

SUCCESS STORY

MAKATY - The first and best cacao community for 2021

The goal of PISA Cacao and Vanilla project is to sustainably increase revenues in existing and new APROCANO-members cacao plantations through improved cultural techniques, increased access to high-value export markets and the introduction of intercropped vanilla, while building demand for Haitian specialty cacao and vanilla in the international market.



The PISA bowl - new unit of Measurement for wet beans

Haiti's cacao industry has traditionally sold most of its harvest to low-paying commodity markets. To differentiate its cacao, PISA invested in both the quality of the product and in certifications to gain access to higher value markets.

Makaty is a cacao community in Acul du Nord not far from the main road and at a 15-minute truck ride from PISA's facility. Its name comes from a colonial plantation named after its historical owner Mac Arthur. PISA started buying cacao in Makaty from 25 smallholder farmers.

During the 2021 main harvest, from January to June, Makaty sold a total of 26,505 bowls of wet beans equivalent to a 20-foot container of exportable beans and 8% of PISA's total purchases. These numbers put Makaty at number one among the 31 APROCANO cells in terms of volume.

The PISA Nord Cacao and Vanilla project has selected 50 producers from Makaty to introduce Vanilla into their plots building on its success and the leadership of its KPS. Pierre Daniel Phelizor is excited by this new product and potential new revenue for the producers.

When PISA entered the local cacao market in March 2014, the company policy was to cut out intermediaries to ensure the best quality by buying fresh wet cacao beans. One of the requirements for good fermentation is to process the wet beans as soon as possible after opening the pods and no later than the same day. Producers were not accustomed to selling wet beans, especially in l'Acul du Nord where there are no cooperatives to receive cacao in this form.



Pierre Daniel Phelizor,
Makaty's leader



Altidor Nicolas, one of the first
cacao producers enrolled in
Makaty delivering fresh beans at
the buying station

PISA introduced a new system into the market, buying directly from the farmers using a new unit of measurement: the PISA bowl. Pierre Daniel Phelizor, remembers when PISA approached farmers with this new system:

“Producers were reluctant to adopt this new unit of measurement; they wanted to test it and see if it was better for them than the traditional “gode”. I always saw the advantage of selling larger quantities directly, and the price was definitely better, so I convinced my community to start selling to PISA this way”.

PISA's policy was also to buy at the same price in every community whereas the traditional market usually put the most isolated communities at a disadvantage. PISA started buying cacao at 35 gourdes whereas local market price was between 15 and 25 depending on how far from the main export house the producers were.

Today, the Makaty APROCANO producers cell counts 111 farmers with a total of 132 certified hectares and 238 plots. The Komite Pilotaj Selil (KPS)—local buying point—led by Pierre Daniel has been actively recruiting producers since 2018 and encourages them to deliver most of their production to PISA.

Pierre Daniel received several visits from chocolate makers and other visitors and is always keen to tell them about the positive impact PISA has had on his community:

“If it were not for PISA we would have abandoned cacao production; now I see people willing to plant more and taking better care of their plots. We never knew what was done with our cacao after selling it, now I am proud to tell everyone that it is being promoted as a high-quality product from the Haitian soil!”.

He is also a regular visitor of PISA's facility and says that:

“The first time I visited PISA, I was impressed by the investment and care put into our cacao. I also see that PISA has been growing over time and this promises continued partnership with our cacao community”.