	-2	861	847	2,650
May 2007	859	860	-1	871S	859	1,714
Jul 2007	881	870	-3	882	869S	577
Sep 2007	891	880	-4	891	882S	414
Dec. 2007	902	894	-3	904	892	260
Mar-08	912	905	-4	912	907S	9
May-08	914	914	-5	914	914	10
Jul-08		924	-5			0
Sep-08		934	-5			0
Totals		886				10,125

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

**30th
October 2006**

Monday

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1470 1475	1486	16	1498	1470	7816
Mar 2007	1505 1512	1518	18	1526	1505	8982
May 2007	1533 ^B 1535 ^A	1540	17	1550	1530	501
Jul 2007	1554 ^B 1560 ^A	1562	17	1570	1561	136
Sep 2007	1575 ^B 1585 ^A	1586	17	1593	1583	185
Dec 2007	1590 ^B 1612 ^A	1611	17	1617	1611	232
Mar 2008	1610 ^B 1630 ^A	1638	19	0	0	0
May 2008	0 1660 ^A	1659	19	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1680	19	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1701	19	0	0	0
Totals		1598				17,852

**31st
October 2006**

Tuesday

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1486 1489	1484	-2	1495	1476	10899
Mar 2007	1520 1523	1518	0	1524	1510	9744
May 2007	1543 ^B 1545 ^A	1542	2	1545	1532	1446
Jul 2007	1564 ^B 1568 ^A	1564	2	1567	1561	900
Sep 2007	1587 0	1586	0	1590	1583	951
Dec 2007	1610 ^B 1615 ^A	1614	3	1614	1613	433
Mar 2008	1642 0	1640	2	1643	1641	51
May 2008	0 0	1661	2	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1682	2	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1701	0	0	0	0
Totals		1599				24,424

**1st
November 2006**

Wednesday

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1470 1475	1463	-21	1475	1459	10438
Mar 2007	1503 1507	1497	-21	1507	1492	8094
May 2007	1528 0	1520	-22	1528	1518	421
Jul 2007	1551 0	1542	-22	1551	1551	30
Sep 2007	1570 ^B 1575 ^A	1566	-20	0	0	57
Dec 2007	1599 ^B 1605 ^A	1592	-22	0	0	0
Mar 2008	0 0	1620	-20	1615	1615	7
May 2008	0 0	1641	-20	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1662	-20	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1681	-20	0	0	0
Totals		1578				19,047

Thursday **2nd**
November **2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1465 1468	1490	27	1492	1457	8319
Mar 2007	1498 1500	1525	28	1525	1492	3425
May 2007	1520 ^B 1523 ^A	1547	27	1543	1522	240
Jul 2007	1545 0	1568	26	1567	1545	261
Sep 2007	1565 ^B 1569 ^A	1590	24	1587	1581	278
Dec 2007	1590 ^B 1596 ^A	1617	25	0	0	4
Mar 2008	0 0	1645	25	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1666	25	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1687	25	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1705	24	0	0	0
Totals		1604				12,527

Friday **3rd**
November **2006**

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1495 1497	1484	-6	1504	1478	9351
Mar 2007	1530 1533	1516	-9	1535	1511	5907
May 2007	1551 0	1537	-10	1557	1550	73
Jul 2007	1570 0	1559	-9	1570	1568	59
Sep 2007	1594 0	1581	-9	1594	1589	120
Dec 2007	1618 ^B 1623 ^A	1606	-11	1623	1604	92
Mar 2008	1644 ^B 1650 ^A	1635	-10	0	0	0
May 2008	1667 ^B 1678 ^A	1656	-10	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1677	-10	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1695	-10	0	0	0
Totals		1595				15,602

News

Not All Cocoa Uses Child Labor

October 30, 2006 LETTERS

By Susan Smith, World Cocoa Foundation

special to Mountain Mail

SOCORRO, New Mexico (STPNS) -- To the Editor:

I read with interest the letter to the editor "Boycott Candy Made by Children" in the October 23 edition of the Mountain Mail. Your readers may be interested to know that a sweeping, independent study – the only one of its kind – found that the vast majority of West African farmers grow cocoa responsibly.

These honest and law abiding farmers are simply trying to earn a living to support their families and boycotting chocolate candy does not have their best interest at heart. The World Cocoa Foundation and its many partners have a long-term commitment to the economic and social development and environmental conservation in the world's cocoa growing communities.

