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COCOA TRACEABILITY SYSTEM - A MODEL FOR DECENT FARMER INCOME

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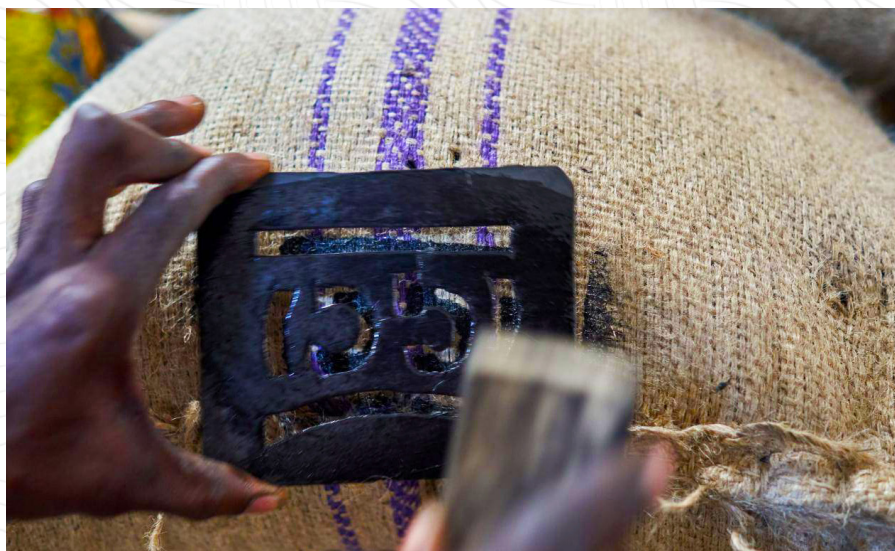
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COCOA TRACEABILITY SYSTEM - A MODEL FOR DECENT FARMER INCOME



technology, financial resources, information, and services.

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), since its inception in the year 1947 as a regulator of the cocoa sector, has consciously worked towards having a credible and comprehensive traceability system for cocoa farmers across all seven cocoa regions to facilitate the sale of cocoa on the international market.

The structure of Ghana's internal marketing system makes it possible to trace every bag of cocoa to a district, month graded with grader details, and the quality of Ghana's cocoa beans is partly attributable to the inbuilt traceability in the supply chain.

The Middlemen or License Buying Company's (LBCs) in Ghana's cocoa supply chain have implemented traceability for reasons of marketing and supply chain management. According to COCOBOD's 42nd Annual Report and Financial Statement (2011), cocoa traceability initiatives started in 2007 and have steadily grown.

This system imposes responsibility on the grader to enforce all quality assurance standards and compliance with the European Union regulation on the traceability of the cocoa beans traded on the international market.

This compliance attracts additional funds to the farmers, which COCOBOD uses to build some social infrastructure and other amenities in their respective communities for improved and better farmer living conditions.

So far, Ghana among other cocoa producing countries, is reputed to have the best traceability system that can trace all cocoa, including conventional cocoa, from the farmer through to the Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) to the final consumer.

Coulombe and Wodon (2007) indicate that the performance of Ghana's cocoa supply system has contributed to poverty

The subject of traceability has been at the center of discussions within the international food policy community and among academics in recent years as a tool for achieving transparency in food chains (Trautman et al., 2008).

As a result, there is an increasing focus on how innovations in traceability can assist the food industry to understand and address concerns relating to sustainability. Today, traceability is emerging as an evolving set of concepts and tools with the potential to inform, support and enable the actions of the many participants in the food supply chain, from producer to consumer.

In the cocoa sector, traceability has remained a topmost issue discussed among stakeholders who, despite efforts towards joint definitions such as the ISO-CEN process, maintain that there is the need for comprehensive concepts and agreed upon definitions of traceability terms.

However, the prominence of traceability systems in cocoa value chain is underpinned by the changing nature of consumer values and the transparency demands of today's dynamic business environments (Hofstede, 2003). The concept continues to evolve both in

theory and in practice and has resulted in variations in definitions and perceptions (Trautman et al., 2008).

According to the ISO protocol for food, traceability is the ability to trace and understand the origin of materials, the processing history, and the distribution location of the product after delivery (ISO, 2007). The European Union Food Law (178/2002) position is that traceability is central to the governance of supply chain and food law reforms.

Recently, the impact of cocoa traceability systems on farmers' income, and how implementing such systems can maximize positive outcomes for cocoa farmers have become topical issues within the cocoa industry.

TRACEABILITY SYSTEM IN GHANA

According to recent data from Ghana Cocoa Board's Cocoa Management System, the cocoa sector employs about 800,000 smallholder farmers. Gockowski et al., (2010) estimate that cocoa provides a livelihood for some 6.3 million people in Ghana who live directly and indirectly on cocoa.

The sector is organized into identifiable groups, comprising public institutions, private sector firms, farmers, individuals,

reduction within the country and helped to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

However, there is growing international concern over the sustainability of the cocoa sector in Ghana.

COCOA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS) - A TOOL FOR CREDIBLE TRACEABILITY SYSTEM

In 2019, the Management of COCOBOD launched the Cocoa Management System, a database for credible records on cocoa farmers in the country. The system collects information including bio data of cocoa farmers and their households, farm sizes, and all transactions by farmers among others. The CMS platform is designed to help improve the quality of cocoa produced, transparency in transactions along the value chain, as well as, trace every cocoa produced.

The Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Operations, Dr. Emmanuel A. Opoku in an interview disclosed that COCOBOD has so far measured 1,239,169 farms with a total of 1380,566 hectares belonging to 761,753 farmers across all seven(7) cocoa regions. He said the CMS has embedded, in it, a Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS) that will ensure that all of Ghana's cocoa beans are traceable from the port to the plot of land on which they were produced. (E.A Opoku, 2022).

In terms of benefits, the CMS will revolutionize cocoa farming in Ghana to make it more attractive to the financial sector and inputs suppliers. The effort would also promote financial inclusion, the emergence of crop insurance, and the design and implementation of an input credit system in Ghana's cocoa sector.

Following the successful implementation and adoption of credible and comprehensive database on cocoa farmers in the country, COCOBOD has made significant headway to curb some impediments facing the industry such as the smuggling of cocoa to the shores of other countries, which has contributed significantly to Ghana recording low cocoa production.

In November 2017, a partnership between the Government of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire on one side, and a group of 35 companies signed a public-private partnership aiming at ending deforestation in forest areas. In addition, a similar framework to achieve Deforestation-free Cocoa was signed in Cameroon in January 2021 by the government of Ghana, companies, farmer organizations and NGOs, to ensure the traceability of 100% of the cocoa supply from farm gate, warehouse and to the port of exit by the end of 2025.

As the EU regulation has been passed to enforce strict traceability systems in all cocoa growing countries to eradicate Child Labour, Deforestation among others, COCOBOD in collaboration with GIZ-SCISP will commence a pilot Ghana Cocoa Traceability System(GCTS) in Assin Fosu in the month of September 2023. The pilot exercise is expected to help in increasing accountability and sustainability of the cocoa sector from the farm gate to the first purchase point.

By providing transparency and accountability in the cocoa supply chain, traceability systems can create an enabling environment that promotes fair compensation, incentivizes sustainable practices, and opens doors to better market opportunities for cocoa farmers. The system can act as a model for decent farmer income in the following ways:

1. Fair Compensation: Traceability systems allow cocoa buyers and chocolate companies to identify the origin of cocoa beans and establish direct relationships with farmers. This transparency helps ensure that farmers receive fair compensation for their produce, as it becomes more challenging for intermediaries to exploit them or suppress prices.

2. Premium Prices: Through traceability, farmers can produce cocoa that meets specific quality and sustainability standards. This can lead to recognition for Cocoa produced in Ghana, giving COCOBOD a foothold to bargain for premium prices in the market for farmers, providing them with an additional income boost.

3. Market Access: Participating in traceability programs often grants farmers access to markets that prioritize ethical and sustainable sourcing. These markets are willing to pay a premium for traceable cocoa, giving farmers the opportunity to tap into more lucrative market channels.

4. Incentive for Quality and Sustainability: Traceability systems encourage cocoa farmers to adopt sustainable and environmentally friendly farming practices. As a result, they can improve the quality of their cocoa and attract higher prices, further enhancing their income.

5. Strengthening Farmer Resilience: Decent farmer income is not solely about immediate earnings but also about the resilience of their livelihoods. By participating in traceability systems and adhering to sustainable practices, farmers can build more robust and sustainable businesses, mitigating

the impact of market fluctuations and external shocks.

6. Technical Assistance and Training: COCOBOD will be able to provide a more informed technical assistance and training programs to support farmers in improving their agricultural practices. These programs can help increase yields, reduce production costs, and enhance overall productivity, which can positively impact farmers' income.

7. Empowerment and Agency: Being part of a traceability system empowers farmers by giving them more control over their products and a voice in the supply chain. This empowerment can lead to better negotiating power and the ability to make decisions that positively affect their income.

8. Recognition of Sustainable Efforts: Traceability systems often provide certification for sustainably produced cocoa. This recognition not only attracts premium prices but also enhances the reputation of farmers, making them partners that are more desirable for potential buyers and investors.

It is important to acknowledge that implementing an effective Cocoa Traceability System in Ghana requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including governments, companies, NGOs, and farmers themselves. By addressing the challenges and barriers that farmers may face, the system can act as a model for fostering decent income and sustainable livelihoods for cocoa farmers, serving as a blueprint for other agricultural sectors to follow suit.

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GHANA IS COMMITTED TO THE AFRICAN COCOA EXCHANGE - BRYAN ACHEAMPONG

The Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hon Bryan Acheampong says Ghana would provide every necessary support for the proposed commodities exchange for Cocoa trade in Africa. According to him, the initiative is a critical element for modernizing the cocoa production value chain to create value towards the eradication of poverty among cocoa farmers and industry stakeholders.

The minister was speaking at the opening of a two-day workshop on a Feasibility Study on African Cocoa Exchange (AfCX), organized by the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) with support from the Cote D'ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative in Accra.

Over the two days, a team of experts from Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Cameroon, discussed and evaluated the report from phase 1 of the feasibility study of an African Cocoa Commodities market, the outcome of which is expected to be the blueprint for the AfCX. Once established, the AfCX will provide a single platform for buying and selling cocoa in Africa.

According to Hon. Acheampong an African Cocoa Exchange ties into the

government's agenda to ensure a decent living income for cocoa farmers, and made a strong case for the establishment of its office in Ghana, saying policies and infrastructure make the country the preferred destination for its operation in Africa.

