

COCOBOD *News*

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FIGHT AGAINST THE CSSVD

Ghana-Cote D'Ivoire

Move To Prevent Further Spread



REASONS TO CONSUME Cocoa



- 01 Provides the most powerful dietary antioxidants
- 02 Reduces blood pressure
- 03 Delays physical signs of ageing
- 04 Fights dental decay.
- 05 Rich dietary iron which helps to fight anemia.
- 06 Has Aphrodisiac effect
- 07 Prevents stroke by improving blood circulation
- 08 Fights stress
- 09 Minimizes discomfort/pain associated with menstrual periods
- 10 Protects blood vessels.
- 11 Boosts sense of well-being.

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THE NEW FACE OF THE CSSVD CONTROL PROGRAMME

THE INCIDENCE OF PESTS AND DISEASES; AGEING COCOA FARMS AND FARMERS; DECLINE IN SOIL FERTILITY; LOW EXTENSION AGENT-FARMER RATIO AND UNFAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITION HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS MAJOR CAUSES OF THE LOW YIELD OF COCOA FARMS IN THE COUNTRY



THE BACKGROUND

Sustainable cocoa production thrives on high productivity. Currently, the productivity of cocoa farms in Ghana is low, averaging 450kg/ha. Several factors including the incidence of pests and diseases; ageing cocoa farms and farmers; decline in soil fertility; low extension agent-farmer ratio and unfavorable weather conditions have been identified as major causes of the low yield of cocoa farms in the country.

Obviously, the situation does not present a blissful future for Ghana's cocoa sector.

THE SITUATION

Field surveys have indicated that 40% of Ghana's cocoa tree stock is unproductive as a result of the aforementioned challenges facing the sector.

Out of the 40% unproductive stock, 17% is said to be diseased (usually caused by virus) while 23% is moribund (overaged or dying farms). Such categories of farms are managed by virtually cutting

out an entire farm, and replanting with the disease tolerant hybrid variety popularly known as 'Akokora bedi'

THE APPROACH

Government and Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), have over the years introduced various programmes to address low farm yield. In the 1959 to 1962, Government through COCOBOD introduced the Cocoa Mass Spraying Programme to control the Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease (CSSVD). The programme, which was modified in 2001 as Cocoa Diseases & Pests Control (CODAPEC), as well as the Cocoa Hi-Tech programme introduced in 2003 sought to tackle holistically the myriad of factors contributing to low yields of cocoa farms in the country.

The CSSVD Control Programme, which was later termed, Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme was given a boost in 2012 after it was successfully launched at Goaso in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The programme was re-introduced after a careful consideration

of the challenges identified in rolling out the earlier schemes.

The introduction of a compensation package for affected farmers was a key component in sustaining the interest of cocoa farmers in the implementation process. It is, therefore, not surprising that significant progress was achieved, but still not without challenges.

From 2014–2016, under a new arrangement by the Management of COCOBOD, the CSSVD/Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme was left in the hands of cocoa farmers. They were to voluntarily cut out their diseased and overaged farms with supervision from COCOBOD field staff. This approach recorded rather low success rate as farmers were reluctant to bear the cost of the exercise.

This situation is believed to be a key contributory factor to the extensive outbreak of the disease in major cocoa growing regions. Consequently, several hectares of cocoa farms across the country are currently under threat of the CSSVD pandemic with the Western North and Eastern Regions accounting for approximately 68% infection rate.

THE COMMITMENT

Being alarmed by the devastation caused to several hectares of cocoa farms and its concomitant effect on farm productivity, Government and COCOBOD re-introduced the CSSVD Control Programme to aggressively cut out affected farms and replant them to raise the productivity levels from the current average of 450kg/ha to about 1000kg/ha. This effort, coupled with adherence to Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs) will invariably, support

the achievement of annual production target of about 1.5 million tonnes of cocoa in the next 10 years.

The CSSVD, undoubtedly, has become a cross border issue in recent times owing to the devastation caused to cocoa farms at the Western border of Ghana. Realizing the fast spread of the virus across the Western border, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire engaged in dialogue and cooperation in a move to working together to prevent further spread of the disease across the two countries.

Following enormous strides in dialogue and discussions on areas of technical cooperation between Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, both Presidents; H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of Ghana and H.E. Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire in 2018 initiated a joint action to aggressively address the CSSVD menace in their respective countries.

Responsibility was put on Ghana Cocoa Board and Le Conseil du Café Cacao of Côte d'Ivoire to work towards finding lasting solutions to the control of the CSSVD.

Addressing participants at the Second Meeting of the Ghana-Côte d'Ivoire Technical Cooperation on Cocoa held on 1st June 2017, at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Accra, the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo indicated that:

'As the two leading producers commanding about 60% of global output, the need for Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to collaborate towards harmonized production and marketing arrangements cannot be over-emphasized. This comment points to the fact that in spite of the seeming competition among producers, each of us sees collaboration as the way forward. Such relationships are in line with the path that the new Management of the Ghana Cocoa Board wants to chart in revamping Ghana's cocoa sector.'

GHANA AND CÔTE D'IVOIRE JOINT ACTION AGAINST CSSVD

To affirm the commitment of both presidents, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire jointly launched the CSSVD Control Programme in August, 2018 at Pillar 34 near Yawmetwa, a border town in the Western Region, to kick start a back-



to-back approach to collectively cut out and treat affected farms across the western border. This unprecedented move is one of several cooperation agreements the two countries have, in recent times, agreed to pursue in the collective interest of both countries.

For the start, Ghana ear-marked to cut out and treat 10,000 hectares of affected farms out of an estimated 680,000 hectares according to Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board. Explaining further at the launch, Hon Aidoo disclosed that with funding support from AfDB, the Programme will be extended to cover other regions till it becomes a national programme.

Côte d'Ivoire on the other hand, disclosed plans to cut some 100,000 hectares of infected farms. Mr. M. Kone Ibrahim, Director Le Conseil du Café Cacao of Côte d'Ivoire described the joint action as a laudable one to support the cocoa economies of both countries and called on cocoa farmers to willingly give out their farms to be cut out and treated.

SUPPORT SERVICES

COCOBOD has, as part of the Rehabilitation Scheme made available various support services to motivate cocoa farmers to embrace the initiative.

Cocoa farmers and some land owners will receive compensation for every hectare of farm cut and treated to help them cope with loss in income during the re-planting phase of the project.

Again, COCOBOD has arranged with experts to replant such farms with hybrid seedlings at no cost to farmers.

The service providers will also plant economic trees, as well as, plantain suckers on the farms. To boost the growth of the young plants, Sulphate of

Ammonia and compost fertilizers will be given to farmers to apply on their farms.

PROGRESS MADE SO FAR

Education in cocoa communities has been high. Few months after the programme was started, it has been reported that several cocoa farmers in the Western and Eastern Regions have given out their diseased farms to be cut out. Treatment has begun in earnest and it is expected that the Programme would be extended to the other regions where the CSSVD is rearing its ugly head.

APPEAL TO STAKEHOLDERS

The success or failure of the Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme/CSSVD depends largely on cooperation from Chiefs and land-owners owing to the land tenure system in Ghana.

COCOBOD is, therefore, appealing for cooperation from land owners to enable tenant farmers give out their overaged/diseased farms for treatment.

We are also encouraging all our field operators and staff to attach a sense of nationalism to the exercise and approach it with the seriousness it deserves. COCOBOD will ensure that logistics required for a successful programme is provided on time.

THE FUTURE

Government and COCOBOD are committed to widening the coverage of the Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme in addition to intensifying its various Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs) with the hope that in the next 10 years, the achievement of annual production target of 1.5 million tonnes will not be a mirage.

COCOA IMPROVES COGNITIVE ABILITY – HEALTH EXPERT



Dr. Edward O. Amporful, the Chief Pharmacist at the Cocoa Clinic in Accra has stated that consuming cocoa regularly improves the cognitive ability of an individual and boosts their academic performance. He disclosed that countries, which have produced many Nobel Award winners have high rates of cocoa consumption; an evidence of a strong correlation between high cocoa consumption and

cognitive development. Dr. Amporful made these remarks when he addressed students of the Commonwealth Hall at the University of Ghana, Legon during their Minimpinim Li Hall Week celebration.

He encouraged the students to consume cocoa regularly for a healthier life.

'When consumed regularly, raw cocoa

contains a lot of essential nutrients which can reduce fatigue, improve sexual ability, reduce high blood pressure, among others', he stated.

A lot of students attended the Minimpinim Li hall week which is organized at the beginning of every academic semester to bring both past and current students together in a spirit of love and unity.

A CALL FOR NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO INTRODUCE COCOA INTO CHILDREN'S MENU

Dr. Edward O. Amporful, a Pharmacist at the Cocoa Clinic of the Ghana Cocoa Board in Accra has called for a national campaign to introduce cocoa into children's menu at an early age.

He indicated that courting children's interest in cocoa consumption was the right way to develop and sustain their interest in cocoa products.

He made the call when he addressed school children during the monthly entertainment show for children dubbed 'Fun World' at the National Theatre in Accra. According to Dr. Amporful, Cocoa

products, especially, the dark chocolate is full of nutrients and health benefits. He noted that research has indicated that consuming cocoa had the propensity of improving the cognitive ability of consumers. He recounted that research done in the U.S shows that most of the people who have won the Nobel Peace Awards in the world come from countries with history of high cocoa consumption.

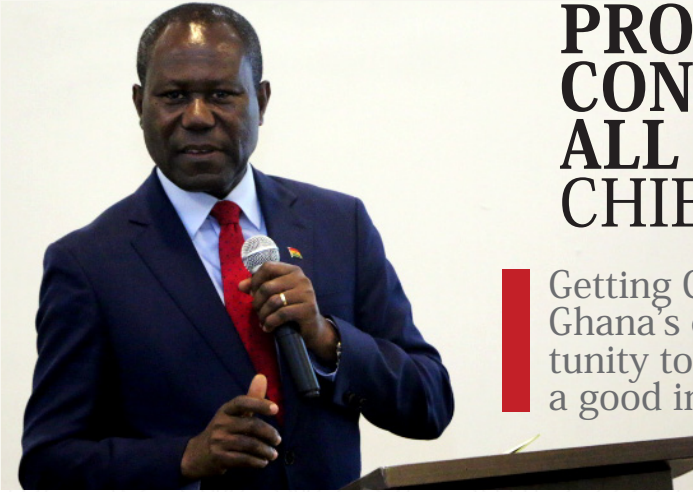
Dr. Amporful stressed that Ghana's production of premium quality cocoa and cocoa products for the world market cannot be overemphasized.

