

Sistema Económico  
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Latino-Americano e do Caribe

Système Economique  
Latinoaméricain et Caribéen

# Belize Export Consortium Proposal Cluster of Premium Chocolate Producers

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**Relaciones Intrarregionales**

*Encuentro sobre Consorcios de Exportación para el Caribe  
Piura y Lima, Perú  
6 y 7 de mayo/ 8 de mayo de 2014  
SP/ECEC-Pymes Di N° 5-14*

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Impreso en la Secretaría Permanente del SELA, Caracas,  
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# Beltraide

making  
business  
happen





# **Belize**

# **Export Consortium Proposal**

## **Cluster of Premium Chocolate Producers**

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# Background on BELTRAIDE

**Mission** – Enhancing Belize’s prosperity by fostering investor confidence, entrepreneurship, business growth and innovation.

**Vision** – Enabling a dynamic and competitive business environment for Belize’s Social and Economic development.



- **FOUR Strategic Areas of focus:**
  1. Business & Investment Facilitation
  2. Investment Generation
  3. Trade, Export Promotion and Development
  4. Entrepreneurial (SME) Development
    - Small Business Development Centre, Belize

# Product/Sector



**Sector: Agro processing under Agriculture**

**HS Code: 1804, 1805 & 1806**

**Product(s):**

**1804 – Cocoa butter, fat and oil**

**1805 – Cocoa powder, not sweetened**

**1806 – Chocolate and other food products containing cocoa**

# Product/Sector

- Varieties of cacao beans cultivated in Belize are Forastero, Criollo, and Trinitario.
- Varieties of Chocolate products produced:
- **Chocolate Liquor** - This is the basis of all types of chocolate, formed by grinding cacao beans into a smooth, liquid paste. Nothing is added, and it does not contain alcohol, despite the name. It naturally contains about 53% of cocoa butter (fat).
- 
- **Dark Chocolate** - Contains at least 35% of chocolate liquor, plus cocoa butter and sugar in varying amounts. There is no technical difference between bittersweet and semi-sweet types of chocolate, and they are often referred to as "dark." Note that the "bittersweet (or semisweet) baking chocolate," is the sweetened cocoa liquor without the added cocoa butter.



# Product/Sectors

- **Milk Chocolate** - Contains at least 10% of chocolate liquor, plus cocoa butter and sugar in varying amounts and at least 12% of milk (milk, cream, milk powder, etc.).
- **White Chocolate** - White chocolate is not technically one of the types of chocolate because it does not contain any chocolate liquor. It must contain at least 20% cocoa butter and 14% milk, plus sugar in varying amounts.
- **Cocoa Butter** - When chocolate liquor is pressed to expel the fat and make cocoa powder, the fat expelled is cocoa butter. Cocoa butter is added to chocolate liquor to make the type of chocolate we enjoy eating; it gives chocolate that smooth, melt-in-your-mouth texture we love.

# Relevance of Product to Belize

- Historical value of Cacao to the Maya population
- Value addition is a priority under the NES and other developmental policies
- Small Business Development is a priority
- Popular “made in Belize” product for the tourist population

# Population Involved



Suppliers of Cacao	Direct Employees	Indirect Jobs	Total	Export Markets
TCGA	13	850	<b>863</b>	U.K., Amsterdam, Germany & Canada
Maya Mountain Cacao	18	306	<b>324</b>	USA (15 chocolatiers)
<b>Producers of Chocolate</b>				
Ixcacao	4	4	<b>8</b>	USA & Canada
MOHO Chocolate	12	0	<b>12</b>	USA
Cotton Tree Chocolate	3	0	<b>3</b>	None Yet
Goss	6	0	<b>6</b>	None Yet
Belize Chocolate Company	9	0	<b>9</b>	None Yet
	<b>65</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>1,225</b>	

# Fame and Identification of the Product

- Toledo District known as “home of the organic cacao”.
- Chocolate making done by Maya Civilization for centuries
- Popularity of the locally produced chocolate increasing

# Fame and Identification of the Product

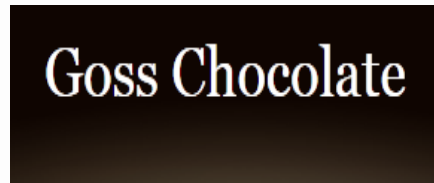
## Main Players:



- The TCGA is an association comprised of over 800 small Maya farmers (average of 0.4 hectares) in the Stann Creek and Toledo Districts of southern Belize.
- Maya Mountain Cacao is also working with small Mayan farmers in Southern Belize. Their number includes around 300 small cocoa producers.

