

SAMOAN
GOLD
TRINITARIO
COCOA
COCA.COM

Fact Sheet: Samoa Cocoa

The Industry and its significance

In the early 1960s, cocoa was the country's second largest export earner with annual production of around 5,300 tonnes. Unfortunately, the impacts of cyclones, lack of replanting and unfavourable global market conditions led to the progressive, long-term decline of the industry. However, the situation has changed for the better, and real interest is being shown by overseas buyers in Samoan cocoa, long known for its highly desirable varieties. As a result, there is increasing interest by the government and the private sector to re-invigorate production and export. Most cocoa is produced by smallholder farmers. Many households are involved in cocoa production along the value chain and it is an important source of rural income. Currently, most Samoan cocoa is sold and consumed locally in the popular drink 'koko Samoa', which is usually manufactured and sold by the farmers and their families in local markets. Exporting cocoa provides a different avenue for marketing and increased opportunity for income returns along the value chain to support rural livelihoods and contribute to increased economic growth.

Market Access Issues

The Trinitario and Criollo varieties grown in Samoa are well known for their inherent high quality and are sought after by chocolatiers for their fine flavor. For this reason,

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there is increasing interest from boutique chocolatiers in New Zealand and Australia, who are looking to produce gourmet chocolate bars. Although there is demand for Samoan cocoa, supply side constraints are preventing growth in exports. Maintaining consistent supply of quality cocoa is a must for overseas buyers. There is significant variability in smallholder fermentation and drying practices, often resulting in variable cocoa bean quality, including smoke contamination from wood fires. In addition, the industry faces difficulties in supplying enough quality beans of the desirable varieties for export. Limited awareness of, and information about, the roles and responsibilities, and opportunities and incentives along the value chain are hindering the development of strong market linkages and industry development.

PHAMA Action

- **Improving quality:** PHAMA is providing support to improve the quality of Samoan cocoa, and demonstrate what is required to consistently produce export quality cocoa that meets the requirements of discerning overseas buyers. PHAMA has provided support to the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) for initial investigations and applied research into cocoa bean fermentation and drying practices.
- **Industry development:** PHAMA is also supporting improved buyer and seller relationships through increased awareness of market and export opportunities and the related value chain requirements. This started by working with



stakeholders to identify the current status of the structure and organisation of the cocoa industry in Samoa, opportunities to strengthen it and incentives for increased collaboration. An opportunity was identified to focus on two groups that are developing supply relationships with buyers in New Zealand. Working directly with these two groups, the Program intends to support the growth of these export opportunities and provide pilots to illustrate an approach to industry development in Samoa.

- **Market survey:** PHAMA is undertaking an international survey of cocoa buyers in Australia, New Zealand, USA and Europe, with a particular focus on boutique cocoa buyers. The aim of this survey is to understand buyer requirements and potential pricing for high quality cocoa, as well as gauge their level of interest in sourcing single origin cocoa from the Pacific.
- **Gender analysis:** PHAMA has commissioned a gender analysis of the cocoa value chain, aimed at better understanding the different roles of men and women and providing recommendations on how programs like PHAMA could help in empowering women involved in cocoa.

Progress

There is now a clearer understanding about the fermentation and drying practices for processing Samoa cocoa beans to achieve the quality needed for export and further value adding. Consultations and analysis to date have provided background on the cocoa industry in Samoa, likely research needs, market and export arrangements, how production might need to change to meet the requirements of new markets, and the types of assistance that would benefit the industry. PHAMA continues to work towards strengthening the cocoa industry by working directly with farmer groups, and facilitating these groups to work together to establish industry representation, promote coordination and engage with the public sector, buyers and other relevant stakeholders to improve national market access outcomes.

Future Actions

PHAMA will focus future work on gaining a better understanding of the existing and potential markets for Samoan cocoa, and improving the capacity of farmers to consistently produce cocoa (quality and supply) that can meet the requirements of these markets. Deepening our partnership with SROS will be a key focus going forward. The Program will help build SROS's capacity so that it can routinely conduct the required laboratory analysis to assess the quality of cocoa beans and related products. In this way, buyers will have more



confidence in the quality of Samoan cocoa. Support will also be provided for SROS applied research into identifying cost efficient processes and affordable cocoa processing technology that can be scaled up across the industry.

Further activities will also include:

- demonstrating and trialing best practice fermentation and drying techniques,
- quality assessment of beans,
- production and evaluation of finished chocolate products,
- documentation of fermentation and drying processes and cost analysis, and
- preparation of technical and extension focused publications and awareness materials.

Research results will be applied to actual farmer practice and implementation of an export trial with the resulting cocoa.

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