'Ghana cocoa is the standard for measuring cocoa around the world making it the pacesetter for others to emulate. So, let's consume the best quality that we produce for good health and nutritional benefits' he added.

He noted that, though, Ghana is the world's largest producer of cocoa, the per capita consumption averages 0.52kg and is far below cocoa consumption in the western world which stands at around 8kg per capita.

By the end of his presentation, children who answered questions on cocoa were awarded with bars of chocolates.





PROMOTE COCOA CONSUMPTION AT ALL TIMES - COCOBOD CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Getting China and India alone to patronize Ghana's cocoa would be a huge market opportunity to increase revenue and at the same time a good incentive to expand the industry

Hon. Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has challenged participants at the just ended Cocoa Validation Workshop in Accra to be cocoa consumption ambassadors and promote it wherever they find themselves.

Hon. Boahen Aidoo indicated that, if we can process not less than 50% of Ghana's cocoa yield, it was important for participants to be in the forefront of the cocoa consumption campaign.

He stressed that Ghanaians need to take advantage of the health and nutritional benefits of consuming cocoa, adding that Ghana cannot lose out on the benefits of cocoa while it produces premium quality cocoa. He expressed worry at the low per capita cocoa consumption of 0.52kg for Ghana as compared to about 8kg for some western countries.

He noted that apart from the health and nutritional benefits of cocoa consumption, Ghana stands to gain when we get new markets like China,

India and some parts of Africa to develop the taste for cocoa to increase revenue.

'Getting China and India alone to patronize Ghana's cocoa would be a huge market opportunity to increase revenue and at the same time a good incentive to expand the industry', Hon. Aidoo added.

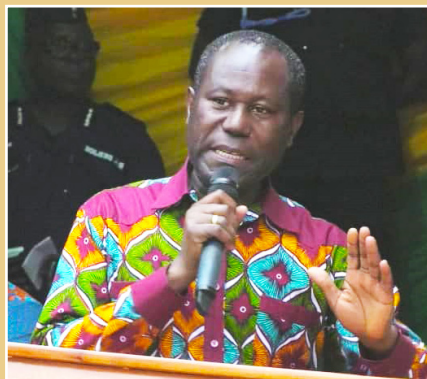
He said the Cocoa Validation Workshop was to finalize the Cocoa Sector Development Strategy II (CSDS II) document and urged all stakeholders to own it for effective implementation.

COCOBOD INCREASES INCENTIVE PACKAGE FOR COCOA REHABILITATION

Ghana Cocoa Board has reviewed upwards, the initial treatment grant which is part of the compensation package for landowners and cocoa farmers who agree to cut and replant their Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus (CSSV) affected cocoa farms under the ongoing National Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme. The initial treatment grant which was pegged at Ghc552.96 has now been increased to Ghc1000.00 per hectare.

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo announced this at Sefwi Wiawso in the Western North Region at a durbar of chiefs and people of Sefwi wiawso Traditional Area in honour of the President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, who is on a 3-day working visit to the Region.

Hon. Aidoo said that out of a total of 1.9 million hectares of cocoa farms surveyed, 315,800 hectares had been



affected by the swollen shoot virus disease. Out of this, the Western North Region alone had 214,500 hectares of affected farms. He, therefore, advised landowners and cocoa farmers to allow their infected trees to be cut and replanted with high yielding, early bearing and disease tolerant seedlings for increased and sustainable yield.

According to the Chief Executive, the cost of cutting the infected cocoa

trees and replanting will be borne by government and COCOBOD. In addition, plantain suckers and economic trees seedlings will be supplied at no cost to the affected farmers.

Hon. Aidoo stressed that no chemical can treat an infected cocoa tree unless it is cut and replanted. 'Out of every five hectares of cocoa farm, two hectares are infected', he lamented. He, therefore, urged the farmers to embrace the National Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme to forestall any decline in production output.

He said the youth in the farming communities have been engaged in the replanting exercise to create employment for them.

The Chief Executive had earlier led the President and his entourage to tour a CSSV treated farm at Ntrentreso, a farming community near Sefwi Wiawso.



OFFICIALS OF STANBIC BANK GHANA PAY FAMILIARIZATION VISIT TO CRIG

Officials of Stanbic Bank Ghana and Standard Bank South Africa have paid a familiarization visit to the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) at Tafo in the Eastern Region.

The delegation from Standard Bank South Africa, mother Bank of Stanbic Ghana was in the country to understand the operations of the cocoa sector and engage with stakeholders on the cocoa value chain.

Receiving the delegation at CRIG, Dr. Michael Padi, Head of Agronomy said climate change and low soil fertility were among the major factors that cause low productivity of cocoa in the country and efforts were being made to reduce their effects on the crop.

He said Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) would continue to support cocoa farmers with Agro Chemicals and Fertilizers to help withstand climatic change as well as disease and pest infestation.

'COCOBOD will continue to encourage farmers to adopt good agronomic practices which are aimed at improving farm productivity', he added.

Mr. Sean Hettena, Consultant, Standard Bank South Africa, on behalf of his colleagues, expressed their gratitude to COCOBOD for the opportunity to visit the research facility and commended the Board for its support for the cocoa sector which has contributed significantly to the

country's economic development. He was hopeful that his outfit's upcoming meeting with COCOBOD in May 2019 would be fruitful and further enhance the relationship between the two entities.

Mr. Charles Nkrumah, Head of Agro Business and Real Estate Development of Stanbic Bank Ghana advised Government and COCOBOD to also pay attention to other sectors of the industry such as cashew cultivation, on a large scale. According to him, the move would decrease the rate of unemployment in the country.

Stanbic Bank is one of the leading financiers of Ghana Cocoa Board's annual syndicated facility for cocoa purchases and also a lender to the License Buying Companies (LBCs).

COCOBOD SIGNS PACT WITH CCEC AT FIRST CHINA IMPORT EXPO

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has signed a pact with China National Complete Engineering Corporation (CCEC) to support the technological needs of COCOBOD to improve the cocoa sector with sustainable cocoa farm improvement programmes.

Signing on behalf of COCOBOD, Mr Emmanuel Adem Opoku, Deputy Chief Executive In-Charge of Operations, expressed COCOBOD's gratitude to CCEC for its resolve to support Ghana in the field of irrigation system for cocoa cultivation. The pact will also support construction of warehouses for cocoa beans storage, construction of cocoa roads in rural communities and the construction of cocoa processing plants.

Mr Emmanuel Opoku explained that the commitment of CCEC to the agreement on one side and COCOBOD on the

other was a sure way of materializing the vision of COCOBOD in the outlined projects. 'We stand to gain nothing if we fail to bring our combined efforts to the direction of this new path that the management of COCOBOD is charting', he added.

CCEC has strong capacity in the provision of agricultural machinery and technical services and is among the top Ten Chinese Corporations. The total sum involved in this collaboration is estimated to be USD1.5bn.

The idea to pursue the agreement began during the state visit of the President of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo to China in September, 2018.

Ghana and China took advantage of COCOBOD's participation in the first China International Import Expo (CIIE) to sign the agreement for technical coordination.



COCOBOD CHIEF CAUTIONS COCOA FARMERS ON THE USE OF WEEDICIDES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF GHANA COCOA BOARD (COCOBOD) HON JOSEPH BOAHEN AIDOO HAS ADVISED COCOA FARMERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO DESIST FROM THE APPLICATION OF WEEDICIDES ON THEIR COCOA FARMS.



Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo has advised cocoa farmers across the country to desist from the application of weedicides on their cocoa farms since the practice has far-reaching consequences on the eco-system and cocoa.

Hon Boahen Aidoo gave the advice when some National Best Cocoa Farmers called on him at his office to discuss ways of enhancing the fortunes of the cocoa sector.

According to him, the use of weedicides has been discovered to be harmful not only to cocoa but also to micro-organisms that improve the soil texture and fertility.

Hon Aidoo commended cocoa farmers nationwide for their immense contributions to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) adding that cocoa farmers have helped to

sustain Ghana's economic growth. He assured the farmers that COCOBOD would continue to support them with Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs) such as the Mass Pruning, Hand Pollination and the Cocoa Rehabilitation Programmes to enable them increase farm productivity.

'The core of the enhancement programmes is to ensure that farmers produce more on the same area of land,' he added.

Hon Aidoo was, however, worried about the continuous fall in the world price of cocoa adding, Government and COCOBOD have over the last two years maintained the producer price of cocoa amidst falling world prices of cocoa as a demonstration of their commitment towards improving the standard of living of cocoa farmers.

He disclosed that Ghana was the only

country among major cocoa producing nations to maintain its producer price, despite the plummeting world price of cocoa.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Nana Charles Gyamfi, the 2018 National Best Cocoa Farmer, commended Management of COCOBOD for their continuous support to cocoa farmers across the country.

Nana Gyamfi was happy COCOBOD was considering devoting funds for the construction of Feeder Roads to connect cocoa-growing communities across the country and called on COCOBOD to intensify its move to attract younger generation into cocoa farming.

Other cocoa farmers present were Paul Osei Tuffuor, 2018 Most Promising Young Cocoa Farmer, and 2016 National Best Cocoa Farmer, Nana Opoku Gyamfi.



Natural
cocoa

Provides
the Best
Dietary
Antioxidant
enjoy it daily for maximum
benefit



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ROYAL COMMODITIES EXTENDS OPERATIONS TO THE VOLTA REGION

Royal Commodities Ltd (ROCO), an indigenous Licensed Cocoa Buying Company (LBC) has extended its operations to the Volta Region. The company, established in 1996, has been purchasing cocoa in all the growing regions except the Volta Region.

Alhaji Abdulzakou Adamou, Managing Director of the company announced the setting up of a branch of the company in the Region during a Farmer's rally held at Hohoe.

According to him, the company had adopted fair and ethical marketing principles which ensure that cocoa farmers receive prompt payments for their produce.

'The company has over 200 electronic scales. ' Cocoa will be bought at every corner with farmers not traveling far. There will also be electronic payment through bank accounts or mobile Money", he added.

The MD was hopeful that COCOBOD's Productivity Enhancement Programs (PEPS) would facilitate increased production.



Alhaji Adamou said his outfit would introduce cocoa certification in the Region with 3 fold interventions – farm inputs, capacity building and community interventions, and urged all cocoa farmers to sell their produce to ROCO for maximum benefits. 'We want to encourage all of you to form Farmer-based groups to facilitate easy management of your activities.

These groups will later be converted into cooperatives which will make it easy to access loans, inputs, extension services, among others", he added.

Mr Eric Agbe, Deputy Regional Administrative Manager of COCOBOD, in a solidarity message, commended ROCO for coming to the Volta Region. He said while introducing competition into the internal marketing of cocoa in the Region, he was optimistic that farmers would receive prompt payments for their produce and subsequently reduce the incidence of smuggling.