Highlighting some of the interventions by the Ghana government, Hon. Bryan Acheampong said some of the key priorities for the sector have been to tackle farmer poverty and protect the environment.

"We are leaving no stone unturned in the pursuit of a modernized agriculture sector – one that provides optimal benefits to farmers, sustains profitable and integrated value chains, as well as, promotes environmental resilience and social inclusion."

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board, Hon. Joseph Boahen Aidoo underscored some of the expected outcomes from the workshop to enhance the African Cocoa Exchange agenda. "A viable African Cocoa Exchange must address the key issues of prices, quality control, fair trade and sustainability; promote exports,

agro-industrialization, market access for both beans and processed products, and access to finance for the cocoa sector," he said.

Hon Aidoo reminded the stakeholders that in the design of the three key components of a commodity exchange; spots, derivatives and trade finance, the guiding principle must take into consideration, the peculiar case of Africa regarding production and consumption levels.

This is against the backdrop of Africa consuming barely 10% of the world's processed cocoa while being responsible for the production of about 75% of global cocoa beans production.

Executive Director of ICCO, Michel Arrion said ICCO is committed to ensuring decent income for farmers, hence the decision to establish an African Cocoa Exchange.

He affirmed the ICCO's belief that an African Cocoa Exchange will revolutionize the dynamics of the cocoa trade, leading to the achievement of better pricing for farmers.



CGCI LAYS STRONGER FOUNDATION FOR BETTER COCOA PRICES - AGRIC MINISTER

The Minister for Food and Agriculture (MOFA) Hon. Bryan Acheampong has lauded the joint effort of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana towards building a stronger foundation for better and decent cocoa prices for farmers in the two countries. This, according to him, has helped to secure the much-anticipated improvement in the well-being of cocoa farmers.

Hon. Bryan Acheampong was addressing the 4th High-Level Meeting of the Cote d'Ivoire-Ghana Cocoa Initiative (CGCI) in Accra, Ghana. The meeting primarily discussed measures both countries have taken over the last few years to secure stability in the world prices of cocoa and also dialogue on the initiative's future action for the Economic Pact.

According to the Agric Minister, it is imperative for the Initiative to continue in its determination to improve the livelihood of cocoa farmers through remunerative prices, promote and defend the two country's common interest in the international cocoa market, enhance scientific and technical knowledge, harmonize production and marketing policies, increase processing capabilities and encourage domestic

and regional cocoa consumption and utilization.

He bemoaned that, "the years of effort by both countries to tackle these challenges have failed, even though collectively we supply 60 percent of the world cocoa production, our farmers are smashed with international trading policies, but as we joined forces to tackle these challenges we are making headway".

The Agric Minister further stated that the cooperation between the two countries has been built around a uniform framework that focuses on three (3) key areas i.e. economic, research, and governance of the secretariat.

"Within the economic realm, our focus lies on attaining higher international cocoa prices, addressing marketing challenges, enhancing farmer incomes, combating smuggling, and boosting processing and domestic consumption", he said.

According to him, the importance of research, production, extension services, climate change, social issues in sustaining cocoa production and

the existence of the Secretariat in achieving its primary goal of higher and sustainable international cocoa prices for our countries should be prioritized as the accord advances in its focus.

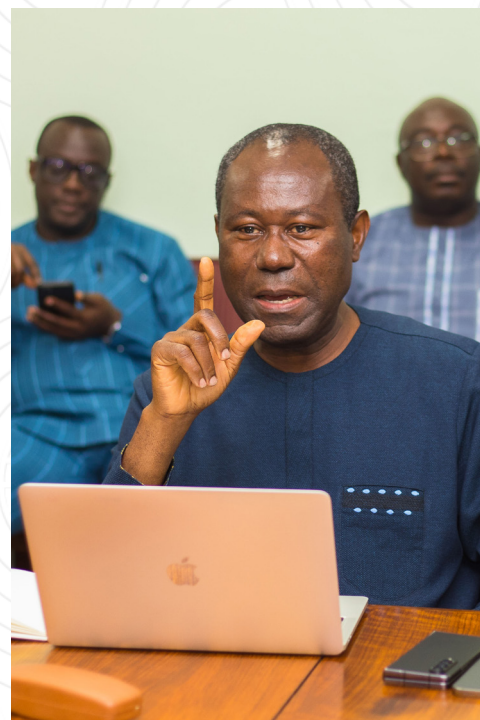
"I am optimistic about the future of our cocoa sector; in both countries, it is my wish that we remain committed to finding solutions to the obstacles for a sustained industry", he added.

He further urged all stakeholders along the value chain to rally their support behind the secretariate to champion this important initiative to make it attractive to other producing countries.

"The secretariat will play a key role in consolidating the gains attained through the Living Income Differential (LID), monitoring compliance and advancing the position of our beloved countries on the international stage, therefore, there is the need for it to be fully equipped with more competent staff and adequate logistics", he concluded.

In attendance were some top officials of Le Conseil du Café Cacao, Ghana Cocoa Board, representatives of Agricultural ministry of both countries.

COCOBOD RESUMES FERTILISER, INPUTS SUPPLY TO BORDER DISTRICTS



The management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has resumed the supply of government subsidized fertilizers, agro-inputs, and other support services to cocoa farmers in cocoa districts along Ghana's borders.

The resumption of supplies effectively reverses an earlier suspension of services to those areas as part of measures taken in response to an investigative report which exposed the districts as conduits for the huge tonnes of cocoa beans which are smuggled out of Ghana to neighbouring Togo and Cote d'Ivoire.

The Chief Executive, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo announced this during a meeting with representatives of Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, and other stakeholders at Cocoa House in Accra.

According to Hon Boahen Aidoo, smuggling has a dire impact on the country, hence the need for all stakeholders to lend their support in fighting the menace.

He however pointed out that notwithstanding the lifting of the suspension, COCOBOD would continue to critically monitor the situation and implement stringent measures to safeguard the cocoa industry.

According to him, the numerous interventions being offered to cocoa farmers in Ghana, would not yield the required benefits if the country continues to lose its produce through the actions of a few greedy Ghanaians and foreigners.

'Even though the situation cannot be blamed entirely on farmers, there is no justification for COCOBOD to continue to invest heavily in the provision of inputs and fertilizers at highly subsidized rates if smuggling persists', he said.

The COCOBOD Chief said that the activities of the smugglers is affecting the volume of cocoa arriving at Ghana's ports, compared to what was recorded within the same period during the 2021/2022 Crop Season.

"After the first quarter, we observed that the number of beans arriving at the ports started dropping. They were averaging 35,000 tones weekly, but it has now declined", he lamented.

He clarified that while Ghana's producer price is lower than the prices in neighbouring countries like Togo and Côte d'Ivoire, management does not consider smuggling as a viable solution.

On the way forward, the stakeholders admitted that though farmers cannot police the smugglers, what management requires from them is to report Purchasing Clerks, District Officers and Licensed Buying Companies who are secretly involved in the smuggling syndicate.

The meeting also concluded with a call on Civil Society Organizations to continue to educate and sensitize farmers on the negative impacts of selling beans to smugglers and instead, assist COCOBOD and the security agencies to foil acts of smuggling.

MINISTER COMMENDS COCOBOD'S OPERATIONAL MODEL

The Minister for Public Enterprises, Hon Joseph Cudjoe has commended the Board and Management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) for implementing sustainable operational practices that ensure efficiency and profitability of the cocoa sector which are worth emulating by other public enterprises in Ghana.

Hon. Cudjoe, accompanied by a delegation from his outfit paid a working visit to the management of the COCOBOD during which he said it was imperative for the ministry to apprise itself with the operations and performance of public enterprises in the wake of the current economic downturn which has affected many state organs.

He explained that efficient performance of state enterprises is paramount in the President's vision of building a viable and resilient economy where the contribution of public enterprises cannot be undermined.

The Minister lauded the role of COCOBOD, as a key state agency in the socio-economic development of the nation as it contributes about 2 percent of Ghana's GDP. He said that since Ghana's independence, over 1000 state enterprises which were set up, have reportedly failed due to poor corporate governance systems.

'It is for this reason that, the Ministry has embarked on a monitoring exercise to interact with state enterprises to understand and appreciate their operational strategies, in order to advocate better for Government support, especially for a state enterprise in good standing like COCOBOD', he disclosed.

Touching on a presentation of the operational strategy and modules implemented by the Board since 2017, the Hon. Minister was pleased with the socio-economic and environmental interventions such as the Cocoa Management System (CMS), Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs), Cocoa Farmers Pension Scheme, Living Income



Differential (LID) and Cocoa Roads projects which the Board had pursued to complement Government's infrastructural development agenda.

The Minister commended Management for spearheading these interventions as they have gone a long way to support the Government's efforts at strengthening the economy.

'I must say that I am pleased with the operational model put in place to tackle the challenges of compliance to international regulations on deforestation, child labour and illegal mining, alongside the fluctuation of international market prices on cocoa pricing. So far, these measures have made COCOBOD stand afloat to withstand the myriad of global challenges affecting cocoa trade", he said.

These organizational strategies are commendable and worthy of being replicated by other state enterprises involved in different food chains', he emphasized.

He charged Management to deal with its indebtedness by considering long term loan facilities and engage the Ministry regularly to fashion out policies geared towards improving the Board's solvency to safeguard its image in Ghana's public enterprises space.

The Chief Executive of COCOBOD, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo was appreciative of the Minister's directive in prioritizing COCOBOD during its performance monitoring exercise and appealed to him to help magnify the contributions of the Board to Government's policy

think-tanks to solicit adequate Government support its mandate.

In the light of this interaction, Hon. Boahen Aidoo made a passionate appeal to the Minister to spearhead policy designs aimed at providing tax exemptions, on the importation of inputs to state enterprises operating in the agricultural value chain.

He noted that the recent removal of tax incentives by Government has led to skyrocketing operational costs borne by state agencies and increase in the general cost of living in the country, alongside other socio-economic ramifications.

'Public enterprises would need the support and collaboration of Government and its related agencies to weather the challenges and remain competitive. In the case of COCOBOD, we need interventions in policy design in the area of import duties and policies to regulate environmental activities', he said.

The COCOBOD boss added that, with adequate support from Government in these domains, the burden of high producer prices would be reduced thereby encouraging producers to expand their ventures to sustain the sector.

Speaking on smuggling and illegal mining which are major industry challenges, he called for tighter regulations and sanctions against offenders, adding that these two factors account for the losses registered by the sector in recent times.

