





TAZA CHOCOLATE
**DIRECT
TRADE**
CERTIFIED CACAO

**We believe both farmer and chocolate maker
should share the reward of making a great product.**

Before we can make delicious stone ground chocolate, we need to source superior cacao beans. We couldn't do what we do best without cacao farmer partners who do what they do best: grow exceptional organic cacao. That is why we are committed to maintaining direct relationships with our cacao farmers and compensating them fairly for the high quality cacao they produce. We're also committed to partnering only with cacao farmers who respect the rights of workers and the environment.

Direct Trade has been a key component of the Taza mission since we began making chocolate in 2006. In 2010, we developed the Taza Chocolate Direct Trade Certified Cacao program, which ensures our trade practices are third-party verified, to further establish our commitment to our cacao farming partners and customers.

TAZA CHOCOLATE'S FIVE DIRECT TRADE PRINCIPLES

Taza Chocolate maintains a Direct Trade relationship with every cacao grower from whom we source our cacao beans. The five principles of the Direct Trade relationship are:

1. We work exclusively with USDA Certified Organic cacao farms that practice sustainable agriculture.
2. We pay a premium of at least 500 US dollars per metric ton above the New York International Commodities Exchange (NY ICE) price on the date of invoice directly to cacao farmers.
3. We physically visit each cacao farmer or cacao farmer cooperative at least once a year to build long-term, sustainable relationships.
4. We only buy cacao from farmers and farmer cooperatives that ensure fair and humane work practices.
5. We never purchase cacao from farmers or farmer cooperatives that engage in child or slave labor.

THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION

The following claims are verified annually by Quality Certification Services (QCS), a USDA-accredited organic certifier based in Gainesville, Florida.

Claim 1:

Direct Relationships With Cacao Producers

We visit our cacao producers at least once per year. Our direct relationships with our cacao producers are measured by consistent visits to our cacao producing communities.

Claim 2:

Price Premium Paid To Cacao Producers

We pay a premium of at least 500 US dollars per metric ton above the NY ICE price for cacao beans.

Claim 3:

Purchase Of High Quality Cacao Beans

We source only the highest quality cacao beans (95 percent fermentation rates or more and dried to 7 percent moisture or less).



Alex Whitmore and Francisco Poma Cruz, president of the CIAAB Cooperative, signing the Taza Chocolate Direct Trade Agreement.

Photo by Jorge Valverde

YEAR IN REVIEW

Since we began buying cacao directly from producers in 2006, Taza has evolved tremendously, and my thinking on how the supply chain can best function has evolved with it. The Direct Trade program that we developed and eventually formalized into what it is today has gone through a continual honing process. We remain the only chocolate manufacturer that makes its relationships, pricing, and purchase volumes transparent in annual reports, and the only one with a third-party certified Direct Trade program. I am tremendously proud of the staff at Taza, the producers we work with, and the teams working at origin for all that we have achieved. I am excited to continue to improve what we have created.

Over the years, Taza has sold small volumes of our Direct Trade cacao to other craft chocolate makers. This provides a greater benefit to the cacao producers we partner with, by helping them increase sales volumes and awareness of their product within the craft chocolate community. For some producers, like the La Red Cooperative, this has resulted in increased prices for their crops, as more companies compete for their highly regarded beans. It's also been rewarding to contribute to the growth of the craft chocolate industry by improving access to high quality cacao for small chocolate makers who buy as little as one sack at a time. Over the past year we have sold a much higher volume of beans than we ever have before, shipping literally tons of cacao to craft chocolate makers all over the country. We look forward to supporting the growth of our producer partners and the burgeoning craft chocolate industry even more in the years ahead.

This harvest year has demonstrated the positive impact of Taza's Direct Trade floor price (the minimum price paid to a producer for cacao), which stands at \$2,800 per metric ton, while the world market price has hovered between \$2,000-2,400. In all of the origins we work in, the harvest got off to a slow start in 2013. Most regions were not seeing much fruit until mid-March or later. But when the trees began to bear, it became one of the most productive periods for cacao that I have seen in years. When I visited the Dominican Republic in May 2013, I found facilities and warehouses overflowing with beans, and trees filled with pods destined to become Taza Chocolate bars. Because of our high floor price and premiums, this abundance benefits the farmers in powerful economic ways, instead of reducing their sale price, as a glut surely would in traditional commodities markets.

Shifts in the ethical trade landscape have provided opportunities for reflection. In 2012, Paul Rice, the President of Fair Trade USA, changed their certification program dramatically, allowing individual farms to become Fair Trade certified. The original goal of Fair Trade was to strengthen farmer communities by bringing more income to small-holder farmers, not large plantation owners. The 2012 change essentially eliminates the requirement of farmer association and allows large plantation owners to certify their crop. This caused uproar in the ethical trade community. Several chocolate companies saw the move to allow wealthy plantation owners to certify as a step in the wrong direction, and abandoned the Fair Trade USA program, switching to IMO Fair For Life or Fairtrade Labeling Organization (FLO), who maintain more traditional ethical trade standards.

