



COPAL COCOA Info

A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance

Issue No. 257

12th – 16th November 2007

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)
12th November	1211.33	1918.82	944.00	1904.67
13th November	1216.95	1927.99	943.00	1914.33
14th November	1213.72	1925.54	946.00	1915.67
15th November	1232.51	1950.41	970.33	1926.00
16th November	1237.18	1956.12	971.67	1935.00
Average	1222.00	1936.00	955.00	1919.00

Up-coming Events

*PROMOTION OF THE CONSUMPTION OF COCOA AND COCOA PRODUCTS
BY COPAL DURING THE AFRICAN CUP OF NATIONS 2008*

In the News (from Newspapers worldwide)

Health and Nutrition

- Health Canada publishes multivitamin, mineral monograph
- Industry sets voluntary deadlines on additive removal
- US revamps food safety strategies
- Codex to discuss health claims science
- Phytobase makes healthy choocs with superfruits
- Chocolate delights to eat - and wear
- Natural Health

Production & Quality

- Strong Rains Persist into Ivory Coast's Dry Season
- Blommer Chocolate Announces New Sustainable Farming Program for Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa
- Cocoa Humidity Slows Central Cameroon Crop Transport (DJ)
- Liberia: Mercy Corps To Take Over Cocoa Farm In Bassa
- St Lucia Cocoa Revival Underway as Foreign Companies Invest (DJ)
- Ivory Coast to Invest \$24.5M in Cocoa Farm-to-Market Roads (DJ)
- Brazil 2007/08 Cocoa Arrivals down 9.5 pct on Year
- Government targets one million tonnes quality cocoa export by 2010

Markets

- TradeSignals Cocoa Futures Morning Commentary -- 2007-11-15 07:03:17
- Tight Supply to Drive Commodities Boom Till 2010 (DJ)
- Ivory Coast cocoa prices stable

Processing & Manufacturing

- Industry consulted on labels claiming 'natural' and 'pure'
- Industry outlines policy on environmental, production sustainability
- Nutrient labeling could see major overhaul
- Cemoi to Invest 38 Million Euro in New Perpignan Chocolate Facility
- Ghana Boosts Cocoa Processing •To 350,000 Tonnes
- ADM launches bright and tasty cocoa powders

Business and Economy

- SW Nigeria Cocoa Merchants, Exporters Face Supply Problem (DJ)
- Top Cocoa Chocolate Exporters
- Cargill to Open 3rd Buying Station in Ivory Coast Cocoa Belt (DJ)
- Burkina Faso Now A Major Destination
- 2007 New York Chocolate Show Roundup
- Cocoa Trade Resumes in SW Cameroon after Protests (DJ) - business
- Natra tops list of chocolate spread firms
- Barry Callebaut Finalizes Sale of U.S. Subsidiary
- Africa: "EU Will Be the Main Beneficiary of the EPAs"
- Cadbury reveals demerger proposals
- Gourmet chocolate exports lead to Australia's first commercial cocoa farm

Labour Issues

- Ivory Coast Cocoa Farmers Union Threaten Blockade by Nov 21 (DJ)

Others

- News briefs: biofuel, melted chocolate and trade shows.
- A helping hand to the confused consumer
- Unsold Cocoa Stocks Pile up in Ivorian Warehouses
- Deadly Attacks on Traders Slow Central Cameroon Cocoa Trade (DJ)
- Blackout protests affect cocoa deliveries
- COCOBOD pays bonus to farmers
- COCOBOD Attends Thanksgiving Service
- Pre-dating the love of chocolate

Do your health a favour, drink Cocoa everyday?

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

Monday 12th November 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Dec 2007	920	918	-4	925	915	2743
Mar 2007	954	949	-3	954	947	3849
May 2008	967	965	-2	970	963	749
Jul 2008	980	979	-2	983	978	199
Sep 2008	990	989	-2	992S	988	819
Dec 2008	1000	996	-1	1000	995	209
Mar 2009	1009	1007	-1	1009	1008	23
May 2009		1016	-1			0
Jul 2009		1025	-1			0
Sep 2009		1030	-1			0
Totals		987				8,591

Tuesday 13th November

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	920	916	-2	922	909	6944
Mar 2007	952	949	0	953	945	7287
May 2008	968	964	-1	968	961	3143
Jul 2008	982	980	1	982	977	3319
Sep 2008	990	989	0	990	986	500
Dec 2008	994	996	0	999	994S	179
Mar 2009	1008	1007	0	1008S	1005S	200
May 2009		1016	0			0
Jul 2009		1025	0			0
Sep 2009		1030	0			0
Totals		987				21,572

Wednesday 14th November 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	913	919	3	932	911	4732
Mar 2007	950	952	3	966	943	8611
May 2008	966	967	3	979	957	1455
Jul 2008	981	984	4	993S	974	1985
Sep 2008	985	992	3	1000	984	329
Dec 2008	992	998	2	1009S	992S	315
Mar 2009	1005	1008	1	1017S	1005S	98
May 2009		1017	1			0
Jul 2009		1026	1			0
Sep 2009		1031	1			0
Totals		989				17,525

Thursday 15th November 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	918	922	3	924	912	2559
Mar 2007	952	955	3	957	945	4106
May 2008	966	970	3	971	961	485
Jul 2008	982	986	2	988	978	1812
Sep 2008	989	995	3	996S	989	80
Dec 2008	998	1002	4	1003S	993	149
Mar 2009	1005	1013	5	1010S	1005S	34
May 2009		1023	6			0
Jul 2009		1032	6			0
Sep 2009		1037	6			0
Totals		994				9,225

Friday 16th November 2007

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	924	924	2	928	920	2,989
Mar 2007	955	957	2	960	951	6,456
May 2008	970	971	1	974	967	462
Jul 2008	986	987	1	991	984	1,839
Sep 2008	994	997	2	1000	994	201
Dec 2008	1002	1004	2	1007	1002	353
Mar 2009	1016	1015	2	1017	1015	102
May 2009		1025	2			0
Jul 2009		1033	1			0
Sep 2009		1039	2			0
Totals		995				12,402

Average for the week	1007					13863
Total for the week						69,315

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

Monday 12th November 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	1899	1877	-44	1899	1870	4012
Mar 2008	1927	1917	-34	1934	1912	6954
May 2008	1936	1928	-31	1936	1928	1431
Jul 2008	1935	1935	-31	1935	1935	465
Sep 2008	1946	1946	-32	1946	1946	31
Dec 2008	1961	1961	-34	1961	1961	201
Mar 2009	1980	1980	-30	1980	1980	120
May 2009	1988	1988	-41	1988	1988	103
Jul 2009	2010	2010	-44	2010	2010	-
Sep 2009	1899	2026	-44	2026	2026	-
Totals		1957				13317

Tuesday 13th November 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007		1879	2			
Mar 2008		1931	14			
May 2008		1942	14			
Jul 2008		1949	14			
Sep 2008		1957	11			
Dec 2008		1974	13			
Mar 2009		1990	10			
May 2009		2000	12			
Jul 2009		2024	14			
Sep 2009		2040	14			
Totals		1969				0

Wednesday 14th November 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	1865	1882	3	1905	1865	7317
Mar 2008	1915	1929	-2	1930	1915	8260
May 2008	1941	1941	-1	1941	1941	719
Jul 2008	1950	1950	1	1950	1950	422
Sep 2008	1958	1958	1	1958	1958	5
Dec 2008	1971	1971	-3	1971	1971	18
Mar 2009	1987	1987	-3	1987	1987	10
May 2009	1998	1998	-2	1998	1998	588
Jul 2009	2023	2023	-1	2023	2023	0
Sep 2009	2036	2036	-4	2036	2036	0
Totals		1968				17339

Thursday 15th November 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	1872	1885	3	1890	1872	5945
Mar 2008	1915	1915	-14	1918	1898	10081
May 2008	1926	1926	-15	1926	1926	1729
Jul 2008	1937	1937	-13	1937	1937	718
Sep 2008	1948	1948	-10	1948	1948	291
Dec 2008	1960	1960	-11	1960	1960	271
Mar 2009	1976	1976	-11	1976	1976	37
May 2009	1982	1982	-16	1982	1982	150
Jul 2009	2006	2006	-17	2006	2006	0
Sep 2009	2022	2022	-14	2022	2022	0
Totals		1956				19222

Friday 16th November 2007

Month	Open	Price	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2007	1900	1905	20	1910	1900	381
Mar 2008	1920	1925	10	1928	1914	5167
May 2008	1935	1936	10	1936	1935	1143
Jul 2008	1946	1946	9	1946	1946	716
Sep 2008	1954	1954	6	1954	1954	182
Dec 2008	1966	1966	6	1966	1966	131
Mar 2009	1983	1983	7	1983	1983	6
May 2009	1990	1990	8	1990	1990	1
Jul 2009	2014	2014	8	2014	2014	0
Sep 2009	2030	2030	8	2030	2030	0
Totals		1965				7727

Average for the week	1976					11072
Total for the week						44,288

Spot Prices (US\$ per tonne)

	12 th November	13 th November	14 th November	15 th November	16 th November
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	-	2324	2327	2340	2350
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	-	2202	2205	2212	2222
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	-	2189	2192	2192	2202
Superior Arriba	-	2409	2412	2397	2407
Sanchez f.a.q.	-	2226	2229	2278	2288
Malaysian 110	-	1884	1887	1885	1895
Sulawesi f.a.q.	-	2067	2070	2103	2113
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	-	3470	3475	3383	3401
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	-	5499	5508	5534	5563
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	-	871	872	849	853

Source: Cocoa Merchants' Association

News

Health and Nutrition

Health Canada publishes multivitamin, mineral monograph

nutraingredients-usa.com

By staff reporter

11/6/2007 - Health Canada has published a new monograph on natural health products containing two or more vitamins and minerals, which sets out instructions on preparation, safety and labelling. Since the Canadian Natural Health Products Regulation came into effect in 2004, Health Canada has issued a number of monographs on natural health products. These are described as "scientific documents that provide authoritative information about the safe and effective use of a substance or ingredient".

Until now, however, only single vitamins and minerals have been included in the monographs. The regulator says that the new multi- monograph will build on these, since it features an expanded list of materials. It is also expected to make licensing easier for new products containing multiple vitamins and minerals, since manufacturers will need to refer to one document, rather than many.

The new monograph brings compliance issues for companies with multivitamin and mineral products already on the market, since they will have to comply with the requirements it sets out. And for the consumer, ultimately Health Canada says it will "further ensure that Canadians have access to products that are well prepared, safe to use and effective... [and] provide clear instructions on their labels". The monograph relates only to natural health products sold in pill (supplement) form, and not to foods or beverages.

Industry sets voluntary deadlines on additive removal

beveragedaily.com/

By Neil Merrett

06/11/2007 - UK food and beverage manufacturers have committed themselves to removing a group of six colour additives from their products by the end of 2008, according to a regulatory report published yesterday. The deadlines put food manufacturers on notice that they must reformulate or get cut out of the supply chain. Regulatory action is being considered by the FSA if deadlines are not met. The report reveals agreements made at a meeting that took place on 9 October between food industry representatives and the UK's Food Standards Agency (FSA) about possible health issues relating to six colour additives and sodium benzoate (E111).

The six colours are sunset yellow (E110), tartrazine (E102), carmoisine (E122), ponceau 4R (E124) quinoline yellow (E104), and allura red (E129). The FSA is currently considering setting a voluntary deadline of October 2008 for retailers and manufacturers to remove the colour additives. The FSA said it would consider a proposed statement: "The FSA would like to see food producers and providers take the necessary voluntary action to remove the specified colours from the food chain by a specific date e.g. October 2008 at which point the FSA will consider what regulatory action might be taken."

One retailer present at the meeting, unnamed in the report, claimed it had already removed the colours used in the study from its own brand products. The same company said it was also moving to ensure all dyes and artificial colours are removed from their products by 1 July 2008. Another retailer said that 99 per cent of products across its range will be free of all artificial colours by the end of 2007. "However, a replacement for sodium benzoate as a preservative in soft drinks is causing difficulty and a solution has yet to be discovered," the FSA stated.

Some retailers indicated they had yet to find alternatives for the use of these colours in canned strawberries and canned peas, the FSA reported. "Food manufacturers reported that they had been taking action to remove the artificial colours used in the study and this has been ongoing for several years," the reported stated. Retailers present at the meeting include Morrison Supermarkets, Somerfield Stores, and Marks and Spencer. Delegates from the British Retail Consortium (BRC) were also present. Retailers rejected a proposal to publish a list of foods and drinks that contained the additives in the study. They argued such a move would be impractical, as "many" products are in the process of being reformulated so the list would not be representative of the market. Retailers also highlighted that industry had taken measures to advise consumers by highlighting information on front of pack statements, such as "Contains no artificial colours".

In relation to concerns raised about sweets sold loose and without such information, the FSA said it would consider the issue further. "The meeting was advised that the three major confectionary companies were either in the process of or had already removed artificial colours from their products," the FSA reported.

Beverage industry representatives noted that the additive tartrazine, featured in the study, had not been used in soft drink formulations for about 15 years. Representatives added that about seven per cent of soft drink on the market needed to be reformulated to cut out the named additives. The industry also claimed that the majority of drinks brands currently aimed at children did not contain the colours identified by the Southampton study, according to the FSA report.

A technical symposium for industry, particularly targeting small and medium sized companies without the research and development resources of their larger competitors, is being organised by the FSA and the Food and Drink Federation.

In a 1 November letter sent to a number of major retailer and industry associations, the FSA expanded its call for information on the use and removal of the additives. The FSA now wants more industry organisations and smaller companies to report by the 14 December deadline. The information will be used as part of a debate on the additives scheduled to take place at the FSA board meeting in February 2008.

The commitments from industry follow on from the FSA's publication of a study linking some colours and sodium benzoate to hyperactivity in children. The study, commissioned by the FSA, links injection of cocktails of the artificial colours and the preservative sodium benzoate to hyperactivity or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) on children.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is currently reviewing all food colourings previously approved for use in the EU, and has said it will give priority to the six colours at the heart of the FSA study. A recent Mintel survey found that consumer demand was already forcing consumers to cut artificial additives from their products.

