

GHANA'S EFFORTS AT SUSTAINING COCOA PRODUCTION

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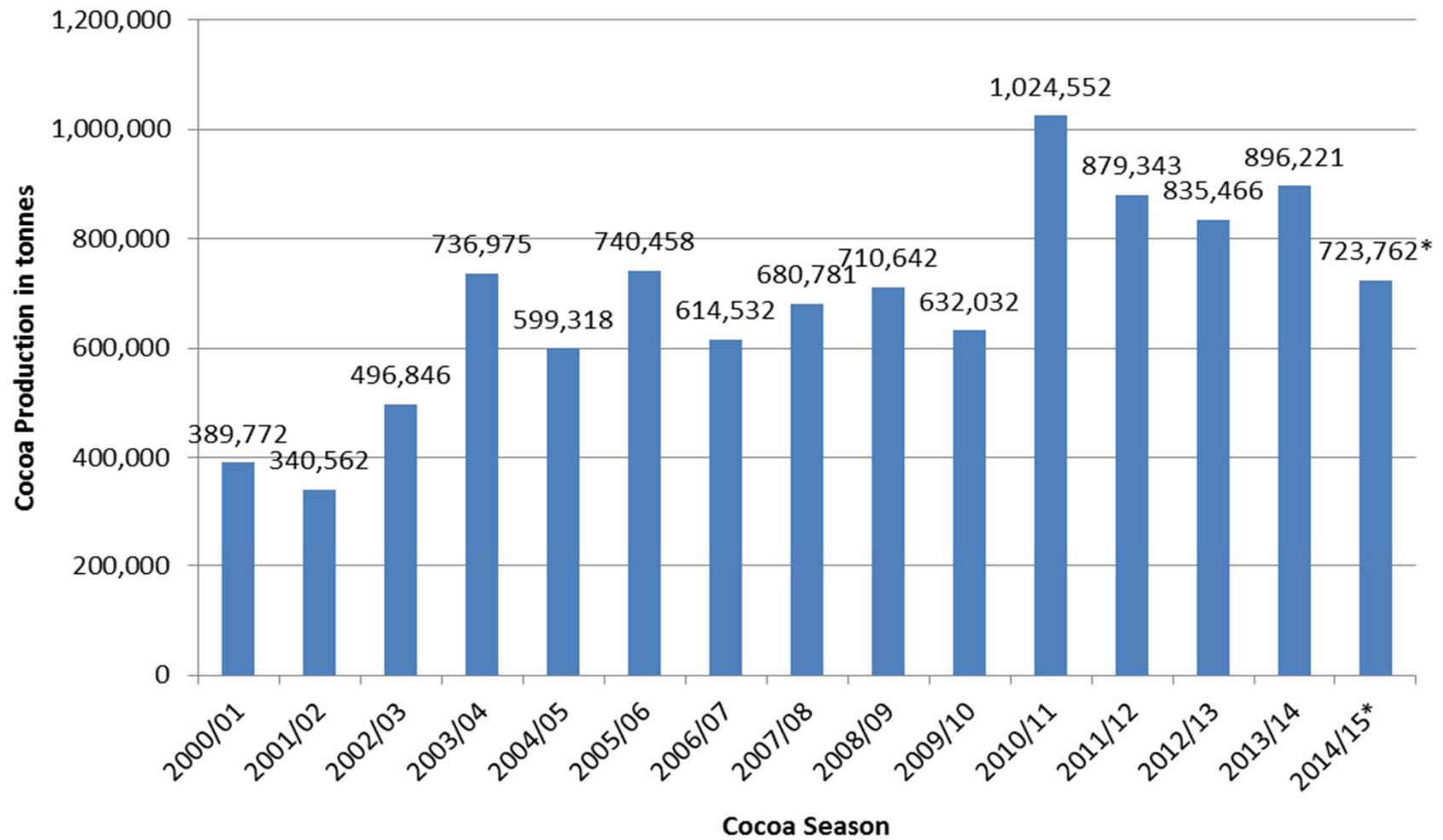
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INTRODUCTION

- Cocoa plays a major role in Ghana's economy
- The sector contributed 3% of GDP and 20% of total export receipts in 2014.
- It supports the livelihood of a lot of people in the cocoa value chain.
- Provides about two-thirds of the total income of cocoa farmers.

Cocoa Production (2000/01 - 2013/14)



- Diseases and Pests Control and subsidised Fertilizer programmes introduced in 2001/02 boosted cocoa production.
- Average annual production from 2008/09 – 2014/15*) is slightly above 800,000 tonnes.