Mr Frank Asante, Deputy Regional Quality Control Manager assured ROCO that his outfit would work in close collaboration with all LBCs to ensure that only the best quality cocoa beans are graded and sealed.

Mr. Emmanuel Ofori, District Cocoa Officer for Hohoe, educated the farmers on the PEPs being implemented by COCOBOD.

Benjamin Larweh, Principal Public Affairs Officer, urged the farmers to consume more cocoa and benefit from its nutritional elements. He said cocoa has the ability to improve blood circulation, lower blood pressure, manage diabetes, reduce stress, among others. ' You (farmers) are the pillars behind Ghana's premium cocoa and deserve to fully benefit from its health and nutritional values", he added.

Togbe Batse, the Regional Chief Farmer who chaired the function, on behalf of the farmers welcomed ROCO to the Region. While urging the company to live up to expectation, he was hopeful that the presence of the ROCO in the Volta Region would help improve the lot of farmers and all stakeholders.

Similar rallies were held in Jasikan and Dodi Papase Districts.



ROYAL COMMODITIES (ROCO) TAKES OVER 30 NEW TRUCKS TO AID EVACUATION OF COCOA



Management of Royal Commodities Ltd (ROCO), an indigenous Licensed Cocoa Buying Company (LBC) has taken delivery of over 30 new trucks funded by GCB bank to ensure efficient internal purchases of cocoa beans across the cocoa-growing regions.

Presenting the keys to Management of ROCO at a ceremony held in Tema, Nana Antwi Boasiako, Acting Head of Corporate Banking, GCB bank acknowledged the long standing partnership that has existed between his outfit and ROCO and described

ROCO as a loyal and dedicated LBC.

Nana Antwi Boasiako further stated that GCB bank was able to support ROCO to purchase about 15,000mt of cocoa and expressed optimism that the new trucks would support their operations further to increase their internal cocoa purchases.

'We have been able to support LBCs with about GHC754million. We are by far, the biggest financier of major LBCs in the country. This is what makes us a dependable partner in promoting a sustainable cocoa economy", he added.

Receiving the keys, Alhaji Abdulzakou Adamou, Managing Director of ROCO, described GCB bank as a dependable partner who has supported their numerous business ventures for more than two decades.

Alhaji Adamou assured that the trucks would be used for the intended purposes

as the company plans to widen its internal operations to ensure efficiency. According to Alhaji Abdulzakou Adamou, the trucks would help in primary and secondary evacuation of cocoa from the farm gate to depots.

The move comes two months after ROCO launched its operations in the Volta Region with a promise to use electronic weighing scales to ensure that farmers are not cheated by unsuspecting purchasing clerks.

Dr. Emmanuel A. Opoku, Deputy Chief Executive in Charge of Operations, Ghana Cocoa Board commended ROCO for the initiative to beef up their fleet of trucks with new vehicles. Mr Opoku hinted that with the introduction of several productivity enhancement programmes, cocoa production was expected to increase and the coming of the trucks was very timely. He called on the drivers to observe road safety measures to prolong the life span of the trucks.



COCOBOD REWARDS 2018 NATIONAL BEST COCOA FARMER, OTHERS

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) on the prestigious occasion of the nation's annual celebration of its farmers, the Farmers' Day, has awarded Charles Gyamfi, of Anokyekrom, Brong Ahafo Region, the price of 2018' National Best Cocoa at the Aliu Mahama Sports Stadium in Tamale.

The farmer was presented with a Toyota Hilux pick up vehicle, a motorised slasher, a motorised pruner, a motorised sprayer, a set of protective clothing, twenty (20) litres of Akate Master for 50 acre farm (2 rounds), three hundred (300) sachets of fungicide for 50 acres (3 rounds), a carton of Pyramid chocolate products and a glass plaque.

Presenting the reward items, Hon Aidoo, congratulated the Best Farmer and urged him to continue to adopt best farming practices, which would, in turn, enhance his yield.

He said the Pick Up, which is valued at GHc207.000, is to help the Best Farmer in his farming activities. "This vehicle, which is being given to you today, among other items, is to facilitate your work as a cocoa farmer, and to acknowledge your contributions to the cocoa industry in Ghana. COCOBOD is deeply interested in the welfare of all cocoa, shea and coffee farmers", Mr Aidoo added.

He said COCOBOD will continue to work with all key stakeholders to ensure

that farmers get adequate technical support in managing their farms and equally receive the right payment for their produce.

In accepting the honour, Charles Gyamfi acknowledged the immense contribution that programmes put in place by COCOBOD, such as the Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs) have made to his farm. He credited such programmes with the boost he has had in yields and proceeds.

Mr Gyamfi has been a cocoa farmer for decades. He has 100.88 hectares of mixed and hybrid cocoa farms in Anokyekrom and Sankore, both in the Brong Ahafo Region.

COCOBOD also rewarded other farmers at the farmers' day event. Ekuia Brenya from the Ashanti Region was awarded the Most Enterprising Female Cocoa Farmer; the Most Promising Young Cocoa Farmer award went to Paul Osei Tuffour from the Brong Ahafo Region; Rose Duku from the Brong Ahafo Region was named 2018's the Best Coffee Farmer; and Akua Bantong from the Northern Region was the Best Shea Nut Picker.

Regional and District Best Cocoa and Coffee Farmers, as well as, Shea Nut Pickers all over the country were rewarded by COCOBOD for their hard work and contributions to national development.

The farmer was presented with a Toyota Hilux pick up vehicle, a motorised slasher, a motorised pruner, a motorised sprayer, a set of protective clothing, twenty (20) litres of Akate Master for 50 acres (2 rounds), three hundred (300) sachets of fungicide for 50 acres (3 rounds), a carton of Pyramid chocolate products and a glass plaque

COCOBOD LADIES CLUB UNVEILS CEREMONIAL CLOTH



Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Ladies Club has unveiled their official Cloth at a colourful ceremony at Cocoa House in Accra. The event brought together, representatives of the ladies Club from across the cocoa regions.

In her welcome address, the President of the Ladies Club, Mrs Sabina Essuman Wereko thanked Management of COCOBOD and the ladies for their contributions and commitment to the activities of the club.

She acknowledged the contribution women in the cocoa industry have made in ensuring a sustainable cocoa economy.

'We should continue to work

relentlessly to promote the cause of women in the advancement of the cocoa industry since women play key roles along the cocoa value chain", she added.

She further implored the ladies to continuously strive to portray a good image of themselves and the COCOBOD brand they represent.

On her part, a former Director of Human Resource of COCOBOD, Mrs. Alice Quaisie, who delivered the keynote address, urged the ladies to wear the new cloth to project the image of COCOBOD and the integrity of Ghana's Cocoa Sector.

Mrs. Quaisie also advised the ladies to pursue higher education to equip

themselves for higher responsibilities. "Permit me to send a word of advice to especially the young ladies gathered here and everyone, you have a responsibility to aspire and progress in your career by taking up further courses to equip you adequately to enable you perform creditably well at your work place to enhance the Cocoa Sector" she added.

Mrs Quaisie urged the ladies to be good role models in the Cocoa industry, and also serve as inspiration to other ladies in the cocoa sector in Ghana and beyond.

The ceremony was attended by past presidents of the Ladies Club, and women in top management positions in the cocoa sector.





GRASAG MEMBERS URGED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COCOA SECTOR

Members of the University of Ghana chapter of the Graduate Students' Association of Ghana (GRASAG) have been urged to take advantage of the numerous business opportunities in the cocoa sector to create jobs for themselves to enhance their livelihood.

Mr. Benjamin Larweh, a Principal Public Affairs Officer at the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), made this call at a maiden Graduate Breakfast Seminar held at the Centre for African Wetlands, University of Ghana, Accra.

The Seminar dubbed, 'A Drive to Entrepreneurship', was designed to empower the graduate students with the requisite skills to address the youth unemployment problem in the country.

"Several entrepreneurial opportunities exist along the cocoa value chain. It is therefore up to you to identify an area of interest, venture into it and begin to employ people instead of moving from organization to organization looking for non-existent jobs", Mr. Larweh added.

According to Mr. Larweh, COCOBOD is supporting the youth to go into cocoa farming with the supply of early bearing and high yielding hybrid cocoa variety, ammonia fertilizers, extension and other support services.

"The Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) of COCOBOD will provide you with cocoa seedlings depending on your farm size and constantly monitor the progress of your cocoa farm to ensure that you reap the maximum benefits", he added.

Mr. Larweh further said the days when cocoa farming was considered the sole preserve of the elderly and people with no educational background were long gone, and added that the youth are more receptive to Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs) which result in higher yields. He again said the on-going National Cocoa Consumption Campaign provides opportunities for individuals interested in the distribution and marketing of chocolate, natural cocoa powder and other cocoa products across the country.

'The Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana –Tafo (CRIG) and Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) are available to train individuals who want to take up artisanal chocolate making as well as production of cocoa by-products such as cocoa wine, soaps and pomade, among others, Mr. Larweh added.

Dr. Edward Amporful, Chief Pharmacist at the Cocoa Clinic in Accra educated participants on the health and nutritional benefits of cocoa and urged them to consume cocoa daily for a healthy life.

According to Dr. Amporful, Cocoa helps in brain function, lowers high blood pressure, improves blood circulation and reduces the risk of cancers, among others.

Other speakers at the seminar were Hon. John Kumah, CEO of the National Entrepreneurship Innovation Plan, Dr. Michael Agyekum Addo, Entrepreneur and Madam Sandra Sekor, Manager, Learning and Development at the Petroleum Commission.

COCOBOD DONATES NINE 6-UNIT CLASSROOM BLOCKS TO COCOA COMMUNITIES

GHANA COCOA BOARD (COCOBOD) HAS DONATED 6-UNIT CLASSROOM BLOCKS TO NINE COCOA-GROWING COMMUNITIES IN THE COUNTRY UNDER THE COCOBOD CHILD EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME.



Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has donated 6-Unit Classroom Blocks to nine cocoa-growing communities in the country under its COCOBOD Child Education Support Programme. The programme, which focuses on building schools in deprived cocoa-growing communities to enhance access to basic quality education, as well as, address factors that cause child-absenteeism in cocoa communities.

At a symbolic commissioning ceremony at Obosomase in the Agona East District of the Central Region, where one of the school building projects is located, the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, in a speech read on his behalf by Mr. Emmanuel Opoku, Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Operations explained that COCOBOD, in 2014 decided to build school facilities in deprived cocoa-communities to encourage parents to send their wards to school.