He asserted that a review and design of practical policies and regulations by the relevant state legislators in these sectors will help sanitize the Public Enterprises space in Ghana, to make them competitive and viable.

Hon. Aidoo assured the Minister of the Board's commitment to collaborate with his outfit and relevant stakeholders to address the existing challenges in the cocoa sector to ensure sustainable cocoa production.



COCOBOD ON COURSE TO ACHIEVE GOALS OF GHANA COCOA TRACEABILITY SYSTEM (GCTS)



Dr. Emmanuel Opoku, Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Operations at Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), has given the assurance that Ghana would continue to sell cocoa to the European Union considering the significant progress made in efforts to achieve the goals of the Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS).

He, therefore, urged all stakeholders to come on board and play their respective roles in ensuring that Ghana becomes the leading producer of traceable cocoa.

Dr. Opoku said these at a COCOBOD/EU/GIZ-SCISP Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS) Stakeholder Workshop held at Elmina in the Central Region.

According to him, as part of modalities to test Ghana's readiness to meet the EU regulations passed into law on 29th May 2023, COCOBOD is collaborating with GIZ to pilot the GCTS in the Assin-Fosu Cocoa District to demonstrate the functionality of the system.

This workshop, therefore, offered the platform to inform relevant stakeholders including, farmers, purchasing clerks and Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) in Assin-Fosu, of their roles in, and contributions to a full roll-out of the GCTS.

In 2019, COCOBOD began the development of a Cocoa Management System (CMS), a seamless system that captures the bio-data of all cocoa farmers, household information, and the shapefiles of individual cultivated cocoa areas.

Dr. Opoku disclosed that COCOBOD had

so far measured 1,239,169 farms with a total of 1380,566 hectares belonging to 761,753 farmers. He said the CMS has embedded, in it, a Ghana Cocoa Traceability System (GCTS) that will ensure that all of Ghana's cocoa beans are traceable from the port to the plot of land on which they were produced.

"The operationalization of the GCTS will help to address the phenomenon of cocoa-driven deforestation, prevent farmers from producing cocoa from protected forests, and improve the visibility of the cocoa supply chain to ensure that the consumer is assured of the best production practices", he added.

In terms of benefits, Dr Opoku touted the benefits of the of the system indicating the CMS implementation would revolutionize cocoa farming in Ghana and make it attractive to the financial sector and input suppliers. The effort would also promote financial inclusion, the emergence of crop insurance, and the design and implementation of an input credit system in Ghana's cocoa sector.

"CMS will make it possible to collect farm data in real-time, with a spatial dimension allowing for productivity and yield output calculations in comparison to seasonal forecast yields.

This makes it possible to detect sourcing from protected areas and national parks. If, throughout a season, a farmer located outside a deforestation area is selling at a rate that will go far beyond his forecasted yield output, then much of the cocoa being sold may be coming from unauthorized areas (Forest

Reserved/Parks etc..). Accordingly, this can be flagged and alerted, and remediation measures can be put into place," he added.

Dr. Opoku urged the Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) to ensure that their Purchasing Clerks (PCs) register on the CMS to bring the project to a successful conclusion.

Madam Claudia Maier, Country Coordinator for the GIZ Sustainable Cocoa Initiative Support Programme (SCISP) expressed her outfit's willingness to provide expertise and financial support to ensure the success of the implementation of the traceability system. She said not only Ghana, but the entire cocoa world was looking forward to this system adding that the piloting of the system at Assin Fosu in the Central Region will start in September 2023.

Central Regional Chief Farmer, Nana Kwasi Ofori, said data is paramount for effective planning and that the introduction of the CMS would help COCOBOD to work with accurate data and improve efficiency in its operations. He pledged the support of all farmers in making the process a success.

Mrs. Mary Yaa Allotey, Central Regional Administrator of COCOBOD, said the traceability system would promote quality control, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. She was therefore hopeful that the workshop would make participants better equipped and help them to contribute meaningfully to all the interventions being implemented by COCOBOD for a more improved cocoa sector.

GALAMSEY ROBS YOU OF YOUR PENSIONS

The Head of Public Affairs at COCOBOD, Mr. Stephen Fiifi Boafo, has reiterated the devastating socioeconomic consequences that illegal mining (galamsey) is having on the future livelihoods of cocoa farmers in the country. According to him, illegal miners are robbing farmers of their lifetime earnings, as well as a legacies that could bequeath to their generations.

He said though perpetrators of illegal mining activities make juicy promises to cocoa farmers, luring them to give away their cocoa farms, these innocent farmers have ended up being in an impoverished situation with nothing to depend on upon retirement. The Head of Public Affairs therefore appealed to cocoa farmers to resist any attempt by illegal miners to convince them to sell off their lands which eventually deprives them of their lifetime investments.

Mr. Boafo made the observation while addressing a ceremony organized by management of Goldfields Ghana Limited at Damang to hand over agro-inputs to some beneficiary cocoa farmers in their catchment communities. Mr. Boafo reminded farmers about the several measures government, in collaboration with Ghana Cocoa Board and the National Pension Regulatory Authority (NPRA) is implementing to better the lives of cocoa farmers, especially in retirement.

“The introduction of the Cocoa Farmers Pension Scheme is meant to secure your future and provide you with a decent means of livelihood when you retire. As with other pension schemes, your monthly earnings will depend on your contributions which means that if you sell off your cocoa farms for mining activities, you are denying yourself and future generations the opportunity to earn decent livelihoods”, he added.

He noted that apart from the introduction of the Pension Scheme, COCOBOD is also implementing several interventions such as cocoa mass spraying, cocoa rehabilitation, pruning, hand pollination and highly subsidized

fertilizers to support farmers. These, according to him, come at huge cost to Government, hence the need to safeguard the future of the cocoa industry by eradicating illegal mining.

Mr. Fiifi Boafo therefore expressed joy at the gesture extended to cocoa farmers by Goldfields Ghana Limited under their Cocoa Farmers Foundation Support Programme, adding that it is worth emulating by other mining companies. He noted that over the years both mining and cocoa production had co-existed peacefully until the upsurge of activities of illegal mining.

Mr. Fiifi Boafo was of the view that the example of Goldfields Ghana Limited is an attestation that responsible mining can go a long way to help improve our ecosystem and support other environmental activities, including farming.

“Let me take this opportunity to commend the management of Goldfields Ghana Limited for this kind gesture to our cocoa farmers. It is my hope that our beneficiary farmers will respond the same by meticulously applying these inputs on their farms in order to obtain yields”.

In all, about 240 beneficiary farmers received agro inputs under the Gold Fields Ghana Farmers Foundation Support Programme.



COCOBOD LAYS SOLID FOUNDATION FOR INVESTMENT INTO COCOA SECTOR



Gerard Manley, for their invaluable contribution to the sustenance of the operations of COCOBOD.

The Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, has stated that management of the cocoa regulatory body has laid a concrete foundation for smooth investment in cocoa farmers across the country to complement the efforts of the government.

Hon Aidoo is therefore calls on Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs), input dealers, and other stakeholders in the cocoa industry to direct some of their investment portfolios towards on-field farming activities to help achieve optimum results.

According to the CE of COCOBOD, major players in the cocoa industry can now take advantage of the robust system that has been put in place by the current regime and invest directly in the area of primary production with guaranteed maximum returns.

Hon Aidoo, made the call when a delegation from Olam Foods Ingredients (OFI) paid a courtesy call on the management of COCOBOD, said government alone could no longer continue to bear the cost of supporting farmers' productivity initiatives, hence, the need for LBCs, inputs dealers and other partners to consider directing part

of their investments into supporting production.

He said with the successful completion of the Cocoa Management System (CMS), interested investors can now have full access to comprehensive demographic data of all cocoa farmers in the country, making it easier for potential investors to target farmers based on their preferred specifications.

The COCOBOD boss further asserted that the CMS has also helped to reduce any potential risk, as data on farmers can always be accessed for easy monitoring and evaluation.

"We believe that the Cocoa Management System provides an opportunity for our partners to strengthen their holds with farmers and cooperatives; it is time for you to scale up your support to cocoa farmers by directly investing in some of the interventions we have introduced to hence productivity and here I am referring to interventions such as the cocoa rehabilitation", he emphasized.

The COCOBOD Chief Executive has meanwhile commended the management of Olam Foods Ingredients and its Chief Sustainability Officer, Mr.

Hon Aidoo recounted with sweet memories the successful rollout of the Living Income Differential (LID) and the surprising intervention COCOBOD received from OFI, under the leadership of Mr. Gerard Manley.

"Let me state particularly our heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Manley and OFI for your support all these years; I recall during the early stages of the rollout of the LID and its associated marketing uncertainties, OFI was our first international trading partner that purchased 50,000 metric tons of our cocoa under the LID. This was a major breakthrough for us all thanks to Gerry and his team," Hon Boahen noted.

Responding to the appeal, Mr. Gerard Manley reiterated the commitment of OFI to the development of Ghana's cocoa industry.

While commending the management of COCOBOD for effective leadership, Mr. Manley said OFI would continue to partner with COCOBOD in the implementation of globally acceptable community and human-centered programmes in cocoa growing areas in order to build the capacity of cocoa farmers and improve their living conditions.

COCOBOD, GSA FIRM-UP DRAFT POLICY ON NATIONAL STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Management of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) have met to finalize the policy document on the National Standards Implementation Guide as a launch pad for the adoption of the African Regional Standard 1000 (ARS1000).

Speaking at a workshop organized by GSA at Standard Heights in Accra, the Director General of the GSA, Prof. Alex Dodoo commended stakeholders from civil society organisations, cocoa farmers, Licensed Buying Companies (LBCs) and the Forestry Commission for showing commitment to collaborate and streamline standard guidelines for the utilization of natural resources to achieve value addition.

Prof. Dodoo assured participants that the guidelines have been simplified for easy understanding and application by service providers and urged stakeholders to maintain close collaboration with the respective regulatory bodies for technical backstopping as a means to ensure value for money.

'The objective of adopting these approved standard guidelines is to achieve the overall goal of meeting standard requirements for sustainable cocoa production and ensure that farmers indeed get their reward for the services provided' he said.

He commended COCOBOD for funding the initiative and working in collaboration to ensure the finalization of the draft which he believes would equip stakeholders with forehand knowledge and readiness to adopt the ARS1000.