US revamps food safety strategies

foodnavigator-usa.com

By Lorraine Heller

11/8/2007 - The US government this week announced wide sweeping plans to improve the safety of the nation's food supply, with measures including more stringent inspections, stronger penalties and mandatory recalls. Two plans were unveiled on Tuesday, one to prevent contamination in the domestic food chain, and one to ensure the safety of imported food.

Food Protection Plan

The US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Protection Plan is built around three core elements: prevention, intervention and response. It will promote increased corporate responsibility, increased collaboration and communication with stakeholders, and a broad risk-based approach to food protection.

Under the plan, FDA will also be able to issue additional preventive controls for high-risk foods, accredit third parties for voluntary food inspections, increase access to food records during emergencies, and issue a mandatory recall if voluntary recalls are not effective. "FDA must keep pace with this transformation so that the safety of the nation's food supply remains second to none. The Food Protection Plan calls for effective action before an outbreak occurs," said FDA Commissioner Andrew von Eschenbach at a press conference in Washington, DC, where he presented the plan.

The Food Protection Plan was developed in response to a request in May this year by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Commissioner of Food and Drugs for a new comprehensive strategy to maximize the safety of FDA-regulated food products.

Import Safety Action Plan

On the same day, the Bush Administration's Import Safety Working Group issued an action plan designed to complement the domestic food safety strategy.

The Import Safety Action Plan comprises short- and long-term recommendations to enhance the safety of the increasing volume of imports entering the United States. Amongst measures outlined by the plan is the creation of a stronger certification process in exporting countries, a greater US presence overseas, and stronger penalties for those responsible for selling unsafe products.

"For many years, we have relied on a strategy based on identifying unsafe products at the border. The problem is that the growing volume of products coming into our country makes this approach increasingly unreliable," said President Bush on Tuesday.

"The working group recommended that we adopt a smarter and more effective approach that focuses on prevention - building safety into products from the very beginning of the supply chain. Under this approach, we will focus on stopping dangerous

products from reaching our border in the first place - for example, by ensuring that food and consumer products meet our standards for safety before they leave their home countries."

The new food safety plans have received the support of the nation's food industry, with trade body Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) saying it has also "embraced" FDA's proposal of mandatory recalls.

Codex to discuss health claims science

nutraingredients.com/

By Alex McNally

09/11/2007 - Codex members are due to sit down and vote on a series of far reaching rules governing nutrient compounds in foods - and crucially discuss whether health claims should be based only on clinical studies. Although Codex is not a regulatory body, its decisions are used as a benchmark of discussion should trade disputes arise in the future, and while Codex does not have the same force of law as an EU directive or national legislation, it is used as a reference point for countries that are looking at revising or creating legislation.

In Europe, the EU has already unveiled its own health claims regulation - which says claims about foods should be supported by science - and has caused uncertainty for the industry since coming into force in July. The Codex meeting next week will vote upon whether scientific evidence should be based solely on clinical studies. This suggestion has come under fire from trade groups who say this would be "unfeasible."

Codex members will also vote on a draft revised standard for infant formula, a list of nutrients aimed at infants and young children. The group will also vote on nutrient reference values for labelling, and the production and processing standards regarding nutritional quality and safety. The European Commission has commented on four of the agenda items, in many cases suggesting new wording.

Clinical studies

The work for scientific basis for health claims began at the 22nd session of the Codex committee on nutrition and foods for special dietary uses. One proposed criteria, which has been drawn up by the International Life Science Institute, says that a claim should be based on human data "primarily from intervention studies."

Subsequent comments from member states said that all health claims should be based on evidence provided by human intervention (clinical) studies, "irrespective of whether the health claim is applied to the whole diet, food group, food or a property of the food."

Animal model studies and in vitro studies may be used as supporting knowledge but should never be considered as "sufficient per se to substantiate any type of health claim."

Not feasible

The International Alliance of Dietary/Food Supplement Associations (IADSA) has said that just to use intervention studies alone would not be feasible. IADSA director of regulatory affairs David Pineda said: "While we agree the text is moving in the right direction, the text still needs to be amended to allow evidence from human experimental and observational studies to form the basis of health claims."

David Richardson, scientific adviser to the UK Council for Responsible Nutrition, said: "Scientific substantiation should take into account the totality of the available data and involve a weighing of evidence. "Human studies are given more weight than animal, in vitro and observational studies, but it is important for the Codex text to show that a health claim can be substantiated on case-by-case bases by a number of different evidence sources."

Codex should also consider evidence from history of use, he added.

The 29th Codex committee on nutrition and foods for special dietary uses will be held in Germany from Monday to Friday. Regardless of the outcome of the vote, it is likely more work will be needed on the draft recommendations before they are finalized.

Phytobase makes healthy chocs with superfruits

<http://www.confectionerynews.com/news/ng.asp?id=81334>

By Jess Halliday

13/11/2007 - Phytobase is introducing a new organic dark chocolate bonbon at Whole Foods stores in the US that contains healthy ingredients at the cutting edge of the functional foods trend. The US-based research food technology company last year

introduced a chocolate aimed at women containing Amazonian berry Borojo, which researchers have claimed acts as an aphrodisiac and boosts energy levels. In 2004 it introduced ChocoLeans, a product said to help control the appetite.

Now Phytobase is extending this offering with a new product called Amoriss, which taps into some of the hottest trends in the functional foods and nutraceuticals market - superfruits and resveratrol. The new product looks to take the intrinsic healthy reputation of dark chocolate, which has been found to have a high content of antioxidants, to a new level. Such products are repositioning chocolate away from being just a luxury, indulgent product towards a healthier profile.

Amoriss is said to contain the antioxidant-rich superfruits acai, mangosteen, goji, pomegranate, rhamnus rosea, as well as red wine extract ("health healthy benefits without the alcohol") and resveratrol. The term 'superfruit' refers to any fruit that has a particularly high antioxidant content or is packed full of other beneficial nutrients. Resveratrol is an antioxidant compound found in red wine, grapes, raspberries, peanuts and blueberries, which in turn fall under the umbrella group of superfoods.

Antioxidants, meanwhile, are understood to prevent cellular damage by preventing the formation of free radicals, atoms that are formed when oxygen interacts with certain molecules. These free radicals can, in turn, damage DNA and pave the way towards serious illness like cancer, other diseases, and outward signs of ageing.

Phytobase CEO Sam Gur told ConfectioneryNews.com that the formulation was developed by the company's own PhD in physiology and plants chemistry. "The formula was developed to be effective, each ingredient working synergistically with each other, and, at the same time not to overwhelm the pallet," he said. He added that each 12g, individually-wrapped chocolate contains 1.2g of extracts. The overall taste will be a "hint of fruits, which compliment the complex chocolate taste".

As consumer tastes become more exotic and research stacks up on the antioxidant content of fruits from far-flung corners of the globe, there is a strong pull towards products that flag content of fruits like acai, goji and pomegrate - even if they do not make explicit health claims.

By association with the whole fruits themselves, superfruit flavours are being developed to increase the consumer draw of a range of packaged foods; superfruit juices have also been identified as a trend for the beverage industry.

Moreover, Phytobase is taking a double-pronged approach to its marketing of the Amoriss product, since it says it can also be melted and applied to the skin on the face, as a "nourishing, moisturizing and antioxidant facemask treatment for healthy-looking skin".

While saying that the response to Amoriss so far has been "remarkable", Gur said that ChocoLeans was the first satiety dark chocolate to come to market. "Being a bit early in the trends has its rewards and challenges," he said. "The satiety trend is at full speed right now in various sectors, and ChocoLeans are becoming more and more popular."

ChocoLeans are sold in upscale health stores across the US, and through E-tailors.

Gur added: "The wellness industry is transforming from reacting to a problem to preventing it, with more and more consumers becoming conscious in how they live their lives."

Phytobase's aim, he said, is to allow people to improve well being, by simply eating a piece of chocolate, drinking a cup of coffee, etc - and making it an experience that is about more than just the taste. Phytobase is not the only company seeking to attract health-conscious chocolate fans.

Last month chocolate giant Barry Callebaut announced what it says are the first chocolates containing probiotic bacteria to come on the market, developed in collaboration with Lal'Foods (Lallemand-Institut Rossel). This product is said to be an effective vehicle for delivering four times as many live bacteria to the gut, where they exert their healthy action, as traditional dairy formats.

Hershey-owned Dagoba also launched a Superfruit organic dark chocolate product containing acai, currants and goji berries at the beginning of this year. The other launches in the Dagoba line were Lemon Ginger, Nibs and Seeds. The products were intended to encourage consumers to keep eating luxury goods - albeit with a healthy edge - into the traditional January dieting season.

Chocolate delights to eat - and wear

Shanghai Daily, China

By Weng Shihui

2007-11-13

There are few foods that people feel as passionate about as chocolate: it can provide a sense of happiness and soothe the heart. For those true chocoholics, just thinking about chocolate can evoke a feeling of pleasure. In this year's FHC, world-renowned chocolate manufacturers will introduce their finest and newest chocolate products to Chinese consumers.

"Chinese people strongly prefer milk chocolate, but we are seeing a developing trend for the consumption of dark chocolate," said Cecilia Ng, the marketing manager of DKSH Asia, a Switzerland-based chocolate maker. "With quality conscious high-end consumers, our customers will even go for single origin chocolate, which has characteristics specific to its place of origin. It's not just Kit Kat bars anymore."

Venture into the chocolate section of FHC China 2007 and you'll get some idea of the latest chocolate products, and have the chance to enjoy eye-catching demonstrations and performances - such as live demonstrations of chocolate making and a chocolate fashion show.

DKSH China will work with 10 elite female pastry chefs from Shanghai to decorate children's apparel with chocolates. Chocolate will be made into beautiful and delicate accessories for kids, who will wear them at the booths and on the catwalk.

A chocolate workshop will be provided by Callebaut, the original Belgian chocolate Jean Marc Bernelin, Callebaut technical advisor for Asia Pacific, will teach the guests how to make pralines as well as demonstrate some special techniques, such as how to make hollow figures.

Nowadays, chocolate is also used in spas for body scrubs and wraps. Increases in chocolate consumption in such a wide variety of ways spur chocolate manufacturers to experiment in order to keep up with current trends, and to anticipate new ones. According to Nadim Itani, marketing coordinator for the Gourmet division in China, his company Barry Callebaut, the world's leading manufacturers of high-quality cocoa, chocolate and confectionery products, explores three trends in the chocolate market - products that are healthier, more convenient and offer a richer experience.

"Consumers are demanding more and more 'experience' products," said Itani. "As such for example, we have been developing a wide range of chocolate based on cocoa beans coming from single origins that have each very unique characters."

Few people can resist the sweet lure of chocolate. In today's world, people are increasingly concerned about healthy eating. "Our company is working on developing products that are exploiting the full potential of cocoa as a healthy ingredient," said Itani.

Jessica Liu is passionately fond of chocolate. She habitually eats two chocolate bars per day. "Chocolate is more than a sweet food, it gives me energy and happiness," the office worker said. "However, in addition to becoming fat, too much consumption of chocolate causes health problems."

To respond to these types of concerns, almost all chocolate manufacturers regularly launch new chocolate innovations and keep abreast of the latest research into the possible health effects of its consumption. Research shows that dark chocolate contains less sugar and more cocoa which contains "polyphenols," a substance that has proved to be a powerful anti-oxidant, and thus beneficial to the body. This is good news for chocoholics, who can't do without that sweet fix.

Natural Health

Nigerian Tribune, Nigeria

Why ginger, chocolate may relieve diarrhoea

By Sade Oguntola

14:11:2007

Ginger The popular spice ginger and dark chocolate made with flavonol-rich cocoa have potential against bacteria-induced diarrhea, experts have suggested. From a preliminary study, researchers from Taiwan's China Medical University, considered the effects of ginger and its bioactive components for their ability to inhibit the binding of a toxin from the bacteria E. coli to specific receptors on cells in a mouse intestine that initiate a cascade of events resulting in diarrhoea.

Diarrhoea is the passage of watery stools, usually at least three times in a 24hour period. However, it is the consistency of the stools rather than the number that is most important. Frequent passing of formed stools is not diarrhoea. It may be an important symptom of such underlying disorders as dysentery and lactose intolerance. Every year at least 2.2 million children die from diarrhoea and related diseases, 80 per cent of them in the first two years of their life.

The lead author of the study, Jaw-Chyun Chen, in the Journal of Agricultural and Food demonstrated for the first time that, in addition to it being effective against nausea, ginger extracts was effective at preventing diarrhoea by blocking the binding of a

toxin from the bacteria *E. coli* to specific receptors on cells in a mouse intestine thus preventing a cascade of events resulting in diarrhoea. Jaw-Chyun Chen said, "Our findings suggest that ginger extract could be used as an herbal supplement to prevent cholera-like diarrhoea in developing countries." The active component of ginger, zingerone was identified as the likely active constituent responsible for the observed antidiarrhoeal activity of ginger the researchers stated.

Given that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration classified ginger as generally safe and the German Commission E Monographs reported that ginger has no known side effects and no known drug/herb interactions, the researchers concluded that ginger might be an effective candidate against diarrhea. The researchers however in the study published on-line ahead of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry* print called for additional studies to determine the effective doses of ginger needed and whether it is safe for infants, who may experience unexpected side effects from large doses.

Dark chocolate made with flavonol-rich cocoa may similarly help to ease diarrhoea symptoms because cocoa compounds has ability to limit the development of fluids that cause the condition, scientist have said. University in Germany showed in laboratory tests that cocoa flavonoids could bind to and inhibit a protein in the intestines called CFTR, which regulates fluid secretion in the small intestines.

Writing in the issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*, they describe how they tested both cocoa extract and flavonoids alone in cell cultures that mimic the lining of the intestine. All of the cultures reported lower fluid levels. Dr Horst Fischer, an associate scientist at the Oakland centre, stated that because that fluid loss by the intestine can be prevented by cocoa flavonoids, this ultimately, could lead to the development of natural treatments that are inexpensive, easy to access and are unlikely to have side effects.

Cocoa and ginger has been used as a natural remedy for diarrhoea for centuries in Chinese Medicine. For instance, ginger is recommended for treating a number of health problems including abdominal bloating, coughing, vomiting, and rheumatism.

Leading researchers at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Centre confirmed the plant could also help people with cancer avoid nausea induced by chemotherapy and nausea related to motion sickness and post-operative recovery. It could relieve the nausea and vomiting experienced by pregnant women to a similar extent as vitamin B6.