'We identified cocoa communities that lacked school infrastructure to provide new school buildings to avoid the stress of children walking long distances to

access school. We intended to create a conducive atmosphere that promotes learning for our children to study so that we can achieve the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 4, which requires access and quality education for all", he emphasized.

Hon Aidoo further revealed that each of the school buildings comprises a 6-Unit classroom block, Crèche/ Kindergarten 1 and 2, and a Head Teacher's office with a Secretariat. He said other ancillary facilities include good drainage system, restroom/toilet, and borehole water systems equipped with hand pumps.

He assured that the COCOBOD Child Education Support Programme will be sustained to enhance access to basic education in cocoa-growing areas.

Receiving the keys to the school block, the Agona East District Chief Executive, Hon Dennis Armah Frempong thanked COCOBOD for the initiative which, according to him, had taken a huge burden off the shoulders of government and the Assembly. Hon

Armah encouraged parents to ensure that their wards are punctual and regular at school and urged the pupils to take their lessons seriously.

For his part, the Headmaster of the Obosomase Anglican Basic School, Mr. Idriss Siraj was full of praise for the new state-of-the-art facility adding, it would go a long way to address child-absenteeism and low academic performance in the school.

The other eight communities which have benefitted under the 1st phase of implementation of the COCOBOD Child Education Support Programme are Appiahkrom (in the Juaso District of the Ashanti Region), Senchiem (in the Assin Fosu District of the Central Region), Akutreso (Adansi South District of the Ashanti Region), Nsonnan (in the Agona West District of the Central Region), Twifo Heman (in the Twifo Praso District of the Central Region), Attakrom (in the Sunyani District of the Brong Ahafo Region), Bomponso (in the New Tafo District of the Eastern Region), and Sefwi Kaase (In the Bia East District of the Western Region).



CLEAN UP! IT IS YOUR LIFELINE TO HEALTH & WEALTH IN 2019 & BEYOND

Time does fly and if there were no clocks to contradict me, I could have sworn that 2018 was the shortest year ever. May we all experience a 2019 filled with great health, happiness and wealth.

It is almost impossible to discuss wealth without health and though our focus has been to discuss prevention of diseases, we will spend more time this month and the year in general looking at practical steps to keep us healthy.

‘The foundation of a successful and sustainable healthcare system is PREVENTIVE MEDICINE; common sense ways to prevent disease.’-Dr. Kojo Essel*

Diarrhoeal diseases including cholera and other illnesses such as typhoid continue to impact negatively on our health and hence our wealth. Our healthcare facilities are choked with people vomiting and passing stools.

Many of these diseases are simply a result of the filth we surround ourselves with and our poor personal and environmental hygiene.

Before cholera breaks loose once again and other illnesses virtually drain all the fluids in our body, we will master a few easy to follow steps that can keep us safe.

Easy to follow steps that protect us from infectious diseases:

- A**.....
- Wash your hands with SOAP and WATER (cleaning your hands by simply wiping them in your clothes is unacceptable):
- AFTER using the toilet
 - AFTER cleaning a child or adult

- BEFORE eating
- BEFORE cooking or handling food
- AFTER multiple handshakes e.g. after a funeral or party
- BEFORE going to sleep especially for children.

These simple steps can reduce the incidence of vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pains and certain pneumonias.

- B**.....
- Brush your teeth properly at least twice a day (morning and last thing before sleeping. Toothpaste must contain fluoride) – it may even protect you from heart disease

- At the very least you need to bath once a day. Wash your hair regularly and comb or brush it.

- Do not continue wearing soiled clothing – sweat, grease/oil, ingredients from cooking etc

- Wash your clothing with soap or a detergent DO NOT just air them out

- Hair in armpit and pubic area should be shaved regularly

- Keep fingernails (especially) short to avoid trapping dirt

- Wipe dry the area in between your toes after a bath

- Change your underwear daily

- Do not wear socks unwashed for days.
- Wash your bed sheet and towel at least once a week

- C**.....
- All refuse should be well covered

- Indiscriminate defecation should be avoided (can you imagine how faeces may leak into burst pipelines?)

- All water storage containers should be tightly covered

- Drinking water should be boiled and filtered (boiled, at least), and allowed to cool before drinking. It is your choice if you opt to use mineral water aka ‘pure water’

- Eat food while warm and be sure the source is reliable

- D**.....
- Ensure your gutters are clean

- Do not entertain pools of water – they can breed mosquitoes

AS ALWAYS LAUGH OFTEN, WALK AND PRAY EVERYDAY AND REMEMBER IT’S A PRICELESS GIFT TO KNOW YOUR NUMBERS (blood sugar, blood pressure, blood cholesterol, BMI)

Dr. Kojo Cobba Essel
Health Essentials Ltd/St. Andrews Clinic
(dressel@healthessentialsgh.com)

*Dr. Kojo Essel is a medical doctor, holds an MBA and is ISSA certified in exercise therapy, fitness nutrition and corrective exercise.

Thought for the week – ‘Personal hygiene is cultivated in us as we grow old, but is never too late to start one, if you lack one.’ - Hubpages



consume
COCOA
— everyday for a healthier life —

img: courtesy: fratehdh.com



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PROFILE OF NANA KARIKARI Ag. MANAGING DIRECTOR, QUALITY CONTROL COMPANY (QCC)

Mr. Maxwell S. Karikari Addo, the Ag. Managing Director (QCC), is an Agricultural Extensionist who holds a Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Extension.

Nana has over 28 years' working experience with the Quality Control Company (QCC) of Ghana Cocoa Board.

He began his working career as a Quality Control Officer in charge of the Sankore 'A' and 'B' Districts of the Brong Ahafo Region, in March, 1991.

By dint of hard work, he was promoted to a Deputy Quality Control Manager in the Brong Ahafo Region and was later transferred to the Ashanti Region.

In 2006, Nana Karikari was again promoted and became the substantive Ashanti Regional Manager QCC, where he was later transferred to the Eastern Region. Nana also worked in the Central and Western South Regions.

In 2016, he was promoted as Senior Manager in charge of the Tema Port and discharged his duties to the admiration of both staff and stakeholders of the industry until his recent appointment as the Acting Managing Director of QCC on 19th November 2018.

Nana Karikari Addo is currently the Sanaahene of Denyase Traditional Area.



NATIONAL CHOCOLATE DAY 2019 IN PICTURES



PROGRAMME LAUNCH



HEALTH WALK





TOUR OF TETTEH QUASHIE COCOA FARM



CHOCOLATE DAY DURBAR



LET'S MODERNISE COCOA FARMING AND MAKE IT AN ATTRACTIVE BUSINESS VENTURE – COCOBOD BOSS

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has charged management of COCOBOD to adopt simple but appropriate technologies to ease the work of cocoa farmers and make cocoa farming an attractive business venture, especially for the youth.

Hon Aidoo said the time has come for cocoa farming to be seen as a viable business venture with established service providers along the cocoa value chain, who will provide various services right at the farm gate to the farmer, on demand. He made these statements at a retreat held for the top management of COCOBOD in the Eastern Region.

The Chief Executive reiterated the need for Management of COCOBOD to confront issues bothering on cocoa sustainability head-on. He urged management to

implement strategies designed by COCOBOD to improve productivity and enhance the welfare of cocoa farmers.

He stressed the need for all departments, divisions and subsidiaries to work closely together to tackle challenges that come up in their day-to-day administration. He emphasized that the cocoa industry is going through some trying times due to the decline in the world market price of cocoa, and the spread of diseases and pests in most cocoa farms, among others.

“This is the time to bring to bear all the skill sets and competencies, and experiences to address these challenges head-on for the cocoa industry to take its pride of place in the economic development of Ghana”, he said.

Hon. Aidoo was particularly emphatic about vertical productivity, whereby, farmers

can increase yield per hectare through the adoption of Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEP) without compromising the environment.

“We need to be conscious of our environment so instead of venturing into virgin or new forests for farming, the same plot of land can be cultivated to increase yield through pruning, hand pollination, irrigation, extension services and disease control, among other interventions, he said.

The retreat brought together all heads of divisions and subsidiaries of COCOBOD, namely Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana, Seed Production Division, Cocoa Health and Extension Division, Quality Control Company, Cocoa Marketing Company, as well as, Deputy Chief Executives in charge of Finance & Administration, Agronomy & Quality Control and Operations.

COCOBOD SCHOOLS STAFF ON CHILD LABOUR ISSUES

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has organized a 3-day training programme on child labour at the Bunso Cocoa College in the Eastern Region. The training was aimed at equipping participants with skills and knowledge to enable them engage effectively with cocoa farmers in an effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labour on cocoa farms.

Participants were mainly cocoa extension officers from the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED), field staff from Quality Control Company (QCC) as well as staff of the Research and Public Affairs Departments of COCOBOD.

Opening the programme at Bunso, Mr Vincent Okyere Akomeah, Director of Research, Monitoring and Evaluation urged participants to treat the training programme with all the seriousness it deserves since it

has far reaching consequences. He revealed that COCOBOD had secured a 6million United States Dollar loan to run a 3-year programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour from Ghana’s cocoa sector.

According to Mr. Akomeah, COCOBOD had engaged the services of KPMG (an audit firm) and the Institute of Statistics, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) of the University of Ghana to monitor and verify the work of the trainees on the field.

He said the appointed verifiers would follow the trainees to assess the impact of the training, content and observations of how skills acquired during the training are passed on to the farmers. “Take records of everything you are doing; details of farmers trained, their telephone numbers, etc because the verifiers will follow you to get

first-hand information from the farmers on whether the right things are being done for the farmers”, he said.

Mr Samuel Amponsah, Ag. Executive Director of CHED, in his remarks implored the staff to give off their best in the discharge of their duties. ‘I have put my neck on the chopping board on behalf of you workers; therefore there is no room for laziness moving forward”, he cautioned.

Present at the opening ceremony were Mr. Thomas K. Osei, Rector of the Bunso Cocoa College, Mrs. Rosemond Owusu Sarfo, Vice Rector, Mr Paul Ntim, Mr Eric Amengor both Research managers of COCOBOD. Others were Mr Osei Asenso Antwi, Senior Associate, KPMG, Mr. Andrews A. Tagoe, Dep. General Secretary, General Agricultural Workers’ Union of TUC and the resource person for the training.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES OF CHED AND SPD INAUGURATED

THE INAUGURATION OF THE COMMITTEES MADE UP OF ELEVEN MEMBERS EACH, TO BRING ABOUT MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN THE COCOA SECTOR.

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Hon. Joseph Boahen Aidoo has inaugurated the Management Committees of Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) and Seed Production Division (SPD) at the Cocoa House in Accra with a call on them to work hard to enhance the fortunes of the cocoa industry.

