

Press release

Stollwerck and Baronie supporting “Farmer Field Schools” projects

Cocoa farmers in Cote d’Ivoire to be trained in sustainable cocoa farming ‘in cooperation with Cargill

Cologne/Veurne/Amsterdam, January 27, 2012. The Dutch-Belgian chocolate manufacturer Baronie and the long-standing German company Stollwerck – both subsidiaries of Belgium’s Sweet Products Group – are now supporting an extensive training program for Ivorian cocoa farmers, which the chocolate supplier Cargill is to implement at local level as part of the Cargill Sustainable Cocoa Program, together with partners such as Anader and Solidaridad. The program is intended to empower farmers to increase the cocoa crop yield on a permanent basis and to achieve harvests of a better quality. Consequently, the training measures are also intended to contribute to an improvement in the incomes of farmers.

The program is initially intended to run for a period of four years. An integral part of the so-called “Farmer Field Schools” – practical trainings onsite – is that the participating farms obtain certification for sustainable cocoa cultivation from UTZ CERTIFIED. In total the project is to promote two cocoa cooperatives close to Gagnoa, which each have between 400 and 500 cocoa farmers.

The training courses, each of which lasts ten months and takes the form of intensive half-day units, primarily cover the conversion to sustainable agricultural practices and consideration of numerous social issues. Thus the training units attended by the cocoa farmers will, among other things, cover the care of cocoa trees, including pruning techniques and regeneration measures, preventive disease control, and above the early detection of “black pod” and other cocoa diseases, the use of fertilizers, harvesting when the fruit have reached their optimum ripeness, and the professional post-harvest treatment, including fermentation and drying of the beans

so as to avoid a deterioration in the quality of raw materials. Furthermore, the farmers are to learn to seamlessly document all the necessary steps.

A further aspect of the training covers social issues such as raised awareness of HIV, responsible working conditions, the fundamental significance of school education for children, and intolerance of child labor.

All of the 900 cocoa farmers will have successfully completed the training program in time for the 2012/2013 harvest that starts on October 2012. It is the aim of this project that to all of them already reached the level required for UTZ CERTIFIED certification by then.

At present the two cooperatives “Cooperative Agricole de Guibéroua” and “Coopérative des Producteurs de Béhibrokro” being supported by Stollwerck and Baronie supply some 1,700 tons of cocoa during this harvest. Cargill, which will implement the training courses together with local partners, expects an average increase of 30 percent in the crop yield with a clear upturn in quality.

“Baronie and Stollwerck themselves support development initiatives at grass roots level so as to contribute to more and more farmers being able to convert from conventional to sustainable cocoa farming and thus enhance their opportunities for economic survival. An increase in profitability not only secures a livelihood for farmers and their families, but also helps ensure that farmers will enjoy cultivating cocoa in the future,” said Jean-Marie van Logtestijn, Sweet Products Spokes Person.

The project partners have agreed to provide information on the progress of the training program at regular intervals. The reporting is intended to guarantee more transparency and understanding among European customers for the framework conditions in the cultivation of cocoa.

About Stollwerck:

Stollwerck GmbH, headquartered in Cologne, is a leading manufacturer of chocolate products such as chocolate tablets, boxed assortments and truffles, as well as small bites and chocolate bars. The company boasts a tradition going back 170 years, with extensive competence and experience in the use of cocoa and chocolate raw materials and ingredients. Since October 2011 Stollwerck has been owned by the Belgian company Sweet Products. Stollwerck produces at a number of sites, primarily in Germany, and has a focused brand portfolio, which includes the leading umbrella brand SAROTTI, which still ranks among the brands best known to consumers, Alpia and Alprose.

www.stollwerck.de

About Sweet Products und Baronie:

Sweet Products is a privately-owned family-run Belgian company and the parent company of the Baronie Group. Baronie – originally Dutch – manufactures a wide range of chocolate products for its national and international customer base. The production sector encompasses branded and private label products, as well as commissioned production of brand-name chocolate. The range encompasses day-to-day chocolate (Belgian boxed assortments, fruits de mer and tablet chocolate) through to seasonal chocolate products for Christmas and Easter. Baronie owns and operates four state-of-the-art production facilities in the Netherlands and Belgium, as well as an ultra-modern logistics center in Belgium for the warehousing and co-packing activities. All this has made Baronie a strategic partner for major European retailers, to whom it offers branded and private label products.

www.baronie.com

About Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate

Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate offers the food industry a wide range of both standard and customised cocoa and chocolate ingredients to be used in delicious bakery, confectionery, and dairy applications all over the world.

Its facilities in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Ghana, the Netherlands, UK and the USA are fully dedicated to produce in accordance with the highest food safety standards.

To secure a good quality and sustainable supply of cocoa beans Cargill has their own cocoa bean sourcing operations for buying, handling and/or exporting of cocoa beans in Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia and Vietnam. Presence in all the leading producing countries allows Cargill to oversee the supply chain from beans at origin to cocoa and chocolate products on our customers' doorstep. In addition, extensive market research and analysis proves to be a source of valuable information to our customers.

For more information visit: for EMEA www.cargillcocoachocolate.com and for North America www.cargill.com/food/cocoachocolate

The Cargill Sustainable Cocoa Program

The Cargill Sustainable Cocoa Program ensures a better life for cocoa farmers and their families and strengthens the cocoa supply chain for the future, based on fundamentals of exercising good agricultural practices. It increases farmer incomes through efficient cocoa production.

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