CACAO FOR PEACE (CFP)

Supporting rural economic development through cacao research, development, innovation, and market access.

OVERVIEW

Cacao for Peace (CFP) promotes rural peace and development in cacao-producing communities through enhanced cacao research, education, and access to international markets. Cacao research is focused on developing more resilient and sustainable cacao plants, farm inputs, and cultivation practices, thereby increasing cacao crop yields and bettering farmer incomes. CFP is implemented through a Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA) with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and it runs from July 2021-July 2026.
COMPONENTS

STRENGTHENING COCOA RESEARCH

CFP strengthens Colombian cacao research institutions’ capacities through educational support and technical assistance, and it helps these institutions develop new and sustainable cacao farming inputs and practices. The activity also helps address the urgent problems impacting the cacao value chain, like cacao diseases and food safety issues.

PROMOTING COCOA TRADE

CFP leverages USDA’s technical experience and partners to address the technical barriers that limit Colombia’s cacao trade. It does this through actions like: optimizing cacao production; supporting the registry of cacao-specific pesticides; improving producers’ food safety capacities; and assisting producers to obtain an heirloom cacao classification.

RESULTS

- Worked with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to strengthen the food safety chapter of Colombia’s national cacao strategy;
- Partnered with CIAT to create a cacao gene editing platform to produce cacao plants that do not absorb cadmium;
- Began the process of developing a cacao research and innovation foundation to advance Colombian cacao production and exports;
- Assisted Colombian cacao producers to obtain an heirloom cacao designation and develop heirloom cacao breeding initiatives;
- Partnered with Fulbright to create three scholarships for Colombian cacao sector professionals to obtain master’s degrees from U.S. universities;
- Started to develop a laboratory exchange program between USDA’s Agricultural Research Service and Colombia’s agricultural research service (Agrosavia);
- Collaborated with the 100,000 Strong in the Americas program and the U.S. Department of State to create scientific exchange initiatives for Colombian researchers and doctoral students; and
- Helped develop a web application that contains information about soil, cacao genetics, water availability, and a cacao suitability to assist policy makers and farmers make informed cacao cultivation and policy decisions.