Hon. Aidoo said that he was optimistic the committee members will bring their vast expertise to bear on their work.

Hon. Aidoo emphasized that the distribution of free hybrid seedlings

was essential in replacing diseased or old cocoa trees that will be cut out in the cocoa farm rehabilitation drive and the cultivation of new farms.

The inauguration of the committees made up of eleven members each, was to bring about marked improvement in the cocoa sector.

The SPD committee, which is chaired by Rev. Professor Hans Adu Dapaah has the following as members: Mr. Charles Gyamfi, Dr. Emmanuel Agyemang Dwomoh, Dr. I. Y. Opoku, Mr. Samuel Amponsah, Mr. Vincent Okyere

Akomeah and Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Ahia Clottey. The rest are, Mr. George Harrison, Dr. George Opoku, Mr. Nasiru Issaka and Mr. Reginald Ofori.

The CHED committee comprises Mr. Joseph Gyamerah, Dr. Emmanuel Agyemang Dwomoh, Dr. I. Y. Opoku, Mr. Samuel Amponsah, Mr. Vincent Okyere Akomeah and Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Ahia Clottey. The rest are Mr. Seth Akoto Osei, Very Rev Kwaku Abaka-Ewusi, Mr. Nathaniel Ofori Acheampong and Mrs. Paz Owusu Boakyie. The committee is chaired by Rev. Professor Festus Kwabena Annor-Frimpong.





THE COCOA PROCESSING COMPANY LAUNCHES THREE NEW CHOCOLATE PRODUCTS



The Cocoa Processing Company (CPC) has introduced three new chocolate products on the market

They are the Bar Chocolates, Handcraft Chocolate Pieces and Chocolate Dragees.

The bar chocolate consists of six different types of milk chocolate with exotic nuts, while handcraft chocolate pieces come in six flavours.

The chocolate dragees are an alternative to the popular Golden Tree pebbles and come in smaller sizes.

At the launch of the products in Tema last Wednesday, the acting Managing Director of CPC, Nana Agyemin Boateng, called for increased public investment in the company to enable it to boost its downstream processing capacity and help reduce the export of raw cocoa beans.

PLEASANT SURPRISE

Nana Agyemin Boateng said the formulation of the new products was inspired by consumer and laboratory research and the desire of management to expand the company's finished product lines to meet consumer preferences and the needs of the highly sophisticated chocolate market.

He said the new products came in improved packaging, while maintaining the unique taste and quality of the Golden Tree Chocolate.

"CPC has already exhibited samples of the new products in Morocco, Spain and China and in each of the countries, the products overwhelmed and confounded chocolate connoisseurs."

"The question had always been, are these chocolates really produced in Ghana?"

he added.

POTENTIAL EXISTS

Nana Agyemin Boateng said the potential existed for the Golden Tree Chocolate brand to gain international recognition but that required support and investment in the operations of the company.

He said countries that had made deliberate efforts at developing their chocolate industries were reaping substantial returns, something that Ghana must emulate.

"Switzerland, which is the largest producer of chocolates in Europe, generates a huge amount of its wealth from chocolate sales estimated at \$14 billion. Belgium, which is the second largest producer of chocolate, generates \$12 billion from chocolate sales, while revenue from taxation on chocolate in Europe currently is \$1.055 billion annually," he stated.

Nana Agyemin Boateng said analysis of the figures pointed to the fact that Ghana stood to gain from downstream processing of cocoa.

"A recent study of trends of revenue from chocolate sales and exports of raw cocoa beans concludes that the continuous investments in the production of beans without commensurate downstream investment and promotion in finished goods, will lead to the oversupply of beans and thereby low prices in the international market," he said.

The Managing Director indicated that CPC was well positioned to expand its operations and, therefore, appealed to the investing public to support the company to procure additional machines to augment the existing ones to enable the company to expand its operations.

SUPPORT

The Deputy CEO of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in charge of Operations, Dr. Emmanuel Opoku, commended the management of CPC for initiating moves to resuscitate the company. He noted that while the CPC had been processing the best of beans in the world, the company was faced with some challenges.

He gave an assurance that COCOBOD had taken up the challenge to help CPC stand on its feet again.

The Minister of State in charge of Agriculture, Dr Nurah Gyiele, stressed the need for the company to do continuous value addition to meet consumer demands.

He also called for the right marketing strategies that would position the Golden Tree brand with its premium cocoa content as a healthy and desired option.

He commended the CPC for making great strides in terms of increase in production, revenue, new product development and visibility.

Source : www.graphiconline.com



GHANA STANDS TO DOUBLE COCOA OUTPUT WITHIN EIGHT YEARS

New agronomic methods being adopted by Ghana to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in cocoa growing will also lead to increasing cocoa yields to nearly double over an eight year period, stakeholders in the national cocoa rehabilitation program have said.

The Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in collaboration with the Forestry

Commission and support from the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been implementing a shift from mono-cropping towards agro-forestry plantation based practice.

Kwadwo Owusu- Afriyie, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Forestry Commission explained that the practice involved the planting of shade trees on cocoa farms under the COCOBOD's cocoa rehabilitation project with seeds supplied by the Forestry Commission.

"We met with the COCOBOD CEO and had a very fruitful discussion. They need more of the seedlings to give to the farmers because the farmers are happy," the forestry commission head disclosed in response to a question from Xinhua.

He added that unlike the past when farmers extended the acreage of their cocoa farms annually in pursuit of more yield, "now scientific research has proven that even in a small one acre farm you could even harvest more cocoa fruits than having five acres or six acres provided you have the trees shades covering them."

This process, according to him was in line with the government's efforts to reverse deforestation, which had partly been caused by farming and to prevent the adverse effects of Climate Change.

"So farmers have now bought into this idea and the experiment that we have done is yielding dividends," he added.

This, Owusu-Afriyie expected to result in higher yields and higher incomes for cocoa farmers in Ghana.

Louis Bockel, Policy Support Officer at the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), had told Xinhua earlier in an interview that whereas cocoa cultivation in the past had led to deforestation, between the last 30 years and 40 years, a big part of the cocoa planted under that condition was getting old and virus affected.

"That is why COCOBOD and government of Ghana have moved to the strategy of rehabilitation of the cocoa value chain which involves 700,000 hectares of new cocoa plantations," he disclosed.

But this rehabilitation, according to him, will not create any additional deforestation but will improve the yield of cocoa and allow also to fix emission of carbon as the country moved from the old type of plantation which destroyed forests to a new plantation with the growing of shadow trees to fix a lot of carbon in terms of biomass.

Bockel maintained that the 1,300 US dollars per hectare expenditure on the project, which commenced on large scale this year, was justified, looking at the dividends expected from such a system, apart from controlling carbon emission and preventing Climate Change.

"It means that for the coming 20 years, with this rehabilitation strategy, we will fix four million to five million tons of Co2(carbon dioxide) per year. Besides this carbon footprint, we are also, through this rehabilitation, going to see a big increase in income of farmers," he added.

In the past cocoa value chain had already been pro-poor in terms of impact because it had recorded the increase of income for two million farmers.

It is expected that under the new programme the yield per hectare will move from 450 kilos to a yield of close to 800 kilos to make a big difference of more income to farmers.

The West African country, second largest cocoa producer globally after Cote d'Ivoire, recorded more than 950,000 metric tons of cocoa production during the 2017/2018 crop year and expects to repeat that level of production during the ongoing (2018/2019) crop year as well.

"Furthermore this rehabilitation is going to create jobs. We have a lot of incremental jobs generated by the same plantation and we can create about 300,000 jobs just with this process. Because we are going to be able to move from 450 kilos per hectare to about an average of 800 kilos per hectare we can generate more value for the whole sector which is going to be about 1.5 billion dollars annually in about eight years," Bockel added.

Source : Ghananewsagency.com



COCOBOD MOVES TO REVERSE THREAT TO GHANA'S COCOA SUSTAINABILITY

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has appealed to Chiefs and land owners in the country to make farmlands easily

accessible to the youth who desire to go into cocoa farming.

Acting Deputy Executive Director in-charge of the Cocoa Health Extension Division (CHED), Dr Nii Tackie-Otoo, explained this will encourage more young people to take up cocoa farming from the aged farmers.

He indicated that things do not look so good for the cocoa sector as a result of the lack of enough farmlands for cocoa farming.

"The future of cocoa production in Ghana is bleak considering the average age of cocoa farmers. COCOBOD is, therefore, grouping the youth to take over, but the challenge is the youth don't have access to farmlands. We are therefore appealing to Chiefs and land owners to release farmlands to those who want to go into cocoa production," Dr. Tackie-Otoo pleaded.

He also expressed regrets over the level of disinterest among the youth towards cocoa farming.

Out of an estimated 800,000 households engaged in cocoa production across the country, the aged with an average age of 55 years, constitute about 70 percent of cocoa farmers in the country.

Dr Tackie-Otoo who was speaking at the 2nd Cocoa Farmers' dialogue series organised by the Ghana Agricultural and Rural Development Journalists Association (GARDJA) at Sefwi Anyinabrim, said the number of elderly farmers in the sector pose a threat to its sustainability.

He stated that COCOBOD is instituting incentive packages to entice the youth in cocoa production.

"Under the productivity enhancement programme, COCOBOD intends to irrigate cocoa farms to provide alternative and supplementary source of water. Management is also exploring the use of technology-drones in disease detection on cocoa farms", he added.

The Cocoa dialogue brought together journalists, farmers, civil society groups, government officials and agricultural experts to discuss and proffer solutions to challenges facing the cocoa sector.

President of GARDJA, Richmond Frimpong, said the trend of leaving cocoa production to the aged population is worrying.

"GARDJA has observed that, most farmers who are actively engaged in cocoa production have aged. This means that, if this trend continues, then Ghana may struggle in producing more cocoa in the next 10 to 20 years. There is therefore the need to incentivize the youth to take up cocoa farming", he said.

Source :3news.com

COCOBOD SUPPORTS SOIL FERTILITY PROJECT FOR COCOA SUSTAINABILITY



Efforts aimed at improving the cocoa sector will require the collective contribution from both government and the private sector

Dr. Emmanuel Agyemang Dwomoh, the Deputy Chief Executive In-Charge of Agronomy and Quality Control of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), indicated that COCOBOD has made huge investments in the provision of fertilizers to improve soil fertility and sustainable cocoa production in Ghana.

Dr. Agyemang Dwomoh was addressing the 2019 International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Annual Cocoa Soils Forum at Teiman-Abokobi in Accra. He emphasized that COCOBOD takes keen interest in the processes that lead to the certification of fertilizers for use by cocoa farmers.