Speaking on behalf of the Chief Executive of COCOBOD, the Public Affairs Director, Mr Stephen Boafo indicated that there has been increased global appeal to pursue agricultural development, in a sustainable manner under guided principles, without compromising the environment for future generations, of which the cocoa economy cannot be spared.

'It is in response to this clarion call that the Government Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire initiated the development of the ARS, to promote and maintain a framework for the production of sustainable cocoa under the principles of continuous improvement. These standards address the unique challenges of African cocoa farmers as well as achieves the goal of economic, social, environmentally sustainable and traceable cocoa', he explained.

Mr. Boafo added that the need to satisfy these global requirement, led to the development of African Standards under the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) for the African cocoa industry, which were approved

by members of the ARSO council in 2021. This action resulted in the need for standards to reflect the national context of respective countries and eventual need for the development of a National Implementation Guide tailor made for Ghana on the ARS1000 series of standards.

Mr. Boafo assured that, COCOBOD is committed towards the implementation of the ARS and urged all stakeholders and partners to support and ensure its smooth implementation, as the ARS will enable Ghana's cocoa to meet the requirements of the European Union's regulation on, deforestation free cocoa and any other market requirements that may arise in the near future.

He again called on all stakeholders to keep the farmer at the center of the deliberations and make valuable contributions towards ensuring that the ARS achieve its intended objective of enhancing the sustainability of Ghana's cocoa value chain.

Participants and stakeholders of the workshop were given an overview of the implementation guide specifically on the clauses centered on requirements for sustainable cocoa management, requirements for cocoa quality and traceability and cocoa certification schemes.



Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in conjunction with Maddison Pine, has held the first edition of its Innovation Marketplace at Cocoa House, Accra to interact and generate innovative ideas, from staff of the Board, its subsidiaries and divisions to build an agile cocoa sector.

The Innovation Marketplace, which was held under the theme 'Realizing the Real Potential of Enterprise-wide Innovation', also seeks to achieve efficiency in operations and promote high performance and productivity.

It also gave selected representatives from the subsidiaries and divisions the opportunity to present their innovative concepts to the Board.

Welcoming staff of the Board to the event, the Deputy Director of Public Affairs, Mr. Fiifi Bofo, expressed admiration at the interest by staff towards the marketplace albeit the first edition. He explained that COCOBOD is on a transformational agenda and as part of that trajectory, the Board seeks to implement policies using the bottom-up approach by encouraging staff to come up with proposals which provide innovative solutions to organizational issues.

Mr. Francis Gyamfi Ocran, the Director of Human Resource, in his address, stated that the project started as a result of recommendations made by the World Bank, to COCOBOD, to work on its 'corporate governance system and cultural and behaviour change'.

According to him, management of COCOBOD engaged the services of Maddison Pine, a UK-based firm which offers consultation services in corporate governance and business transformation, to assist in implementing the World Bank's recommendations.

'Since coming on board, Maddison Pine has sensitized staff across the regions to bring all on board and this event ties into the mandate of the consultant', he indicated.

He added that the innovation Marketplace is the transformation project expected to be run in phases by Maddison Pine to harvest ideas to promote innovation. Mr Gyamfi Ocran reiterated the bottom-up approach of the project saying 'it is an opportunity for staff who ordinarily may not

COCOBOD HOLDS FIRST INNOVATION MARKETPLACE



have the opportunity to take part in decision-making affecting the industry to do so. This platform is going to afford members of staff with ideas to contribute..."

Dr. Olu Ajayi, the CEO of Maddison Pine, described the innovation marketplace as employee-driven to enhance 'employee engagement and commitment as we build a better COCOBOD'. She added that the project 'is essentially about the democratization of transformation, giving everyone an opportunity to be a co-creator and to be a change champion, giving the workforce the capacity and the voice to become innovators'. She concluded that, 'The COCOBOD we want is the COCOBOD we create' and encouraged staff to be change makers.

On his part, the Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board, Hon Joseph Boahen Aidoo, was optimistic about the inputs of staff and how they could help to garner ideas to support the Board's activities. 'I believe there are great ideas among staff, and this is the right time for us to market them to build a robust industry', he expressed.

Hon Boahen Aidoo emphasized creative ideas which address the teething challenges that have continued to thwart efforts at pursuing a

transformational agenda for the Board over the past six years.

Comparing COCOBOD to the human body and how each part depends on the other, he stressed the importance of every member of the COCOBOD fraternity irrespective of age, rank division or subsidiary.

'We want to go the extra mile, and this should come from you. We want more ideas from you, this time it's not to complain; this time around we want innovative ideas that can assist the industry to make the transformational progress', he said.

Mr Peter Mac Manu, Chairman of the Board of Directors COCOBOD, thanked the participants for their ideas and encouraged them to come up with more innovative ideas. He assured them of the Board's cooperation.

The innovative Marketplace will be held quarterly to harness employees' creative and innovative potential to promote an agile culture at COCOBOD.

The event had representatives from the Cocoa Health & Extension Division (CHED), Seed Production Division (SPD), Cocoa Marketing Company (CMC), Quality Control Company (QCC) and Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), presenting creative ideas and proposals to the Board.

SEED PRODUCTION DIVISION IN BRIEF FOCUS

By Edward Kojo Asante, Public Affairs

The Seed Production Division (SPD), a Division of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) was set up in January 2001 to produce and distribute hybrid cocoa seed pods to farmers following the dissolution of the erstwhile Cocoa Services Division as part of the re-organization of the Agricultural Sector to have a unified Agricultural Extension Services. Consequently, the Cocoa extension was ceded to the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES) of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA).

The Division's mandate is to multiply and distribute the best-quality planting materials in the most efficient, cost-effective and in adequate quantities to farmers across the country. Over the years, the Division has supported Ghana's cocoa sector in achieving rapid growth in cocoa production levels, placing the country as the second-largest producer of cocoa after Cote d'Ivoire and subsequently maintaining the reputation as a producer of premium cocoa across West Africa and beyond.

In view of this, the SPD forms part of the Pre-harvest sector and spearheads the raising of hybrid cocoa and coffee seedlings for farmers at its various nursery sites across the seven (7) cocoa-growing regions. The division has 39 cocoa stations out of which four (4) are coffee stations. In total, 512 nursery sites are available across the cocoa regions in the country.

The SPD has over the past 5 years evolved by adopting new models in raising cocoa seedlings for cocoa farmers in the country. The use of cocopeat, as a potting media and receptacles has replaced topsoil and polybags while the use of galvanized pipes with a concrete base to erect shed has replaced bamboo poles.

Also, the introduction of automated irrigation systems into the maintenance of Seed Gardens has reduced the stress of acquiring water and by extension, provided alternative source of water for nursery sites established at various

locations. For example, the Division, in collaboration with Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), has constructed a 15ha drip irrigation system in Seed Gardens at Bunso and 13ha at Goaso, totaling 28ha. The project seeks to improve hybrid seed pod production in these locations to support the establishment of new and treated farms.

To complement Management's efforts to increase cocoa production to over 1 million metric tonnes annually, the Division has established eight (8) new stations at Offinso, in the Ashanti Region; Akontombra, Juaboso and Sefwi Bekwai, in the Western North Region and Diaso, Huni Valley, Samreboi, Aiyinase/ Daboase, in the Western South Region to help raise more hybrid cocoa seedlings and seed pods for planting rehabilitated farms, and newly established farms, among others.

Over the past 5 years, the Division has cumulatively produced about 350 million hybrid seedlings and about 25 million hybrid seed pods, resulting in the country's significant attainment of 1.045mt in the 2020/2021 crop season breaking a 10-year record in

2010/2011. The Division's ability to deliver on its mandate has faced some challenges.

One of the challenges, inadequate water supply at various nursery sites across the country, during the dry seasons, has always slowed down the pace of work done on the field. Also, the cost of erecting permanent structures to replace bamboo poles at some of the various nursery sites thwarts efforts at rolling out the full scale of technological reforms in the Division's operations.

Due to the crucial role SPD plays in the cocoa production chain, many have hailed and described it as the "The Heartbeat" of COCOBOD's existence. Perhaps, what must be done to achieve high visibility is to communicate the work of the Division to correct some misconceptions borne out of lack of information.

The SPD is poised to reform its operations by adopting more innovative methods of executing some of its core activities to enhance the production of high-quality seedlings and hybrid seed pods while at the same time, protecting the environment.



COCOBOD AIDS FARMERS' LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THREAT OF ILLEGAL MINING ON COCOA



Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) has joined a lawsuit initiated by some cocoa farmers from Asuom, in the Kwaebirem Municipality of the Eastern Region, against a mining company they accuse of destroying farms in their area.

The farmers petitioned COCOBOD for support to stop the operations of AC Zenon, which they say has taken over large portions of land in their community and encroached on their farms, causing significant destruction.

Maxwell Kwadwo Owusu (47), Isaac Mante (39), Yaw Amponsah (61), and Emmanuel Ganyo (47), who are executives of the Asuom-Adansi Cocoa Cooperative, said they are acting as witnesses on behalf of the over 300 affected members of the association

and in the interest of the community.

They seek the court to promptly stop the expansion of AC Zenon's operations and claim compensation for the destruction of their farms.

At a media briefing to outline COCOBOD's interest in the case, Prof. Michael Kwarteng, who is in charge of COCOBOD's Anti-Galamsey Desk, said the case highlights the ongoing conflict between mining and cocoa farming in Ghana.

He stated that COCOBOD joined the lawsuit to support the farmers' efforts to protect their livelihoods and ensure environmental sustainability.

He noted that unregulated mining causes significant damage to

the environment and is detrimental to the production of good-quality cocoa.

Prof. Kwarteng bemoaned that the community has already lost over 4.5 acres of land, equivalent to more than 2000 cocoa trees. He said the mining company claims to have been given a concession to mine a 32-kilometre square area which will affect even more cocoa farms.

He revealed that discussions among the Board, Minerals Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, and Forestry Commission have led to a consensus for the enactment of laws to prevent mining companies from destroying cocoa farms. He however stressed the need for strict enforcement to protect the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and preserve their farmland.

He further noted that discussions are also ongoing for COCOBOD to be part of the mining licencing process to carry out inspections on prospective mining sites to certify that cocoa farms will not be affected.

'COCOBOD has also stepped up its effort to sensitize farmers on Galamsey and its negative effects, to prevent them from being tempted to give their farmlands to illegal miners. I believe this effort is yielding positive results', he hinted.

Maxwell Kwadwo Owusu, who is the Secretary of the Asuom-Adansi Cocoa Cooperative, expressed gratitude to COCOBOD for taking up the issue but called for more help from regulatory agencies within the mining sector to curb the menace which is currently threatening cocoa production in the country.