Traditional remedies for expectant mothers trying to treat the nausea and vomiting of early pregnancy include soda, crackers or crushed ice, which are only marginally helpful, or over-the-counter medications, which may have potential side-effects.

Results from a new double blind, placebo-controlled, and hospital-based study conducted at The University of South Florida showed that those using ginger had significant reductions in nausea and vomiting. Although ginger is recognised as a remedy for appetite loss and indigestion, it has also been taken to loosen phlegm, relieve gas, and ease sore throats, headaches, some types of menstrual and arthritis pain, and fevers and aches caused by colds and flu.

Many home remedies for diarrhoea to use include the following:

- Boil a little water and add 30 grammes (or a handful) of rice powder to make the solution into a thin liquid. Add one level teaspoon of salt and water to this liquid to make it up to 1 litre.
- Grate one raw papaya. Add three cups water, boil for 10 minutes, strain and finish the water in one day.

Ease asthma with lettuce seeds, carrot and tomato juice
By Seye Adeniyi

Production & Quality

Strong Rains Persist into Ivory Coast's Dry Season

Source: Reuters

Nov. 12, 2007

Abidjan, - Rains have persisted into what is normally Ivory Coast's dry season, causing more pods to rot and helping fungal black pod disease to spread, farmers in the world's No. 1 cocoa grower said on Monday. "We were expecting rains to ease but it's still raining," said farmer Magloire Gnankan who farms cocoa near the centre western town of Daloa. He said there was a lot of cocoa being harvested but continued wet weather was a threat to the pods.

A manager at Kavokiva, a Daloa cooperative and one of the biggest in the country, estimated a large proportion of the crop there would be destroyed by black pod which spreads easily in damp conditions and can infect even developed, near-ripe pods. "The rainfall was good this year. The cocoa trees have produced well with a lot of pods on the trees but the problem is the spread of black pod," the manager said.

"According to our statistics, 20-30 percent of the harvest will be lost in the region because of this disease. A lot of plantations were affected by the disease," he said.

Rains were also strong in Meagui, a town around 80km north of Soubre and part of the West African state's main cocoa belt. "The rain is annoying us. It's raining a lot and it's difficult to dry (beans). We're having a lot of problems getting beans out of the bush because the roads have deteriorated due to the rain," said farmer Innocent Zamble.

However, he said the showers should help sustain production well into the New Year as it would provide ample moisture for continued flowering and pod production. Cocoa exporters at the country's two ports estimated around 60,000 tonnes of beans were delivered from the bush last week showing the harvest is at or near peak output and reflecting the strong harvest that has developed after months of regular rains.

But it is unclear whether the extra production the rains brought this season will be enough to offset the losses to black pod disease which has thrived as the rainfall persists. But in the eastern town of Abengourou near the border with Ghana from where black pod disease is believed to have spread and where the disease has done widespread damage, farmer Anini Kouakou said it had cost him the bulk of his harvest. "It's raining too much. Everything's rotten on the farms. We hardly got any cocoa this year because of black pod," he said.

In other growing regions such as Divo and Agboville in the south, Gagnoa in the west and near the centrally-located political capital Yamoussoukro, farmers said growing conditions were generally good though rains were also abundant.

Blommer Chocolate Announces New Sustainable Farming Program for Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa

Earthtimes, UK

Author : Blommer Chocolate

12 Nov 2007

EAST GREENVILLE, Pa., Nov. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Blommer Chocolate, North America's largest processor of cocoa beans and ingredient chocolate products, announced today the expansion of the company's sustainable farming initiatives with a new program in West Africa. This program will focus on cocoa farmers in Cote d'Ivoire and is called the Cote d'Ivoire alliance of Farmers, Olam International and Blommer Chocolate (CIFOB). CIFOB is modeled on the company's initial successful foray into sustainable farming in South East Asia, called the Sulawesi Alliance of Farmers, Olam International and Blommer Chocolate (SAFOB) in Indonesia.

According to Peter Blommer, Chief Operating Officer of the company, "CIFOB is introducing programs to farmers focused on teaching modern farming and business techniques that will help improve the yields and quality of Cote d'Ivoire's cocoa crops. Based on our experience in Indonesia we would expect to see significant improvements in family incomes due to gains in crop yields and improved market access. The program will also advance safer labor practices."

Karl "Kip" Walk, Director of Blommer's Cocoa Department further explained, "In Indonesia, more than 15,000 farmers benefited from SAFOB in 2007, the program's second year of operation. Among the results have been increases in family incomes of 20-55% through higher crop yields and quality premiums. Seeing the tremendous impact of the Indonesian program, it was an easy decision to introduce the program in West Africa."

CIFOB has started working with 15 cooperatives throughout the cocoa growing regions of Cote d'Ivoire. Farmers are trained in techniques to revitalize their cocoa farms and to improve cocoa quality. "Simple technology can go a long way in helping farmers improve their incomes," noted Mr. Walk. "For instance, we have introduced a greenhouse type structure called a solar dryer to the cooperatives. The dryers provide a weather proof, natural method of properly drying cocoa beans, which allows the farmer to create a consistent product for the marketplace. These dryers were first used as part of a Blommer sponsored program in Ecuador and resulted in a 30-40% increase in farmer incomes."

The program also provides transparent market pricing to the cooperatives and the ability to sell cocoa directly to Blommer. In the first year, Blommer anticipates establishing commercial contracts valued at more than \$12,000,000 with CIFOB partners.

Mr. Walk continued, "With the continued expansion of SAFOB and the projected success of CIFOB, Blommer expects to have commercial contracts exceeding \$100,000,000 in support of sustainable farming initiatives by 2010. In concert with these

contracts, we anticipate that these programs will have a positive impact on nearly a quarter million people in the cocoa farming community." In addition to the company projects, Blommer is a member of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), a chocolate industry-led consortium that promotes sustainable cocoa economies through economic and social development, and environmental conservation in cocoa growing communities around the world. In October, Mr. Walk was elected Chairman of the Foundation.

"Since its inception in 2000, the World Cocoa Foundation has moved aggressively and innovatively to address economic and social issues that affect the more than 5 million cocoa farmers and their families and communities in Africa, Asia and the Americas," noted Mr. Walk, "To date through Farmer Field Schools, the Sustainable Tree Crops Program and partnerships among government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), WCF's member organizations and independent experts, the WCF has helped more than 1.6 million people. Our goal is to double our impact over the next five years."

Mr. Walk added, "We see the Blommer sustainable farming initiatives as complimentary to the broad efforts of the World Cocoa Foundation. By leveraging our considerable purchasing volume we have created a strong and sustainable economic link to the farmer that supports and rewards farmer efforts to improve the cocoa sector."

Cocoa Humidity Slows Central Cameroon Crop Transport (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 13, 2007

Yaounde, Cameroon, - Humidity of up to 15% in central Cameroon cocoa beans is slowing transportation of the beans to the main port of Douala, several traders in the region told Dow Jones Newswires Tuesday. Only cocoa beans with a maximum of 8% humidity are officially allowed for export, and with humidity in cocoa beans rising up to 15%, traders are reluctant to buy the crop from farmers, traders said.

The Center province, which officially accounts for an estimated 30% to 35% of the country's seasonal cocoa output, is in its main crop cocoa harvest, according to industrial data. "There is much cocoa in the market, but the cocoa beans have humidity ranging between 13% and 15%. This makes it difficult for us to buy such cocoa beans and evacuate it to the port of Douala," said Frederick Ashu Bessong, who buys cocoa in the Center province for Cameroon's leading cocoa exporter, Telcar Cocoa Ltd.

"If the humidity in cocoa were around 9% to 10%, it would have eased the buying and evacuation of the cocoa beans to Douala," he said. "Now we've (got) to reject cocoa with high humidity and buy that with low humidity, then dry it at our warehouses for some more days before transporting the cocoa to Douala."

The quest for even humid cocoa beans was prompted by earlier fears that the ongoing main crop cocoa harvest in the Center province may decline due to a lack of rain in August and September. But late rainfall "pushed" the big harvest to October, leading to the rush for cocoa beans at farmgates. "I should have transferred at least 220 tons of cocoa beans to Douala during the past six days, but humidity has delayed my moves, and I can only evacuate 130 tons," Bessong said.

Middleman trader Dieudonne Ombe, who buys cocoa in the Center province and sells to exporters in Douala, said, "If we don't buy the humid cocoa beans, the big traders will buy everything and we may end up not having cocoa during this harvest." Another middleman trader, Servin Olomo, said: "There is adequate sunshine, so if one buys well-fermented cocoa with high humidity, there is no problem drying the cocoa back here before taking it to Douala." He was speaking by phone from the Center province's key cocoa-growing and marketing town of Bafia, located some 150 kilometers from Yaounde.

Cameroon is in its main crop cocoa harvest, which generally runs from September through February or March. Officially, the cocoa season in Cameroon runs from August to mid-July. Cameroon produced 179,239 metric tons in the 2006-07 season, up from 164,301 tons produced in the preceding season, according to recently published industry data.

Liberia: Mercy Corps To Take Over Cocoa Farm In Bassa

AllAfrica.com, Washington

The Analyst (Monrovia)

16 November 2007

Mercy Corps, an American charitable organization, is to take over a large cocoa farm of about 80 acres in Grand Bassa County. This followed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Liberia Produce Marketing Company (LPMC) and Mercy Corps yesterday at the offices of the latter at the Freeport of Monrovia.

Managing Director Nyan Matein of LPMC signed for his entity while Tom Wert signed for Mercy Corps. LPMC is to accrue an amount in the tone of US\$50, 000 over the period of one year. In his statement before the signing ceremony, Managing

Director of LPMC, Nyan Matein recounted the damage done to all LPMC farms as a result of the 15 years of brutal civil conflict. This, he said, has left the entity dormant and powerless. How to revamp the once flourishing entity, he said, has been the core of the administration since his ascendancy. Mr. Matein said the decision is timely, adding: "We think that is the beginning of rebirth of the LPMC activities in the country." Still counting the significance of the agreement, he said it would help provide jobs for farmers in the county and give them "training and technical assistance".

The Country Director of Mercy Corps, Tom Ewert said that the agreement is the beginning of goodwill for the both parties. Mr. Ewert said the rehabilitation of the cocoa farm "is a paddle program for his organization.

St Lucia Cocoa Revival Underway as Foreign Companies Invest (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 13, 2007

Soufriere, St Lucia, - After more than 20 years of decline, St Lucia's cocoa industry may be about to get a second wind. The Caribbean island exported some 700,000 metric tons of cocoa annually in its 1950s heyday, but the sector was supplanted by the more profitable business of growing bananas, known locally as "green gold." But now that European Union trade reforms have marginalized banana farmers, agricultural diversification has become a priority.

"The government decided to play a more integral role in the cocoa industry and started a number of rehabilitation programs in the 1990s," said Rufus Leandre of St Lucia's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries. Several hundred acres of land have been returned to cocoa production as a result, Leandre noted.

Although St Lucia's cocoa output is tiny relative to the global picture, its revival will be critical to the country, where unemployment in agriculture runs at 30%. World cocoa production is around 3.5 million tons, according to Laurent Pipitone of the International Cocoa Organization. St Lucia's revived plantations will grow high-end fine flavor cocoa, increasingly sought after by chocolate manufacturers.

Fine flavor cocoa demand has "exploded," said Pipitone. "Quantities of fine flavor cocoa being produced worldwide are small, but values are very high." Production from St Lucia commands a premium of \$1,000/ton because of this, Pipitone noted, and this gives farmers an incentive to produce more. Several hundred acres have been brought back into the fold of cocoa producers over the last decade, with the government subsidizing fertilizers and inputs, and providing marketing advice. But inroads had been relatively small, until foreign investment kick-started the sector over the last 18 months.

Privately-owned U.K. chocolatier Hotel Chocolat is in the second year of an ambitious plan to revive Rabot Estate, once one of St Lucia's premier agricultural estates. The 140-acre estate is located on the hairpin drive up St Lucia's west coast to Soufriere, more than 1,000 feet above sea level. The estate is being replanted and a factory to produce luxury chocolate is planned for the next phase of its revival.

Becoming the first in the world to make chocolate this way will be a major challenge for its new owners. When Hotel Chocolat acquired Rabot, the estate was run-down, infested with rats and vulnerable to being taken over by the flourishing tourist sector, which had already claimed 60 acres of its land for a five-star resort.

But Angus Thirlwell and Paul Harris, who co-founded Hotel Chocolat as a catalogue and Internet business some 15 years ago, are already shipping beans to Europe to make into chocolate for their 22 stores. The estate is run by Phil and Judi Buckley, a British couple that moved to the West Indies to oversee the project in November 2005. "Our mission is for Rabot to be a center of excellence for cocoa production," says Buckley, the estate director. "We're growing potential from nothing, and can directly see the results of working with the local community. We intend this project to save the cocoa sector in St Lucia," he adds.

U.S. producer World's Finest Chocolate Inc. of Chicago also cultivates cocoa on a plantation in St Lucia, sending the beans back to its factories to make into chocolate. A three-year deal with St Lucia's Agriculturists' Association Ltd., signed in 2005, also gives the company around half a million pounds of cocoa a year, the Association said.

For both companies, the focus is on making fine flavor cocoa, grown on Trinitario trees. More expensive than bulk-origin products, fine flavor cocoa represents 5% of global output and is increasingly sought after by chocolate manufacturers. It's used to make high-end, dark, cocoa-intensive chocolate that may have health benefits, as it contains higher levels of antioxidants than bulk-origin cocoa.

Private investment is providing the impetus to the sector that the government has been unable to give. "Investment will always get solid government support, whether by introductions to other farmers, setting standards and where possible, matching

money put in," said the Ministry's Leandre. The challenge for Hotel Chocolat isn't just in turning around its own estate, but in reviving the island's entire cocoa sector to secure the additional beans its chocolate factory will need.

The estate aims to produce 30 tons by the end of 2007 with the factory's capacity set at 150,000 tons when completed in its third year in 2008, before reaching 250,000 tons in its fourth year. This means other local farmers need to contribute, because the Rabot chocolate factory won't be able to operate without their cocoa beans. To encourage their participation, Buckley pays local farmers some 30-35% more than the international price of cocoa and guarantees them a market, provided their beans meet Rabot's quality standards.

