



**Inaugural Issue  
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# Cocoa Jamaica

The newsletter of the JCFA



*Hon. Lisa Hanna, Minister of Youth & Culture with JCFA employees Shauna Brown (left) and Donna McLean*

## JCFA/MIF Revitalizing the Jamaican Cocoa Industry Project has taken Root!

The JCFA recently joined family, friends and supporters of the late Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Roger Clarke at a wake held in his honor. Freshly brewed Jamaican hot chocolate “tea” was offered by JCFA members and gratefully received by all in attendance. Mr. Clarke will be sadly missed by the Agricultural sector and his constituents for his friendly personality and genuine care for farmers.

**In** an effort to breathe new life into the Jamaican Cocoa Industry, the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers Association (JCFA), with funding from the Multilateral Investment Fund, MIF, has embarked on a three-year project to build a stronger, more sustainable industry. The MIF is a division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The project which has several components will include training for farmers in several areas such as agribusiness, organic farming, and Best Practices in general. Hundreds of

acres of cocoa farms will be rehabilitated, technical officers trained to best assist farmers with their needs and a computerized traceability system will eventually replace the current manual system of collection and billing to lessen the instances of errors.

Youth and female farmers will receive special attention through a series of workshops designed to address the particular issues related to these farmer groups. The future of the Cocoa Industry lies in the hands of our young farmers and opportunities

for female farmers to get involved in cottage industry and other areas of the industry, as well as in the fields.

Many thanks to the MIF for seeing and embracing the vision for the future.



*Extension Officers George Jones and Jodene George, Rehabilitation Consultant Nevette Wallfall and farmer Howard Wright shares a laugh while JCFA President Clayton Williams looks on in the background.*

The Board of Directors and Members of




honour the life, work and legacy of the  
**HON. ROGER CLARKE**  
His stellar contribution to our industry will always be remembered. Our sincere condolences to his family and loved ones.

## Rehabilitating Cocoa Fields

Rehabilitation of cocoa fields is well underway in Clarendon, St. Thomas, St. Mary and Portland. As of the start of October, 180 farmers representing 212 acres of cocoa have received rehabilitation services under the JCFA/MIF Project.



*Rehabilitation team on the move.*

The rehabilitation team has been busy pruning trees to make them more productive and to increase the levels of sunlight reaching into the orchards. Farmers are also being educated on good cultural practices to increase the number and size of pods and minimize diseases.

## *Training Young Farmers - The Future of the Cocoa Industry*



*Mr. Clayton Williams and Team Farm Kidz from St. Mary show off their vision board.*

It was a day of fun and learning when 30 young men and women, some already farmers and others potential farmers, gathered at the Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston for a day

of team building and training.

The event, which was the first in a series to be conducted under the JCFA/MIF Project, focused on getting the young farmers to understand their vital role in developing a sustainable Cocoa industry for the future.

MIF Representative Mr. Wayne Beecher and JCFA Director Mr. Hugh Johnson both addressed the group, giving them insight into

the big plans that are unfolding and the many areas in which they can play a part. The group was reminded that the Cocoa Industry was more than just farming but that there are opportunities in technology, product development, marketing and even finance.

Activities included creating vision boards for their regions, identifying issues they currently face and proposing solutions.



*Team Survivals from Clarendon getting ready to create their vision*



*Team Acumen from St. Catherine was "little but Tallawah"*



## *A Profile of Valrhona... Internationally Renowned Chocolatiers*

JCFA farmers recently received an unexpected treat - a visit from Mr. Benjamin Frigarede of Valrhona, the French gourmet Chocolate Company that buys exclusive fine flavored Jamaican beans from JCFA.

During his visit he spent time with the farmers observing farming practices, checking quality and touring our processing facilities. This historic occasion marks the first time that Jamaican cocoa farmers were able to interact with a buyer in their fields.

Valrhona is internationally known for its high quality chocolate products as well as its pastry and chocolate school *L'Ecole du Grand Chocolat* which has been training chocolatiers and chefs for the past 25 years. Recently, they celebrated another milestone with the opening of its first American-based chocolate school in Brooklyn, New York.