The programs the Foundation supports are working to raise farm family incomes, address important farm community issues – like access to quality, relevant education and are raising awareness of responsible labor practices and safe farming. For more information on efforts to strengthen cocoa farm families and their communities in West Africa, visit www.worldcocoa.org.

Olam, ADM acquire Cameroon cocoa processor

By Dominique Patton

31/10/2006 - Singapore-based cocoa bean supplier Olam has jointly acquired the Cameroon cocoa processor Usicam with ADM, the world's largest cocoa processor, giving both firms greater economy of scale in the African market. The two will each own 50 per cent of the business, which will become one of the country's biggest plants for drying, cleaning and grading cocoa beans.

Cameroon's cocoa has a particular taste and is used only by a small number of processors such as Cargill, ADM and Barry Callebaut. However most cocoa plants in the country are small. "In Cameroon it is difficult to set up processing for economy of scale," an Olam spokesman told AP-Foodtechnology.com. "This deal will allow us to scale our volumes in Cameroon and increase our business in Cameroon cocoa," he said. "Our strategy in cocoa is to have a dominant position in every market worldwide." Less than 20 per cent of Olam's cocoa customers are based in Asia, with most from the US and Europe. ADM is one of the firm's key customers.

The partners plan to further upgrade the Usicam plant for processing cocoa beans. Usicam, previously owned by French group SAGA, has in turn acquired the cocoa processing assets of SDV in Cameroon. Olam said in a statement that the partners will "ensure that cost economies and usinage efficiencies may be offered to the cocoa suppliers in the country before they export the beans". The industry is under pressure to support a sustainable cocoa sector with consumers increasingly turning to fair trade products that guarantee better prices for cocoa farmers. Cameroon produced 160,000 metric tonnes of cocoa in the latest season, down on the previous year due to erratic weather and floods in the main producing areas.

Should Africa consume more of its own cocoa?

Toye Olori | Lagos, Nigeria

31 October 2006 11:59

It's certainly a logical suggestion: in an effort to make cocoa-producing countries in Africa less dependent on consumers abroad, why not increase domestic consumption of cocoa products? While Africa produces more than 75% of the world's cocoa, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, the continent consumes only about 2% of this produce. The remainder goes to Europe and the United States, which, some claim, have too big a say over cocoa prices as a result -- prices that are set without much consideration for production costs.

A glut of cocoa has also played a part in forcing down prices fetched by the commodity on the international market. In addition, European cocoa buyers have tied lower prices to bad-quality cocoa beans from Africa. "The most pragmatic way for Africa to control what goes to the international market in order to influence the cocoa price is to significantly increase local consumption within Africa," says Abiodun Falusi, professor of agricultural economics at the University of Ibadan in south-western Nigeria. "African countries, though the largest producers,

cannot influence prices [of cocoa] due to bulk export of raw cocoa beans, low level of domestic consumption ... and weak demand in the major consuming countries -- which calls for the development of a sustainable policy framework for African cocoa in the world market."

Resolution

In fact, a resolution on increasing local consumption of cocoa was taken during a meeting of eight African cocoa-producing nations during May this year, in Nigeria's capital, Abuja. (The attending states comprised Côte d'Ivoire -- the world's largest cocoa producer -- and Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, São Tome and Principe, Togo and Uganda.) The countries agreed that this should be achieved through development of cocoa-consumption habits, raising awareness among citizens of the nutritional and health benefits of cocoa products -- and encouraging research, development and commercialisation of new cocoa products.

"We all agreed at the Abuja summit that we will encourage the local consumption of a higher proportion of cocoa ... because when we consume a lot of it locally, we will be in a position to reduce what goes out to the international market, and by this we can control prices," Akinwale Ojo, executive secretary of the Cocoa Association of Nigeria (CAN), told Inter Press Service in an interview from Akure, in south-west Nigeria. The CAN is an umbrella organisation for the country's cocoa farmers, processors, buyers and exporters. But implementing this resolution is likely to prove something of a challenge, says Angela Okisor, an agriculture analyst based in the Nigerian financial capital of Lagos. "The level of poverty in the various countries makes the consumption of cocoa products a luxury. For example, how much can an average Nigerian set aside for cocoa beverages each month given the economic situation of the country?" she asks. According to the 2005 Human Development Report, produced by the United Nations Development Programme, about 70% of Nigerians live on less than \$1 a day.

Taking the initiative

Steps taken by Nigeria's government in recent years might show the way.