Hotel Chocolat plans to plant 20,000 Trinitario trees every year for the next three years to help achieve its production goals. The government has said it will match this for local farmers, using Rabot plants as a gene bank for the rest of the island. If successful at Rabot, Hotel Chocolat plans to expand in St. Lucia by acquiring other estates. It's also looking to establish trading links with other Caribbean islands to process beans.

One of the biggest problems facing the country's rundown cocoa estates is rats, capable of eating a cocoa pod each a night. Over 1,800 rats were caught in the 15 months to June at Rabot alone. "We'd lost 50% of the crop until then, to rats," says Alphonsus Stanislas, a third-generation employee at the estate whose grandfather was Rabot overseer for 50 years.

And just as many other commodity markets have suffered from a lack of investment, so too is St Lucia's struggling to find experienced estate staff. "The farming population has been shrinking as the younger generation turns to industries like tourism, leaving the average age of a farmer at 60 years," said the government's Leandre.

A youth program has been set up to attract personnel through what Leandre calls a high-tech revolution, tapping into modern technology to produce cocoa. And these modern methods are now being introduced at the country's estates, including more specific fermentation times and regular moisture checks using laboratory instruments.

The government is working with farmers to establish countrywide standards. Hotel Chocolat recently rejected four tons out of a 14 tons shipment on quality grounds. Already, a total 42 farmers are working with Rabot. Of these, 29 farmers were involved in the recent 10-ton shipment. "The smallest amount purchased for the deal was 19 pounds, the largest was 4,000 lbs - there is a place for everybody," says Rabot's Buckley.

Ivory Coast to Invest \$24.5M in Cocoa Farm-to-Market Roads (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 13, 2007

Abidjan, - Ivory Coast is to invest 11 billion CFA francs (\$24.5 million) in repairs of cocoa farm-to-market roads in the 2007-08 cocoa season (October to September), according to an official document obtained by Dow Jones Newswires Tuesday. The repairs are long overdue and marketing of cocoa in the world's top grower suffers from poor accessibility to farms.

The document from the government's Committee for Research and Monitoring of Projects and Programs in the Coffee and Cocoa Sector, also said XOF3 billion will be invested in rural health projects, XOF6 billion in rural educational projects and XOF3 billion in drinking water projects.

The money comes from the Rural Investment Fund, or Fonds d'Investissement en Milieu Rural (FIMR), which levies a special tax of XOF12.50 a kilogram on cocoa exported. Ivory Coast, the world's top cocoa grower, produces around 1.3 million metric tons of cocoa beans annually.

Brazil 2007/08 Cocoa Arrivals down 9.5 pct on Year

Source: Reuters

Nov. 14, 2007

Sao Paulo, - Brazilian 2007/08 (May/April) cocoa arrivals from Bahia and other states totaled 2.16 million 60-kg bags by Nov. 11, down around 9.5 percent from 2.38 million bags a year ago, Bahia Commercial Association said Wednesday. The association said that Bahia state, Brazil's main cocoa producer, delivered 52,345 bags in the week ending Nov. 11, compared with 53,458 bags during the same period last year.

"(Last week's arrivals) showed an unforeseen increase, which has no greater significance for Bahia but was quite substantial in the case of the other states, especially Para," cocoa analyst Thomas Hartmann said in a report.

Hartmann added that cocoa arrivals from Para state were nearly twice as much as the amount that arrived in the weeks before at a time when the harvest was supposed to be tailing out. Light showers fell on Tuesday, but over the northern and central parts of Bahia's cocoa region, rather than in the south, where it remains dry.

Although bringing some relief, they were far from sufficient to reestablish needed moisture levels, except in some areas where rain was due to persist for the next two days. Apart from these showers, the weather was forecast to continue dry and sunny at least until early next week.

Farm gate prices in Bahia remained constrained to a narrow 57-58 reais per arroba (15 kg) range over the past week, equivalent to \$2,155 to \$2,190 per tonne at Tuesday's dollar-real exchange rate. Some deals at 58.50 reais were reported on Friday.

2007/08 ARRIVALS IN 60-KG BAGS

	PAST WEEK	CUMULATIVE
Bahia	52,345	1,195,255
Other states	11,801	412,398
Other nations	0	554,896
Total	64,146	2,162,549

2006/07 ARRIVALS IN 60-KG BAGS

	WEEK	CUMULATIVE
Bahia	53,458	1,481,359
Other states	3,729	374,471
Other nations	0	528,764
Total	57,187	2,384,594

Government targets one million tonnes quality cocoa export by 2010

Accra Daily Mail, Ghana

November 16, 2007

One of the major objectives of the government's mass spraying cocoa spraying exercise and the cocoa high tech programme is to produce one million metric tones of good quality cocoa by the year 2010. Mr Michael Offei-Annor, Enchi District Senior Quality Control Officer, announced this when he addressed cocoa farmers at a durbar at Samreboi in the Wasa Amenfi District of Western Region. He urged cocoa farmers to stick to the Cocoa Research Institute's approved insecticides such as Confidor, Atala and Akate master in order to keep to food safety standards.

Mr Offei-Annor warned the farmers to desist from using the insecticide Thionex to spray their cocoa farms as it was strictly recommended only for cotton treatment. He also warned purchasing clerks and depot managers to stop using hanging scales to weigh cocoa or get ready to face the full rigours of the law. Mr Offei-Annor commended the government for increasing scholarships to children of cocoa farmers from 2,500 to 7,500 this cocoa season and appealed to the farmers to reciprocate the government's gesture by producing good and quality cocoa for export.

Mr Gordon Kenneth Tawiah, Samreboi District Quality Control Officer, urged the farmers to eschew engaging children on their farms. He said children were great assets for future development and urged the farmers to make education their priority for their children. Mr Tawiah urged community leaders to come together and enact byelaws to check recalcitrant farmers who refused to send their children school.

Mr E K Abizi, Chief Technical Assistant of the Cocoa Services Division, said Samreboi District had 62 gangs for Capsid spraying and 28 gangs for Black pod spraying, backed with 9,880 litres of Confidor and 47 litres of Premix for the mass spraying exercise.

Nana Yaw Owusu, Chief of Tigarekrom, appealed to the government to pay cocoa bonuses in full and not in instalments to alleviate the plight of the farmers

Markets

TradeSignals Cocoa Futures Morning Commentary -- 2007-11-15 07:03:17

TradeSignals, Ireland - Nov 15, 2007

Cocoa:

Nearby Cocoa futures finished the previous session higher extending the prior days gains. Trend indicators are indicating a bearish market. However the overall strength of the trend, as indicated by the ADX, is weak and should be watched as a result. Momentum readings are also in bearish territory. However, the market just signaled a bullish key reversal off a 10-Day new low.

TREND INDICATORS:

Simple Moving Average (10-Day): The closing price finished below this moving average. Also, the slope of the moving average is in a downward slope from the previous session indicating further weakness. As a result the 10-Day simple moving average has a strong bearish bias.

Simple Moving Average (25-Day): The closing price finished below this moving average. However, despite prices trading below the moving average line, the moving average is in an upward slope from the previous session. If prices trade above the moving average then the trend will be clearly established as up. However, this weakness in the price will need to be watched. As a result the 25-Day simple moving average has a weak bullish bias.

Simple Moving Average (50-Day): The closing price finished below this moving average. However, despite prices trading below the moving average line, the moving average is in an upward slope from the previous session. If prices trade above the moving average then the trend will be clearly established as up. However, this weakness in the price will need to be watched. As a result the 50-Day simple moving average has a weak bullish bias.

ADX: The Average Directional Change (ADX) indicates the strength of a markets underlying trend. A rising ADX is interpreted as building trend strength, while a falling ADX indicates weakness in the underlying trend and the potential of a market reversal. On this market, the 14-Day ADX is falling, while the long term trend, based on a 50-Day moving average, is up. However, the weak ADX indicates that the current trend is deteriorating and may possibly reverse. Look for choppiness ahead.

MOMENTUM INDICATORS:

MACD: The MACD is in bearish territory. However, the market just signaled a bullish key reversal off a 10-Day new low.

RSI: The 14-Day RSI is in neutral territory. (RSI is at 44.85). This indicator issues bullish signals when the RSI line dips below the oversold zone (currently set at 20.00); a bearish signal is generated when the RSI rises into the overbought zone (currently set at 80.00). Nevertheless with the RSI at 44.85 the market is somewhat oversold, suggesting a possible rally. Supporting this outlook, the bullish key reversal off a 10-Day new low here suggests an upturn in the market.

VOLATILITY INDICATORS:

Bollinger Bands (20-Day Average +/-1 Standard Deviation): As prices are closer to the bottom band than the top band, the Bollinger Bands are indicating oversold prices. Volatility also appears to be decreasing, as evidenced by a smaller distance between the upper and lower bands over the past few sessions. The market is oversold and appears to be finding some support near recent lows. Confirming this, the market just signaled a bullish key reversal off a 10-Day new low. Look for a potential bottom in this area.

Tight Supply to Drive Commodities Boom Till 2010 (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 13, 2007

Singapore, - The current high price environment for most commodities will likely continue for several years more before supply catches up with rising demand, said Ricardo Leiman, Chief Operating Officer of global commodities supply chain manager Noble Group. "It'll take another two to three years just for supply to adjust to (current) demand" and by that time, who knows how much demand will rise from current levels, said Leiman in an interview.

Monday Noble reported a revenue of \$5.6 billion for the quarter ended Sept. 30, the second-highest level in the company's history, reflecting the broad-based boom in most of business segments including agriculture, metals, minerals and ores, energy products and logistics.

Notably, revenue from agriculture for that quarter surged 64% to \$1.9 billion from the same period last year. Leiman said he is confident soft commodities will bring in more hard cash for the company, going forward. "Agriculture is one area that we will continue to invest in, and probably more significantly in the future," said Leiman, while adding that Noble's general approach is to have a balanced portfolio in all assets.

The Hong Kong-based, Singapore-listed company is now one of the top three soybean crushers in China, where it recently acquired its fourth soybean crushing facility. It is also one of the top five players globally in the trade of grains, coffee, cocoa and cotton. High growth markets such as China, which accounts for 44% of world imports and whose soybeans imports have been growing at a compound annual rate of 31% for the past seven years, are key to Noble's growth.

Analysts in investment banks such as Macquarie have called soft commodities the next boom sector as Chinese consumers now spend more on quality food and clothing than ever before. Leiman said further rise in commodity prices will largely depend on how fast China's economy continues to grow. "Will China continue to grow by 10% a year, or will it decrease to 5%" is the question, he said.

Seeking Stability In Volatile Environment

As for its own growth plans, Leiman said Noble, which has a market capitalization of around \$4.3 billion, will continue to grow "organically" through the acquisition of small to medium-sized companies where "sustainable value can be created."

Noble, however, is unlikely to go for "enormous acquisitions which will create significant integration risks," he said.

While declining to comment on the impact of BHP Billiton's attempt to acquire the U.K.-based Rio Tinto Plc (RTP), Leiman said "the more concentrated the sector, the more opportunities there will be to find small-sized companies to consolidate (with)."

"The price of iron ore is on the uptrend and that will be positive for our company," he said.

Noble, which is a growing supplier of iron ore to China, recently acquired stakes in Brazilian and Australian iron ore mining companies. It has also integrated its iron ore division with its steel and ferro alloys divisions for greater synergy.

With the line now blurring between food and fuel, Noble is also seeing some unexpected synergy between these two sectors of its business.

Sugar Prices Unlikely To Rise For Another Two Years

The underperformer in Noble's portfolio this year has been its sugar division, due to oversupply from India, Leiman said. Revenue fell 15% in the sugar division during the first nine months of 2007 compared to the same period last year mainly due to a sharp fall in prices. "The situation looks unlikely to change for the next two years unless there is some climatic event that drastically reduces the sugar crop, but we believe that demand for sugar as a biofuel feedstock should provide price support," said Leiman.

But with a 53% on year increase in revenue for the third quarter, Noble's diversified portfolio has allowed it to manage the volatility of commodities prices, he noted. "Agricultural commodities prices are more volatile as they are prone to cyclical supply shocks, as in the case of wheat which hit record highs before falling through, while other sectors such as energy or metals require a longer lead time to adjust to demand and thereafter are less prone to climactic events. We want to continue to have a balanced portfolio and will do so by investing in all assets," said Leiman.

Ivory Coast cocoa prices stable

November 15 2007

ABIDJAN : Farmgate prices for cocoa in Ivory Coast's main growing regions changed little from November 5 to 11, data from the Coffee and cocoa Bourse showed on Tuesday, despite strong competition for good quality beans.

In the southern Divo region where the biggest price change occurred, an increase of 25 CFA francs to 475 CFA (\$1.06), farmer Mathurin Kouame said buyers were eager for supplies. "Competition is strong. Merchants are in a hurry to get beans, so much so that often they're not waiting until it's properly dried," he said.

"Beans are large and there's very little mould in the deliveries. Buyers are happy with it," Kouame said, adding prices there sometimes hit as high as 500 CFA per kilo during the week.

Processing and Manufacturing

Industry consulted on labels claiming 'natural' and 'pure'

foodnavigator.com/

By Laura Crowley

02/11/2007 - The UK's Food Standards Agency (FSA) is set to update industry guidelines on the use of words such as 'fresh', 'natural' and 'pure' in food labelling. The FSA last issued labelling guidelines on these marketing terms in 2002. It has now launched a consultation to adapt the advice in light of new developments in the food industry and growing concerns from consumers on the descriptions put onto some labels. The FSA has now invited the food industry to respond to the chosen criteria for the labelling guidelines by 21 January.

The changes to the guidelines are intended to provide clearer advice to manufacturers, producers, retailers and caterers, helping them decide when the descriptions should be used or not. They will also help the enforcement authorities, and will ultimately help consumers in their product selection. The new criteria to be decided on will regulate the use of new terms that have come into use, such as 'farmhouse pate', 'handmade', 'quality', 'selected', 'premium', 'finest' and 'best'.

The FSA also wants alter the guidance on the use of some existing terms to take account of results of research into consumer expectations. The research supports some of the existing advice and identifies amendments that are needed for the terms 'traditional', 'original', 'authentic/real/genuine' and 'homemade'. Additionally, it wants to provide revised advice on existing terms to take account of issues that have arisen when advice has been requested from the FSA or where further information on industry practices has emerged.

