

# Quality and HACCP-based compliance for primary processing of fine or flavour cocoa beans in Trinidad

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## Abstract

Trinidad is recognized as a premium producer and supplier of fine or flavour cocoa. Beans from Trinidad have been awarded prizes at the “Cocoa of Excellence” in the Salon du Chocolat’s, International Cocoa Awards (ICA). The principal markets for the exportation of local beans from Trinidad are Europe, USA and Japan. While cocoa beans sourced from Trinidad receive a premium price well above the international price for bulk cocoa, these importing countries are imposing more stringent regulations and standards such that the beans maintain highest levels of quality and safety. The competitiveness of the cocoa industry in Trinidad is threatened by inconsistent production, constraints of technological implementation and its accessibility to smallholder farms, inadequate postharvest practices as well as an aging farming population which have contributed to the steady decline over the past few decades. It is imperative that cocoa farmers apply best practices at every stage in the cocoa value chain to ensure optimum productivity and to attain the highest quality and safety standards. The purpose of this review is to analyze the present state of the cocoa industry in Trinidad and assess the quality of cocoa beans currently produced for export markets. The review provides a framework for deriving a “Quality and HACCP based Compliance Model” for the primary processing of cocoa beans in Trinidad which has significant implications for improving consumer satisfaction, market access and improving the economy of this premium supplier of cocoa beans from the Caribbean region.