Authorities in this West African country have introduced cocoa as supplement for children, as part of an initiative to provide free lunches at schools. Under a pilot programme that got under way in April last year, 2,5-million primary school pupils in 12 of the nation's 36 states are being given at least one meal daily, and a cup of cocoa.

The initiative is aimed at increasing enrolment, so that Nigeria can attain universal primary education. Research by the Ministry of Education has shown that a substantial number of primary-school pupils do not eat enough to ensure proper school attendance and performance, while almost half of the children between seven and 15 years are under-weight. In addition, "The introduction of cocoa drinks in primary schools as part of the school feeding programme of government, if successfully implemented, will inculcate the habit of cocoa-beverage consumption in Nigerian youths and eventually adults," says a 2005 report by government's universal basic education committee. Officials further plan to ensure that within the next few years, 50% of cocoa beans harvested in the country is locally processed to produce beverages for domestic consumption.

The Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria, based in Ibadan, south-western Nigeria, has also developed varieties of cocoa products -- including cocoa cream, liquor, cocoa bread, cakes and biscuits -- that could be put on the market. However, the institute is finding it difficult to convince investors to buy the patent rights for most of these products, a critical step towards mass local production. Warns Falusi: "Without a drastic increase in local processing of cocoa, the campaign for increased domestic consumption will continue to be a mirage."

Price control

Some have speculated about creating a situation in which African producers would exercise the same degree of control over cocoa prices as the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) has over oil. But the CAN's Ojo does not believe this is likely. "To say we will operate like Opec is impossible, because cocoa is an agricultural product -- one can not predict if it will do well in any given year. Production is controlled by a lot of things, including weather and pests," he notes. "But, what the summit has put in place will lift the industry."

In a communiqué issued at the end of the Abuja meeting, cocoa producers also agreed to target countries that are not considered traditional consumers of cocoa, such as China and India, in "aggressive international campaigns" intended to spark greater consumption. Furthermore, they plan to promote intra-African trade in cocoa products through the New Partnership for Africa's Development and regional blocs.

The fate of millions could be affected by these initiatives.

"In Africa, cocoa provides employment for over two million farming households directly, with another five million indirect beneficiaries in the form of input provisions, marketing, warehousing and quality control. A larger figure is employed in other support services," said Adamu Bello, Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, at the Abuja gathering. "In all, well over 20-million Africans in the major producing countries rely on the cocoa economy as a source of livelihood." -- IPS

Cocoa Processing Company pays €1.5 billion dividend

Nov 01 2006

Source: GNA

The Cocoa Processing Company (CPC), a major confectionery manufacturer, on Tuesday paid 1.55 billion cedis in dividend to the Government of Ghana, its majority shareholder. This is the first time the company has paid any dividend to the government since it was listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange three years ago. CPC successfully floated 40 per cent of the shares of the sole shareholder to the public in 2003.

Nana Obiri Boahen, Board Chairman of CPC, said the initial challenges faced by the company had been subdued while its expansion and rehabilitation programme embarked on in 2004 with the view to increase overall throughput capacity from 25,000 to 65,000 metric tonnes annually was well on course and substantially accomplished.

The first phase of the programme involving the construction of a state-of-the-art 30,000-metric tonnes per annum capacity liquor plant was completed and commissioned in November last year. Nana Boahen said the second phase, which will deal with the refurbishment of the old cocoa factory in order to increase its capacity from 25,000 to 35,000 tons per annum had started and expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2007. The expansion is expected to generate an annual turnover of 100 million dollars for the company.

Besides this physical transformation, the company was undergoing a major structural reorganisation, which will substantially boost its efficiency, Nana Boahen added. This is expected to result in job cuts, he said, but added that the company was committed to an amicable settlement for the job losses. He appealed to government to continue to support the company to achieve its set goals.

In response, Mr. Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu, Minister of Finance, said government would do all it could to support local industries and companies to become competitive. He said the expansion works being carried out by the company was in line with government's vision to process at least 40 per cent of local production of cocoa, which had been growing steadily reaching 730,000 tons in the 2005/06 cocoa season.

Cocoa Comments

November 01, 2006

By Hector Galvan of RJO Futures

The cocoa market this past week has left many curious as to what type of news will need to press the market to reintroduce more volatility. Granted a larger mid crop has some curious as to what we could see in regards to numbers in the near future. However, with that said producer selling around \$1500 has kept us from really looking towards greater price levels. Farmers are not happy to be selling crop at current levels with many still hoarding beans in the hope of higher prices. Yet with that said a steady supply of beans is still reaching port and keeping prices in check.