The term 'fresh' is of particular interest because modern distribution and storage methods make the legitimacy of the term increasingly confusing. It is also used in a number of phrases the FSA says have emotive appeal but no real meaning, with phrases such as 'oven fresh' and 'garden fresh'.

Other descriptions to be looked into include 'natural' and 'pure', thereby tightening criteria for when colourings and flavourings have been added, and 'farmhouse' and 'traditional'. The new guidelines will also make the voluntary, best practice advice clearer and more distinct from the legal requirements. Labelling has been a topical matter for debate amongst the industry and regulators, as the consumer trend leans towards healthier eating with a growing demand for natural and organic products.

The European Commission is currently in the midst of reviewing several aspects of labelling requirements to simplify the rules and reduce the burden on the industry while also maintaining a high level of consumer information and protection.

The UK has also been reviewing various aspects concerning food labelling, looking at pre-packaged foods and health claims for example.

Industry outlines policy on environmental, production sustainability

nutraingredients-usa.com

By Ahmed ElAmin

06/11/2007 - In a policy document released yesterday, the EU's food and drink sector called on the European Commission to take account of economic conditions when setting environmental and production sustainability targets for industry. All three pillars of sustainability, including social and economic, must be considered in an integrated manner, the Confederation of the Food and Drink Industry in the EU (CIAA) said in the document.

The Commission plans to publish in early 2008 an action plan for the bloc that would determine regulation of environmental impact, including climate change, and resource use. The plan will have implications for manufacturers, who already are paying out increased costs to reduce their environmental impact.

The CIAA submitted its policy document to the Commission in September as part of a consultation on future EU policy on environmental and manufacturing sustainability, and made it public yesterday. The Commission is working on developing two separate policies for the bloc -- the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) policy and Sustainable Industrial Policy (SIP). The SCP deals with environmental impact. The SIP deals with resource use.

"The CIAA considers it vital for the success of SCP that all relevant stakeholders be fully involved in the process, including farmers, manufacturers, the transport sector, retailers, consumers, waste managers and others," the organisation stated. "Each actor along the chain has to take responsibility for his direct sphere of influence and should actively cooperate with other life-cycle partner to address sustainability issues affecting the entire food chain."

The CIAA also said it does not support discrimination between "good" and "bad" products on purely environmental grounds. "Consumers base their purchasing decisions on a wide range of key parameter, including health, nutritional composition, convenience, fitness, life-style and cultural affiliation," the CIAA argues. "Instead of discriminating against certain products and reducing consumer choice, SCP should be built on the principle of continuous improvement, based on innovation and the proliferation of best practice and technology."

The CIAA also supports adding information on all relevant product characteristics, including their environmental performance. But such consumer information should be "science-based, meaningful and verifiable, understandable and not misleading and contributes to improved environmental conditions in a cost-efficient manner". "Voluntary stakeholder initiatives, private public partnerships, self-regulation, or co-regulation should be considered on a case-by-case basis in support of both SCP and better regulation and competitiveness," the CIAA stated. The SCP should not hamper EU industry's capacity to compete on world markets, the CIAA stated.

Nutrient labeling could see major overhaul

foodnavigator-usa.com/

By Lorraine Heller

11/9/2007 - Nutrition facts labels on food and beverage products in the US could be set for a revamp, with the nation's regulator announcing this week that it is considering revising reference values and mandatory nutrients.

In an advance notice of proposed rulemaking, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said it is considering the changes in order to bring recommendations up to date with new information on diet and health. Components that could be affected include calories, fat, carbohydrate, fiber, protein and sodium. The agency, which has not updated its percent daily value (DV) levels since 1995, is now reevaluating these in light of the latest national dietary guidelines, published in 2005, and the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) 2003 review of nutrients using the Dietary Reference Intake (DRI) process. It is calling for comments on certain suggestions, and requests scientific backing for all responses received.

DVs: how to set them and who they target

FDA is seeking comments on how daily values should be set, what they should be based on and which consumer populations they should target.

Questions posed by the agency include whether the DV should be set based on estimated average requirements (EAR) for nutrients, or on Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA).

Currently, DVs are designed for consumers over the age of four. FDA is asking whether this should continue to be the case, or if separate DVs should be developed for different lifestyle groups, for example, infants, toddlers and pregnant women.

Consumer understanding

FDA is also calling for information on how consumers use DVs, and if there is any related information that may promote a clearer understanding.

In addition, it asks how helpful the DV indicator is for consumers when making purchases, and what may promote or discourage the purchase of certain products.

Labeling of nutrients

Questions posed by the FDA include:

Calories

- Should 2,000 calories continue to be used for the reference energy intake
- Should 2,500 calories be kept as a label footnote
- Will providing for a percent DV disclosure for total calories promote consumer understanding of food's caloric value

Calories from fat

- What information exists on how consumers use 'calories from fat' listings
- How do these affect consumer focus on a food's total calorie content
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of eliminating this listing

Calories from saturated fat

- Should these continue to be voluntary or should they be made mandatory on labels

Saturated fat

- Should the current Daily Reference Value (DRV) of 20g/d from saturated fat remain
- Should research data be used to establish a DRV for saturated fat that is as low as possible

Trans fat

- Should research data be used to establish a DRV for trans fat that is as low as possible
- Should saturated fat and trans fat be listed on separate lines of the Nutrition Facts label, but have one numerical value for the percent daily value for these two nutrients together

Polyunsaturated fat

- Should it continue to be voluntary or should it be made mandatory to label this
- How should a DRV be developed

Monounsaturated fat

- should it continue to be voluntary or should it be made mandatory to label this

Cholesterol

- Should the current DRV of 300mg/d remain
- How should a DRV be established

Carbohydrate

- Should the current approach for calculating grams of total carbohydrate by difference continue to be used
- Would the separation of dietary fiber from the 'total carbohydrate' declaration in nutrition labeling affect consumer understanding of label information and its application to dietary guidelines
- Should additional types of carbohydrate (e.g., starch) be listed separately in the Nutrition Facts label
- Should 'sugars' continue to be included in the Nutrition Facts label
- Should carbohydrates be classified and declared in nutrition labeling based on their chemical definition or on their physiological effect

Dietary Fiber

- Should the IOM dietary fiber and/or functional fiber definitions replace the current FDA definition for dietary fiber
- Should total fiber be used on the label to represent dietary fiber until further analytical methods are developed
- Should soluble and insoluble fiber be made mandatory on the label

Sodium

- Should the DRV be based on 2,300mg/d
- If so, should it be adjusted using the same approach as the other DRIs

Cemoi to Invest 38 Million Euro in New Perpignan Chocolate Facility

Source: FLEXNEWS

13 November 2007 - French confectionery firm Cemoi plans to build a new 38 million euro plant near its headquarters in Perpignan. According to French financial press reports, the new facility will cater for Cemoi's markets in the south of Europe and will replace the company's Barcelona plant, which was destroyed in a fire, and the existing Perpignan plant, which cannot be upgraded.

The reports add that the new upgradable 25,000 sq m plant is expected to be operational by the end of 2008 and will have an annual production capacity of 55,000 tons. Cemoi will create 108 new jobs at the site, but will also transfer the workforce of 220 from its existing Perpignan plant.

The financial reports go on to say that Cemoi will also invest 6 million euro in its Dunkerque site next year to boost production from 20,000 to 40,000 tons. Meanwhile, the firm will also invest in recently-acquired Polish cocoa grinder and chocolate producer Gryf in order to grow production.

In June, FLEXNEWS reported that Cemoi acquired Gryf in a move to develop its presence in eastern Europe, where its retailer customers are expanding as well. Located in Perpignan, Cemoi has 11 factories throughout Europe and has a workforce of 2,500. The firm saw its 2006 turnover reach 500 million euro, of which 95% was generated in the western European market.

Ghana Boosts Cocoa Processing •To 350,000 Tonnes

Modern Ghana, Ghana

13 Nov 2007

Ghana is to boost its cocoa processing capacity from 100,000 tonnes a year to at least 350,000 tonnes by the end of 2008, the industry regulator, Cocobod has indicated. Cocobod Chief Executive, Isaac Osei said new investments by US-based agribusiness giant Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) would help Ghana process more of its rising cocoa output locally. "We are getting closer to realising our twin vision of producing more cocoa and processing more than 40 percent of it," Osei told Reuters. "By the end of 2008 we should have an installed capacity for 350,000 tonnes."

Cocobod officials previously suggested grinding capacity would rise to about 300,000 tonnes in 2008. Ghana processes up to 250,000 tonnes from a cocoa crop which has averaged 670,000 tonnes over the past four years. Mr Osei said the new plants would increase employment in the sector and help boost Ghana's international trade.

Cargill is building a \$70 million plant at a tax haven in the eastern port of Tema, with initial capacity to process 65,000 tonnes of cocoa annually into liquor, butter and powder. It has the potential to rise to 120,000 tonnes.

ADM has signed a five-year supply agreement with Cocobod for its plant, being built in Ghana's second-largest city of Kumasi. Cocobod officials said ADM initially requested 30,000 tonnes a year in supplies.

Both factories are expected to be fully operational in 2008. "We are on target and will be running next year," Jack Sinclair, ADM general manager in Ghana, told Reuters. Ghana is the second-largest supplier of cocoa to the United States, which in 2005 imported \$1.4 billion of cocoa products. Osei said Cocobod aimed to maximise Ghana's returns by diversifying its export markets and investing more abroad. "We have to look for opportunities for investment elsewhere and have a stake in what goes on in the world at large."

Cuba, Turkey, China and Kyrgyzstan have shown interest in commercial ties, especially investment in the tertiary sector where cocoa is converted into powder and chocolate products. Cuba, which produces about 200,000 tonnes of high quality beans, has requested to import about 25,000 tonnes. A Cocobod source said Ghana would consider the request. Cocobod, the sole purchaser of cocoa beans in Ghana, expects a 2007-08 harvest of at least 650,000 tonnes. It has outlined plans to raise output to one million tonnes by 2010 by improving fertilization and disease control.

ADM launches bright and tasty cocoa powders

NutraIngredients.com, France

By Laura Crowley

15/11/2007 - Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) has introduced a new line of cocoa powders aimed at improving visual appeal and flavour in dairy and bakery products. The Huysman brand offers a range of powders with unique sensory properties. It currently consists of two bright powders called ZB and ZR, which are both designed to improve the visual appeal and flavour profile of the end product. They are available in low and two high fat (cocoa butter) content levels.

The ZB powder has been developed to deliver a high impact, intense, bright brown colour. It was specifically designed for use in ice cream and dairy products, such as chocolate milk and premium desserts, breakfast cereals, compound coatings and chocolate biscuit fillings. The ZR powder is a bright red cocoa powder which is supposed to provide a crimson colour for use in dairy, ice cream, bakery products, cereals and confectionery applications.

Shannon Reinhard, a spokesperson for ADM, did not reveal the exact technology used to produce the new powders, but said the selection of raw materials was crucial. She told FoodNavigator.com: "ADM developed the Huysman line to help our customers further differentiate their products. The attractive colour results achieved by these ingredients makes end products stand out from the competition."

In a statement, managing director of ADM International Scott Walker said: "The launch of the Huysman line demonstrates our dedication to innovation and responds to consumer preference for visually appealing, great tasting, indulgent products." The Huysman range is an extension of the established De Zaan brand and was launched at London's FiE at the start of the month. It was named after the founder of De Zaan, Jan Huysman. "As an extension of the De Zaan brand, which offers the highest quality cocoa powders, liquors and butters produced from the best raw materials, Huysman builds on the century old industry-unique tradition and cocoa expertise held by ADM," said Walker.

ADM intends to develop the Huysman range further, with a greater range of ingredients for improving the smell and taste of chocolate-based products. This is not the first time the company has launched bright cocoa powders. Last year it launched the

D-11-ZR powder as part of the De Zaan range, which was aimed at enabling manufacturers to differentiate and diversify their products and to deliver more attractive foods.

ADM is one of the largest international processors of soybeans, corn, wheat and cocoa. As well as cocoa products, its confectionery division supplies lecithin emulsifiers, food acids, vegetable oils and fats, and wheat and soya flours for a variety of confectionery applications.

Business & Economy

SW Nigeria Cocoa Merchants, Exporters Face Supply Problem (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 9, 2007

Ibadan, Nigeria, - Cocoa merchants and exporters in southwestern Nigeria said Friday they have difficulty sourcing beans due to the scarcity of the commodity. Farmers and Local Buying Agents are unable to supply cocoa to merchants and exporters because of a shortage of beans, said an exporter in Akure, capital of Ondo state. "There is a lot of money in circulation chasing the small (amounts of) cocoa in the market. People cannot get the cocoa tonnage they want," he told Dow Jones Newswires.

And contrary to views last month that cocoa production would improve in November, cocoa production remained low in southwest states, he said. "We are going to the end of the second week in November and cocoa supply remains low. Everybody is complaining over the small quantity of cocoa in the market," he said. The cocoa shortage started in October following damage to the early yield of the 2007-08 main cocoa crop caused by excessive rainfall and black pod disease. Black pod is a fungal disease that thrives in wet and cold conditions and has the potential to destroy around 40% of Nigeria's annual cocoa output if farms aren't sprayed with fungicides, according to the state-run Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria.

The damage resulted in a smaller harvest while cocoa that was harvested also had high moisture, mold and slaty percentages. It had been hoped that with the end of the rainfall and black pod infestation, farmers would harvest more main-crop cocoa this month, said a cocoa merchant in Idanre, Ondo state. "This has not yet materialized and people in cocoa business are largely idle. There is a lull in cocoa trading. This time last year, trading had reached a high level," he said. Idanre is the single largest cocoa-producing area in Nigeria, he said adding "if there is scarcity of cocoa here (Idanre) it means there is a production problem generally in the country this year."

Nigeria normally produces 242,000 metric tons of cocoa a year when the weather is good and other conditions are favorable. Cocoa officials still can't say what the output level for the 2007-08 season will be. A trader at Ile-Ife, Osun state said the cocoa scarcity was also persisting in the state, which is the third-largest producer in Nigeria after Ondo and Cross River states in the southeast.

