

New Hershey Learn to Grow Program to Impact Nearly 9,000 Cocoa Farmers in Cote d'Ivoire
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The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY):



- **Public/private partnership with Blommer, Olam and IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative, to increase farmer productivity**
- **Programs benefit communities connected to 27 cooperatives in six regions of Cote d'Ivoire**
- **Farmer training for modern agriculture practices will accelerate Hershey supply of certified cocoa**

The Hershey Learn to Grow program aims to reach more than 8,700 cocoa farmers who belong to 27 cooperatives spread across six regions of Cote d'Ivoire, the world's largest cocoa-producing country. (Photo: Business Wire)

The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY) announced today an innovative partnership with

Hershey suppliers and a European sustainability agency to help thousands of farmers in Cote d'Ivoire improve productivity, raise incomes and improve communities.

The partnership includes Blommer Chocolate and Olam International through their joint "GrowCocoa" initiative and IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH). The Hershey Learn to Grow program aims to reach more than 8,700 cocoa farmers who belong to 27 cooperatives spread across six regions of Cote d'Ivoire, the world's largest cocoa-producing country. There are three key objectives:

- Improving planting methods to increase productivity on each participating farm
- Providing fertilizer incentives and other important inputs to farmers who demonstrate use of good agricultural practices
- Rehabilitating cocoa farms that are more than 25 years old with new, faster-growing and higher-yielding cocoa trees

Hershey is building on its cocoa sustainability programs in Cote d'Ivoire. In 2013, Hershey funded the construction of a primary school in the Abroko cocoa region. With today's announcement, the Hershey Learn to Grow program will enroll approximately 19,000 Ivorian cocoa farmers by 2017.

"This significant expansion of the **Hershey Learn to Grow Cote d'Ivoire** farmer training and community development program is another example of how public and industry partners, who have deep expertise and a commitment to cocoa sustainability, can positively impact the lives of farmers and their families," said Terry O'Day, Senior Vice President, Chief Supply Chain Officer. "Through skilled trainers, we help farmers raise their income by adopting modern agricultural practices, while also investing in schools and infrastructure projects, important to local communities."

Farmer Training Key to Improving Livelihoods

Farmer training includes teaching improved planting techniques, pruning, frequent harvesting, timely weeding, shade tree management and soil fertility management. Access to fertilizer is one of the critical challenges for cocoa farmers in West Africa. Regular applications of fertilizer is key to achieving high yields.

"This public and private partnership will focus on delivering the productivity package of knowledge and inputs to farmers through cooperatives. The ambition is to give farmers with well-maintained farms access to much needed fertilizer which has the potential to significantly increase their cocoa production on existing land," said Joost Oorthuizen, Executive Director of IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative.

In addition to training farmers on the latest farming techniques, the program will also use technology to improve farming practices. Farms will be geo-mapped using GPS technology, which allows farmers to know, often for the first time, exactly how large their farm is. This enables more appropriate and precise application of key farming inputs, such as fertilizers.

The **Learn to Grow** partners will also fund women empowerment and cocoa community improvement programs. The programs will include focus on educating children, consistent with Hershey's long-time commitment to helping children in need.

Accelerating Certified Cocoa

A major benefit of the Learn to Grow Cote d'Ivoire program will be to accelerate Hershey's purchase of sustainably grown cocoa. Hershey is working with Fair Trade USA to certify many of the farms participating in this Learn to Grow program.

Hershey is committed to buying 100 percent certified cocoa for all of its products worldwide by 2020. Certified cocoa is verified through independent auditors to assure that it is grown in line with the highest internationally recognized standards for labor, environmental and better farming practices. Hershey's percentage of certified cocoa surpassed 18 percent through 2013 and Hershey has committed to purchase 40 and 50 percent certified cocoa by 2016.

"We are very excited to be working with Hershey and IDH on Learn to Grow in Cote d'Ivoire," said Tracey Duffey, Director of GrowCocoa. "This program will build on the work that Blommer and Olam have been undertaking together in Cote d'Ivoire since 2006. It will directly assist farmers while also strengthening farmer cooperatives, which are critical to ensuring sustainable cocoa."

This extension of the **Learn to Grow Cote d'Ivoire** project is one of a series of steps by Hershey to expand its farmer training model from established programs in Ghana and Nigeria as part of its **Hershey's 21st Century Cocoa Sustainability Strategy**, the company's roadmap for helping cocoa farmers and their communities. Hershey's 21st Century Cocoa Sustainability Strategy includes West Africa farmer training, community programming and technology initiatives that will reach more than 50,000 cocoa farmers by 2017.

Supporting CocoaAction

All of these actions are part of Hershey's commitment to CocoaAction, the industry's collaborative strategy for improving cocoa farms and communities in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Hershey and CocoaAction are also actively working to address gender equality and increase economic empowerment for women in the cocoa communities.

About GrowCocoa

GrowCocoa is an initiative of the Blommer Chocolate Company and Olam International focused on sustainably and responsibly securing the future of the global cocoa supply chain through shared value, linking communities to consumers, and improving the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and their families. GrowCocoa reflects the dedication of Blommer and Olam to ensure a healthy and equitable cocoa value chain for generations to come.

About IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative

IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative accelerates and up scales sustainable trade by building impact-

oriented coalitions of leading companies, civil society organizations, governments and other stakeholders.

By convening public & private interests, strengths, and knowledge, the 18 IDH programs sustainably transform commodity markets to create large scale improvements in the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of small scale farmers, reduce negative environmental impact, and support local value creation in developing countries - making sustainable production and consumption the norm.

About The Hershey Company

The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY), headquartered in Hershey, Pa., is a global confectionery leader known for bringing goodness to the world through its chocolate, sweets, mints and other great-tasting snacks. Hershey has approximately 13,000 employees around the world who work every day to deliver delicious, quality products. The company, which has more than 80 brands worldwide that drive over \$7.1 billion in annual revenues, includes such iconic brand names as Hershey's, Reese's, Hershey's Kisses, Jolly Rancher and Ice Breakers. Hershey is focused on growing its presence in key international markets while continuing to build its competitive advantage in North America. Additionally, Hershey is poised to expand its portfolio into categories beyond confectionery, finding new ways to bring goodness to people everywhere.

At Hershey, goodness has always been about more than delicious products. For 120 years, Hershey has been committed to good business by operating fairly, ethically and sustainably to make a positive impact on society. This means contributing to a better life for its employees, consumers, communities, and, ultimately, creating a bright future for children in need. This commitment is exemplified by Milton Hershey School, established in 1909 by the company's founder and administered by Hershey Trust Company. The children who attend the school receive education, housing, and medical care — thriving as direct beneficiaries of The Hershey Company's success.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/multimedia/home/20141022005908/en/>

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