In regards to any type of political news that may affect the market, many are looking at how the transition of power between the current President of Ivory Coast and his prime minister will go during this week. Rebels have time and time again pressed the President to step down and have promised violence should he not stick to the U.N. mandate.

Finally, the British pound has been gaining on the dollar this week and has pressed on levels not seen since early August. We should always remember that the cocoa prices will be pressed by higher or lower levels on the dollar. Technically December Cocoa finds support at 1476 and 1447, while resistance can be seen at 1495 and 1508. One would be wise to keep these numbers in the back of their minds should we have any type of breaks in either direction.

Cameroon: Cocoa Farmers Receive Farm Tools

Cameroon Tribune (Yaoundé)

November 2, 2006

Lukong Pius Nyuylime

The CFA 20 million worth of equipment was offered in Mfou last Tuesday, 31 October, by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Some 50 Wheel barrows, 200 sprayers, 2500 fungicides, 5000 insecticides and 1200 kilograms of fertilizer, evaluated at CFA 20 million were freely distributed to 30 Cocoa producer organisations from nine of the ten Divisions of the Centre province last Tuesday, 31 October during a ceremony marked by song and dance. The farmers received the equipment from the hands of Aboubakar Yacoubou, the Resident Representative of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the organisation through which the United States Development Agency (USDA) has channelled the aid.

The sharing of the tools falls within the framework of the implementation of the Tree Crops Production Marketing and Livelihoods Program (PAP2CP), the cocoa development component of which covers the Centre and South West provinces of Cameroon. With the newly acquired equipment, cocoa farmers are expected to boost production and increase yields during the next cocoa season. "We have handed material to enable them produce good quality cocoa" Mva Mva Jonas, the project administrator, said. "We wanted to do things in an organised manner that is why we asked the villagers to group themselves into production organisations in order to receive the gift" Bassanaga Simon, the master trainer of the project, said. He said it was important to let the villagers understand how to use the farm tools, some of which can be dangerous to health. "Prior to this, we offered them cocoa seeds which they will now use these equipment to develop" he said.

The Mfou Divisional Officer, Mrs Mbo Meye Mbarga, who presided at the ceremony on behalf of the SDO for Mefou and Afamba, took the pains to recall the importance of cocoa to peasant farmers. She emphasised the necessity to ensure good quality production of the product which is determined at all the stages of production. "I call on you to encourage the youths to work on cocoa farms rather than sit in the house and watch television", she said.

The PAP2CP project has a life span of 36 months (January 2006 to December 2008). It has as immediate partners; producers of tree crops, particularly cocoa and oil palm; and different actors within the chain (consumers, service suppliers, transformers, dealers in cocoa products, oil palm, plantain, banana and non-timber forest products). Particular emphasis is on women and youths involved in agricultural activities linked to tree crops and income generation.

We Won't Compromise On Quality Of Cocoa — Veep

(11/3/2006)

The Vice-President, Alhaji Aliu Mahama, yesterday stated that Ghana would not compromise on the quality of cocoa beans and products which it exported. "We will not do anything which will send contaminated cocoa outside the country," he gave the assurance.

Responding to a statement by the Chairman of the Chocolate and Cocoa Association of Japan, Mr Naotada Sato, to the effect that Japan had rejected about 2,000 metric tonnes of Ghana's cocoa exported to that country in May this year, the Vice-President said the quality of Ghana's cocoa had been acclaimed internationally as the best. He therefore assured that the country would not do anything to destroy that reputation and brand name. Mr Sato, currently leading a 16-member delegation of the association on a tour of some cocoa-growing areas, processing companies and research stations in the country, made the statement during a courtesy call on the Vice-President at the Castle, Osu in Accra. Mr Sato attributed the rejection to excessive chemical residue found in the beans exported to Japan.

However, the Ghana Cocoa Board explained that the maximum residue levels (MRLs) referred to by the Japanese for the rejection of the produce came into force on May 26, 2006, while the consignment referred to was produced and shipped to Japan before the new rules came into effect. The Vice-President said the quality of Ghana's cocoa had remained the best since the pre-colonial era and added that the country exported only quality cocoa beans. He gave the assurance that Ghana would continue to supply Japan with quality cocoa beans.

