

CNFA-Implemented Cocoa Initiative to Collaborate with Blommer Chocolate Co. in Côte d'Ivoire

CNFA, Blommer Chocolate team up to strengthen production of high-quality sustainable Ivorian cacao beans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), an international agricultural development organization, announced that Blommer Chocolate Co. and the Maximizing Opportunities in Cocoa Activity (MOCA) project, implemented by CNFA, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Jan. 7 aimed at improving the cocoa value chain in Côte d'Ivoire.

MOCA, funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Progress program, provides capacity-building, training and other support services to Côte d'Ivoire cocoa producers, cooperatives and exporters in order to boost stakeholder productivity and efficiency, improve farm incomes, and increase the supply of high-quality cacao beans.

Under the new agreement, Blommer—the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America—will partner with MOCA to work with farmers and cooperatives to strengthen the production of sustainable cacao beans.

To drive those efforts, Blommer and MOCA will collaborate over the next year to increase cooperatives' management capacities, launch pilot mobile money solutions with selected cooperatives, and improve distribution channels for agricultural inputs.

“Blommer is a recognized leader in advancing sustainability efforts in cocoa communities,” said MOCA Chief of Party Marc Steen. “We look forward to working closely with them, and to leveraging our joint expertise to improve Ivorian farmers' incomes and livelihoods through the sustainable production of high-quality cocoa.”

“Blommer is excited to launch this new partnership and pilot introducing new approaches to identified bottlenecks” said Kip Walk, Senior Director, Sustainability. “Finding ways to improve management capacities and instituting systems supporting mobile money are critical to the long-term success of the cocoa farming sector.”

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CNFA: Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture, an international agricultural development organization, specializes in designing sustainable, market-led agricultural initiatives. CNFA builds strong local and global partnerships, incorporates innovative approaches in its programs, and fosters inclusive development to offer enhanced opportunities to under-served groups. Since 1985, CNFA has managed more than \$600 million in donor-funded agriculture development programs and has worked in 44 countries across the world in Africa, Eastern Europe, Latina America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and South and Central Asia.

Blommer Chocolate Company: Blommer Chocolate Company is the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America. With over 800 employees and five strategically located manufacturing facilities in North America and China, the company provides comprehensive business solutions for domestic and international customers of all sizes in the confectionery, baking and dairy industries. Among Blommer’s core competencies are cocoa bean processing, chocolate manufacturing, commodity risk management, and product and process R&D. The company is a leader in advancing sustainable cocoa farming as a founding member of the World Cocoa Foundation, a member of the Cocoa Action sustainability initiative, a member of the Cocoa and Forests Initiative and through its privately managed global farmer programs. Founded in 1939, the company has developed and maintains an outstanding reputation for customer service and quality.