

Cocoa



↑
max. 15 metres
∅
max. 0.4 metres

Occurrence

Originally the cocoa tree comes from Mexico, Venezuela and Ecuador. Today it is widespread in Central and South America, Southeast Asia and West Africa, where it is frequently cultivated in smallholder structures. The shade-grown plant prefers a humid, warm climate.

Significance

Even the Maya and Aztecs cultivated cocoa 3,500 years ago and drank it as a bitter drink. Today, cocoa is cultivated on a grand scale and over four million tons of cocoa are produced worldwide every year.

Fine cocoa

Around five per cent of the cocoa is cultivated as fine cocoa, which differs from bulk cocoa in terms of origin and flavour. The Criollo variety is the noblest cocoa and has a fresh floral flavour.

At ForestFinance

We exclusively plant fine cocoa on our fincas in the Bocas del Torro region in Panama and in San Martín in Peru.

Characteristics



Leaves

The red colour is typical for the young leaves of the cocoa tree. Later the leaves turn green.



Bark

The grey-brown bark is relatively smooth and thin. Both the delicate flowers (cauliflory) and the fruits grow directly on it.



Fruits

Depending on the variety, the fruits have different colourings. From deep red, yellow-orange to green. The colour of the fruit can change depending on its ripeness. A ripe fruit can weigh up to 900 g and contain 10-40 beans.



Flowers

The delicate white-yellow flowers are five-petalled and are pollinated by small mosquitoes and flies.

Cocoa

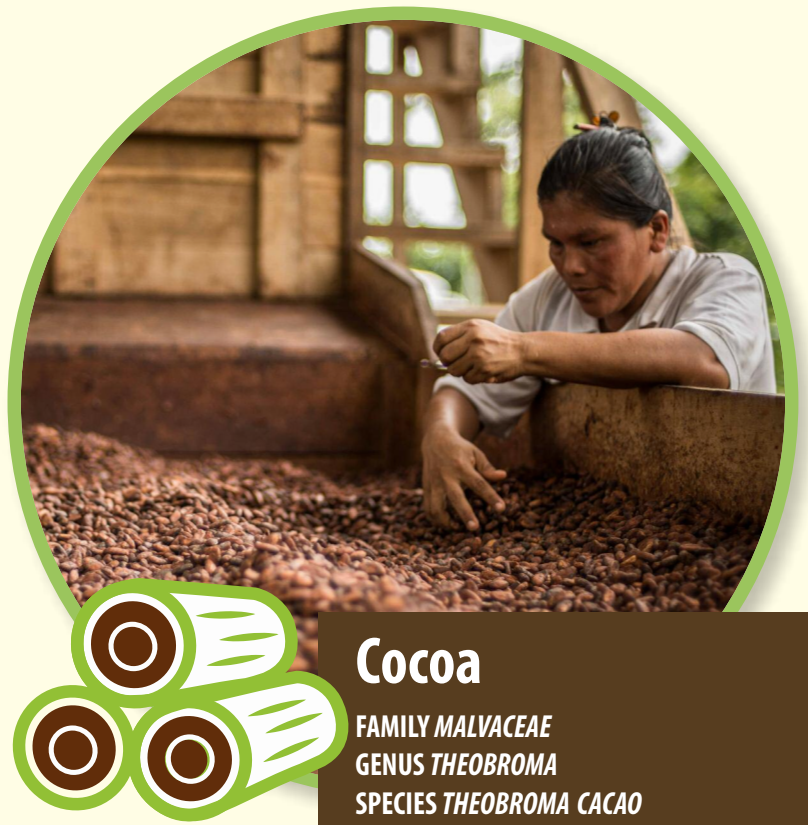
FAMILY MALVACEAE
GENUS THEOBROMA
SPECIES THEOBROMA CACAO



Cocoa

Cocoa varieties

There are two basic types of cocoa: the criollo ("native") and the forastero ("foreigner"). The elongated fruit of the criollo is red to yellow-orange and has white seeds. This variety is of high quality, but more susceptible to pests. The forastero has a green-yellow colour and black seeds. The latter is mainly cultivated today as it achieves higher yields.



Cocoa

FAMILY *MALVACEAE*
GENUS *THEOBROMA*
SPECIES *THEOBROMA CACAO*

DENSITY

0.41-0.43 g/cm³

JANKA HARDNESS

470 lbf

Fermentation



After the harvest, the cocoa beans are fermented in large wooden boxes for about 5-6 days. The pulp surrounding the beans is broken down by microorganisms and the cocoa flavour is formed.

Drying

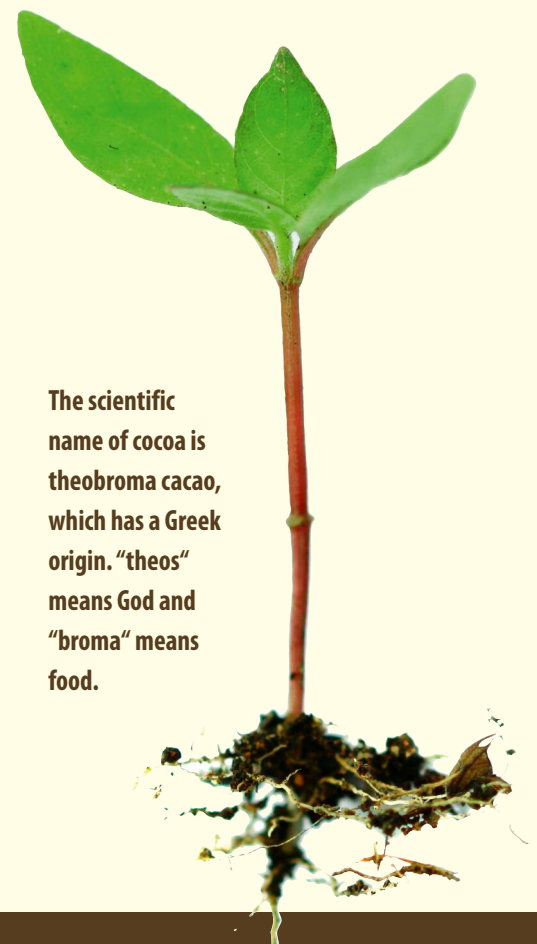


The size of the fermented cocoa beans is checked before they are dried in the sun for 1-2 weeks until the moisture content drops to 7 per cent. Only then is the cocoa called raw cocoa and is ready for transportation.

Chocolate



After drying and before being processed into cocoa mass, the cocoa beans are roasted. This allows the special flavour of the cocoa to unfold.



The scientific name of cocoa is *theobroma cacao*, which has a Greek origin. "theos" means God and "broma" means food.