Commenting on a claim by Mr Sato that demand for cocoa products had increased in Japan as a result of the promotion of the product among the adult Japanese community, after years of use by the children, Alhaji Mahama said, "I am happy that the demand has increased." He said he was happy that the delegation was in Ghana to familiarise itself with the production and processing of cocoa, as well as research work. The Vice-

President noted that Japan was promoting chocolate in Japan with the brand name "Ghana Cocoa" and said, "We want that name to be maintained." He called for increased trade between Ghana and Japan and suggested that shea butter should be included in the line of trade.

Mr Sato stressed that the quality of cocoa beans exported to Japan should be improved upon. He said the demand for cocoa products was expected to soar because of the health and medicinal significance associated with cocoa. Japan imports 70 per cent of its 55,000 to 60,000 tonnes of cocoa from Ghana annually.

Chocolate maker Barry Callebaut posts 17.4% rise in FY profit

By Nicci Pugh

2nd November 2006

Swiss cocoa and chocolate maker Barry Callebaut has posted a 17.4% increase in profit for the year ended August 31, 2006, to CHF183 million (\$147.1 million), due to cost savings and improved margins. Net income for the year rose to CHF183 million from CHF155.9 million, while revenue increased 4.9% to CHF4.3 billion, helped by positive currency effects. The chocolate company subsequently increased its payout to shareholders from CHF8 per share to CHF10.50 in the form of a par value reduction and repayment.

Patrick De Maeseneire, CEO of Barry Callebaut, said: "We are pleased that we have again achieved very good results in fiscal year 2005/06, although we had a challenging fourth quarter due to a very hot summer in Europe, which impacted our volume growth. Most importantly, Consumer Products Europe has achieved a positive result; margins were improved and costs reduced. The business is now operating on a solid foundation." Barry Callebaut also announced the appointment of Victor Balli as CFO, who replaces Dieter Enkelmann following his departure for Swiss bank Julius Baer Group.

Love chocolate? Then try soaking in it

By Laura Blumenfeld, Washington Post

2nd November 2006 11:13:54 AM PST

HERSHEY, Pa. - WHAT TO DO with leftover Halloween chocolate — other than to eat it? Lots, in fact. At the Chocolate Spa in Hershey, clients bathe in whipped cocoa, bask in the glow of Tootsie Roll-flavored candles and breathe brownie-batter-scented steam.

"Yummy," Mary Gunn said in the spa locker room, sniffing the crook of her arm. "You smell like chocolate," said her mother, Nancy Gunn, inhaling.

Mary had just indulged in a "chocolate fondue wrap." She ran her fingers up her ribs and said, "They paint chocolate all over you." For \$105, a spa technician brushes warm cocoa oil mixed with mud onto your skin. The technician seals your body in plastic and covers you with foil. The effect: You're a Hershey bar, melting in the sun. If you move, your wrapper crinkles.

"It looks like chocolate, smells like chocolate, but it's mud," Joann Bowers, a spa technician, said as she massaged a client with the fudgy muck.

"Don't lick it," Bowers said.

The fondue is a top menu choice at the spa, located at the Hotel Hershey. But the most popular treat is the whipped cocoa bath. Clients soak in a tub of foaming cocoa, their body parts bobbing like mini-marshmallows. Candles flicker, powdered milk froths, and jets gush with 100-degree sweetness.

"Do I have to call security to get you out?" an attendant, Lindsay Mancine, teased Teri Kolaskey, who was lingering in her milk bath. Kolaskey was late for a chocolate sugar scrub.

She chuckled as she toweled dry. Other clients were giggling, lifting chocolate muffins from silver trays and nibbling Kisses from crystal bowls. "The important question of the day: Do I want chocolate on my underwear?" joked Andrea Waldorf as she considered what to wear for a chocolate bean polish, an exfoliation treatment using cocoa bean husks and cocoa cream.

"People get a little silly," said Jennifer Wayland Smith, the spa director.

Bowers, the technician, described the atmosphere at the Chocolate Spa as "girls' slumber party." In the rich, dark-chocolate-brown "Quiet Room," otherwise dignified women steal dozens of Kisses, emptying bowls into their handbags, she said. The management buys 25-pound boxes of chocolates to stock the bowls. "As soon as they smell chocolate, it makes them excited," said Liz Sutcliffe, a massage technician.

Sutcliffe was rubbing a client with essence of cocoa, kneading her calf like a piece of chocolate taffy. The client, tucked under a brown silk blanket, smiled. "They get this childlike expression," Sutcliffe said. "They giggle, they lick their shoulders. You don't get that with jasmine and chamomile," traditional scents used in aromatherapy.

