

# CARIBBEAN FINE COCOA FORUM

## CFCF e-Newsletter

July 2015 (Vol. 1, Issue 1)

Welcome to the first edition of the Caribbean Fine Cocoa Forum's (CFCF) newsletter. This newsletter will be circulated twice yearly to our members & selected stakeholders (>500).

For more frequent updates visit our websites at [www.caribbeanfinecocoaforum.net](http://www.caribbeanfinecocoaforum.net)  
[www.facebook.com/caribbeanfinecocoaforum](http://www.facebook.com/caribbeanfinecocoaforum)



Caribbean Fine Cocoa Forum  
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## CFCF 4 / IFCIC 1 Conference and Symposium

Our latest Conference and Symposium (in collaboration with the UWI Cocoa Research Center - CRC) was held at the Ortinola Great House in Maracas St. Joseph, Trinidad during March 23-24, 2015.

This event represented the formal launch for the European Union co-funded **International Fine Cocoa Innovation Centre** project. The IFCIC project was conceptualized, designed and developed in partnership by Newer Worlds Ltd. ([www.newerworlds.co.uk](http://www.newerworlds.co.uk)) to effect a step-change process in the fine cocoa sector across the Caribbean which will ensure the sustainability of this important food crop and pioneer a futuristic approach for food security in the region.



During the Conference & Symposium, entitled "**Seeding Innovations along the Value-Chain**", speakers from all parts of the fine cocoa value-chain shared advancements in the global and regional cocoa industry. On Day 1, over 120 delegates from around the world - Australia, United Kingdom, the USA and the Caribbean - learned from researchers the latest innovations and findings in cocoa genotyping and flavor assessments, best practices on increasing yields in the cocoa estate as well as trends in the value-add component. The main focus during the second day of the Conference was further developments in commercialization of cocoa value add products with several small and medium size enterprises (**MSME's**) from the Caribbean region exhibiting their products and providing insight into their country-specific challenges. Visitors were able to sample locally produced cocoa-based products such as pralines, chocolates bars, cocoa drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and cocoa butter - amongst other products.

### What's Next?

CFCF, and the IFCIC project, is now preparing for its next **Annual Conference and Symposium to be held in Montego Bay, Jamaica in 1Q 2016.**

If you are interested in attending, presenting and/or exhibiting at this high profile international event do contact us via e-mail on [cfcfactory@gmail.com](mailto:cfcfactory@gmail.com) to register your interest.

## News from around the Caribbean Region

### BELIZE

The *Maya House of Cacao* was officially opened by the European Union Ambassador to Jamaica, Belize, Bahamas, Cayman & Turks & Caicos Islands - Ms. Paola Amedi - on May 16, 2015.

CFCF was proud to be a *Key Partner* of the *Toledo Cacao Growers Association* (TCGA) from the beginning - conceptualising, developing and implementing this 3 year EU funded project which celebrates the origins of the Cacao (or cocoa) food crop, to the world.



This significant milestone brings to life an *innovative model of eco-tourism and community development* in southern Belize, providing the Mayan farming community there with the potential for entrepreneurial diversification and additional, alternative sources of income.

The multi-purpose facility will now immediately provide a much needed community venue for training, meeting, exhibiting, selling, marketing and engaging with visitors and travellers. Its planned further expansion will eventually host the manufacturing of indigenous value added cacao products on-site (Phase II).

The Centre is located at 18 Miles San Antonio Road, Crique Troso, Toledo District directly on the newly constructed Southern Highway linking Belize to Guatemala.

### What's Next?

*If you are planning to visit southern Belize, do kindly visit and support* this pioneering eco-tourism and community venue. Also check out the **Annual Chocolate Festival of Belize** - in late May in Toledo: [www.tcgabelize.com/tcga/toledo/chocolate-festival-belize](http://www.tcgabelize.com/tcga/toledo/chocolate-festival-belize)

### GRENADA

Once again, Grenada and its cocoa & chocolate community proved to be one of the most advanced and organized in the Caribbean indigenous, fine cocoa sector.

Between May 8<sup>th</sup> and May 17<sup>th</sup>, Grenadians welcomed visitors from all around the world to the "spice island" and its **Grenada's Chocolate Fest 2015**.

Of course, one of the main attractions were the chocolate tastings. For more information, visit [www.facebook.com/GrenadaChocolatFest](http://www.facebook.com/GrenadaChocolatFest)

The island continues to boast being the only Caribbean country hosting the operation of two indigenous, fine cocoa bean-to-bar chocolate mini-factories - the **Grenada Chocolate Company** and the **Diamond Chocolate Factory**.