Robo Adhuze, a spokesman of the Cocoa Association of Nigeria, or CAN, told Dow Jones on Thursday that excessive rainfall and damage caused by black pod disease would lower Nigeria's 2007-08 cocoa output. Nigeria is the world's fourth-largest cocoa producer after Ivory Coast, Ghana and Indonesia.

Top Cocoa Chocolate Exporters

Chocolate Companies in Importing Countries Make Highest Profits

© Daniel Workman, Jul 11, 2007

While worldwide demand for chocolate is expected to grow 15% over the next 5 years, cocoa bean exporters pray for big harvests & higher cocoa prices. In international trade, the chocolate industry is segmented by 3 broad categories: raw cocoa bean farming, cocoa processing and finished chocolate manufacturing.

After harvest, cocoa beans are generally exported to companies around the world with facilities for processing. Sometimes cocoa beans are first cleaned, fermented and roasted in their originating countries before export. More often, importing countries treat raw cocoa beans and then press them into intermediate products such as cocoa paste/liquor, cocoa butter, cocoa cake and cocoa powder. To create finished edible chocolates, chocolate manufacturers like Hershey also take intermediate cocoa and add such ingredients as sugar, milk and nuts.

World's Top Cocoa Bean Countries

Cocoa bean farming is concentrated in the following 9 nations, which generate some 91% of global production. The list of world's top cocoa bean countries is based on the latest production estimates for the 2006/7 season from the International Cocoa Organization.

Côte d'Ivoire ... 1.3 million tonnes (37.4% of world's total of 3.5 million tonnes)
Ghana ... 720 thousand tonnes (20.7%)
Indonesia ... 440 thousand tonnes (12.7%)
Cameroon ... 175 thousand tonnes (5.0%)
Nigeria ... 160 thousand tonnes (4.6%)
Brazil ... 155 thousand tonnes (4.5%)
Ecuador ... 118 thousand tonnes (3.4%)
Dominican Republic ... 47 thousand tonnes (1.4%)
Malaysia ... 30 thousand tonnes (0.9%)

Most cocoa bean producers are rural enterprises that depend on export earnings for their livelihoods. On the above list, African countries represent about 71.4% of total cocoa bean production. Central and South America account for 12.9% while Asian nations produce 15.7%. Over the past 3 years, world prices for cocoa beans have drifted lower. This has adversely affected revenues for countries that export cocoa beans, constraining their ability to import processed foods - ironically including chocolates.

Cocoa Chocolate Import Tariffs

Even though cocoa processing and finished chocolate manufacturing companies make much higher profits than cocoa bean farmers, top cocoa chocolate exporters continue to specialize in cocoa bean production. Historically, their motivation has been the fact that most importing countries impose much higher tariffs on processed cocoa and finished chocolates. For example, the European Union charges a 7.7% tariff on cocoa powder imports and 15% on chocolates containing cocoa butter, but exempts raw cocoa beans. Similarly, Japan and the United States have no ad valorem duty on unprocessed cocoa beans but charge significant cocoa chocolate import tariffs.

Some developing nations do impose high tariffs on cocoa bean imports, possibly to protect the growth of their cocoa chocolate industries. India collects a 35% duty on imported raw or roasted cocoa beans. Egypt has an import duty tax of 20% while Brazil charges a 15% tariff on cocoa bean imports.

Sources for this Article

This article presents independent calculations and insights based on data from the International Cocoa Organization (icco.org) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (fao.org).

Cargill to Open 3rd Buying Station in Ivory Coast Cocoa Belt (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 12, 2007

Abidjan, - U.S.-Dutch agribusiness giant Cargill Inc. will on Nov. 16 open its third cocoa purchasing station inside Ivory Coast's cocoa belt, a person inside the company told Dow Jones Newswires. The new buying station is located in Soubre, the main town in the key southwestern cocoa growing area of Bas-Sassandra, which produces about 25% of Ivory Coast's average annual crop of around 1.3 million metric tons.

Cargill is the country's leading cocoa exporter. Last season the company exported almost 232,000 tons of cocoa, or more than 19% of total exports. Cargill already has buying stations in the center-west cocoa towns of Gagnoa and Daloa, cocoa terminals in the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro and a 100,000 tons a year cocoa grinding plant in Abidjan.

Burkina Faso Now A Major Destination

Modern Ghana, Ghana

Boahene Asamoah

Mon, 12 Nov 2007

Burkina Faso has become a major destination for Ghana's exports of non-traditional commodities within the sub-region. Figures from the Ghana Export Promotion Council (GEPC) indicate that the country exported a total of \$77.1 million worth of goods to Burkina Faso in 2006, as compared to the \$63.3 million, representing 21 per cent growth in the market share.

Ghana's exports to Nigeria stood at \$67.6 million for 2006 which was 24.9 per cent growth of the 2005 figure of \$54.2 million. Before 2005, Nigeria was the leading country in terms of exports of NTEs from Ghana.

Export products to Burkina Faso were primary household utensils, wood, plastics, salt and textile. However, over the past two years, Nigeria placed a ban on goods from neighbouring countries hurting local exporters from Ghana.

The Senior Export Development Officer of the GEPC, Mr Alex Dadzawa, attributed the rise in the country's exports to Burkina Faso to the observation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme. He said this led to free flow of goods into the country without any taxes. Ghana last year exported non-traditional exports to the tune of \$893 million, representing a 14.8 per cent growth over the 2005 figure of \$778 million.

The target of \$1 billion is however yet to be achieved. According to figures from the GEPC, emerging economies accounted for 11.90 per cent of the country's exports of NTEs, while other developed countries outside the EU also accounted for 11.07 per cent and other African countries constituted only 2.82 per cent. The GEPC report indicated that during the periods of 2005 to 2006, all the markets recorded positive growth with the exception of the ECOWAS market that recorded a negative growth of -0.52 per cent. The decline was as a result of the relative difficulty in accessing the Nigerian market even by companies with approval under the ETLS.

The EU market performance grew by 13.88 per cent while the markets in the other African countries, other developed countries, including emerging markets grew by 34 per cent, 33.55 per cent and 47.22 per cent respectively.

In 2006, Ghana's single largest market for the NTEs was the United Kingdom which accounted for 12.12 per cent of total NTEs, worth \$108.2 million, representing a decline of 4.6 per cent of the previous year's figure of \$113.5 million.

Cocoa paste veneer sheets, prepared tuna cocoa butter, plywood frozen tuna, shea nuts, cut fresh pineapples, other prepared fish and frozen fish, accounted for 51.7 per cent of total exports worth \$461.7 million dollars. Cocoa paste which is the highest earner contributed 10.71 per cent with a value of \$95.6 million, representing 226 per cent increase over the 2005 figure of \$29.3 million. This was due to significant increase in the future prices of the product last year on the London futures market. Additionally, the increase was also partly due to expansion of Barry Callebaut Ghana Limited, a major exporter of cocoa paste.

2007 New York Chocolate Show Roundup

Cool Hunting, NY

Evan Orensten

Nov 12, 2007

The New York Chocolate Show never disappoints, and the CH crew performed its annual search for the newest and tastiest chocolates. Our top four picks from this year's show are: Romanicos Chocolate from Miami, Oliver Kita Fine Confections from Rhinebeck, NY, Theo Chocolate from Seattle, and the Comptoir du Cacao from France.

Romanicos Chocolate is the creation of Alejandra Bijai, a Venezuelan living in Miami. Her grandmother passed on the gift of truffle making, and Alejandra has evolved her skill into a force to be reckoned with. Romanicos is the most established of this group, and has made their name by not adding sugar or butter to their chocolates, which provides both a smoother, cleaner taste and also exceptionally good truffles that weigh in around 38 calories each (above). The Wild Coconut, Fresh Mint and Passion Caramel are tops. The "Chocolate Art" collection features "exotic" flavored chocolates with designs on top. We loved the Dulce de Leche for its over-the-top taste that wasn't too sweet. Their lactose free Healthy Artisan Chocolate Bars include innovative combinations like Salted Pistachio and Nutmeg, Wasabi and Honey, and Soy Bean and Sea Salt.

Romanicos Chocolate

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Oliver Kita Fine Confections is new on the scene. Oliver Kita, a well known caterer in Hudson Valley, NY recently opened this chocolate shop, where he and his team hand make a range of traditional chocolates—pralines, marzipan, bon bons, ganaches, truffles and caramels. We loved the Mint and Lemon Balm and Shiki Matcha Crunch truffles, and these solid chocolate buddhas (left), available in dark and milk chocolate, edible gold dust optional.

Oliver Kita Fine Confections

Astor Square

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Rhinebeck, NY 12572

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Theo Chocolate is notable for their ingredients, process and results. Most people don't realize that nearly all chocolates are made from a chocolate base (known as couverture) that is made by companies such as Scharffen Berger, Valrhona, Guittard and Domori. Same stuff you see in the store. Very few independent chocolatiers go through the process of making their own

couverture as it is complex, time consuming and difficult. Theo does, and they are the first to do so with Fair Trade Certified cocoa beans. They are also the only roaster of organic cocoa beans in the U.S. They produce single origin bars (the 91% Venezuela Limited Edition Dark Chocolate Bar is a rare, remarkably not bitter high percentage bar); Confections; and the quirky 3400 Phinney bars, which include the Bread and Dark Chocolate bar with toasted bread crumbs and 65% chocolate, and the Chai Milk Chocolate bar, with chai spices and black tea.

Theo Chocolate
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Seattle, WA 98103
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Not bad so far. Ami and I worked our way through the chocolate fanatics and would have left the show quite happy with our new discoveries. And then we found the Comptoir du Cacao booth. This small family run chocolate company makes their chocolate about an hour outside of Paris (where they have a shop). Maybe it was the fact that they were in the States for the first time, and only a few people had the opportunity to discover them before us. Maybe it was the traditional/chic French wood boxes they packed their chocolates in. Or maybe it was the out-of-this-world <<Chocolat et cristaux croustillants de brisures de crêpe dentelle avec croustines Gianduja caramel au beurre salé>> (above right), bite size chocolate-covered crunchy bits with caramel, salted butter and crêpe dentelle (those very fine, rolled cookies that are often served with espresso in French cafés). These little delights got our vote for best in show. The family also makes many other tasty chocolates, and has a line with fair trade cocoa, and a line of chocolates made without sugar. Though not yet available stateside at retail, you can order them from the store or by using the downloadable order form.

Cocoa Trade Resumes in SW Cameroon after Protests (DJ) - business

Source: Dow Jones Newswires
Nov. 14, 2007

Yaounde, Cameroon, - At least 600 metric tons of cocoa beans have left Cameroon's key southwest cocoa region for the port city of Douala for export, following days of protests that left two dead and ground cocoa trade and transportation to a halt for a week, traders in the region told Dow Jones Newswires Wednesday. The demonstrators, mainly students from government secondary schools in the province's chief cocoa-growing and trading town of Kumba, were demanding the restoration of electricity after weeks of power cuts.

"There has been no movement of vehicles in Kumba since the strike action began on Wednesday last week," said middleman cocoa trader Timothy Ashu, who buys cocoa in the region and sells in Douala. "We're just beginning to start taking our cocoa beans to Douala today (Wednesday)" Ashu said.

Another cocoa producer and middleman, Clement Ewang, said he was on his way to Douala "after being held hostage by the strike action for a week." An official at the CCIB told Dow Jones Newswires from Douala that it has received 624 tons of cocoa beans from the southwest province in the last week, although the CCIB had been expecting to receive at least 3,000 tons.

The southwest province officially accounts for at least half of the country's annual cocoa output, according to data from the Cocoa and Coffee Inter-professional Board, or CCIB.

Eyewitness accounts said the protesters resisted armed troops and took to the streets carrying placards which carried messages calling for quick restoration of electricity. In the heat of the crisis, government-deployed troops shot bullets into crowds to disperse the demonstrators. Two students were killed Friday and police made about 25 arrests, according to government and independent media reports.

Monday, the U.S.-led electricity provider AES-SONEL said in a statement that it was re-establishing energy in several parts of Kumba and surrounding areas. Cameroon is in its main crop cocoa harvest, which generally runs from September through February/March. Cameroon produced 179,239 tons in 2006-07, up from 164,301 tons in the previous season, according to CCIB data.

Natra tops list of chocolate spread firms

By Charlotte Eyre

14/11/2007 - Spain-based Natra is now the largest private label producer of chocolate spread in the EU, after recent acquisitions in Italy and Belgium, the company claims. The company yesterday signed an agreement to acquire all the shares of the Nutkoa chocolate spread factory in Italy, only a month after Belgium-based chocolate factory All Crump.

The move marks the latest consolidation in Europe's food market, with companies seeking greater cost efficiency through bigger economies of scale. Larger companies theoretically can also compete better with the giants in the industry, such as Nestle. "With these two acquisitions, Natra has formed a business unit projected to invoice more than 100 million euros in 2008, with a volume superior to 50,000 tonnes a year, or 15 per cent of the European market share," the company said.

The company also now claims to be the second largest chocolate spread manufacturer in the world in terms of market share, coming after Ferraro, makers of the universally popular Nutella.

Natra will acquire Nutkao, established in Italy in 1982, in the next four months for €48m, the company said. The Italy-based firm will help Natra in its attempts to move into the private label brand (PLB) market. Nutkao supplies such PLB products to 27 countries around the world, with strong sales in chocolate spread loving countries such as France, Italy and Switzerland. "Nutkao has a production of 24,000 tonnes a year and up to now it was positioned as the fourth European company in terms of production volume," Natra said.

In October, the company also acquired Belgium-based All Crump for €45m, taking on board its private label products as well as the brands Palinutta, Patillia and Crumpy. "All Crump projects to close the business year with sales of €50m, whereas Nutkao projects sales in excess of €45m for the same period," Natra said.

For the tax year 2006, Nutkao posted net sales of €35m and sales of All Crump products totalled €48m. Natra produces 45,000 tonnes of cocoa and chocolate products each year, and recorded profits of €380m in 2007. Every year the company sells nearly 500m chocolate products in Europe; 400m flavoured chocolate products, 80m chocolate bars and 18m boxes of chocolates.

Barry Callebaut Finalizes Sale of U.S. Subsidiary

Source: Barry Callebaut AG

November 15, 2007

Zurich, Switzerland, - Barry Callebaut AG, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa and chocolate products, today said it completed the sale of its U.S. sugar candy business Brach's to Farley's & Sathers Candy Company Inc., as announced in September. The sale included all of the business and all assets of Brach's and its affiliates, including three factories. The two parties agreed not to disclose any financial details of the transaction.