For most people, said David Katz, an associate professor of public health and director of the Prevention Research Center at Yale University School of Medicine, the smell of chocolate "is pretty heady, and maybe even intoxicating." Katz found that people who regularly ate dark chocolate or drank cocoa had improved cardiovascular health and lower blood pressure. Dark chocolate is high in bioflavonoid antioxidants, he said. Although there isn't any research on the health effects of a chocolate whirlpool bath, Katz said, "Chocolate has a potent aroma; aroma can influence the brain. Ergo, chocolate aroma could have psychoactive effects."

Might that explain the giggling?

"The olfactory nerve is hard-wired into a primitive part of a brain. You catch a whiff, and you're transported back 30 years, through a portal in time," Katz said. "Also, it's hard not to giggle when you say, 'I'm bathing in chocolate.'"

Vietnam's cocoa project grows area under cultivation

Source: Sai Gon Giai Phong – Translated by Tuong Nhi

Vietnam's cocoa extension project has gained good results under an effective government strategy, said the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) at a conference Tuesday. The current area under cocoa cultivation was 7,320ha, compared with only 11.5ha in 2000, deputy minister Bui Ba Bong reported at the 3rd annual conference held by the Success Alliance and Vietnamese relevant agencies in Ho Chi Minh City Tuesday.

Bong said the result was thanks to the effective support of a Success (Sustainable Cocoa Extension for Smallholders) Alliance project launched two years ago, set to complete next year and the national agricultural extension program. Earlier this year, MARD had launched a plan to increase the country's cacao-growing acreage to 20,000 hectares by 2010 in fourteen provinces in the coastal South Central, Central Highlands, Southeast and Mekong River Delta. Success Alliance, run by the World Cocoa Foundation, provides programs in cocoa extension with instruction and technical supports in three countries including Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, benefiting thousands of farmers.

TIT BITS

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

US MIDDAY: cocoa down

NEW YORK (November 02, 2006): US cocoa prices slipped to a one-week low Wednesday as speculators took profits from the recent run-up after noting little reason to immediately test resistance at \$1,500.

New York cocoa ends mixed

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US MIDDAY: cocoa down

NEW YORK (November 04, 2006): US cocoa futures ended down Friday after trending higher to breach \$1,500 a tonne as players tried to narrow the gap between forward months and the benchmark contract which was approaching delivery.

New York cocoa higher

NEW YORK (November 04, 2006): US cocoa futures closed 1.8 percent higher on Thursday after short-covering and potential for trouble in top producing country Ivory Coast lifted the market. December cocoa on the New York Board of Trade closed up \$27 at \$1,490 a tonne, just off the day's high of \$1,492. The bottom was \$1,457, below the one-week low of \$1,459 hit on Wednesday.

New York cocoa futures down

NEW YORK (November 03, 2006): US cocoa prices slipped to a one-week low on Wednesday as speculators took profits from the recent run-up after noting little reason to immediately test resistance at \$1,500. New York Board of Trade December cocoa closed down \$21 at \$1,463 per tonne, it's lowest since October 25 and near the bottom of a \$1,475 to \$1,459 range.

Ivorian cocoa strike ends

ABIDJAN (November 01, 2006): Ivory Coast's main cocoa and coffee farmers association on Tuesday definitively called off a threat to resume strike action after President Laurent Gbagbo refused to consider their calls for tax cuts.

New York cocoa futures rise

NEW YORK (November 01, 2006): US cocoa ended 1 percent up on Monday, recouping almost all of the previous session's losses. Volume in cocoa futures transacted on the New York Board also rose, to an estimated 17,857 lots from Friday's official tally of 9,734.

Ivories San Pedro cocoa arrivals 31,615 tonnes

ABIDJAN (October 31, 2006): cocoa arrivals at Ivory Coast's port of San Pedro reached 31,615 tonnes by October 22, 2006, according to data from the Coffee and cocoa Bourse (BCC) obtained by Reuters on Monday.

Cocoa smuggling on rise in west Ivory Coast

DUEKOUE (October 31, 2006): Increasing quantities of cocoa are leaving the world's top grower via the country's northern rebel zone and are being smuggled to neighbouring West African states, buyers in the region say.

CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY

(<http://www.ecolechocolat.com/news.php>)

- ♦ **Chocolate Visions**, Inc. a small artisan chocolate company founded three years ago in Scotts Valley by Lloyd and Lindy Martin officially announced yesterday that they had indeed won the Hazelnut Council's 2006 Product Development Contest with their Hazelnut Trio chocolate. Press Release
- ♦ **The baking-chocolate** section of the grocery store has suddenly become a lot more complicated. Recently, Hershey's and Nestlé introduced premium extensions to their product lines, responding to Ghirardelli's move late last year to increase the cacao content of its baking bars and to state that content on the label. High-end chocolatier, Scharffen Berger, is introducing a line of Home Baking Bars targeted at supermarket and mass-retailer customers, reported St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Full Story
- ♦ **Dark-chocolate sales increased** 42% over the last five years, and one in three new chocolate products is dark so far this year, compared with one in seven in 2005, according to ACNielsen. As demand for quality dark chocolate grew, the industry rushed to cater to its core customers, women ages 25 to 40, who, surveys by Mintel indicate, consume on average eight servings a month. Hershey's, Godiva, Nestle's and Ghirardelli are among the brands catering to this trend, reported The Philadelphia Inquirer. Full Story
- ♦ Many American chocolate companies have begun labeling their bars according to cacao content, a blend of cocoa solids and cocoa butter. Chocolate's taste is influenced more by the origin, blend and roasting of the cocoa beans. A professor of baking and pastry at the Culinary Institute of America, expects the next wave in chocolate marketing to focus on origin and variety of cocoa beans, similar to how coffee is classified, reported TwinCitites.com. Full Story
- ♦ The Hershey Company, as part of its strategic focus on the high-growth premium chocolate segment, today announced that it has acquired the assets and operations of Dagoba Organic Chocolate. Based in Ashland, Oregon, Dagoba is known for its high-quality natural and organic chocolate bars, hot chocolate and chocolate-covered coffee beans sold in natural foods outlets and gourmet stores. Full release
- ♦ The Hershey Company and the United States Postal Service have unveiled the 2007 edition of the LOVE Series stamp, entitled "With Love and Kisses" with the Hershey's Kisses brand as the new centerpiece of the popular LOVE stamp series, making it the first chocolate product selected for placement on a stamp.
- ♦ In honour of breast cancer awareness month and to support breast cancer research and education, Rogers' Chocolates, has created a signature flavour for its famous Victoria Creams chocolate collection. From now until the end of 2006, \$1 from every Raspberry Vanilla Swirl chocolate sold will go to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, B.C./Yukon Chapter and its goal of a future without breast cancer.
- ♦ The newest owners of Chicago's Fannie May candy company, 1-800 Flowers, plan to open a 3,400-sq. ft. flagship store in Chicago, replacing the 800-sq. ft. store, reported the Chicago Tribune. Full Story

CHOCOLATE & HEALTH

- ♦ Drinking an unprocessed kind of cocoa that is not yet commercially available may help improve blood vessel function, according to a new report published in The Journal of Hypertension. The study's authors receive grant support from Mars Inc., which also supplied the cocoa used in the experiments, reported The New York Times on the Web.
- ♦ Candy industry focused on health - The annual candy expo of the National Confectioners Association was recently held in Chicago to showcase new product innovations. The development of healthier alternatives to conventional snack products was a common theme at this year's expo. Low-calorie candy products were unveiled by several companies including Hershey Co., Nestle USA, and Russell Stover Candy Co.'s Whitman's unit. The chocolate manufacturer Botticelli promoted a new "cardio" bar featuring 400 milligrams of the heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Candy fortified with various nutrients remains a strong trend in the industry. According to a report by the Mintel Group, more than 100 fortified chocolate and candy products have entered the market since 2003. The most common types of fortification include calcium, omega-3s and vitamin C.

- ♦ A new study suggests that eating milk chocolate may boost brain function. "Chocolate contains many substances that act as stimulants, such as theobromine, phenethylamine, and caffeine, which by themselves have previously been found to increase alertness and attention," according to Dr. Bryan Raudenbush from Wheeling Jesuit University, WV.
- ♦ WebMD answers questions on Chocolate and Your Health in a Feb,2006 article. (http://www.webmd.com/content/Article/16/1728_55149.htm)
- ♦ Why Cocoa May Help Heart Health. Antioxidants Are Key -- and Not Always Saved in Cocoa Processing. Antioxidants in cocoa might help your heart by keeping your blood vessels relaxed, thus easing blood pressure and helping circulation. So says a study in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Archived CHOCOLATE & HEALTH NEWS

