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Contact: Marisa Yoneyama - Marisa.Yoneyama@worldcocoa.org +1 202 559 4398

World Cocoa Foundation Announces Selection of Seven International Scientists for Cocoa Research Fellowship in United States

Fellowship Recipients Include First-Ever from Vietnam

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, November 19, 2012 – The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) has announced the selection of seven cocoa research scientists from five countries for fellowships through the WCF/U.S. Department of Agriculture's Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellowship Program Global Cocoa Initiative. The scientists, representing research institutions in Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, the Philippines and Vietnam, will complete a 2-3 month fellowship in the United States beginning in early 2013. The presence of a Vietnamese cocoa research scientist is unprecedented in the five-year history of the program.

In making the announcement in the commercial capital of the world's leading cocoa producing country, WCF President Bill Guyton said, "The Cocoa Borlaug Fellowship Program helps ensure a new generation of cocoa scientists is well trained and connected with their peers in research institutions around the world. The efforts of these scientists will help address a range of challenges in the cocoa sector, improve cocoa production, and in turn, support increased incomes for farmers and their communities."

"WCF has been an invaluable private-sector partner in USDA's efforts to foster sustainable farming practices and strengthen communities in cocoa-producing countries around the world," said Patricia Sheikh, deputy administrator, Office of Capacity Building and Development at USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. "We are pleased to welcome this new class of cocoa research fellows, and with WCF's continued support we will broaden our impact by offering training and mentoring opportunities to leading members of the scientific community in cocoa-producing countries."

Research to be conducted during the fellowships will focus on factors known to affect cocoa production, including swollen shoot virus; black pod; shade management/intercropping; insect pests; and the effects of farming practices on pollinators. During the program, scientists acquire skills and knowledge that can be shared broadly upon their return home. In turn, mentors, identified by the program and who work with the individual scientists during their stays in the United States, travel to the scientists' home countries to broaden the program's impact.

The World Cocoa Foundation is the leading non-profit organization in cocoa sustainability worldwide and represents more than 80 percent of the global cocoa market. For more information, visit www.worldcocoa.org.

About the World Cocoa Foundation: *The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) is an international membership foundation that promotes a sustainable cocoa economy by providing cocoa farmers with the tools they need to grow more and better cocoa, market it successfully, and make greater profits. WCF's membership includes cocoa and chocolate manufacturers, processors, supply chain managers, and other companies worldwide, representing more than 80 percent of the global cocoa market.*

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