Dr. Dwomoh underscored the fact that everything scientifically possible and environmentally acceptable should be done to safeguard the production and

sustainability of the cocoa industry in Ghana, considering the role it plays in the economy. 'Efforts aimed at improving the cocoa sector will require the collective contribution from both government and the private sector', he added.

Dr. Dwomoh emphasized that COCOBOD is committed to all programmes geared towards the success of the national effort to improve cocoa production in Ghana, urging all stakeholders to work harder to ensure the success of the cocoa soils project by activating the appropriate monitoring, evaluation and learning tools.

Coordinator for the forum, Dr. Richard Asare mentioned that 3% increase in the production of world cocoa is as a result of clearing natural vegetation. This he

said is alarming since this practice will leave forest vegetation depleted.

Mrs. Faustine Asamany, Acting Deputy Executive Director of the Seed Production Division of COCOBOD challenged the scientists to focus on developing means of getting cocoa leaves, pods and shells to decompose for use as manure to fertilize cocoa farms.

Participants were drawn from the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources, Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), Yara Ghana, Kuapa Kookoo, World Cocoa Foundation (WFC) and Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN).

Also in attendance were cocoa farmers, some researchers and other cocoa industry players.

COCOBOD URGES FARMER ASSOCIATIONS TO FORM COOPERATIVES

COCOBOD has begun a process to streamline the activities of Cocoa Farmer Associations in an effort to make them relevant in ensuring efficiency in the distribution of cocoa inputs



The Deputy Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in Charge of Operations, Dr. Emmanuel A. Opoku has urged Cocoa Farmer Associations in the country to form Cooperatives to facilitate COCOBOD's operational activities with them. He further stated that farmer cooperatives are more able to access loans from financial institutions.

Dr. Opoku gave this advice at the annual rally of the Sefwi Bekwai Youth in Cocoa Production Association (SBYCOPA) at Sefwi in the Western North Region.

'COCOBOD has begun a process to streamline the activities of Cocoa Farmer Associations in an effort to make them relevant in ensuring efficiency in the distribution of cocoa inputs', he said

Touching on the ongoing Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease Control Programme (CSSVD) in the Region, Dr. Opoku encouraged cocoa farmers to willingly give out their diseased farms to be cut and treated for increased yield.

According to him, COCOBOD and Government would continue with the subsidized fertilizer program to prevent smuggling, diversion and political influences that characterized previous free input distribution programme.

Dr. Opoku cautioned cocoa farmers against the use of weedicides stating that, continuous use of these chemicals

lead to chemical residue in cocoa, adding that as an alternative to the use of these harmful weedicides, COCOBOD would supply farmers with motorized slashers to aid weed control on their farms.

The Ag. Executive Director of the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED), Mr. Samuel Amponsah on his part, was happy that the association, which started with 2000 members a few years ago had grown to 3600 members. He assured them of his outfit's support and called on the executives to be transparent in their operations.

Mr. Amponsah further added that, Government is engaging the youth from the cocoa growing communities to support the replanting of treated farms.

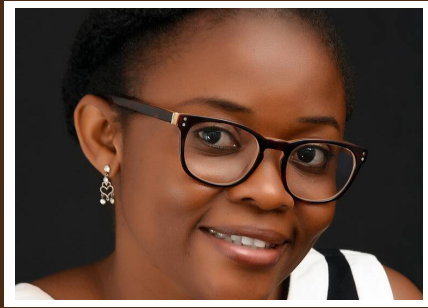
The President of SBYCOPA Mr. Rockson Ackah, on his part said, transporting cocoa seedlings from nursery sites to farms was a major problem to farmers. He appealed to the management of COCOBOD to establish nursery sites closer to farming areas for ease of transportation of the seedlings.

Mr. Ackah again appealed to COCOBOD to consider supplying chemicals and other agro inputs directly to the associations to enable them plan and supervise its usage.

Over 3100 farmers attended the rally at Sefwi Bekwai in the Western Region.



MY CHOCOLATE EXPERIENCE



By Abigail Ahorgba, Hohoe

Just when I thought I had heard all the beautiful quotes associated with that magical product, CHOCOLATE, one more has popped up again; "When the going gets tough, the tough eat chocolate".

There is no doubt that chocolate is one of the most common food types from the melon shaped cacao fruit. Alexandra Leaf, a self-described "chocolate educator" who runs a business called Chocolate Tours of New York City once said "I often call chocolate the best-known food that nobody knows anything about,"

On regular basis, we discover new things about chocolate; from its emotional attributes to the health values, its socio-economic values and most especially its effect on the general well-being of mankind.

In this edition of COCOBOD news, I want to delve into the mysterious world of chocolate in an effort to share with readers some of the deepest truths behind the product.

The Oxford dictionary defines chocolate as a food in the form of a paste or solid block made from roasted and ground cacao seeds, typically sweetened and eaten as confectionery.

History has it that the word chocolate comes from the Maya word xocolatl which means bitter water. The Maya (600 AD) and Aztec (1200 AD) civilizations both had significant impact on the journey of cocoa, the main ingredient used for the production of chocolate. While the Mayas cultivated the earliest known cocoa plantations, the Aztecs attributed the creation of the cocoa plant to their god Quetzalcoatl who, descended from heaven on a beam of a morning star carrying a cocoa tree stolen from paradise.

In both the Mayan and Aztec cultures, cocoa was the basis for a thick, cold, unsweetened drink (xocolatl) believed to be a health elixir. Since sugar was unknown to the Aztecs, different spices were used to add flavour, even hot chili peppers and corn meal were used. Aztecs believed that wisdom and power came from eating the fruit of the cocoa tree, and also that it had nourishing, fortifying, and even aphrodisiac qualities. In fact legend has it that the Aztec ruler, Montezuma consumed up to 50 cups of chocolate drinks each day. 50 cups a day?

Emperor Montezuma once welcomed the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortes with a

banquet that included drinking chocolate, having tragically mistaken him for a reincarnated deity instead of a conquering invader. Cortés, in search of gold and riches, instead found a cup of cocoa given to him by the Aztec emperor.

The Spaniards subsequently invaded the Aztecs and took the cacao seeds back home to Spain. Chocolate drink was popular in Spain before later spreading throughout Europe where new technologies and innovation changed its texture and flavour. By the 17th century, chocolate was a fashionable drink throughout Europe, believed to have nutritious, medicinal and even aphrodisiac properties. But it remained largely a privilege of the rich until the invention of the steam engine made mass production possible in the late 1700s.

When most of us hear the word chocolate, we picture a bar or something relating to that. The verb that comes to mind is probably "eat," not "drink," and the most apt adjective would seem to be "sweet." But for about 90 percent of chocolate's long history, it was strictly a beverage, and sugar didn't have anything to do with it.

The creation of the first modern chocolate bar is credited to Joseph Fry, who in 1847 discovered that he could make a mouldable chocolate paste by adding melted cacao butter back into Dutch cocoa (www.smithsonianmag.com).

Africa represents a recent entry into the chocolate fraternity. Although there were attempts at introducing cocoa into Africa much earlier, it was only in the late 19th century that production began on a large scale. The first large-scale production was in the 1880s from Portuguese plantations on the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe. The Spanish island of Fernando Po (Bioko), off the coast of Cameroon was also one of the earliest cocoa-producing colonies in Africa.

The first successful introduction of cocoa to Ghana is attributed to a Ghanaian, Tetteh Quarshie, who brought the pods back from Fernando Po in 1879. Between 1894 and 1908 a Ghanaian farmer could earn around ten times more from cocoa than palm oil. From 1886, the authorities also encouraged cocoa cultivation, providing some support including seed and training. Exports began in 1891 and within 20 years Ghana was the world's largest producer, exporting nearly 40,000 metric tonnes. Production rose further to over 200,000t in 1923, and 311,000t in 1936, a record that was unbroken until after independence. Ghana's highest ever production output was recorded in the 2010/11 cocoa season when more than 1 million metric tonnes was realized.

It is evident from historical perspective that, chocolate is one source of food that has survived many generations without losing its great value and taste. Every culture around the world has people who love and enjoy chocolate which is served in different varieties ranging from desserts, puddings, candies, cakes and many more. According to research, the chocolate industry is progressively growing with billions of United States dollars every year worldwide. This amount is exclusively attained from businesses centred on the sale and consumption of cocoa products.

Despite the fact that Cote D'Ivoire and Ghana, produce about 60% of the worlds' cocoa, per capital consumption in these countries is very low. Ghanaians consume an average of 500 grams of cocoa annually. Even though the chocolate "fever" had been in the country for a while, it was in 2007 that the Ministry of Tourism decided to give chocolate consumption a national appeal by instituting a National Chocolate Day Celebration. The celebration which comes off on the 14th of February ever year, more or less replaced the annual Valentine's Day celebrations.

The 2019 National Chocolate Day celebration was marked on the theme "My Chocolate Experience" with very interesting and educative activities. I was on my annual leave at the time and therefore decided to pass by the Golden Tree Chocolate shop at Cocoa House in Accra to get some few products for my loved ones. The spectacle I met was one thing that will take a long time to forget; a very large number of people had queued to buy cocoa products. Some had to be there virtually the whole day to get served. I could imagine the same thing happening in every cocoa shop around the country at the same time and on daily basis. Ghana could have attained a per capita consumption of 2 kilograms in no time.

Educational campaigns are on-going but many Ghanaians still have little or no idea about the numerous benefits derived from eating cocoa or chocolate. Many cultures around the world associate chocolate with other festivals such as Easter and other important events. On shelves during these festivals, we find different chocolate products ranging from moulded chocolate rabbits, eggs and coins being sold to mark the occasion. Chocolate is an acceptable gift on occasions like birthdays, parties and other social events.