WOMEN IN COCOA COOPERATIVE UNION LAUNCHED

Female members of twenty-three cocoa farmer cooperatives have united to establish the Sunyani District Women Cocoa Farmers Union (SUWCOF) in their quest to become more robust in promoting their shared values and interests.

With a membership of over 1500 female farmers, the decision by the women was driven by their desire to capitalize on the numerous benefits and opportunities it presents. At a ceremony to officially launch the union, the significance of women's roles in cocoa farming was recognized, particularly, in relation to the attainment of Goal Five of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The members of the new union were as such encouraged to pursue tailor-made programmes that promote their social and economic wellbeing.

A Special Aide to the Vice President of Ghana, Hon Isaac Kwadwo, who was the Special Guest of Honour, in a solidarity message encouraged them to fully harness their potential and experiences in cocoa farming for their collective interest while urging them to adopt other additional livelihood projects to diversify their income.

“Executives of the Union must plan and invite experts to offer training on snail rearing, beekeeping, baking and other ventures to enable members to obtain backup funds to augment their regular source of income, which is farming”, he advised.

An award-winning farmer, Mrs. Martha Addai, who is also a member of the interim governing body of the Union was happy the women had mobilized themselves into a strong Union in the District and called on them to invite

more members into the group.

According to her, in Ghana, particularly in the Sunyani District, the traditional role that women were often seen providing to support their husbands on the farm had changed as women farmers are today farm owners, cultivating large acres of cocoa farms.

The Regional Manager of the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED), Mr. Ernest Owusu Ansah, promised his outfit's support to assist them cultivate cocoa professionally so that they can increase their farm yields.

There were solidarity messages from some dignitaries and officials from various stakeholders in the Sunyani Municipality which included the MCEs of Sunyani East and West, Care International, License Buying Companies (LBCs), COCOSHE and the Sunyani Traditional Council.





CRIG HOLDS ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING

The Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) has held its 2023 Annual Review Meeting at New Tafo - Akim to discuss the progress of the various research projects of the Institute. The week-long programme started on Tuesday 23rd May and ended on Friday 26th May 2023.

Presentations by Research Scientists were restricted to the existing Thrust Systems of the Institute which include, Soil and Crop Management and Crop Improvement Thrusts. Other systems are Insects and Pests Management, Pre-and Post-Harvest Quality Management and System Assessment and Analysis Thrusts.

The Deputy Chief Executive of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), in charge of Agronomy & Quality Control (A&QC), Dr. Ebenezer Owusu, expressed the Board's gratitude to CRIG and urged the Scientists to continue with the culture of quality research which has contributed largely to increased

productivity and sustainability of the industry.

Dr. Owusu was optimistic that these numerous research projects being implemented by COCOBOD, would contribute significantly to the Board's target of attaining 1 million metric tonnes of cocoa beans.

"The last time Ghana attained this feat of 1.1 million metric tonnes was the 2020/21 crop season", he added.

He emphasized the need for the Institute to re-package its by-products such as cocoa wine, cocoa jam, cashew nuts and the Ghana Dark Bar chocolate among others to make them attractive to investors.

Dr Francis Padi, the Executive Director of CRIG, expressed his gratitude to the eminent scientists and participants for making the programme a success.

He lauded the research scientists for

the good job done, urging them to work harder to do more to address farm management challenges. He further exhorted them to hold on to the Institute's pride as a centre of excellence and a formidable force for the cocoa industry.

In attendance were Rev. Edwin Afari, Executive Director of Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) and a member of CRIG Management Board, Mr. Lawrence Adutwum, Executive Director of Seed Production Division (SPD) also a Board member and Dr. Samuel Lowor, Deputy Executive Director of CRIG.

Some other key attendees included Dr. Richard Adu Acheampong, Deputy Executive Director of CRIG, Nana Charles Owusu (Board Member), Nana Paul Adjei (Board Member) and Professor Kwadwo Ofori, College of Basic and Applied Sciences, University of Ghana, Legon.

ICCO STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP IN PICTURES





PROFILE

Ghana Cocoa Board has appointed Mr. Francis Gyamfi Ocran as the Director of Human Resources.

He has been a staff of the Board since 1990 and his appointment follows the heels of the retirement of Mr. Randolph Adei as HR Director.

Mr. Gyamfi Ocran comes to the role with over three decades of industry experience and training, having worked with most of the Board's divisions and subsidiaries including QCC, CHED, Bunso Cocoa College and CRIG.

Mr. Gyamfi Ocran describes his predecessor, Mr. Randy Adei as sincere, disciplined and a man who was dedicated to his duties.

"The best thing about working with Randy was that he is honest, and he ran an open administration."

Inspired by his work ethics, Mr. Gyamfi hopes to influence change in attitude towards work, to help reduce wastage and improve efficiency. He is also passionate about rewarding hard work and promises to empower staff to deliver on the mandate of COCOBOD.

BACKGROUND AND EARLY CAREER

Mr. Gyamfi Ocran was born on 6th May 1969 at Asankragwa in the Western Region. He attended the Asankragwa Secondary School where he obtained his O' Level certificate and continued to Nsein Secondary School for his A' Level Certificate.

He was subsequently employed by COCOBOD in 1990 and worked with Produce Inspection Division (PID), now

Quality Control Company (QCC), as a Grading Officer at Dunkwa.

Eight years of dedication and diligent service earned him a Scholarship from COCOBOD to pursue a degree in Social Science at the University of Ghana. Upon completion, he was promoted to HR Officer in 2002 and later transferred to the Bunso Cocoa College.

After some years with the College, he was transferred to the Eastern Regional Office of CHED and later earned some years of experience, working with the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana.

In 2013, he was re-assigned to the Head office, Cocoa House and rose through the ranks to Deputy Director of HR until his appointment as the substantive director.

LIFE OUTSIDE WORK

Do not be surprised to see Mr. Gyamfi amongst the list of regional or national best cocoa farmers in future as he dedicates his spare time to his cocoa farm at Bunso in the Eastern region. He is also into poultry farming and says a good political discussion will always pique his interest.

He is married with two children.

A portrait of Mr. Gyamfi Ocran, a man with a shaved head and a goatee, smiling. He is wearing a red and yellow patterned shirt. The background is a dark grey gradient.

MR. GYAMFI OCRAN - HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR



MR. SAMUEL ASARE ANKAMAH - DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHED

Mr. Asare Ankamah was appointed Deputy Executive Director (Agronomy) CHED in April 2023.

He brings on board vast experiences in Cocoa Agronomy, Cocoa Certification, Agricultural Extension Services, Project Management, Integrated Pest Management, Land and Water Management among others.

His professional experience includes Country Master Trainer for Cotton System and Production in Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions, Master Trainer for Farmer

Business School (CHED) and Technical Manager for CHED in Western South. He joined COCOBOD in 2005 as a District Cocoa Officer in Jukwa with CSSVD-CU.

He has a Msc. in Agric Extension from the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Post Graduate Certificate in Agricultural Administration, a Bsc. In Agricultural Extension from UCC among other professional certifications.

Mr. Asare Ankamah is married with four kids.

DR. KWAME OWUSU-ANSAH: DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CHED (PEPs)

Dr. Kwame Owusu-Ansah is currently the Deputy Executive Director of the Cocoa Health & Extension Division (CHED) of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) in charge of the Productivity Enhancement Programmes (PEPs)/Operations.

He joined the Board in 2009 as a senior Technical Officer at Sankore in the Brong Ahafo Cocoa Region. He later headed the Western North Cocoa Region where he led a team of dynamic staff to successfully implement the National Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme with adorable accomplishments, culminating in his rise to fame in 2022.



CHED SENSITIZES FARMERS ON COCOBOD INTERVENTIONS



The Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) has sensitized cocoa farmers in the Boinso District of the Western South region to adopt the various Productivity Enhancement Programmes introduced by the Board to help boost production levels in the region.

Speaking at a farmer rally in the District, the Regional Manager, Mr. Samuel Osei said pruning of overgrown cocoa trees, hand-pollination, applying fertilizers, weeding and disease control around the farm at the appropriate times within the crop year, help boost pod production per tree and should not be taken for granted.

Mr. Samuel Osei said quite a large sum of money is invested into cocoa production annually to ensure good returns for cocoa farmers in Ghana. He therefore urged farmers who have benefited from the subsidized fertilizer programme to pay for their supplies

in time to ensure sustainability of the intervention.

While explaining the need for the farmers with diseased and over-aged farms to subscribe to the Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme, he disclosed that areas where farmers allowed for their farms to be rehabilitated by COCOBOD are now seeing great results while anticipating bumper harvests in the upcoming seasons.

At the same forum, Mr. Osei cautioned farmers against cutting down cocoa trees to plant rubber. He said the short-term gains could not exceed the numerous benefits that come with new initiatives introduced by government such as the Cocoa Farmers Pension Scheme (CFPS).

He used the platform to educate the farmers on the Cocoa Farmers Pension Scheme and the ongoing enrolment exercise. He said once enrolled; a farmer can contribute a minimum of

5% of the total beans sold at a point of sale of their cocoa. He added that government also adds its part of the contribution which is invested together with the farmer's contribution.

He gave assurance that the CFPS is governed by law and will continue to operate as long as the laws of Ghana exist.

The farmers expressed appreciation for such platforms to educate them about programmes and interventions by government, as well as the opportunity to make suggestions that influence policy to help boost the country's cocoa sector.

They gave assurance of their readiness to comply with, and adopt the good agronomic practices recommended by COCOBOD to ensure Ghana maintains its position as the leading producer of premium cocoa in the world.

A CLEAN HOSPITAL IS A PATIENT SAFETY REQUIREMENT - COCOA CLINIC CHIEF PHARMACIST

Staff of Cocoa Clinic, a health facility owned by the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), on Saturday, June 10th, 2023, conducted a clean-up exercise in all its branches across the country to demonstrate the need for a clean and safe environment for staff, patients, and the public.

The gesture formed part of activities earmarked for the clinic's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Administrators, lab technicians, nurses, pharmacists, doctors, and labourers of the health facility in Accra, Tema, Tafo, Kumasi, Debiso and Takoradi took part in the exercise, which included surface cleaning and disinfection, sterilization, and device reprocessing.

The participants also polished furniture, floors, walls and cleared cobwebs, weeds, and gutters within and around the clinic premises.

The laboratories, outpatient departments, pharmacy, gynaecology unit, surgical unit, wards, and administrative offices are among the areas that got a good shine from the clean-up exercise.