- ♦ A new study reveals the chemical in chocolate that produces known heart-healthy benefits. The research found that epicatechin, one of a group of chemicals known as flavanols, is directly linked to improved circulation and other hallmarks of cardiovascular health. Full Story
- ♦ Chocolate may help repair damage to smokers' blood vessels, at least temporarily, a new study shows. The benefit may stem from antioxidants called flavonols that are found in chocolate (and fruits and vegetables), according to researchers in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, reported Fox News. Full Story
- ♦ Flavanols Key To Potential Chocolate Benefits (September 29, 2005) — Phytochemicals known as flavanols, which are found in chocolate, fruits and vegetables, can boost the levels of nitric oxide in the blood of smokers and reverse some of their smoking-related impairment in blood vessel function, according to a new study in the Oct. 4, 2005, issue of the Journal of the American College of Cardiology. full story
- ♦ Researchers at the University of L'Aquila in Italy found that dark chocolate may help the body use insulin more effectively and decrease blood pressure
- ♦ Eating dark chocolate can result in short-term improvements in arterial function and blood pressure, according to a new study conducted at Yale University's Prevention Research Center and funded by The Hershey Company.
- ♦ All products containing natural cocoa have flavanol antioxidants, confirmed a study sponsored by The Hershey Company in conjunction with Cornell University and Brunswick Laboratories. The study also found that the level of antioxidants in commonly available chocolate products is directly related to the amount of natural cocoa contained in that product.
- ♦ Dark chocolate can lower blood pressure, according to a study published by the American Heart Association. The study joins a growing body of research that show compounds found in chocolate called flavonoids can help the blood vessels work more smoothly, perhaps reducing the risk of heart disease.
- ♦ Dark chocolate, but not white chocolate, may help reduce blood pressure and boost the body's ability to metabolize sugar from food, according to the results of a study from the University of L'Aquila in Italy.
- ♦ Upscale chocolate company Bissinger's Handcrafted Chocolatier's is using health claims to tout its new Spa Chocolate, which urges consumers to "treat yourself to good health." The packaging says the candies contain ingredients "linked to improved cardiovascular health, lowered risk for certain types of cancer, a reduction in body weight and a slowing of the aging process," but critics disagree, reported STLtoday.com
- ♦ The new Mars chocolate bar, called "Cocoa Via," contains a soybean extract that has been known to lower cholesterol. The candy bars, not yet in grocery stores, can be ordered online.
- ♦ A 15-year investigation into the molecular composition and nutritional effects of cocoa, known in-house as the "healthy chocolate" initiative, by Mars Inc. Harold Schmitz, who oversees research for the firm with \$17 billion in annual sales, seems to hope that cocoa - or more precisely, cocoa processed according to Mars's

special methods, with extremely high flavanol levels - will then turn out to be among the most potent and popular functional foods yet created. Article

- ♦ Cardiologists at Athens Medical School in Greece found that eating dark chocolate appears to improve the function of important cells lining the wall of blood vessels for at least three hours. But experts cautioned that the weight gain from eating a lot of chocolate probably would cancel out the apparent benefit.
- ♦ Eating dark chocolate helps blood vessels function more effectively, according to University of California researchers writing in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, reported BBC News. Full Story
- ♦ European researchers found milk and other dairy products somehow discourage the body's ability to absorb the protective compounds in chocolate. Details of the study appeared the science journal Nature, reported Cape Argus. Full Story
- ♦ A small study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association suggests that eating dark chocolate can lower your blood pressure. The short study would need to be confirmed in larger, longer-term ones before doctors could recommend treatment with chocolate, researchers say, reported The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.
- ♦ Candy makers and other food companies are marketing low-carbohydrate chocolates for adherents of the Atkins diet and other eating plans that restrict starchy and sugary foods. Manufacturers acknowledge that the low-carb candies contain the same sugar substitutes as sugar-free chocolates, but say that the new product packages will make more dieters aware of their snacking options, reported AZCentral.com.
- ♦ Chocolate's Secret Power - Just 1 oz of dark chocolate packs a big antioxidant wallop according to this Prevention.com article. You've read it before: Dark chocolate, the richer in cocoa the better, is not only a to-die-for treat, it's actually good for you. And just 1 oz of a very special chocolate packs more than twice the healthy antioxidant punch of red wine or other dark chocolates.
- ♦ Chocolate and cocoa may help prevent heart attacks, according to researchers at the University of California at San Francisco. So far, just two commercially available chocolate products - Dove dark chocolate bars and M&M Baking Bits - are known to contain high levels of flavanol, the substance linked to heart health, the study found. UCSF