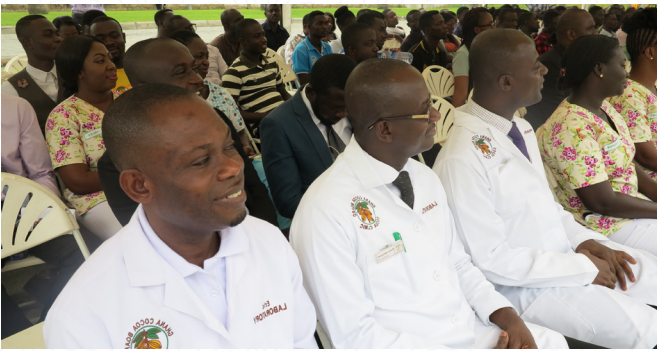
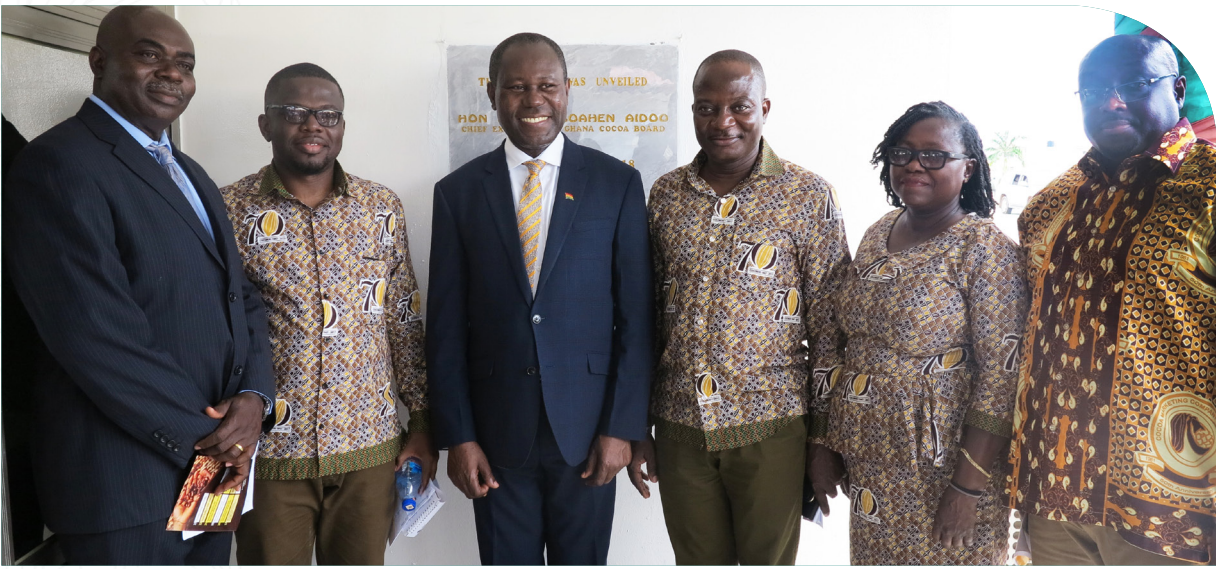
Promoting a sustainable cocoa industry basically involves interventions for sustainable production and increased consumption. I therefore wish to conclude that we all have a responsibility to play in ensuring that chocolate, and for that matter cocoa products are consumed by all Ghanaians. Every Ghanaian must work towards being a "cocoaholic". This is because being a "cocoaholic" is a daily thing and goes beyond Valentine's Day.

From the little knowledge gained about cocoa and chocolate in the past few months, I have come to agree with Chris Kilham (a medicine hunter, author and educator) that after water, cocoa is the single healthiest substance you can put in your mouth. It can easily replace a number of psychiatric drugs for mood; produces the same chemistry in the brain that occurs when we fall in love; prevents several life-threatening diseases and above all, promotes general well-being of mankind.

My favourite Chocolate Experience was.....!!!!!! What about you?

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KEJEBRIL COCOA CLINIC OFFICIALLY OPENS FOR STAFF

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo has cut tape to officially open the Kejebriil Cocoa Clinic at Takoradi in the Western South Region with a call on staff of COCOBOD to observe good hygiene.

Commissioning the facility, Hon Boahen Aidoo said the clinic will run a 12- hour service for staff and their dependants in line with World Health Organization's Sustainable Development Goal 3 which hinges on good health and well-being.

'A healthy workforce is a pre-requisite for high staff efficiency and productivity', he added.

Hon Aidoo assured the staff of plans to network all cocoa clinics across the cocoa regions for effective healthcare delivery for staff, farmers and the public and called on personnel of the clinic to deliver quality health services and maintain the facility to promote its life-span.

He said when facilities are expanded, the Clinic will be open to the general public.

COCOA HEALTH BENEFITS - A REVIEW



In the past few days there have been several enquiries on the health benefits of cocoa and dark chocolate. In the past I have done some articles on the health benefits of cocoa. I believe the special regard people have for February 14 has fuelled these enquiries. I am particularly pleased by these turn of events because it can only inure to the overall good of this country. In terms of local consumption of cocoa, Ghana has a long way to. Currently per capita consumption is about 0.52kg (520g).

Countries like Belgium, U.K., Switzerland, etc have per capita consumption levels of over 8kg. Meanwhile, Ghana is the second largest producer of cocoa and the main producer of premium quality cocoa.

In summarising the health benefits of cocoa, I sourced materials from among others, Andujar et al in a paper titled "Cocoa Polyphenols and Their Potential Benefits for Human Health". *Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity*. Volume 2012, Article ID 906252, 23 pages.

There is another paper by Magrone et al titled "Cocoa And Dark Chocolate Polyphenols: From Biology To Clinical Applications", published in *Front. Immunol.*, 09 June 2017 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fimmu.2017.00677>.

Cocoa has more phenolics and higher antioxidant capacity than green tea, black tea, or red wine.

In fact, Lee et al. [40] found that cocoa contains 611 mg/serving of gallic acid equivalents and 564 mg/serving of epicatechin equivalents.

The values for gallic acid equivalents were 1.8, 3.7, and 4.9 higher than those obtained for red wine, green tea, and black tea, respectively, while the epicatechin equivalents were 3.5, 12.0, and 16.6, respectively, for the same beverages. On a perserving basis, cocoa has higher flavonoid content and antioxidant capacity than red wine (2 times), green tea (2-3 times), and black tea (4-5 times), respectively.

Worms fed with the cocoa powder were more resistant toward the oxidative stressor hydrogen peroxide, increasing their survival rate from 36% to 53% and their lifespan in a 17% after being fed with the cocoa powder.

These effects explain the emphasis on regular consumption of cocoa to boost the immune system and also reduce risk of cancers.

The consumption of cocoa leads to the release to nitric oxide which in turn causes vasodilation and a reduction in blood pressure. This effect was first noticed in one group of islanders in the Panamas, the Kuna Indians who commonly ingest higher amounts of cocoa than mainlanders. In similar trials, the effects of consumption of solid dark chocolate on endothelial function of healthy individuals revealed a significant increase in flow mediated

dilatation (FMD) in high-flavonoid intakers of dark chocolate (46 g) when compared to low flavonoid intakers for 2 weeks.

Also in diabetics, chronic consumption of cocoa three times a day for 30 days, containing 321 mg of flavanols, led to higher increase in FMD in comparison to the low-flavanol cocoa group.

Taken together, these evidences clarify why polyphenols, even including those from cocoa and dark chocolate, are able to improve endothelial function in health and disease through the release of NO.

A series of studies have demonstrated the cocoa's platelet inhibitory effects in healthy individuals and in heart transplant patients who had consumed cocoa or dark chocolate.

It is important to remember that platelet activation (and aggregation) greatly contributes to the inflammation and thrombosis in the progression of CVD. Inhibition by polyphenol-rich source such as consumption of cocoa and dark chocolate becomes clinically relevant.

With regard to lipids, cocoa butter contains both monounsaturated and saturated fatty acids (FAs). Oleic acid is the major monounsaturated FA that is present in similar amounts to those contained in the olive oil. Conversely, palmitic and stearic acids represent the main saturated FAs. However, stearic acid has been found to

be anti-atherogenic, also accounting for one-third of the lipids contained in cocoa butter.

Fibers are present in cocoa beans, and their consumption has been shown to improve the low density lipoprotein (LDL): high density lipoprotein (HDL) ratio, also reducing risk of type 2 diabetes.

Among minerals, magnesium, copper, potassium, and iron are present in cocoa and chocolate in significant amounts. Magnesium, copper, and potassium exert a cardio protective role, while iron, mainly present in dark chocolate, contributes to the 25% of the U.S. recommended dietary allowance for middle-aged man, thus preventing anemia outcome.

In terms of effects of cocoa on serum lipid profile, a number of studies have clearly demonstrated that consumption of cocoa leads to increase in HDL while lowering LDL. The same holds true also in the case of ingestion of high-polyphenol chocolate.

Flavonoids modulate transcription factors via protein kinase inhibition, while inducing the expression of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF).

This factor contributes to neurogenesis, synaptic growth, and neuron survival in certain learning and memory brain regions. Another mechanism is based on the generation of NO that leads to

vasodilation and increased cerebral blood flow and blood perfusion in the context of the CNS as well as of the peripheral nervous system. Such an increased blood flow is able to supply oxygen and glucose to neurons, also getting rid of waste metabolites in the brain and sensory organs while stimulating angiogenesis.

Another neurotrophic effect of cocoa flavonoids is represented by their ability to increase cerebral blood flow in healthy young subjects, as assessed by functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). This effect was observed 3 h after cocoa consumption.

Furthermore, such an increased blood flow to gray matter has been shown to account for angiogenesis as well as growth of new hippocampal neurons involved in the memory processing. In this context, evidence has been provided that increase in blood flow in the middle cerebral artery may account for protective effects in the course of dementia and stroke.

With special reference to the influence on behavior, a series of studies have demonstrated that palatable chocolate consumption is able to improve mood in a more significant manner than that performed by a non-palatable chocolate. Palatability seems to be related to the chocolate-mediated release of opioids, such as β -endorphins in the hypothalamus, thus producing an analgesic effect.

Also, cognitive function has been shown to be improved by cocoa beverages with reduction of mental fatigue.

Andújar and associates reported that administration of cocoa polyphenols mitigated symptomatology accompanied by reduction of neutrophil infiltration, NO generation, expression of COX-2 and STAT-1 and STAT-3 as well reduction of IL-1 β , IL-6, and TNF- α from peritoneal macrophages. These modifications of biomarkers were associated to improvement of colitis- a benefit in persons with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). The addition of polyphenols to enteral nutrition in patients with inflammatory bowel disease is beneficial in view of their ability to induce phase II antioxidant and detoxifying proteins, thus preventing or improving the inflammatory status.

In a human trial conducted on healthy volunteers, consumption of a high-cocoa flavanol beverage for 4 weeks, containing 494 mg flavanols, significantly increased the growth of *Lactobacillus* spp. and *Bifidobacterium* spp. in comparison to a low cocoa flavanol drink. Usually, these bacteria are able to maintain an anti-inflammatory status in the bowel suggesting that cocoa polyphenols may behave as prebiotics.

EDWARD O. AMPORFUL
CHIEF PHARMACIST
COCOA CLINIC

STAFF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TRAINED ON HEALTH BENEFITS OF COCOA

A one-day training programme has been held for staff of the Public Affairs Department of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) to equip them with facts and figures on the health and nutritional benefits of consuming cocoa.