The Chief Pharmacist of the Cocoa Clinic and Chairperson for the 50th Anniversary Planning Committee, Dr. Edward Amporful, who led the clean-up exercise, said the team decided to start the anniversary activities with a clean-up exercise to ensure a hygienic and safe environment for all during the celebrations and beyond.

"An exercise like this is a good start for the 50th anniversary celebrations, for our work surroundings and our bodies too. Everyone who participated has exercised his or her body through this and this is good for our general health.

Health and safety of staff is just as important as that of the clients we serve," he said. Cocoa Clinic recognizes the importance



of environmental hygiene to quality healthcare and therefore ensures regular cleaning of its facilities.

"We don't compromise on hygiene in patient care at Cocoa Clinic because a clean hospital is key to patient safety. The safety of our staff is just as important, and I am happy that they have seen how management emphasizes personal and environmental safety and have joined to keep the work environment clean and safe for all", he said.

He commended staff for their support and massive participation in the

exercise. Dr. Amporful outlined some of the activities for the anniversary celebration, which include free health screening in some selected districts, staff fun games, and an anniversary lecture and called on staff and all stakeholders to participate.

The Cocoa Clinic is a department of Ghana Cocoa Board and was established on 24th October 1973 to cater for the health needs of staff and cocoa farmers.

The 50th anniversary celebration will climax in October 2023 with a thanksgiving service.

COCOBOD LAWYERS TOUR CRIG

A group of newly employed lawyers of Ghana Cocoa Board has toured the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) as part of their orientation to familiarize themselves with the Institute.

Receiving the guests, the Executive Director of CRIG, Dr. Francis Padi narrated the history of the Institute, its activities and highlighted some ongoing research projects, the result of which has the potential to heap praises on Ghana.

Dr Padi used the opportunity to invite investors for strategic partnership to expand the market fortunes of the Institute's by-products and other technologies which have remained unharnessed for year.

He urged the delegation to be ambassadors of CRIG's by-products to support its transformational agenda.

After a presentation by the Executive Director, the delegation was taken on a tour of various specialized facilities, including the Fine Flavor Research Laboratory, Clubhouse, Dam site and some experimental farms.

A Human Resource Manager at COCOBOD, who facilitated the trip, Mrs. Eunice Antwi, expressed gratitude to CRIG for their continued quality research works towards increased productivity and the sustainability of the industry.

Present at the meeting were, Deputy Executive Directors of CRIG, Dr. Samuel Lowor and Dr. Richard Adu Acheampong, Mr. Lemuel Ollenu, Human Resource Manager of CRIG and Mrs. Korkor Okutu, Legal Manager of COCOBOD.

Others included, Mr. Robert Twene Deputy Legal Manager of COCOBOD, Mr. Evans Abbey Quaye, Principal Legal Officer of COCOBOD and Mr. Lloyd Brobbey Adasi, Principal Public Affairs Officer of CRIG.





CHED PLANTS TREES TO MARK GREEN GHANA DAY

The Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) of Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) joined this year's National Green Ghana Project to plant over 200 cocoa and other tree seedlings at Nobi, a community within the Abuakwa North Municipality of the Eastern Region.

The Executive Director of CHED, Rev. Edwin Afari, led a delegation of Management, Staff and National Service Personnel (NSP) for the event themed 'Our Forests, Our Health'. They were joined by officials from the Forestry Commission, Bunso and Letutu Farmers' cooperative to observe the National Green Ghana Day and the tree planting exercise.

Rev. Afari emphasized that the nationwide tree planting exercise

which was launched by the government in 2021 was a call in the right direction to protect the environment. He said COCOBOD's Cocoa Rehabilitation Programme to replace overaged and disease infested farms across the cocoa regions, attests to the organization's commitment to protecting the country's vegetative cover and adhering to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 13.

He added that the planting exercise at the Nobi was a symbolic act to encourage Ghanaians to show commitment and involvement in the Green Ghana initiative. Addressing the participants prior to the tree planting exercise, the Eastern Regional Manager for the Forestry Service Division, Mr. Amankwa Omane said that the

Commission's mandate is to execute aggressive afforestation, reforestation, and protection of the existing forest cover.

He added that 10 million trees are to be planted nationwide for the 2023 Green Ghana Project and urged the public to protect forest reserves, describing it as a shared responsibility to sustain the environment for posterity.

Other officials who participated in the planting exercise included the Eastern Regional Manager of CHED, Mr. Abdul Majid Mumuni, the Eastern Regional Manager of Seed Production Division, Mr. Kennedy Owusu Nyarko, Chief of Nobi, Nene Tetteh Wayoe, Mr Atsu Saviour and Mr. Twumasi Adutwum from the Forestry Commission.

CRIG JOINS CHIEFS TO CELEBRATE OHUM



The management of Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), on Wednesday, July 5, 2023, joined the Chiefs and people of Abuakwa North Municipality to celebrate this year's Ohum Festival to officially usher in the New Yam Season.

The delegation from CRIG, which was led by the Deputy Executive Director in charge of Coffee, Shea and Cashew, Dr. Samuel Lowor, was received at the Awansa Palace by The Akyem Tafohene, Osabarima Adusei Peasah IV.

The Ohum Festival is celebrated every year by the people of the Tafo Traditional Community to mark the arrival of the New Yam Harvest (Kookoase Bayere)

and to give thanks to God Almighty, the gods, and ancestors for protection and provision of an abundance of new yam. The festival is also often referred to as the Yam Festival because it is the celebration of the new yam.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, Dr. Samuel Lowor, conveyed CRIG's solidarity to the Chiefs and people towards the development of their communities.

As a token of their contribution towards the celebration, the delegation presented customary items to four Paramount Chiefs and their traditional councils, including Osabarima Adusei Peasah IV of Tafo; Daasebre Boamah

Darko of Kukurantumi; Osabarima Abiam Brakatu II of Bunso and Barima Ati Awuah Kwaako of Ati.

The delegation from CRIG included Dr. Richard Adu Acheampong, Deputy Executive Director in charge of Cocoa and Kola; Mr. Lemuel Ollenu, Human Resources Manager; Mr. Richard Berchmans Armah, Principal Public Affairs Officer; Mrs. Mateko Nyirah-Kwarteng, Principal Human Resource Officer and Mr. Geoffrey Opoku-Darko, Public Affairs Officer.

Also present were, Mr. Emmanuel Ewe, Chief Technical Officer; Madam Eva Yeboah, Assistant Administrative Officer and Madam Faustina Sepiu, Principal Photography Assistant.

IS IT SMART TO EXERCISE WHILE ILL?

Many of us may find it difficult to believe it, but there are people with flesh and blood who do not make any excuses to avoid exercising. I certainly wish I was in this unique category.

These exercise addicts and some professional athletes who think missing an exercise session will spell doom to their dreams will call you at the first glim of light to find out if it's okay for them to exercise.

Exercise is 'medicine' but do you have to pop this 'pill' at all times? Let us explore this together.

My rule of thumb is; exercise should make you better so avoid if it will worsen your state. Also if you have an illness that could be infective such as a common cold kindly do others a favour and exercise outdoors.

We are aware that moderate intensity exercise increases ones immunity and helps ward off viral illnesses including the common cold but once you have the infection I doubt that spending a lifetime in the gym or outdoors jogging will make a difference. Sometimes what you need is some rest instead of puffing, sneezing, coughing and barely being able to drag oneself through an exercise session.

Dominique Groom in her article does a great job of summarizing instances where one may go ahead and exercise

as well as those that are a total no go area and I refer to a number of them here.

1. SAFE TO WORK OUT

a. When symptoms are above the neck such as sneezing, sore throat, runny nose, tearing eyes, itching throat and ears

2. NOT SAFE TO WORK OUT

a. Symptoms below the neck such as severe chest pain, chest pain associated with breathing, coughing, body aches, shallow breaths, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, malaria etc.

3. DEFINITELY AVOID WORKING OUT

a. An acute asthmatic attack is definitely no time to flex your muscles or put your heart and lungs in overdrive.

b. Finally DO NOT exercise if your healthcare professional asks you to take time off based on your health condition.

Whenever in doubt ask a professional whether it's safe to exercise.

ALWAYS REMEMBER that 'exercise was made for man and not man for exercise.' You have to stay safe to be able to exercise. Sometimes taking a short break will help you heal faster so that you can return to your 'addiction' sooner.

Now to my friends who are always

looking for a new innovative Exercise Excuse, let us do ourselves a favour and spend more time exercising instead of being at peace with our beds or couch.

AS ALWAYS LAUGH OFTEN, ENSURE HYGIENE, 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/ Mobissel
(dressel@healthessentialsgh.com)

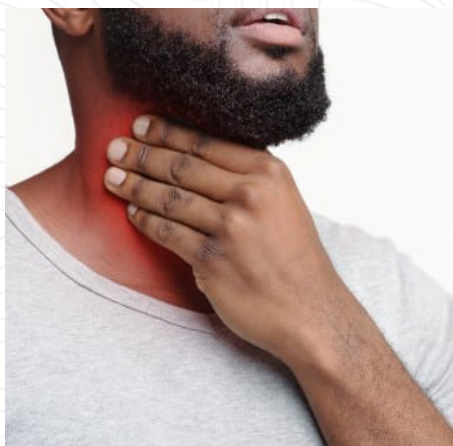
*Dr. Essel is a medical doctor, holds an MBA and is ISSA certified in exercise therapy, fitness nutrition and corrective exercise. He is the author of the award-winning book, 'Unravelling The Essentials of Health & Wealth.'

Thought for the week – 'For heart health you need to relax and have fun as well; schedule time for leisure, laugh often, learn to breathe deeply and maybe get a pet.'

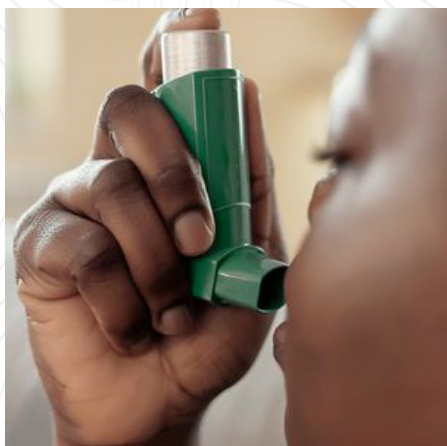
References:

▪ ISSA Newsletter; 'Should your client exercise while sick?' by Dominique Groom. Certified ISSA Trainer.

