



## OVER \$72M PAID OUT TO FARMERS

Over the last three years the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers' Association (JCFA) has paid over Seventy Two Million Dollars (\$72M) or an average of Twenty Four Million Dollars (\$24M) per year to farmers. It is a fact that is not lost on hundreds of cocoa farmers across Jamaica who sell their cocoa to the JCFA. According to Mr. John Osbourne who has a 57 acre cocoa farm-one of the largest in the parish of St. Mary, "It is the very best price that is available anywhere". Situated in the community of Whitehall, the property, known as Unity Farm, was acquired by Mr. Osbourne in 2008. His observation about the price of the cocoa is shared by senior citizen, Brenda Samuels who runs a 10 acre farm with her husband, Bertley, miles away in Harmony Hall. "Oh yes, we get more for the cocoa when we sell to the Association and what is even better they collect the cocoa so we don't have to pay to take it to the collecting point", she said.

President of the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers' Association, Mr. Clayton Williams, said that an important objective of the Association is to give cocoa farmers a fair price for their

cocoa. "For many of our farmers, cocoa has become a major income stream from their farming activities. We want to keep it that way and that is why we periodically review our price. Our aim is to significantly increase the quality and yield of the cocoa orchards and to encourage and provide the incentive to farmers to put more acreage into cocoa. We are very committed to providing the technical support to our farmers in order to help them make a decent living from cocoa", he said.

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The President's words have found resonance in Egypt Pen, Bellfield, where Mrs. Pauline Ormsby owns and manages a 3 acre farm with cocoa as her primary income stream. "I have gained a lot in terms of technical knowledge. My farm was rehabilitated by the Association and now I am getting more and better yields and of course more income from my farm", she explained.

The work of the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers' Association is supported by funds from the Inter-American Development Bank/Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB/MIF) by way of a project that is aimed at revitalizing the cocoa industry in Jamaica.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first Edition of Cocoa Talk for 2015. We hope you like the new format. The idea is to reflect the views of our farmers and to highlight the work that is being done in the field where it matters most.

We want cocoa farmers to feel that this is their newsletter. We look forward to publishing articles from farmers on various subject matters. They have a wealth of information that is worth sharing with colleagues, the Association and even policy makers.

Enjoy the issue and let us know how we can make it better.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Millions paid to cocoa farmers each year
- Jamaica Cocoa Industry Goes After Fairtrade Certification
- Farmers talk benefits of JCFA

## NEWS ROUND UP

### Organic Consultant to be Engaged

An Organic Consultant will be engaged to lead the process to obtain an organic certification that will allow access to specialty markets. The certification is to take place at the farm and Association levels. The Consultant will work to establish demonstration clusters of Organic Cocoa farms in St. Catherine, St. Mary, Portland and St. Thomas. In-depth training will also be done with

at least 250 farmers in organic cocoa farming.

At the level of the JCFA, the Consultant will review the organisation's process flow to establish systems throughout the value chain that will be required to obtain certification. Training will also be conducted with extension and fermentation facility staff as well as at the Board level.

(cont'd on page 2)

## ONE 'N ONE WITH THE PRESIDENT



### **Q: How would you describe the first six years of the JCFA?**

A: I would probably say that what we have achieved has been outstanding. We have been able to mobilize some 2,000 farmers into an organized group. We are still working on strengthening the base and ensuring that the structure works for our farmers but the achievements have been notable.

### **Q: What would you say is the biggest success of the JCFA?**

A: You know, farmers always face the challenge of subsisting and just barely being able to eke out a living. One of the goals of the JCFA is to help farmers to earn a sustainable income from cocoa. We have shown our commitment in this respect by paying the best price for cocoa. I would say that that is a singular achievement and our farmers appreciate this tangible demonstration of our commitment.

### **Q: Sustainability has always been an issue though. How do you plan to ensure that we are changing culture and practices?**

A: There is a major focus on capacity building. We are on the farms showing farmers how to get more yield and better quality beans. We are training them to operate their farm as a business. Many of them are already reaping good dividend in terms of increased earnings. I can't think of a better way to change culture and practices.

**“One of the goals of the JCFA is to help farmers to earn a sustainable income from cocoa.”**

## Significant Achievements in Capacity Building

A key component of the JCFA/IDB/MIF project to revitalize the cocoa sector in Jamaica involves building capacity to manage agricultural and food production systems. Toward this end, 370 acres of cocoa have been rehabilitated and 202 persons have been trained in post harvest handling and processing of cocoa. These include 130 farmers, 65 students and 7 teachers. In addition, some 139 farmers have been trained in agro-business and entrepreneurship.