MAJOR CHALLENGES

- Ageing and over aged cocoa trees – 23% of cocoa tree stock more than 30 years old.
- Pests and diseases (17% of tree stock infected with cocoa swollen shoot virus)
- Low productivity levels of cocoa farms – Improved hybrids constitute about 31% of tree stock.
- Ageing cocoa farmers – Average age about 55 years
- Declining fertility of cocoa soils
- Illegal gold mining activities on cocoa farms.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES

- Increase productivity from an average yield of 450kg/ha to 1,000kg/ha.
- Make cocoa farming lucrative to attract and sustain the interest of the youth.

Specific programmes/Initiatives

- Cocoa rehabilitation programme
- Cocoa pests and diseases control
- Soil fertility improvement
- Enhanced extension support for farmers
- Youth in cocoa programme
- Child education support programme
- Research support
- Rehabilitation of cocoa roads

COCOA REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

- Cocoa Rehabilitation and Replanting Programme initiated in 2011 to assist farmers to rehabilitate and replant old, diseased and abandoned cocoa farms.
- In 2014/15 season, nursery sites were increased from the existing 27 sites to 87 sites to raise 50 million hybrid cocoa seedlings for free distribution to cocoa farmers.
- Provision of boreholes at the nursery sites to irrigate the seedlings and also serve as portable water for the communities.

Cocoa Pests and Diseases Control

- Diseases and pests account for about 20% of crop losses.
- Free mass spraying against pests and diseases started in 2001/02.
- Programme reviewed in 2013/14 season to make it more effective and efficient.
- Under the new arrangements, fungicides and insecticides are directly distributed to farmers.

Cocoa pests and diseases control

- National security agencies monitor the evacuation of the inputs to the Cocoa Districts.
- District and Local Task Forces established to monitor and supervise the distribution and usage of the inputs.
- This new arrangement has minimized pilfering and diversion of inputs and has made farmers actively involved in the planning and execution of the spraying exercise.
- For 2014/15 season, inputs worth about USD120 million were procured to control pests and the black pod disease.

SOIL FERTILITY IMPROVEMENT

- Subsidized fertilizers supplied to farmers since 2002/03.
- Distribution of free fertilizers to cocoa farmers started in 2013/14 season.
- In 2014/15 season, granular and foliar fertilizers worth about USD110 million distributed to farmers.
- Sulphate of Ammonia fertilizer supplied to farmers to boost growth of young cocoa plants (1- 2 years old).

Extension Support Programme

- COCOBOD provides free extension services to cocoa farmers.
- In the 2014/15 season, Cocoa Extension Districts were increased from 41 to 60 Districts.
- Number of extension staff increased by 68% in 2014/15 to improve Extension Staff to farmer ratio.
- Cocoa Extension since 2011, has been operating under PPP with various innovative programmes to boost cocoa productivity.
- The traditional platforms for extension services augmented with the innovative “CocoaLink”.

Youth in Cocoa Programme

- “Youth in Cocoa Programme” initiated to attract young men and women into cocoa farming.
- About 30,000 young cocoa farmers are being supported with technical advice, improved cocoa seedlings and agrochemicals.
- An annual award instituted for the most promising young cocoa farmer since 2012.

Child Education Support Programme

- Child Education Support Programme initiated in 2014/15 to assist in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in cocoa growing communities.
- This programme seeks to gradually rehabilitate schools in deplorable state and also build new ones in deprived cocoa growing communities.

Research Support

- Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) has intensified research into the development of early bearing, high yielding, disease and drought tolerant cocoa varieties.
- Old trees in COCOBOD's Seed Gardens are being replaced with new varieties.
- WCF's African Cocoa Initiative is assisting in the establishment of 50 ha of new seed gardens with elite materials developed by CRIG

Rehabilitation of Cocoa Roads

- COCOBOD is constructing and rehabilitating roads in cocoa growing communities with support from Ministry of Roads and Highways.
- For the 2014/15 season, an amount of US\$150 million was set aside for this purpose

COCOBOD INTERVENTION

CONCLUSION

- Ghana will continue to be a reliable source of premium quality cocoa to the global cocoa economy.
- Ghana Cocoa Board is therefore poised to roll out programmes that will ensure sustainable production of the crop to support farmer livelihood, cocoa producing communities and the global cocoa industry.