Africa: "EU Will Be the Main Beneficiary of the EPAs"

AllAfrica.com, Washington

Francis Kokutse

Accra

15 November 2007

If Ghana's government used civil society protests as guideline as to which way to go in the negotiations with the European Union (EU) on the economic partnership agreement (EPA), the talks would have been terminated. The message to the government has been clear: the EPA will not improve trade between the country and its European trading partners. Unfortunately, governments do not always consult their people in such matters.

Civil society has shown clearly where it stands when it comes to the EPA currently being negotiated between the EU and, among other groupings, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In its present form, the EPA will lead to the loss of livelihood for most peasant farmers, Mohammed Adam Nashiru, president of the Ghana Trade and Livelihood Coalition Campaign (GTLCC), told a recent meeting of peasant farmers organised by the GTLCC in Tamale in the north of the country. Some 60 percent of Ghana's workers are in the agricultural sector, which is the main source of livelihood for Ghanaians and supplies 35 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Nashiru referred to a study by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa which has estimated that Ghana would lose revenue equal to eight percent of its GDP. He identified the poultry industry and tomato factories as those most at risk to be negatively affected if the EPA were to be implemented. The country's industrialists, organised under the auspices of the Ghana Association of Industries, are also applying pressure on the government.

The executive director, Cletus Kosiba, told IPS in an interview in Accra that "we are not opposed to trade liberalisation. We are aware that liberalisation has its positive side. However, our main concern is the way liberalisation is being handled under the EPA negotiations". Kosiba said Ghanaian industries are not in any position to compete with their European counterparts because of the challenging conditions under which they operate. "There is a need to improve the competitiveness of the country's industries. This would help us benefit from any liberalisation regime. This would require some support to the local industries to expand their capacity," he added.

Kosiba said the negotiations should be postponed for three years. This extra time should be utilised to create structures that would help build the capacity of industries and improve conditions. This will enable African countries to take advantage of the opportunities that the EPA liberalisation regime may offer. "Until this happens, any attempt to impose wholesale liberalisation, as envisaged under the EPAs, will only kill infant industries," Kosiba said. He mentioned the fruit processing industry as an example. In its present form, there is no way that the exporters of processed pineapple could compete with their European counterparts because of their cost structure. Pineapples are one of Ghana's top exports.

Kosiba also cited the influx of Chinese goods into the country and said this has posed a significant threat to the survival of the country's industries. The government has not been able to do anything about this, he said. "Therefore, any further opening of the Ghanaian market will amount to nothing less than killing struggling industries."

In spite of these protestations, Ghana's President John Kufuor seems unsure as to which position to adopt on the EPA. He has given mixed signals about the country's position on the negotiations. Addressing the United Nations General Assembly in September in New York, Kufuor asked the EU to give Africa enough time to think through the EPA before appending their signatures.

The one exception has been cocoa exports. Cocoa is Ghana's main export and any upset in cocoa production would greatly affect the country. Thus, in an address in Accra on October 12, Kufuor told cocoa producers to unite against the imposition of tariffs on cocoa products to the European countries.

Addressing a meeting of ministers from countries that belong to the Cocoa Producers Alliance (COPAL) he said, "speaking against the imposition of tariffs would be one of the surest ways of ensuring sustainability of the cocoa industry". If the EPA were not signed by Ghana, 30 percent of the country's exports, including cocoa butter and paste, would face stiff tariffs, according to a report written by Oxford University researcher Mayur Patel for the Realizing Rights Ethical Globalisation Initiative.

The Trade Union Congress has asked Kufuor to state his position clearly. Secretary general Kwasi Adu-Amankwa said Ghanaian workers do not want any agreement with Europe that would further devastate an already ailing industrial sector. Adu-Amankwa does not regard the EPA as an answer to the continent's problems. "Rather, it is a tool for re-colonising us." The main beneficiary of the EPAs would be the EU and "the people of Africa would lose even the little that they have achieved so far," he added. He has used every opportunity over the past few months to call on the government to resist "EU pressures and manipulation to sign the agreements". For Adu-Amankwa, the EPA holds far-reaching negative implications for domestic production. He warned that Ghana and, for that matter, Africa as a whole, stands to lose when the EPA comes into force. Among other concerns, the EU has been pushing for the inclusion of government procurement in the EPA to enable their suppliers to outbid local suppliers and further bleed the ailing West African economy, Adu-Amankwa argued.

The deputy minister of trade, Kwaku Agyeman Manu, has said that the EPA should provide a mechanism to enable Africans achieve their development goals. "We need an EPA with true development provisions built into it to ensure that the EU's promises of making the EPAs function as development tools, are translated into commitments that can be fulfilled."

Manu said Africans "can only take advantage of the market opening opportunities and ensure that the EPA, indeed, becomes a development tool," if the final outcome of the negotiations is the building of "our productive capacity, competitiveness and industrial upgrading as well as the enhancement of our integration process".

Cadbury reveals demerger proposals

beveragedaily.com/news

By Ahmed ElAmin

15/11/2007 - Cadbury Schweppes yesterday filed regulatory documents outlining the separation of its Americas beverage business into a new company, revealing the company's strategy to maintain its position as the world's largest confectionery manufacturer. Management's goal is to leverage scale and a dominant position to maximise growth and returns, Cadbury Schweppes said in a regulatory filing.

Cadbury's strategy is one that is becoming increasingly common in the food and beverage industry, with management often citing the need to separate underperforming units from core and growing businesses. Under the demerger proposals, shareowners will be issued shares in two new companies. They will hold shares in Cadbury Plc, the new holding company for the confectionery businesses to be listed on the London Stock Exchange.

They will also receive shares in CSAB Inc., a new company holding the Americas Beverages business that will be listed on the New York Stock Exchange. The beverage arm is estimated to be worth about €10bn.

Cadbury Schweppes' products include brands such as Cadbury, Schweppes, Halls, Trident, Dr Pepper, Snapple, Trebor, Dentyne, Bubblicious and Bassett. The company first announced its demerger plans on 19 June this year. The company said the goal is to drive growth through a focus on "fewer, faster, bigger, better" participation and innovation. Cadbury Schweppes also cited as a goal a desire to achieve cost and efficiency gains to increase margins into the mid-teens by 2011.

Management is targeting annual organic revenue growth of between 4 to 6 per cent, while increasing its market share of the confectionery segment. The company plans to focus on 12 key markets, including the UK, US, Australia, Mexico, Brazil, India, Russia and Turkey. Together, the 12 focus markets represent about 70 per cent of current total revenues. The markets are forecast to account for about 60 per cent of expected category growth over the next five years, Cadbury Schweppes stated. The company also identified 13 focus brands as Cadbury Dairy Milk, Trident, Halls, Dentyne, Flake, Green & Black's and the Natural Confectionery Company. Together, the 13 brands currently account for about 50 per cent of confectionery revenues and have above average revenue growth and operating returns, Cadbury Schweppes stated. Cadbury Schweppes is currently the number one confectionery firm in Western Europe, holding 11.6 per cent of the market, as well as being number one in terms of global sales.

This year, the company said it had boosted profits with its very successful moves within the chewing gum market, and the company now claims to be number one in 18 of the top 50 gum markets worldwide. The company has also made some steps in the organic and premium chocolate markets with its acquisition of the Green & Blacks range, Meade added. Like many other successful companies, Cadbury has made conscious efforts to reorganise operations in Western Europe in order to keep costs down.

Only this month, the company announced the closure of a factory in the UK in order to move production to Poland, while Cadbury is currently focusing on moving the main offices out of central London to a cheaper location.

Gourmet chocolate exports lead to Australia's first commercial cocoa farm

North Queensland Register, Australia

16 November 2007

Melbourne company Farm by Nature is winning over chocolate lovers from Europe and around the world, using a unique Australian innovation that adds real wine to chocolate to create the world's first non-liqueur wine chocolates. Made under their signature Cocoa Farm brand, Farm by Nature's chocolates have won fans amongst consumers, gourmets and retailers with authentic shiraz, merlot and pinot noir flavours.

Farm by Nature CEO, Janice Falzon, said while people often eat wine and chocolate together, nobody has yet combined real wine and chocolate in a way that complements both. "A patent-protected method for infusing chocolate with real wine is the first anywhere in the world – a combination that not only adds to the flavour, but also delivers added benefits, by combining the proven anti-oxidant qualities of both red wine and cocoa.

Through Austrade's New Exporter Development Program, Farm by Nature made their first sale into the United Kingdom last year. After the company's initial success in the UK, Farm by Nature participated in the ISM International Confectionery Fair this year in Cologne, Germany, as part of a trade mission organised by Austrade. As a result its export revenue is expected to grow from \$15,000 last year to \$750,000 in 2007.

Now the rapidly growing international customer base, mostly in European markets, means the company is in the throes of some serious expansion plans. "A new chocolate factory has been commissioned at our Scoresby head office with manufacturing starting in December," Ms Falzon said. "Our sister company has also been working for several years to establish Australia's first commercial cocoa farm near Mossman in far North Queensland, and we anticipate Australia's first ever commercially grown cocoa crop will be harvested in June 2008."

Austrade's chief economist, Tim Harcourt, said Australia's "clean green image" was helping companies like Farm by Nature crack the European market.

Labour Issues

Ivory Coast Cocoa Farmers Union Threaten Blockade by Nov 21 (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 13, 2007

Abidjan, - Ivory Coast's main cocoa farmers' trade union, Anaproci, threatened Tuesday to block cocoa trade as from Nov. 21 if farmers' cooperatives haven't received funding by then, union Vice President Edoukou Angoua told a news conference

Tuesday. While some of Ivory Coast's 300 operational co-ops get funds from exporters to purchase cocoa beans, many depend on the FGCCC Coffee and Cocoa Farmers' Cooperatives Guarantee Fund. Set up and run by farmers, exporters, bankers and the government, the FGCCC provides collateral for bank loans for farmers' co-ops. A director at the fund, Raphael Zogbo, contacted by Dow Jones Newswires, declined to comment when asked why cooperatives hadn't received financing, six weeks after the start of the 2007-08 cocoa season.

In previous seasons co-ops have been slow in reimbursing loans while many went bankrupt or simply ceased to exist. Last season (October-September) cooperatives purchased an estimated 15%-20% of the total crop - the rest was purchased by middlemen and sold to exporters and cocoa processing companies at the ports. In the past six years farmers' unions repeatedly threatened and three times did block cocoa trade for about one week to push for higher farmgate prices or financing.

Presently harvesting in the world's top cocoa grower is peaking with 50,000-60,000 metric tons of cocoa beans coming down from the farms to the ports every week. It remains to be seen if a strike call would be followed. Currently farmers are keen to sell as the average farmgate price is around 420 CFA francs, or \$0.93, well above the farmers' break-even price of XOF300/kg.

Others

News briefs: biofuel, melted chocolate and trade shows.

<http://www.confectionerynews.com/news/ng.asp?>

By Charlotte Eyre

09/11/2007 - A UK firm can turn chocolate into biofuels, lazy chocolate lovers no longer need to melt it themselves, and the Middle East welcomes confectioners from around the world later this month.

UK firm develops chocolate biofuel

Ecotec has developed a method of turning waste products from chocolate processing, usually dumped in landfills, into biofuel, according to Reuters. The firm first turns the waste into bio-ethanol, then mixes it with vegetable oil to produce biodiesel, the news agency said.

Biofuels are a controversial topic in the food world, as rising commodity costs are often attributed to clearing fields or flattening forests to grow bio crops.

However, as chocolate waste is a by product of another process, Ecotec's product is environmentally friendly, said spokesman Andy Pag. According to Reuters, a truck fuelled with the chocolate by-product will travel to Mali on a charity mission later this month.

Pouch delivers pre-melted chocolate

Chocolate lovers who enjoy a runnier chocolate treat will no longer have to melt the chocolate themselves, as a US firm has designed a squeezable pouch containing molten chocolate 'lava'.

"The lava bar has a consistency similar to a chocolate ganache, or frosting at room temperatures," said manufacturer Lava chocolate.

Although the product can be eaten, or rather drunk, just as it is, the company also suggests pouring it on ice-cream or fruit. Currently on sale on-line, the product will soon be sold at convenience stores across the US, the company said, after winning awards across the country.

First middle-eastern chocolate show takes place

Sweets Middle East, the region's first trade only confectionery show, will take place later this month, giving manufacturers from all over the world access to a \$4.2bn market. The area has an ever increasing need for imports of chocolate and sweets "to fill the gap between limited domestic food production and demand from a growing production base," the organisers said.

"Furthermore, the Middle East ranks among the areas with some of the highest per capita GDP's in the world," they added.

The show will be attended by manufacturers from over 27 countries, ranging from Western chocolate producing nations such as Belgium, Germany, France and the US, to Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. The show will take place between the 18 and the 20 November in Dubai.

A helping hand to the confused consumer

13/08/2007 - Consumers are bombarded with an overload of nutritional advice and product marketing - be it from magazines, television shows, and product advertising - and without a degree in nutritional science, it's a wonder they can make sense of it at all.

One year they are told to not eat fat, then not to eat carbs, and later they are told that maybe these aren't smart choices and that in fact eating rich and all-natural foods like they do in the Mediterranean is the best way to go. All the while, the products in grocery aisles are anything but 'all natural', despite the fact manufacturers are addressing consumer demand for healthful food by injecting nutrients into packaged goods.

Fair enough. At least consumers will be getting more nutritional value out of their packaged functional foods - so if you are not fortunate enough to have a farm in Provence with fresh olive oil at your disposal, functional items may be your next best option.

So this leaves consumers with the choice of going down the packaged foods route or the fresh vegetable aisle route for their nutrition. These are personal lifestyle decisions and a savvy consumer will know how to find a balance between convenience and optimal nutrition. But just how savvy is the average consumer? I'm not wanting to underestimate anyone here - there are some very clued in customers out there.

But there are strong indications that whatever it is we have been doing over the past 20 years it has not been working. In the US, for example, an estimated 66 percent of adults are either overweight or obese, based on results from the 2003-2004 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. And the rate of obesity more than doubled from the previous survey - increasing from 15.0 percent (1976-1980) to 32.9 percent.