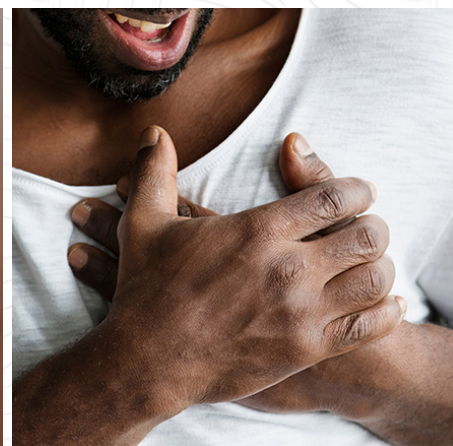
* Join me and the La-Palm Royal Beach Hotel Healthy Lifestyle Team on Saturday 29th July 2023 and the last Saturday of every month at 6am prompt to exercise and share ideas on staying healthy.



SAFE TO WORK OUT



DEFINITELY AVOID WORKING OUT



NOT SAFE TO WORK OUT

MEMOIR OF CASHEW: MYTH ABOUT CASHEW AND MILK NOT BACKED BY SCIENCE

By: Geoffrey Opoku-Darko, CRIG

Once the world was full of myths but it belongs to science now. To think that cashew with milk is a death warrant once thrived on every mind. As strong as these woven words are, its power of truth is a trickle myth. It's a pinprick of candlelight against the raging power of science. Azrael (Angel of Death) has disappeared, myth hiding in plain sight as the history of the world's most favourite nut (cashew nut) and health benefits seen in our mind's eyes.

Anacardium occidentale L. is the scientific name of Cashew. The white kernels in kidney shaped made up of the seed (nut) snuggling close to its plump flesh (apple), like a kangaroo with its young in its pouch. Cashew nuts originated from Brazil; the Portuguese traders brought the seeds to Africa in the 16th century. Vietnam is the largest producer and exporter of cashews in the world whiles La Cote d'Ivoire is the largest producer and exporter of cashew in Africa.

In Ghana, cultivation started in the 1960's with periodic plantings in the Central and Greater Accra Regions and later spread to the Brong-Ahafo, Volta, Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions. Since 1966, cashew has been included as one of the mandate research crops of the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG).

Ghana's cashew sector is one of the most promising in sub-Saharan Africa. Notwithstanding, the low attention given to the sector. Ghana earns in excess of US\$ 2 billion in annual foreign exchange whereas serving as a major source of employment to about 800,000 families.

According to statistics from the African Cashew Alliance (ACA), production has grown from 22,000 in 2009 to an estimated 105,000 MT in 2020. The country earned in excess of US\$374 million in foreign exchange from this sector in 2018 and accounted to 43% of total revenues of Ghana from non-

traditional exports for that year.

Stakeholders such **ComCashew/GIZ, Meda, Move/GIZ** and Ministry of Food and Agriculture (**MOFA**) promote all the actors in the cashew value chain to ensure a sustainable development of the sector.

Let me take you on a journey about scientists knocking down the milk with cashew death tales and create awareness on its health benefits.

Alhaji Arz Salifu, a food specialist

and Deputy Director at the Office of the Chief Director of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in an interview with the Ghana News Agency (GNA) in 2013, dismissed the assertion that combination of cashew and milk was poisonous. He expressed surprise about the fearmongering as he is a living testimony of eating both cashew and milk simultaneously to convince people that it's not poisonous.

A 2016 histopathological study of toxicity of a mixture of cashew apple juice and cow milk in the University



of Abomey-Calavi by Benin Professor Innocent Bokossa Yaou et al., opined that milk has absolutely no toxic to animal cell. The study therefore, affirm that cashew apple juice and milk are compatible.

Dr. Paul Adu Gyamfi, a Research Scientist and Cashew Breeder at Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), a Division of Ghana Cocoa Board in a tete-a-tete in 2022, emphasised that there is no scientific proof that eating cashew and milk is poisonous.

He called for all hands-on deck especially the media to address demystifying the cashew and milk compatibility misconception and raise awareness on its nutritional and economic value.

Cashew Nutritional Facts and Health Benefits;

Immunity booster

Its rich in zinc and vitamins that you healthy. Regular intake of zinc and vitamins ultimately enhance your immunity.

Help boost brain functions

It contains brain booster nutrients that may help boost brain function and keep your memory sharp.

Prevent cardiovascular diseases

It rich in essential fatty acids, potassium, and antioxidants that are beneficial for the heart health

Prevent and control diabetes

It can control the blood sugar level when added to diet especially for people with type 2 diabetes.

Good for eye health

It contains zeaxanthin and lutein which are antioxidants that protect from UV rays.

Increase fertility

It is rich in zinc which is essential to improve sperm count in males and fertility chances.



Help strengthen bones

Its rich in copper and calcium that gives strength to our bones and make them stronger.

Averts cancer

It prevents cancer.

SHORTCOMINGS OF HAVING TOO MUCH CASHEW NUTS;

There are drawbacks to everything in life and so it is with having too many cashews. Some of these downsides are;

- Roasted cashews often contain high amounts of oil and salt which may not be good for health if taken too much
- Cashews to be added to any dishes, it is advised by experts to soak it overnight. This is because they contain phytates that make it challenging for the body to extract minerals and vitamins. Therefore, soaking them lowers the phytates content and improves digestibility.

To conclude, Ghana's cashew sector has socio-economically empowered the society especially women and youth with employment, wealth creation, entrepreneurship along the value chain ensuring revenue and building a sustainable cashew industry.

Reference

1. Bokossa Yaou I. et al (2016), Toxicity of a mixture of cashew apple juice and cow milk. University of Abomey-Calavi. Cotonou.
2. Adu-Gyamfi P.K. et al (2021) Broadening the Gene Pool of Cashew (*Anacardium occidentale* L.) for Survival and Precocity. CRIG, New Tafo-Akim
3. <http://africancashewalliance.com/demystifying-cashew-apple-and-milk-compatibility-misconception>
4. Ghana News Agency (2013), Arz Salifu dismissed assertion that combination of cashew and milk is poisonous. GNA, Accra
5. <http://comcashew.org/GIZ>

WHAT IS IN YOUR PROSTATE?

The abrofo-nkatie sized gland found only in men wants to be known and referred to as the prostate gland and not prostrate gland as many of us choose to call it. It has also made a strong case that it has more to it than the feared prostate cancer.

The prostate gland is lodged comfortably between the bladder and the penis and behind it is the rectum. The urethra that carries urine and semen passes through the centre of the prostate gland. Many of the problems associated with this gland start with the structures listed above that are close to it.

The prostate is not useless as some may refer to it as. It toils to secrete fluid that nourishes, protects and transports sperm.

A brief look at Prostatitis, BPH (benign prostatic hyperplasia) and Prostate Cancer will put things in the right perspective. These three conditions share some symptoms.

PROSTATITIS

This is an infection of the prostate gland and may present with:

- Chills and a fever, pus-like urethral discharge
- Frequent urination, painful urination, pain in groin and testes
- Painful orgasms, new onset erectile dysfunction

Seek professional help. Do not self-medicate or second guess yourself.

BENIGN PROSTATIC HYPERPLASIA (BPH)

This condition is an increase in size of the prostate but it is not cancerous. The actual cause of this enlargement not known but male hormones may play a role.

Men with BPH may show symptoms such as:

- Frequent urination especially at night, urge incontinence (where one may soil self if you don't quickly urinate

when you feel the urge)

- Difficulty starting to urinate (straining), poor urine stream
- Painful urination, blood in urine
- Terminal dribbling (urine continues to drip after one finishes urinating)
- May end up with not being able to pass urine (referred to in emergency rooms in Accra as **shamoo baa** i.e. the urine won't or can't come).

This is extremely painful and you will find men sweat, scream and do all sorts of things. In fact some have compared it to labour pains.

PROSTATE CANCER

It is one of the commonly diagnosed cancers in men and many of these cancers are slow growing. In general it is commoner among black men and has an earlier age of onset and quite often more aggressive and lethal.

Who is at risk?

- Age; the older you are the higher the chance
- Race ; blacks at more risk
- Family History ; higher risk if a family member has had it
- Obesity

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SYMPTOMS?

- Urinating frequently including at night, straining to urinate, blood in urine /semen
 - Weak or interrupted urine flow
 - New onset erectile dysfunction
- When there is spread
- Fatigue, unexplained weight loss, change in bowel habits
 - Pin in back, hips, shoulders, thighs etc.

Diagnosis

This will require proper history taking from the client and then an examination and tests

- Digital rectal examination, where the doctor inserts a gloved lubricated finger through your anus to feel the prostate. It often will have an irregular , hard surface if cancerous
- PSA (prostate specific antigen)

may also be elevated in a few other circumstances

- Biopsy, Ultrasound Scan
- CT Scan/MRI/PET Scan
- Bone Scan

Management

A holistic approach including watchful waiting, medication, surgery, radiation, cryotherapy. Always ask that all the options are discussed with you.

Risk Reduction

- Screening
- Healthy diet with a variety of fruits and vegetables. Carrots and tomatoes seem to have been discussed quite often. But variety is key. Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale and a few others may also be worth having in your healthy diet.
- Choose healthy foods over supplements
- Keep weight in check
- Exercise at least five days a week

Do remember to go the extra mile and share the information. The prostate too needs support !!!

AS ALWAYS LAUGH OFTEN, ENSURE HYGIENE, 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/ Mobissel (dressel@healthessentialsgh.com)

*Dr. Essel is a medical doctor, holds an MBA and is ISSA certified in exercise therapy, fitness nutrition and corrective exercise. He is the author of the award-winning book, 'Unravelling The Essentials of Health & Wealth.'

Thought for the week – 'This year, World Heart Day (29th September) aims to encourage people to look after themselves, others, and nature as well. Putting in coordinated efforts to improve one's own lifestyle and diet and motivating others to do the same can lead to a reduced number of people with heart and blood vessel disease.'

CLASSIC CHOCOLATE CAKE



PREP: 15 MIN.
BAKE: 35 MIN. + COOLING
15 SERVINGS

Hi there,

Want to learn how to make chocolate cake from scratch? This is a simple and easy homemade chocolate cake recipe that you would absolutely enjoy.

Ingredients

2/3 cup butter, softened
1-2/3 cups sugar
3 large eggs, room temperature
2 cups all-purpose flour
2/3 cup unsweetened baking cocoa powder
1-1/4 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1-1/3 cups 2% milk
1 bar of melted Kingsbite chocolate for frosting(optional)

Let's make it !!