## Jamaica Cocoa Industry Goes After Fairtrade Certification

Extension Officers for the parishes of St. Catherine, Clarendon, St. Mary, St. Thomas and Portland in December benefited from the first in a series of sensitization sessions on the fairtrade certification system and how it can benefit cocoa farmers in Jamaica. The sessions are being organized by the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers' Association (JCFA) which is spearheading an Inter-American Bank funded revitalization programme

**“The transformation process on which we are embarking can only be successful if the farmers believe in and own the vision”**

of the local cocoa industry. President of the JCFA, Clayton Williams, said that it was important to raise the awareness of the extension officers who were the change agents on the ground. “They are the implementers and they have a key role in helping our farmers to see the big picture and work toward correcting any disconnect that currently exists between the farmers and the Association. The transformation process on which we are embarking can only be successful if the farmers believe in and own the vision”, he said.

The sensitization session was conducted by Ms. Chanelle Fingal-Robinson, Fair Trading Consultant who pointed to the environmental, financial and developmental benefits of achieving fairtrade certification. Fairtrade International will be working with the JCFA to achieve certification for the local cocoa industry beginning in 2015.

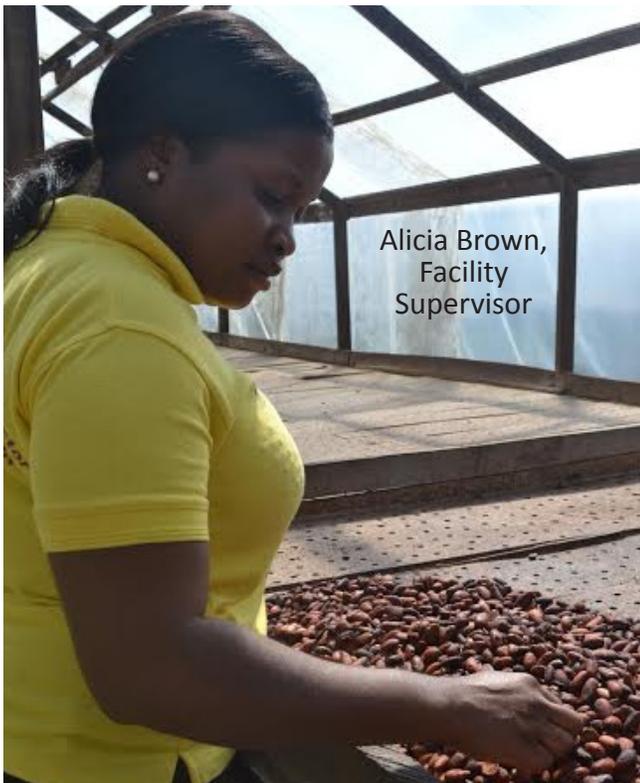
# FROM THE FIELD



JCFA Extension Officer for the parish of St. Mary Jodene George, talks to St. Mary Cocoa Farmer John Osbourne on a visit to his farm recently.



## Trout Hall Drying Facility Collects More than 2,900 boxes of Beans



Alicia Brown,  
Facility  
Supervisor

Two Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Four (2,894) boxes of cocoa beans were collected by the Trout Hall Drying Facility in Clarendon for the period January – December 2014 which produced Six Hundred and Thirty One (631) bags of dried beans.

The facility collects cocoa from communities such as John's Hall, Woodside, Windsor, Collington and Trout Hall as well as from the parish of St. Catherine. The selection of beans, fermentation and drying are carried out at the facility.





# FARMERS TALK BACK

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Food for the Poor partners with JCFA
- Regional Groups plan AGMs



It is not easy to manage a farm this size. But I have always loved farming. I really appreciate the work that was done on my farm in terms of rehabilitation. I would welcome some more.

**John Osbourne**  
Unity Farm, Whitehall,  
St. Mary



I benefited from rehabilitation of my farm. I have 8 acres and that help was very good. I also got some tools as well.

**Donald Sirjue**  
Richmond Road, St. Mary



I try to do the things that they show me on the farm, you know improve my farming practices. For example, I know what to do to prevent black spots. I can take much better care of my cocoa trees and I am reaping the benefits in terms of better yield and better quality beans.

**Pauline Ormsby • Bellefield, St. Mary**



I got good help with the rehabilitation. In all I have 7 acres. I wouldn't mind getting some more.

**Lorna Walker**  
Richmond Road,  
St. Mary

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