Now consumer savvy is being put further to the test with the onset of functional foods crossing the line into snack foods or candy territory.

Take chocolate for example. The once forbidden candy item is edging into 'healthy' aisles thanks to cocoa polyphenols and their heart health benefits. But can food manufacturers really assume consumers will know enough to make the distinction between an occasional treat with functional properties, and suddenly thinking a chocolate bar is health food?

This is not a question of IQ, but rather of time, priorities and public awareness. Research has shown that consumers are confused about even the basics, like nutrition fact labels. In the US, these are designed to help consumers make wiser decisions at the supermarket, but surveys have shown that the public is still not digesting the message.

A study published in the November 2006 issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine questioned 200 patients from a wide socioeconomic range and found that, among other things, only 37 percent of patients could calculate the number of carbohydrates consumed from a 20 oz bottle of soda containing 2.5 servings, while only 60 percent could calculate carbohydrates consumed if they ate half a bagel. Meanwhile, the participants indicated overwhelmingly that they found nutrition labels easy to read.

Industry has obviously already identified the need to spell things out simply for consumers, which has resulted in a proliferation of nutrient symbols and marks in the US designed to flag up products that meet specific nutritional guidelines. But again the problem here is a lack of consistency, which ultimately risks confusing consumers more than helping them.

There is a similar situation in Europe, where the food industry has been hotly debating different approaches to food labelling. Be it the basic but accessible 'traffic light' scheme, the CIAA's guideline daily amount (GDA) scheme, or a combination of the two, the overarching aim is to give the consumer the information they need to make an informed purchasing decision.

So efforts are underway. But if we are going to be throwing more and more innovative products their way, time is of the essence in finding ways to associate these foods with a nutritional knowledge base consumers can easily decipher and fit into a whole lifestyle plan.

This way, food manufacturers can be instrumental in informing people that if they eat that chocolate-based healthy bar as a snack, maybe they should forgo the soy smoothie for breakfast, despite the fact it is also healthy, unless they go for a brisk walk after work.

Consumers are faced with the luxury of perhaps too many choices, and the food industry is collectively in a position to draw a nutritional roadmap for them to make the healthiest and most balanced use of their increasingly better-flavored and healthier

products. Clarisse Douaud reports for NutraIngredients-USA.com and has lived and worked in Canada, Ireland, Argentina and France. If you would like to comment on the piece, send an email to: clarisse.douaud@decisionnews.com.

Unsold Cocoa Stocks Pile up in Ivorian Warehouses

Source: Reuters

Nov. 14, 2007

Abidjan, - Some cocoa exporters in Ivory Coast have built up stocks totalling between 10,000 and 50,000 tonnes which they have not immediately sold on the world market in the hope prices will rise, exporters said on Tuesday. Exporters usually sell cocoa on the world market as soon as it arrives in warehouses but some recently deferred sales with the aim of selling the cocoa for higher rates later to enable them to pay merchants more for their beans.

Competition for beans has been strong and exporters at the ports risk their regular suppliers taking their beans to other shippers if they cannot offer rates that enable these merchants to make a profit, forcing them to find ways to pay more. "Exporters are doing this because they have to face the competition of processors who are buying beans at the ports at 520 CFA when they can only offer 460 or 470 CFA francs," said the director of one international exporter in Abidjan.

"(Otherwise) you can't get cocoa. Buyers would rather deliver to processors ... instead of delivering at a loss," he said, adding he thought the unsold stocks totalled no more than 50,000 tonnes. Farmgate prices are around 100 CFA francs higher than at this time a year ago, a bigger jump proportionately than the increase in world prices since then, meaning squeezed margins for exporters and merchants who bring cocoa down from the bush.

One exporter in the smaller western San Pedro port said some shippers had been forced to speculate through deferred sales in order to compete with Cargill and ADM, who process cocoa locally and who were paying up to 550 CFA per kg. He estimated the total amount of stockpiled cocoa at the ports at 20,000-30,000 tonnes, while another shipper thought it was even lower. "I think it must be around 10,000 to 15,000 tonnes and anyway we can't see any of it in the ports," he said, adding if these stocks were much larger, they would be easily noticeable in the warehouses.

Cocoa merchant Adama Locine said he had been selling cocoa in October through "depot vente", under which he was paid some of the value of the cocoa upon delivery and the rest when it was finally sold, but that the mechanism disrupted his cash flow. "It's true exporters were doing that in October but since then you don't see it. (Deferred sales) don't suit us because you leave cocoa with exporters for too long before receiving your money when you need it to carry on (buying)," he said.

Tano Kassi, director of Ivory Coast's Coffee and Cocoa Bourse which issues documents permitting exporters to ship beans, said the structure did not monitor such practices. "We don't gather this data. It doesn't have any effect on us," he said.

Deadly Attacks on Traders Slow Central Cameroon Cocoa Trade (DJ)

Source: Dow Jones Newswires

Nov. 15, 2007

Yaounde, Cameroon, - Armed attacks on cocoa traders and farmers in Cameroon's leading cocoa-growing Center province are slowing cocoa trade, several traders and farmers told Dow Jones Newswires Thursday.

A total of 11 armed robberies are currently being investigated by police. Three cocoa traders have been murdered and eight others wounded in the recent attacks.

Fredrick Ashu Bessong, a Telcar Cocoa Ltd. trading coordinator in the Center province, said in the latest attack, a key Telcar supplier was shot at close range by armed bandits. According to Bessong, "Much cocoa is in the market, but it takes a lot of time and searching to find a suitable venue to bargain the price because bandits hover around to identify traders who have money to buy cocoa, or farmers who have just sold cocoa." "I should have acquired at least 250 tons of cocoa beans this week, but since Bikele (the trader) was shot, most of my cocoa providers have taken a break in supplying me with cocoa," said Bessong. He said Bikele used to supply at least 30 tons of cocoa beans a week.

In addition, high humidity is slowing trade. Only cocoa beans with a maximum 8% humidity are officially allowed for export and in the region humidity is peaking at 15%, making traders reluctant to buy crops from local farmers. Some are waiting and drying beans before selling.

The Center province, which officially accounts for an estimated 30%-35% of the country's seasonal cocoa output, is in its main crop cocoa harvest. Low rainfall in August and September raised concerns that the harvest would be lower this year. The main harvest was pushed to October, adding to supply pressures. Officially, the cocoa season in Cameroon starts in August and runs through to mid-July the next year. Cameroon produced 179,239 metric tons of cocoa in the 2006-07 season, up from 164,301 tons a year earlier, according to recently published CCIB data.

Blackout protests affect cocoa deliveries

Independent Online, South Africa

November 16 2007

Yaounde - Cocoa deliveries via Cameroon's key trading town of Kumba were disrupted this week by student demonstrations about power cuts, but have now begun to return to normal, local cocoa dealers said on Thursday. Transport in and out of Kumba has been disrupted since police shot dead two students last weekend during violent protests triggered by several days of power cuts in the town at the heart of Cameroon's main cocoa zone in South-West Province.

South-West province accounts for around 50 percent of annual cocoa production in Cameroon, the world's fourth biggest grower. "We are very happy students have resumed classes and the number of gendarmes and soldiers in town has reduced considerably," said Joseph Nde, manager of the Cameroon Marketing Commodities (CAMACO), the second biggest cocoa exporter of Cameroonian cocoa.

COCOBOD pays bonus to farmers

Joy Online, Ghana - Nov 14, 2007

The Ghana Cocoa Board has paid about 216 million Ghana cedis bonus to Cocoa farmers for the 2006/07 crop season. A statement issued by the COCOBOD says the amount represents the first tranche of bonus payment for the period.

Each farmer would be paid 227.43 Ghana cedis per tonne or 21.71 Ghana cedis per 64kg bag of cocoa. According to the statement the next tranche will be paid in June next 2008.

The government had indicated earlier that the bonuses are part of a general incentive package meant to ensure that farmers have adequate money during the crop season. Government has also increased the number of scholarships to children of cocoa farmers from 2,500 to 7,500. Cocoa farmers have also been supported with insecticides to undertake government's mass cocoa spraying exercise to produce one million metric tones of good quality cocoa by the year 2010.

COCOBOD Attends Thanksgiving Service

Business/Finance - Mon, 12 Nov 2007

Daasebre Akuamoah Boateng II, Board Chairman of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Mr Isaac Osei, Chief Executive Officer of COCOBOD, Major (RTD) Courage Quashigah, Minister for Health, staff of COCOBOD and the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana yesterday joined worshippers at the Holy Spirit Cathedral Catholic Church in Accra to climax their 60th anniversary celebration.

The celebration of the 60th Anniversary of COCOBOD, which was launched in May this year, was marked with several activities to create awareness about the successes and problems being faced in the cocoa industry and the way forward for management of this all important cocoa industry.

Mr Isaac Osei said the Board hoped to produce a million tons of cocoa by the year 2010 from the current production of 614 tons.

Thanking the Catholic Church for giving them a venue for their thanksgiving service, Mr Osei praised all those who have contributed in any small way to the growth of the cocoa industry. He called on people in senior management positions to endeavour to train young ones and make them capable replacement when there were no more and said the youth had so much potentials that needed to be tapped.

Daasebre Boateng II, who is also the Chief of Kwahu Traditional Area presented GHC 100 (10 million Cedis) as a token of appreciation to the church and GHC 500 (5 Million Cedis) to the Akropong School for the Blind who were also there to worship with the church.

The Most Reverend Gabriel Charles Palmer-Buckle, Archbishop of Accra, in a sermon underscored the importance of a seed to procreation and said Christians should see the word of God like a cocoa seed that had been entrusted to our care. 'We all know what a cocoa seed can do when we take good care of it,' he said and stressed that Christians should nurture the word of God in them like a cocoa seed to ensure it grows well and becomes productive.

Rev Palmer-Buckle urged Ghanaians to work hard and earn a daily living and said it was only Ghanaians and Africans that could make Africa a developed place.

Source/Credits: GNA

Pre-dating the love of chocolate

By Anna-Marie Lever

Science and nature reporter, BBC News

Tuesday, 13 November 2007

Chemical and archaeological evidence has pushed back the earliest known use of cacao, the key ingredient of chocolate, by 500 years. The chemical compound, theobromine, which only occurs in the cacao plant, has been found on pottery vessels dating back to as early as 1000 BC.

Experts say the vessels were used to serve a fermented cacao drink that was made from the sweet pulp of the plant.

The vessels were unearthed at sites in Puerto Escondido, Honduras. "The earliest use of cacao in Mesoamerica is likely to have been for a fermented drink," lead author Professor John Henderson wrote in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). "Such drinks may contain up to 5% alcohol in volume," the Cornell University, US, academic added.

Frothy chocolate

As well as chemical evidence, a change in pottery vessel shape allowed scientists to pre-date the use of cocoa. It had been known that the seeds were used to make a frothed chocolate drink which became central to social life throughout Mesoamerica. It was drunk at important ceremonies to mark weddings and births, especially by elites.

As the drink was frothy, it was served in a spouted bottle with a flaring neck. However, long-necked bottle samples that pre-date the spouted bottle were also found to contain cocoa residues.

The researchers suggested that this vessel type was inappropriate for frothing but better for pouring. This led the authors conclude that "early cocoa was consumed as a fermented beverage made from pulp", rather than seeds. During the time of the Aztec empire, chocolate seeds were used as an early form of money.

TIT BITS

(Source: Business Recorder – www.brecorder)

US MIDDAY: cocoa and coffee rises

NEW YORK (November 14, 2007): US cocoa futures were slightly higher in early trade on Tuesday and Arabica coffee rose on technical dealings, traders said. cocoa was a shade stronger in quiet trading on contract rollover and a stronger dollar, traders said.

New York cocoa settles at two-week low

NEW YORK (November 14, 2007): US cocoa closed at a two-week low on Monday, on pressure from harvest and the strong dollar that attracted arbitrage selling, dealers said. "The dollar has really firmed up here today so the cocoa here in New York has really taken a tumble.

US MIDDAY: coffee up; cocoa mixed

NEW YORK (November 15, 2007): ICE arabica futures rose in early trade on Wednesday on buying interest in the benchmark contract amid heavy position rolling, while cocoa was mixed, traders said.

New York cocoa settles up

NEW YORK (November 15, 2007): US cocoa futures ended higher on Tuesday on support from the weaker dollar after a quiet day of trade, dealers said. "Overall, the spread trading has been really active here ahead of first notice day, which is on Thursday," for the front-month December contract, one trader said.

Ivory Coast cocoa prices stable

ABIDJAN (November 15, 2007): Farmgate prices for cocoa in Ivory Coast's main growing regions changed little from November 5 to 11, data from the Coffee and cocoa Bourse showed on Tuesday, despite strong competition for good quality beans.

London sugar and cocoa rise; coffee falls

LONDON (November 16, 2007): London white sugar futures finished higher on Thursday, boosted by late short covering on the December contract which expired at the close of business, dealers said. cocoa futures ended higher, boosted partly by sterling weakness, while robusta coffee finished lower on hedge sales.

US MIDDAY: coffee and cocoa dip

NEW YORK (November 16, 2007): US cocoa dropped to a 2-1/2-week low in early trade on Thursday, as the weak pound added pressure, while coffee dipped as origin sellers returned to the market, traders said. On the screen, ICE benchmark March cocoa was down \$22 at \$1,907 per tonne at 9:17 am EST (1417 GMT), moving from \$1,930 to \$1,898, a low last seen October 29.

cocoa futures little changed in New York

NEW YORK (November 16, 2007): US cocoa futures closed barely changed on Wednesday as position-rolling out of the spot month remained the dominant feature and a weak pound added some pressure, dealers said. "You're coming up to first notice period so I think that's where everyone's focused, getting their December position in order," one trader said.

PROMOTION OF THE CONSUMPTION OF COCOA AND COCOA
PRODUCTS BY COPAL DURING THE AFRICAN CUP OF NATIONS 2008
IN GHANA

The Secretary General sends his compliments and has the honour to confirm the willingness of the National Organizing Committee and the Government of the Republic of Ghana to create a COPAL Village during the upcoming Cup of Nations football tournament.

The Secretary General believes this offers an excellent opportunity to promote our respective origins and cocoa products during this month-long tournament.

Interested countries should contact the Secretariat as soon as possible with the specific requirements for space and other amenities.

Hope Sona Ebai,

Secretary General