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Blommer Chocolate Announces Cocoa Sustainability Partnership Supporting Ivory Coast Farmers

Partners with top French and Asian chocolate makers in farmer education and support programs; improving farmer livelihood, crop yield and product quality

East Greenville, PA – Blommer Chocolate, North America’s largest processor of cocoa beans and ingredient chocolate products, today announced a new \$3 million cocoa sustainability partnership supporting farmers in Ivory Coast, West Africa. The joint venture, called the Processors Alliance for Cocoa Traceability and Sustainability (PACTS), is being developed in conjunction with [Cemoui Chocolatier](#) of France and [Petra Foods](#) of Southeast Asia. The PACTS mission is to improve the supply of high quality, fermented cocoa beans from the Ivory Coast while improving the livelihoods of the local cocoa farming community. The program was introduced today at the [World Cocoa Foundation](#) meeting in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

The PACTS program trains farmers in modern techniques and provides them with skills to improve crop yield and quality, and to give them a better understanding of the marketplace. The program focuses on the establishment of fermentation centers that help the farmer improve post-harvest processing and improve bean quality. The fermentation centers also act as a hub from which farmers can improve their agronomy skills and understanding, with a goal of increasing crop yields and, ultimately, farmer incomes. Over a three-year period, the joint venture will establish up to 30 fermentation centers that will support approximately 10,000 farmers. It is expected that the program will expand as the cocoa farming community reaps the benefits of better prices and consistent, high-quality crops. The Ivory Coast is the largest cocoa producing country in the world and approximately 90 percent of its cocoa is grown on small family farms.

The three partners in the joint venture share a concern for the cocoa community and the sustainable future of the industry. Cemoui, who developed the fermentation center model for the joint venture, is the number one chocolate producer in France; and Petra Foods is one of the world’s major manufacturers and suppliers of cocoa ingredients, and a leading player in branded consumer confectionery products in the Southeast Asia region.

“Blommer has developed its sustainability platform through the building of strong partnerships. The prospect of partnering with two of the most highly respected companies in the cocoa industry in a new and innovative program presents an exciting opportunity to expand that platform,” said Peter Blommer, President and Chief Operating Officer for Blommer Chocolate.

Blommer has a long history of involvement in supporting cocoa community sustainability, beginning in the early 1950s when company founder, Henry Blommer, helped found the American Cocoa Research Institute. That organization has evolved into the World Cocoa Foundation, and Kip Walk, Director of Cocoa for Blommer Chocolate, has acted as chairman of the foundation since 2008. In addition to the PACTS program, Blommer is involved in several private sustainability programs in Indonesia, Ecuador and Ivory Coast. More than 30,000 farmers have participated in Blommer sustainability programs to date in which farmers have experienced better crop yields and premium pricing through their participation.

“As the largest processor of cocoa beans in North America we have a strong sense of responsibility to ensure the long term sustainability of the worldwide cocoa community,” said Blommer. “We see the farmers as a key partner in the cocoa supply chain and want to empower them to stay in the industry, make a better living and deliver a higher quality, more consistent product.”

About Blommer Chocolate Company

Blommer Chocolate Company is the largest cocoa processor and ingredient chocolate supplier in North America. With over 650 employees and five strategically located manufacturing facilities in the North America, 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, playing an active role in the World Cocoa Foundation and promoting sustainable farming practices through its privately managed programs in Cote d'Ivoire, Indonesia and Ecuador. Founded in 1939, the family owned and run company has established an outstanding reputation for customer service and quality. For more information about Blommer Chocolate Company, please visit www.blommer.com.

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