

## **Fruity, florally, nutty and earthen, Caribbean cocoa inspires the world's chocolatiers**

[St Michael, Barbados, March 26, 2015]

The popularity of dark chocolate throughout the world has surpassed just being a flavour of the month. The rapid growth in demand for fine flavour cocoa, primarily used in the sought-after dark chocolate, over the past five years, is set to continue bringing lucrative benefits to the Caribbean's fine cocoa industry.

How the region can fully exploit this enhanced business growth through market penetration will be explored at the 3<sup>rd</sup> CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum, being hosted by the Caribbean Export Development Agency, on April 15 – 16, in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

The world cocoa market distinguishes between two broad categories of cocoa beans: ordinary or bulk beans (around 85% of all cocoa worldwide) and fine flavour beans, which are the defining component of high quality chocolate. Together, Latin America and the Caribbean produce 80% of the world's fine flavour cocoa and, with six of the recognised 17 countries in the world that produce and export the exotic product come from the Caribbean, the collection of small islands have earned their place to feature prominently on the world stage.

As the drive for increased consumption is coming from the more mature markets of Western Europe, North America and Japan, producers need to be aware of the specific requirements and expectations of these buyers and importers to make the most of market opportunities.

"We need to look at how to recognise and encourage the proper growing and processing of fine flavour beans and how to build links between small farms and artisan chocolate makers. Both sides can benefit from the sourcing of unusual and interesting flavours from very local sources and the production of great chocolate," says founder of the British company Duffy's Chocolate Duffy Sheardown, who will be a speaker at the upcoming CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum.

The complex flavours of cocoa beans grown in the region have also become increasingly popular, as major chocolate manufacturers in Europe and other markets are now offering premium chocolate products in their range.

For example, cocoa from Jamaica has been described as 'fruity', cocoa from Grenada as 'fruity, florally and earthen' and cocoa from Trinidad as 'nutty and winey'. Like coffee or wine, the taste of cocoa is unique to a region and can vary from season to season.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum will further explore trends and innovations in the Caribbean's specialty cocoa industry and provide a platform for companies to network and find out about trade and investment opportunities. The Forum is being organised in collaboration with the ACP Business Climate facility (BizClim) and seeks to promote trade

between Caribbean businesses and those in Europe, enable public-private sector dialogue and support the business climate reform agenda in the Caribbean. The agro-processing industry (cocoa, herbs and spices) will be specially featured along with music and higher education.

---

Notes for editors:

CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum  
April 15 –16, 2015  
Montego Bay, Jamaica

Caribbean Export is a regional export development and trade and investment promotion organisation of the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM) currently executing the Regional Private Sector Programme (RPSDP) funded by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). Caribbean Export's mission is to increase the competitiveness of Caribbean countries by providing quality export development and trade and investment promotion services through effective programme execution and strategic alliances.

BizClim: The ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim) is a programme of the ACP Secretariat financed by the European Union under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). It aims at fostering a business enabling environment in ACP countries and regions by improving legislation, institutional frameworks and financial measures relating to the enabling environment of the private sector.

*Links:*

Forum website: [www.cariforum.eu](http://www.cariforum.eu)

Caribbean Export Development Agency: [www.carib-export.com](http://www.carib-export.com)

BizClim: [www.bizclim.org](http://www.bizclim.org)

Press photos: <http://www.cariforum.eu/images/press/chocolate.jpg>

*For press inquiries and accreditation for the conference please contact:*

JoEllen Laryea

Caribbean Export Development Agency

E-mail: [JLaryea@carib-export.com](mailto:JLaryea@carib-export.com)

Tel: +1 (246) 436 0578/262 0702



This project is funded by the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union nor that of the ACP Secretariat.