



International workshop on cadmium reduction in cacao in Andean zone CIAT, Cali, Colombia, 12-14 March

Latin America currently produces about 15% of world cacao production. Despite being the main producer of fine flavor cacaos, the cacao sector in the region is faced with numerous challenges, among them, the presence of cadmium (Cd) in the soil, a heavy metal that accumulates in cocoa beans and that has harmful effects on human health. The European Union has established norms for the maximum levels of cadmium allowed in (imported) cocoa products, which will come into force on January 1, 2019. This new standard will immediately block a large part of cacao exports (especially fine aroma) from the Andean region, which will have a strong negative impact on the cocoa value chain of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, as well as economic and social repercussions, considering that cocoa is commonly produced by resource-poor smallholders. Identifying and developing solutions to this problem is, without doubt, a high priority.

The French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) are jointly organizing an international workshop with the objective of formulating a regional applied research project (Colombia, Equator, Peru) to solve the challenges of cadmium in cocoa in the region.

Objective is to bring together a group of experts and researchers from the region, as well as relevant research teams in Europe, the US and the Caribbean, in order to:

- Reconfirm and update the results that came out of previous Cd-in-cacao regional research meetings in Lima, Peru (2017);
- Identify the main research gaps and their corresponding research / innovation needs (short and medium term).
- Formulate a regional applied research project, to be negotiated with agencies and private sector stakeholders, for implementation before end of 2018.

Participants:

- Researchers / actors from national sectors (e.g. universities, agencies, research centers).
- Cocoa / chocolate companies operating in the region.
- International researchers from outside Latin America.
- Financing and development agencies

Co-financing: The workshop is being co-financed by the French Development Agency – AFD and the French Regional Cooperation. It is linked to FONTAGRO's new Seed Fund initiative on cacao.

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