Go, taste and enjoy !!

## JAMAICA

The main news in Jamaica fine cocoa sector continues to be the ongoing divestment of the Cocoa Industry Board's assets by the Government of Jamaica - now in its final stages according to the Hon Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Derrick Kellier.

In the meantime CFCF continued to partner in key projects designed to assist improve the productivity of the cocoa crop for small farmers in that country.

### ***COCOA-POP (Cocoa Pollination Optimization)***

Now in its third, and final, year this project has made ground-breaking findings in the behavior of the insects - called midges - which play a key role in pollinating the fine cocoa flowers. Pioneering research has been conducted by Natural Resources Institute (NRI) experts for the past two years in both Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago. The project partnership, which CFCF is supporting, consists of the University of Greenwich, the University of Trinidad & Tobago (UTT - the Lead Partner), CABI ([www.cabi.org](http://www.cabi.org)) and the Cocoa Industry Board (CIB) Jamaica. Further updates on this EU-ACP funded project may be found at [www.cocoaappop.eu](http://www.cocoaappop.eu).



### ***IFCIC - GERMLASM BREEDING PROGRAMME***

One of the objectives of the IFCIC project is to support the development of a fine cocoa germplasm breeding program in Jamaica. This genetic based approach is a ***fundamental requirement for improving the fine cocoa yields in that country*** and the activity is being led by expert geneticist, Prof P Umaharan of the Cocoa Research Centre at UWI St Augustine.

Training of staff and students at 2 leading Agricultural Colleges - College of Agriculture, Science and Education (***CASE***) and ***Knockalva Agricultural School*** - was conducted in November 2014 (grafting techniques) and June 2015 (fermentation processing) respectively.



Activities planned for 2015/2016 include erection of cocoa nurseries and an indigenous clonal garden through unprecedented collaboration with both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education in Jamaica. Project developments in this area can be followed on [www.ifcic.center](http://www.ifcic.center).



## TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

### A Mini Profile - The Ortinola Estate

The Ortinola Estate is a beautiful family-owned (the Nath's) property steeped in the history of Trinitario Fine Cocoa of Trinidad. The Great House there is available for rent and provides a unique, charming setting for receptions and corporate events. Ms. Nikita Nath is now one of Trinidad's aspiring Chocolatiers and her processing bean-to-bar operations are in full swing. Since her family bought the former Cadbury cocoa estate in 1999 in the lush Maracas Valley in Trinidad's Northern Range, the Nath's have begun to rehabilitate the Ortinola Estate by planting new cocoa fields. Soon Trinidad will have yet another delicious tasting, unique single estate chocolate bar branded with the Ortinola logo.



### Did You Know?

- ❖ The Cocoa Research Centre at UWI is in the process *of creating a pioneering, model "orchard" for visitors and interested parties* to visit and learn the best practices developed through decades of cocoa-related field research
- ❖ The ongoing IFCIC project will facilitate sector clustering in a Fine Cocoa Business Incubator, where selected MSMEs, including Cocoa Co-operatives, will be provided with working space, technical advice and business support to grow their business sustainably.
- ❖ The Coffee and Cocoa Industry Board (CCIB, Trinidad and Tobago) was dissolved in late 2014. There is a new entity - the Cocoa Development Company - established to lead the strategic development of the fine cocoa sector in that country.
- ❖ This e-newsletter has been emailed by CFCF to over 500 contacts in the fine cocoa industry internationally.

### Dates for your Diary

- World Cocoa and Chocolate Day (2015)  
October 1 2015;  
**University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad**
- CFCF Caribbean Fine Cocoa Conference (2016)  
TBA - 1Q 2016;  
**Montego Bay, Jamaica**
- ICCO World Cocoa Conference (2016)  
22-25 May 2016;  
Barcelo Bavaro Convention Centre,  
**Dominican Republic**

### Your CALL

CFCF regularly conducts research and consultations with fine cocoa stakeholders across the Caribbean so as to ensure their needs and issues are on the agenda of decision makers.

In order for the sector to be sustainable it is vital that the research and development activity in the region is aligned with the needs of its key stakeholders.

We therefore welcome your feedback and participation in the ongoing transition of the fine cocoa sector in the Caribbean.

**If you have a query, an event to publicize, or wish to have some information disseminated to the wider fine cocoa community, globally, then email us at [cfcfactory@gmail.com](mailto:cfcfactory@gmail.com)**