The training programme was part of the department's annual capacity building programmes aimed at building the knowledge base of staff to enable them educate the citizenry on the reasons for consuming cocoa.

Dr. Edward Okyere Amporful, the Chief Pharmacist at the Cocoa Clinic, Accra walked the staff through the numerous health benefits of cocoa and used illustrations to further explain various scientific justifications for consuming cocoa.

Dr. Edward Amporful disclosed that, recent research findings on cocoa and its health benefits have concluded that cocoa has anti-cancer properties which reduce one's vulnerability to cancers when consumed regularly. He stated

that the presence of polyphenols in cocoa helps in controlling stress, ageing, hypertension, and also boosts general well-being.

He encouraged the staff to identify each target group and disseminate relevant messages regarding the health benefit of cocoa consumption.

All staff of the Department, including National Service Personnel benefited from the one-day training programme with a charge to be ambassadors of the consumption campaign.

DECENT PRICES FOR COCOA FARMERS IS MY PRIORITY – NEW ICCO BOSS DISCLOSES



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL COCOA ORGANIZATION (ICCO) MR. MICHEL ARRION HAS SAID HE WOULD ENSURE THAT COCOA FARMERS RECEIVE REMUNERATIVE PRICES FOR THEIR PRODUCE.

The Executive Director of the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) Mr. Michel Arrion has said he would ensure that cocoa farmers receive remunerative prices for their produce.

This, according to him, will ensure equitable distribution of revenue accrued from the cocoa trade.

'My priority is to ensure that cocoa farmers all over the world get decent prices for their produce', he stated.

Mr. Michel Arrion disclosed this when he conferred with Management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in Accra as part of his official duty tour of cocoa producing countries in Africa.

Mr. Arrion lauded Ghana for being the world's second best producer of cocoa and the strides the country is making in ensuring sustainable cocoa production.

He promised his administration's commitment to collaborate with all producing countries to chart a common agenda and strategy and advance programmes that will promote ethical practices to preserve and protect the environment and eco-system.

Mr. Arrion hinted that he would soon be outdoor a 5-Year Strategic Action Plan in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire in line with his vision to addressing the challenges

affecting the world cocoa economy. Speaking on plans to check price volatility, the ICCO Boss said there is the need to synchronize the activities of all producing countries for the collective interest of all producers and farmers, and called for cooperation.

Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, Chief Executive of COCOBOD said COCOBOD had made significant progress in sustainable cocoa production, sustainable domestic consumption, and forest preservation.

Hon Aidoo indicated his Management's commitment to work closely with the ICCO to address the continuous fall in the world cocoa price of cocoa. According to him, although farm productivity in Ghana is rising due to the combined effects

of the Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs) implemented by the Board, the cocoa farmers will soon benefit enormously to enhance their livelihoods.

'Cocoa farmers who adopted our productivity enhancement initiatives have recorded higher yields but the falling world price of cocoa is still a matter of concern,' he added.

Mr. Michel Arrion is the new Executive Director of the ICCO who replaced Dr. Jean Marc Angah and brings to the ICCO, 30 years professional experience in Africa. He is looking forward to the opportunity to use his experience and knowledge of the cocoa sector to work with various stakeholders to address the challenges facing the sector.



COCOBOD TAKES OVER 192 NEW FLATS FOR STAFF

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has taken over 16 new blocks of apartments consisting of 192 flats from Amandi Investment Limited at Cocoa Village in Tema.

The Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon. Joseph Boahen Aidoo at a ceremony to take over the apartments disclosed that, the previous management of COCOBOD signed the contract with Amandi Construction but upon assumption of office, the management was not satisfied with the terms of contract and so, decided to engage the contractor to review the terms to ensure value for money.

'I must place on record that, whilst commending the previous management

and board, originally, 192 flats were to be built here at us\$24million. When the new administration took over, we decided to review the cost of putting up facilities and in doing so we amended the project contract and were able to secure an additional block which is going to give us 16 flats". he said.

Hon Boahen Aidoo further stated that, over 200 staff of COCOBOD will benefit from the facility and charged occupant of the facility to constantly maintain the facility.

On his part, Chairman of the Board of Directors of COCOBOD, Hon. Hackman Owusu-Agyemang hinted that the Board would set up a system to receive

complaint from occupant for immediate redress. Hon Owusu-Agyemang further stated that allocation of the apartment to workers would be done in a fair and transparent manner to ensure that those who actually need the apartments are catered for.

'I am appealing to the Chief Executive to start the sharing process but be fair and transparent, so that those who are entitled to it will get it." he charged.

The Member of Parliament for the Tema West Constituency who doubles as a Member of the Board of Directors of COCOBOD, Hon. Carlos Ahenkorah also commended COCOBOD for the initiative to cater for the welfare of its staff.





GOOD DIET AND EXERCISE - KEY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MENOPAUSAL SYMPTOMS – DR. ADOMAKO

Dr. Paul Adomako Mensah, a Gynaecologist at the Cocoa Clinic, Accra has disclosed that good diet and exercise are very important in managing symptoms of menopause.

He said on the average, at aged 51 years, women produce less oestrogens which lead to the onset of menopause.

Dr. Adomako Mensah made this revelation at a reproductive health sensitization programme organized by Cocoa Marketing Company (CMC) Ladies Association at Cocoa House in Accra as part of their awareness creation on female reproductive health issues. Dr. Adomako Mensah encouraged women to adopt healthy lifestyles to improve their reproductive health status.

Explaining the types of menopause, Dr. Adomako said premature menopause sets in before women attain age 40 and further noted that surgeries resulting in the removal of the womb and ovaries create premature menopause.

'Premature menopause affects about 1% of women the world over', he disclosed.

Dr. Adomako urged the ladies to eat healthy foods, consume more cocoa, eat fruits and vegetables to stimulate the production of more oestrogens .

Speaking on some basic signs and symptoms of menopause, Dr. Adomako mentioned forgetfulness, anger, loss of interest in sexual activities and hot flushes as some signs of menopause and encouraged women to make more friends at this stage in their life to prevent depression and stress.

Ms. Dorine Amartey, the Human Resource Manager of CMC, in a brief address said it was important for CMC to be mindful of the health status of their personnel since their health directly impacts on their work performance and efficiency. Ms. Amartey urged the CMC ladies to take good care of themselves by exercising and eating right.





2018 MOST PROMISING YOUNG COCOA FARMER IN FOCUS

Mr. Paul Osei Tuffour is a 35-year old Junior High School graduate whose farm is located at Tuffourkrom in the Sankore District of the Brong Ahafo Region.

He has 35 dependants comprising his siblings and other family members. He has been a beneficiary of the numerous Farmer Business School Programmes (FBS) organized by the Cocoa Health & Extension Division (CHED) and this has obviously helped him to keep a healthy cocoa farm.

He has 20.92 hectares of hybrid cocoa farm. He owns part of the land while part is an inherited parcel of land from his late father. The farm was established between 1995 and 2005 and sources planting materials from the Sankore Cocoa Station and others. Mr. Tuffour has 6 farmhands and pays them on 'Abunu' basis.

He ensures effective weeds control, diseases and pests management,

mistletoes removal, basal chupons removal, fermentation among others and this has led to a total yield of 47,040 kg with farm productivity averaging around 2,248.56kg/ha. This production feat was among the considerations for making him the 2018 Most Promising Young Cocoa Farmer.

Mr Tuffour has two serviceable motorized spraying machines, 10 pneumatic hand sprayers of different brands, three (3) serviceable standard pruners and fifteen (15) harvesting hooks and uses Akate Master and Confidor to control insect pests on his farm. He also applies Kocide to augment the Government's blackpod control programme and testifies how Sidalco liquid fertilizer has helped him immensely to increase his farm yield.

He has a safe place where all the chemicals, equipment, tools, and machinery are kept and disposes of used-chemical containers through the recommended methods - burying

or burning. The farmer insists on his workers to put on the recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed for agro-chemical application.

Mr. Tuffour harvests his riped cocoa pods every 3 weeks and observes a 6-day fermentation process to produce quality cocoa beans. As a result of his constant participation in the FBS, Mr. Tuffour has a good book keeping system to help him track his farm proceeds and related transactions. This has helped him plough back his profits into other livelihood activities. He can currently boast of 150 local fowls, 80 ducks, 20 guinea fowls in addition to 5 acres of plantain, 5 acres of cassava, 3acres of cocoyam and 7 acres of maize farms.

Mr. Paul Osei Tuffour is socially responsible as he uses part of the proceeds from the cocoa business to construct boreholes for his community and supports the rehabilitation of some feeder roads within his catchment area.



BOOST YOUR HEALTH THROUGH REGULAR EXERCISE- DR. ESSEL

Dr. Cobby Essel, the Chief Executive of Health Essentials (HE), a non-governmental organization working on the area of healthy lifestyle has urged Ghanaians to make exercise a habit to promote their well-being.

Dr. Essel made the call during an aerobic and fitness sensitization programme organized by his outfit at the LA Palm Royal Beach Hotel in Accra to drum home the importance of exercise to the body, as well as, create awareness on the need to consume cocoa regularly.

'We have only one life to live and we must maintain it properly through exercise and good nutrition and regular intake of cocoa', he added.

Addressing the participants shortly

after the aerobic session, Mr. Benjamin Larweh, a Principal Public Affairs Officer at the Ghana Cocoa Board encouraged the participants to cultivate the habit of consuming cocoa in view of its nutritional and health benefits.

Mr. Larweh emphasized that the consumption of unsweetened cocoa improves the cognitive acumen of consumers, provides the most powerful dietary antioxidants and minimizes discomfort and pains associated with menstrual periods, and called on the citizenry to consume more cocoa.

'It also has aphrodisiac effect and prevents stroke by improving blood circulation among others', he added.

The Programme was attended by 18 companies who mounted exhibitions on a wide range of health-related products.





12 Provides energy and vitality

13 Boosts fertility in both sexes.

14 Inhibits dangerous clot formation within blood vessels.

Improves memory and general brain functions.

18

15 Affords anti-cancer and cancer-prevention properties.

Promotes nourishment/health of brain cells.

19

16 Promotes cleansing and detoxification of the body.

Supplies many essential dietary minerals.

20

17 Minimizes worrisome changes that accompany menopause

Offers healthy levels of dietary fiber.

21

An initiative of NCPCC-COCOBOD
Endorsed by Prof. F.K. Addai
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*over
70 years*

**PROVIDING
PREMIUM QUALITY
COCOA**

Cocoa from Ghana enjoys high premium on world commodities

From beverages to skin care, Ghana's cocoa has become the world's favourite ingredient for most cocoa based products, especially chocolate