In a bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy for 5-7 minutes. Add your eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine your flour, unsweetened cocoa powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk, beating until smooth after each addition. Pour batter into a greased and floured baking pan of choice.

Bake at 350° until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 35-40 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack. When the cake is cool, melt 1 bar of kingsbite chocolate and spread on the top or top with your favorite frosting.

Nutrition Facts 1 piece: 257 calories, 10g fat (6g saturated fat), 67 mg cholesterol, 368 mg sodium, 38g carbohydrate (23g sugars, 1g fiber), 4g protein.



CHOCOLATE MILKSHAKE

PREP TIME: 10MINS

Do you love shakes? This easy Chocolate Milkshake recipe is thick, creamy and absolutely sweet made in just a few minutes, with only three simple ingredients.

Ingredients

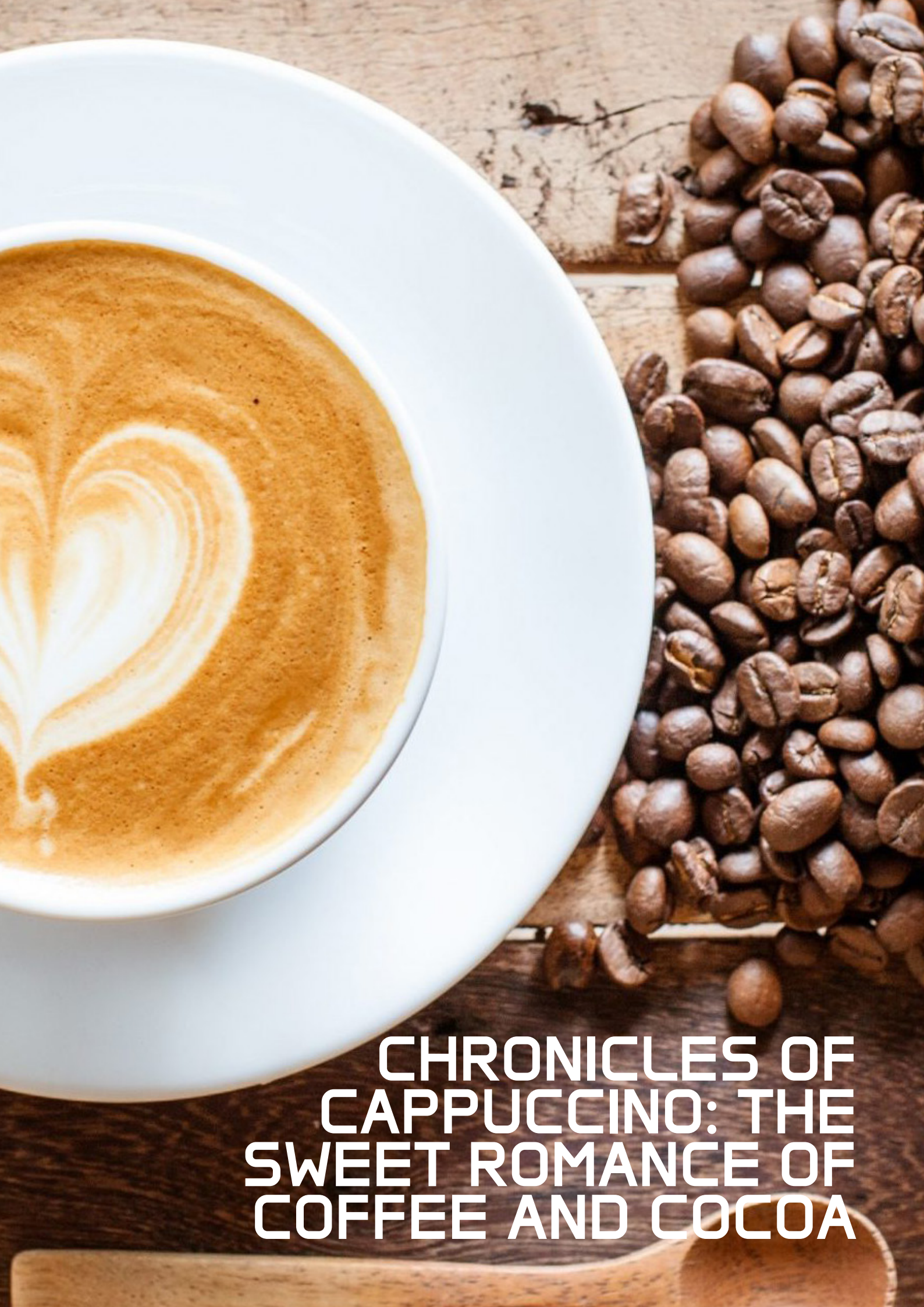
6 cups vanilla ice cream or chocolate ice cream
1/3 cup milk, or more as needed, or use chocolate milk
1/3 cup chocolate sauce
Oranco chocolate bar or whipped cream for topping

Let's make it !!

In a blender combine ice cream, milk, and chocolate sauce in a blender. Blend until combined, add more milk if needed. For a thicker shake, add more ice cream. For a thinner shake, add more milk. Serve topped with chocolate bars or whipped cream, if desired.

Alternatively, if using Cocoa Powder, add ¼ cup warm water, 6 tablespoons of cocoa powder and 3 tablespoons of sugar to a blender and blend on low. Add ice cream and a splash of milk if needed, and blend to combine.

Nutrition Facts: Calories: 508kcal, Carbohydrates: 64g, Protein: 9g, Fat: 24g, Saturated Fat: 15g, Trans Fat: 1g, Cholesterol: 89 mg, Sodium: 255 mg, Potassium: 494 mg, Fiber: 2g, Sugar: 52g, Vitamin A: 854IU, Vitamin C: 1 mg, Calcium: 289 mg, Iron: 1 mg



**CHRONICLES OF
CAPPUCCINO: THE
SWEET ROMANCE OF
COFFEE AND COCOA**



By: Geoffrey Opoku-Darko, CRIG

I've drunk countless cocoa beverages in my life; from dawn to dusk my comrades who love coffee recommended combination of cocoa and coffee as the best beverage ever.

Most of them claiming that the blend was a blessing to mankind and food of the gods. It could heal any damage inside us. It was what we need to survive. I thought they were out of their minds, Love between Caffeina, the Roman goddess of Coffee and Cacao, the Mayan god of Cacao was fable only found in novels. That has all changed since I drank cappuccino brewed in the Cocoa Garden. I never felt I would be completely consumed by it.

The sweet romance of coffee and cocoa, a divine drink consecrated to Aphrodite, the goddess of love's potion for the gods and mankind. It's a great feeling to simultaneously sip your coffee as you take a bit of chocolate. Aphrodite's love web wedged the passion of Caffeina, the Roman goddess for a young man in a small Italian village who was passionate about coffee.

And his name was Giovanni. Giovanni's romance with the roman goddess of coffee gave him an idea to create a new coffee drink that would combine espresso (that's finely ground coffee and cocoa beans in water under high pressure) of coffee brewed with a sprinkle of cocoa powder for the perfect balance blend. This bitter sweet perfect balance blend is known as Cappuccino.

However, it's generally believed that cappuccino was first introduced in Africa in the mid-20 century, when Italian immigrants brought their coffee them to the continent. It popular in Ethiopia, which is considered the birthplace of coffee and other countries such as Egypt, Libya, La Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Kenya, South Africa and Ghana.

Today cappuccino and other espresso drinks are widely available in Ghana, particularly in urban areas with a strong coffee culture with several local coffee shops and cafes.

Life is race of activities through the sands of time where the minds are stimulated daily to get us stressed and all you need is a cup of cappuccino to calm nerves down.. A mug of cappuccino is a splendid way to start the day as the beneficial antioxidants in coffee and cocoa gives the brain a boost of energy and stimulate the mind.

Studies have shown that this combination of coffee and cocoa have healing abilities.

Below are some of the Health Benefits of Cappuccino Drink;

▪ **Reduced risk of certain diseases**

Studies have suggested that consumption of cappuccino, may be associated with a reduced risk of certain diseases such as heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

▪ **Boots metabolism**

Cappuccino increases metabolic rate which can help your body burn more calories throughout the day.

▪ **Increased antioxidants**

Cappuccino is also a rich source of antioxidants, which can help protect your body against damage from free radicals

▪ **Improved alertness**

Cappuccino contains caffeine which is a natural stimulant that can help improve mental alertness and concentration.

▪ **Anti-Cancer**

Afford anti-cancer prevention properties.

▪ **Detoxification of body**

Promotes cleansing and detoxification of the body

▪ **Reduces stress**

Reduces the effects of mental stress on the body

In conclusion, cappuccino is a classic divine beverage that has stood the test of time as its bitter yet sweet romance of coffee and cocoa flow through the hourglass. It is a versatile drink that can be customized (add steamed milk, non-dairy milk, flavoured syrup and alternatives) to suit your taste.

Cappuccino has, without doubt, been a blessing to both cocoa and coffee lovers in the world, and even though it originated in the coffee shop of Giovanni in Italy, the popularity spread throughout Europe , North America. and Africa. Today, cappuccino is enjoyed by millions of people every day all over the world.

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Ukers, W (1935), All about Coffee. The Tea & Coffee Trade Journal. New York

JOKES



THE WHEELBARROW JOKE

A certain man worked in a factory for 20 years.

Every day after work, he will come out pushing the same wheelbarrow full of straw.

The security always gave the man a thorough search before he leaves the facility, but he never found anything on him.

On the day of his retirement, the security was curious about what he must have been smuggling out for 20 years.

He was convinced that the man must have been smuggling something, but he wasn't sure what it was. When he asked, the man said wheelbarrows.

EXPENSIVE JOKE

Everything is now so expensive in Ghana that witches don't serve food in dreams again.

*Am I lying?
Okay, when last did you eat in your dreams?*

WHO KILLED GOLIATH?

A teacher asked a class who killed Goliath. The first pupil said he wasn't the one, the second said he doesn't know. No one knew in the class.

The teacher got furious and dashed to the headmaster's office to report. Immediately, the headmaster followed him back to the class with a cane.

He growled- "If no one tells me who killed Goliath in this class, you will see fire" Everyone in the class insisted on the fact that it wasn't them.

Then the Headmaster looked at the teacher and said - "Mr. Dapo, are you sure that the person who killed Goliath is in this class? The teacher fainted.



**EFFECT OF HAND
POLLINATION**



Ghana Cocoa Board
Poised to Maintain Premium Quality Cocoa