

HEIRLOOM
CACAO 
PRESERVATION




Fine Chocolate
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
FCIA

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THE HCP DESIGNATES NEW HEIRLOOM CACAOS IN COSTA RICA & BELIZE

January 2015 – The Heirloom Cacao Preservation Initiative (HCP) is delighted to announce that the cacao trees of **Terciopelo, Coto Brus, Costa Rica** (<http://finechocolateindustry.org/hcp6>) and **Maya Mountain Cacao Ltd. Farmer Network Villages of San Antonio, Santa Cruz, Santa Elena, and Pueblo Viejo in Belize** (<http://finechocolateindustry.org/hcp7>), both provided by Daniel O’Doherty of Cacao Services, Inc., have been designated HEIRLOOM. They become, respectively, the sixth and seventh HCP Heirloom designations made since the 2014 inaugural Heirlooms and the first from Costa Rica and Belize. Heirloom cacao has previously been designated in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Hawaii.

The HCP’s International Tasting Panel loved the smooth, clean finish of the Costa Rican sample, the way the fruits persisted until the end, and the intensity of the chocolate flavor given the mild aroma and light color. The Panelists found the flavor of the liquor and chocolate made from the Belize beans to be dramatic: well balanced and smooth yet surprisingly complex with all the flavor notes maintaining their distinctiveness but not overpowering each other. Specific notes can be found on at <http://finechocolateindustry.org/heirlooms>.

“Flavorless high-yielding trees are not the only option in the fight against the global degradation of cacao,” says Gary Guittard, President of the Guittard Chocolate Company. “Numerous specialty chocolate manufacturers and chocolatiers whose livelihood depends on fine-flavored cocoa have come together to work with local farmers on every continent to preserve heirloom cacao. That’s what the HCP supports.”

About the Heirloom Cacao Preservation Initiative (HCP)

The best chocolate in the world starts with the finest cacao but that cacao is poised for extinction. As the industry continues to replace fine flavor cacao trees with bland hybrids and clones, a world of boring monochromatic chocolate dominates. The HCP (www.finechocolateindustry.org/hcp) seeks to protect, preserve, and propagate the finest, richest, most complex forms in the chocolate universe for future generations. Launched by the FCIA in 2012, the HCP offers a new way to find these diamonds of cacao by connecting their flavor traits to their genetics, rewarding their growers, and working with world’s foremost flavor experts and geneticists to save Heirloom cacao from extinction.

A completely self-funded initiative, the HCP is not another certification or awards

program. It is a not-for-profit collaboration between the FCIA and the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA/ARS), and the HCP's Heirloom designations are its first steps to realizing its mission:

- identifying the finest flavor cacaos in the world;
- linking their flavor to genetics for natural reproduction;
- preserving and propagating them now and for future generations;
- recognizing and rewarding the growers who cultivate them.

Unlike other organizations which charge growers a certification or entrance fee, the HCP is self-funded by a worldwide group of small, medium, and large chocolate makers/manufacturers and staffing is largely volunteer. When growers do not have relationships with manufacturers or other well-funded industry people, the HCP arranges for bursary sponsorships to support those growers through the HCP process. All they need to do is provide the beans for the HCP to evaluate and access to their trees once the designation is made and the evaluation process is complete.

Throughout its process, the HCP follows a strict set of protocols, all of which are publicly available in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese. The HCP Lab at Guittard Chocolate, the oldest family-owned chocolate company in the US, blindly processes all submissions for an acclaimed international Tasting Panel of chocolate specialists. A detailed report is then provided to the applicant and the USDA/ARS performs a site visit and genetic analysis to both map the DNA of the trees and preserve them in the database for the future. Everything is provided to the growers who, with the support of the HCP, can use the designation to achieve better prices than they would growing ordinary or bulk cacao.

Taken together, the HCP is about three P's in Pod: People, Planet, and Prosperity. It goes from gene-to-bar and unwraps the possibilities for the millions worldwide who believe that life without the very best chocolate is no life at all.

About the Fine Chocolate Industry Association (FCIA)

The FCIA (www.finechocolateindustry.org) was founded in 2007 by an international group of chocolate professionals who came together in support of the art of fine chocolate making. Recognizing the tremendous consumer interest and growth in the fine chocolate segment of the chocolate industry, the FCIA provides a collective voice of quality and innovation that promotes fine chocolate making practices from blossom to bonbon and bar. A non-profit organization, the FCIA supports the development and innovation of the fine chocolate industry and best practices through: Identifying industry standards for cacao growing, bar and confection production, and the use of quality ingredients; Communicating with consumers, the media, and legislators regarding issues in growing, production and consumption of fine chocolate; Educating chocolate professionals on fine chocolate best practices, ingredients and techniques.

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