# Fame and Identification of the Product

## Belizean Chocolate



# Main Challenges

The primary challenges currently faced by chocolate producers in Belize are:

- High costs of importing raw materials
- Capital constraints for equipment
- Packaging & Labeling being too costly
- Branding & Marketing of Chocolate
- Niche Pricing Strategy

# Institutional Support

Business Development & other training support are offered by (not exhaustive):

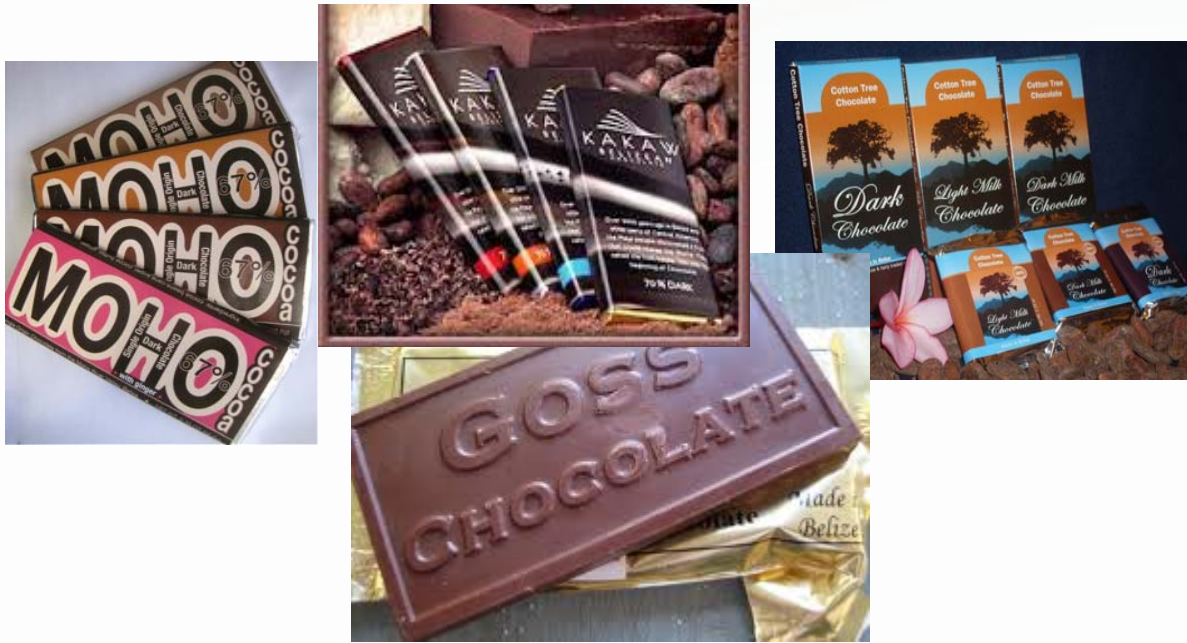
- BELTRAIDE
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Agriculture
- Belize Bureau of Standards
- Belize Agricultural Health Authority
- Directorate of Foreign Trade



# Market Approach

- **Quality is the hallmark**
- The chocolates made in Belize are said to be all organic and all steps in the production system are done carefully and effectively so as not to lose the true value of the cacao.
- The chocolates have a brown shine to it, break smoothly and taste of pure cacao.

# Market Approach - Packaging



Packaging in Belize is a relatively costly process, as packaging materials are imported from other countries. As such, the cost of packaging has been attributed as one of the key inevitable expenses that drive up the final price.

# Market Approach - Promotion

Main Promotion:



Chocolate producers have been receiving exposure through the National Chocolate Festival of Belize, an annual show held in the Toledo District and visited by a significant local and tourist population.

# Reasons for Selecting this Product

- Poverty Alleviation and employment generation, particularly in Southern Belize
- Diversification and expansion of the export base
- Positive regional and global prospects for Chocolate
- Opportunity to market as premium/niche product

# Expectations

- Learn from country examples
- Enable BELTRAIDE to assist with facilitation
- Enable SMEs to tap into external markets



# Thank you

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