The JCFA has been a grateful beneficiary of Valrhona's generosity. The company has shown its commitment to the growth of the Jamaican Cocoa industry by providing pre-financing for wet cocoa purchases, offering technical assistance and quality



*Mr. Benjamin Frigarede and Extension Office Howard Thompson stand by a Valrhona sponsored dryer at JCFA Trouthall facility*



*Mr. Benjamin Frigarede inspecting Cocoa pods in the field*

control services and sponsoring travel and accommodation for a French intern, completing his Masters Programme in Agriculture, to work with our farmers in the field. Valrhona also invested US\$30,000 to construct dryers at our Trouthall and Spring Gardens facilities.



*Mr. Benjamin Frigarede with farmers in the field*

## Jamaican Cocoa on Display at Denbigh

Every year thousands of Jamaicans flock to Denbigh, and this year was no different. People from all walks of life stopped by our booth to learn about cocoa, get up close with cocoa pods and of course, enjoy a cup of fresh hot chocolate.

**The JCFA booth was a huge hit!**



JCFA Directors and employees serving and greeting customers.  
 Top left: Donna McLean (facing camera) Top right: Extension Officer George Jones (back turned)  
 Bottom left: Orlando McLeod (far corner) and Portland supervisor, Shauna Brown (in hat)  
 Bottom Right: Project Accountant, Veronica Shirley

## Expert Training in Trinidad



Jodene George and Howard Thompson practicing hand pollination, a type of sexual propagation.

JCFA Extension Officers. Jodene George, Howard Thompson, George Jones and Project Manager Donovan Edwards recently returned from a learning exchange visit to Trinidad where they were

hosted by the Ministry of Food Production and the Cocoa & Coffee Industry Board.

During their 5-day stay in Trinidad, they visited the Cocoa Research Centre (CRC) at the University of the West Indies (U.W.I) St. Augustine Campus, and the Cocoa Research Department of the Ministry of Food Production where they received training in best practices and the latest innovations in Cocoa research. They also received training in best practices for extension services.

Of particular interest was a visit to the International Gene Bank. Here the team had an opportunity to look at the over 2,400 known varieties of cocoa in the world and



JCFA Team with staff from the International Cocoa Gene Bank



JCFA's Donovan Edwards (forefront) and George Jones, practicing grafting techniques under the watchful eye of a propagator from the Cocoa Research Unit in the Ministry of Food Production, Trinidad.

participate in practical demonstrations on cocoa propagation.

### One One Cocoa...



**Full Basket**  
 Did you know that...

the more cocoa we produce, the less time it takes to get paid?

Because we must fill a container in order to ship to our Valrhona the longer it takes JCFA members to reap enough cocoa to fill that container is the longer it will take to process and export.



**It's harvest time...  
 let's reap!**



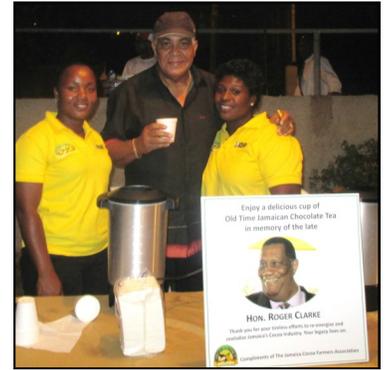
# Caught on Camera



*Kyamisha Russell of the St. Thomas Hill Stars Team, Junior President with Kaedon Lewis of St. Mary as Junior Vice President*



*IDB representative inspects Drying facilities at Spring Gardens, Portland*



*Hon. Robert Pickersgill, Minister of Land, Water & Environment, enjoy a cup of cocoa with JCFAs employees Shauna Brown and Donna McLean*

## VISION BOARDS ON DISPLAY

*Youth Farmers show off their Vision Boards to JCFAs President Clayton Williams at the end of training.*



*Team Hill Stars from St. Thomas*



*Team Survivals from Clarendon*



*Team Young Warriors from Portland*



*Agri-Business training in Portland with Consultant Dee Kyne (up front)*



*Farmers having fun during Agri-Business training in Portland*



*The end of a hard day of rehabilitating fields in Clarendon*



*Pruning in progress with French Intern Stefan, looking on.*



*Cocoa beans drying at JCFAs Trouthall Processing Facility*



*Extension Officer George Jones at the Cocoa & Coffee Marketing Cooperative Society, Trinidad*

**CocoaJamaica Newsletter will be published bi-monthly.**

**Please send your comments, pictures and any information you would like to share to [communications@cocoajamaica.com](mailto:communications@cocoajamaica.com)**