



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Cacao of Excellence Names 50 Highest-Ranking Cacao Producers in 2025 Global Evaluation

Amsterdam, 20 February 2026 – The Cacao of Excellence programme of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT has concluded its 2025 Edition, recognising 50 highest-ranking cacao producers following an 18-month blind evaluation process spanning 45 producing origins.

The results were announced on 20 February 2026 at the Chococoa Trade Fair in Amsterdam through four regional ceremonies covering Asia & the Pacific; Africa & the Indian Ocean; South America; and Central America & the Caribbean.

A total of 191 nationally selected cacao samples were submitted and assessed under structured technical and sensory protocols. Samples were evaluated blind and processed into chocolate under standardised conditions to enable comparative flavour assessment. From this global field, producers were recognised with Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards based on documented performance.

The 2025 Edition reflects broad geographic representation across four regions and diverse production systems, including estate operations, cooperatives, associations and individual producers.

Gold Award Recipients – 2025 Edition

- Comunidad Santa Rosa de Boca – Asociación de Recolectores de Cacao Silvestre Yuracare (Bolivia)
- Fazenda Santa Cruz Agricola Cantagalo Ltda. (Brazil)
- Gilmar Batista de Souza (Brazil)
- Leomar Silva Vieira (Brazil)
- SCCAPCC Kye Ossi – François 2 Atangana Onana (Cameroon)
- Finca Cacao Las Mujeres (Dominican Republic)
- A&D Sanchez Cocoa Export (Ecuador)
- Bean&Co Processing Beanprocessing S.A. (Ecuador)
- Costa Esmeraldas Cacao Co. (Ecuador)
- Isaac Nyampong (Ghana)
- Kamananui Cacao Orchards (Hawaii)
- PT. Kudeungoe Sugata Indonesia (Indonesia)
- Taluang Cocoa (Thailand)
- TinTin Chocolate (Thailand)
- USCPCC IBA “COOP-CA” – Aboudou-Moumouni MAMAN (Togo)
- USCPCC IBA “COOP-CA” – Koffi EKOUADJI (Togo)
- David Valentin Bayon (Puerto Rico)

Silver Award Recipients – 2025 Edition



- Comunidad El Carmen – Asociación de Recolectores de Cacao Silvestre Yuracare (Bolivia)
- Adela Santamaría (Colombia)
- CNRA / DIVO (Côte d’Ivoire)
- Isaac Asirifi Darko (Ghana)
- Otu Kabu David (Ghana)
- Benjamin Field (Hawaii)
- Honolii Orchards (Hawaii)
- Cooperativa Agraria APROCAM (Peru)
- Cooperativa Agraria APPROCAP LTDA (Peru)
- Cooperativa Agraria Norandino LTDA – Eduardo Espinoza Tamariz (Peru)
- Apoy Benit's Cacao Agricultural Farming (The Philippines)
- David Christopher dela Serna (The Philippines)
- Bok Lian Lau (Taiwan)
- Chih Pei Mo (Taiwan)
- Carlisle Pemberton (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Deosaran Jagroo (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Mariella Pierre-Peschier (Trinidad and Tobago)

Bronze Award Recipients – 2025 Edition

- Patrick Klossail (Côte d’Ivoire)
- Bounni Sanon (Côte d’Ivoire)
- Hacienda Dos Lagunas (Costa Rica)
- Asociación Cafetalera Alpina S.A. de C.V. – Cyrille Beraud (El Salvador)
- Luis Antonio Arias Nájera & Mónica Monti Perla (El Salvador)
- Kampura Sociedad Anonima (Guatemala)
- Bon Fiction and Abburi Subbarao (India)
- Minang Kakao (Indonesia)
- Claudio Mananjara (Madagascar)
- Voankazomamy (Madagascar)
- Ananda Cocoa Ltd (Myanmar)
- Festus Osatuyi (Nigeria)
- Hacienda Terruño JS (Puerto Rico)
- Ricardo Lozada (Venezuela)
- RaiGoNueng (Thailand)
- ZHENG HONG Lin (Taiwan)

The 2025 Edition reinforces a structured global reference framework for cacao flavour evaluation grounded in blind comparative assessment. By maintaining standardised protocols and transparent recognition criteria, the programme contributes to clearer differentiation around flavour performance within the international cacao and chocolate sector.

Award process background materials are available in the programme’s Media Kit at www.cacaoofexcellence.org



About the Cacao of Excellence Programme

The Cacao of Excellence Programme is a global awards, research and capacity-building platform that identifies and evaluates high-performing cacao through blind technical and sensory assessment. Operating from its Research and Development Laboratory and Training Centre, the programme establishes an internationally comparable reference framework for cacao flavour.

Working with national institutions and producers, it strengthens evaluation systems, builds sensory capacity, and supports transparent recognition of quality within the global cacao sector. Cacao of Excellence is a programme of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT.

About the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT delivers research-based solutions that harness agricultural biodiversity to sustainably transform food systems and improve lives. As part of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food-secure future, the Alliance works with public, private and civil society partners across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean to generate evidence, strengthen capacity and mainstream innovations at scale in agricultural and food systems.