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**Fine Flavor Cocoa, Quality, and Genetics Highlighted at
World Cocoa Foundation Meetings in San Salvador**

San Salvador, El Salvador (September 7, 2015) – The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) kicked off a series of cocoa-related meetings in San Salvador today to raise Latin American awareness about issues related to fine flavor cocoa, quality and plant genetics.

The meetings mark the first of their kind in El Salvador and will navigate the nuances of fine flavor cocoa and cocoa quality, areas of growing interest for the cocoa and chocolate industry. Elite scientists, industry experts, government representatives and NGOs from the region will discuss the market outlook, opportunities for further developing this segment of this market, the latest research, and the role of capacity building. Later in the week, researchers from public and private institutions in the region will meet to discuss strategies for adapting cocoa production to climate change and addressing disease pressures.

“Fine flavor, quality and genetics are important and interlinked issues the cocoa and chocolate industry is facing,” said WCF President Bill Guyton. “We’re pleased to bring people together in El Salvador to collaborate on these important topics.”

The meetings will be officially opened by El Salvador’s Minister of Agriculture Orestes Fredesman Ortiz Andrade, and will feature speakers from cocoa companies such as Casa Luker, Ecom, and Guittard, among other distinguished speakers.

Francisco Gomez, International Business Manager at sponsor company Casa Luker and a member of WCF’s Board of Directors stated “Today, at this great event promoted by the WCF, we want to show how CasaLuker is adding value to the cocoa knowledge chain - agricultural and scientific –making it clear that this step will be very helpful for improving our sustainable and profitable model to our farmers keeping qualities of aroma and flavour in our products.”

Dr. Wilbert Phillips-Mora, CATIE Cacao Improvement Program Leader shared “The development of new varieties of cocoa are an important topic of discussion for the sector in the face of potential impacts of climate change on cocoa and diseases. Genetic diversity ensures future cocoa production and conservation of agro-systems and the livelihoods of thousands of farmers.”

Sponsors for the meetings include Catholic Relief Services, Lutheran World Relief, Casa Luker, CLUSA El Salvador, and Fairtrade America.

About WCF: *The World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) is an international membership organization that promotes sustainability in the cocoa sector. WCF provides cocoa farmers with the support they need to grow more quality cocoa and socially and economically*

strengthen their communities. WCF's members include cocoa and chocolate manufacturers, processors, supply chain managers, and other companies worldwide, representing more than 80 percent of the global cocoa market. WCF's programs benefit farmers and their communities in cocoa-growing regions of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Americas. For more information, visit www.worldcocoafoundation.org or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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