We work with several different kinds of producer organizations to source the high quality cacao we use to make Taza Chocolate, including large farm owners, cooperatives, social enterprises, and associations. Finding a model that works well with all of them is difficult, and as we watch producers and other manufacturers navigate these shifts in the market, we constantly assess how our own program is working, and how it can be improved. However, by staying true to our Direct Trade principles and having meaningful, face-to-face relationships with each group or farmer, we can ensure that the spirit of our program and our commitment to quality, community, and sustainability remains vibrantly intact for years to come.

I am excited to continue developing these partnerships so our impact on our producer partners, the Taza community, and the craft chocolate industry can be increasingly positive.

Sincerely,

Alex Whitmore
Taza Chocolate Co-founder & Managing Director



MAYA MOUNTAIN CACAO
Belize

LA COOPERATIVA RED GUACONEJO
Dominican Republic

FINCA ELVESIA
Dominican Republic

ÖKO CARIBE
Dominican Republic

CENTRAL INTEGRAL
AGROECOLOGICA DE ALTO BENI (CIAAB)
Bolivia

WHERE WE FIND CACAO

Cacao pods grow directly from the trunk and branches of the Theobroma Cacao tree, which grows only in the Cocoa Belt, the tropical climate zone ranging from 20 degrees north to 20 degrees south of the equator.

During the harvest, farmers cut the pods from the trees and collect them in piles, where they are cracked open and the beans and fruit removed.

This mass of beans and fruit is packed in large wooden boxes to ferment for up to 7 days. The beans are then spread out to dry on large wooden decks. Drying can take up to 8 days.

The dried, fermented beans are then shipped to the Taza Chocolate Factory.



Maria Elena stands in the seedling nursery at La Cooperativa Red Guaconejo.
Photo by Alex Whitmore

LA COOPERATIVA RED GUACONEJO

Country: **Republica Dominicana**

Provincia: **María Trinidad Sánchez**

Municipality: **El Factor**

Area: **Reserva Científica Loma Guaconejo**

Fermentary Location: Lat. **19.293363**, Long. **-69.904128**

Average Rainfall: **52.44 inches**

Average Temperature: **79.39 °F**

The team at the La Red cooperative has faced a particularly difficult year. The co-op has experienced significant struggles with the management of producer loans and the administration and distribution of cash to their members, resulting in delays fulfilling their cacao contracts. Then, on March 30, Maria Elena, La Red's administrator and treasurer, and Juan del Rosario, the production manager, lost their son Francis Rosario in an auto accident. He was 19 years old.

Francis worked in the fermentation and drying operation at the cooperative. The La Red community was deeply affected by his loss. Operations were largely halted, and little cacao was purchased by the co-op from the member farmers for some time after the tragedy. With these deeply sad reports coming from the cooperative, Alex traveled there in early May, as they were gradually resuming some purchasing, to try to help work out a good way forward.

Taza's relationship with La Red has been a particularly close one. We bought our first fifteen sacks of cacao from them in 2007, and we have provided support for them over the years as they grew their business. Taza co-founder Kathleen Fulton designed the logo for their sacks and painted it on their warehouse. Two years ago we flew several members of the cooperative to Boston to spend time with our team in the Taza factory, making chocolate with their beans. This is something that most cacao farmers never get to do. They also visited with Root Capital, the Cambridge-based rural finance organization that helped facilitate the co-op's growth. They even got to see a game at Fenway Park.

The May meeting was focused on how to get the co-op back on its feet to meet its contract volumes. La Red received over one hundred thousand dollars in pre-harvest financing from Root Capital based on our forward contracts for their beans, but they were not able to deliver their first shipment in February. Since the harvest year was more than half over by May, the goal was to find ways they could fulfill their contracts and loan payments. It was agreed that they would immediately ship 12.6 tons they had produced in a small container, and then begin buying aggressively for the remainder of the harvest to try to acquire another 25 tons of cacao. Since La Red's product is one of the most popular beans Taza sells to other craft chocolate makers, we hope we can get even more, so that we can continue to share this excellent origin with others.

Despite this year's struggles, we are committed to working closely with La Red to help get them back on track for the 2013-2014 harvest season. With the redoubled support of Root Capital and Taza Chocolate, and the greater community in the region, La Red will continue to be a rising star in the farmer-owned cooperative movement in the Dominican Republic. We look forward to continuing this journey with them, and to sharing chocolate made with their excellent cacao.

Rest in peace, Francis. We will miss you.





Haitian immigrant workers at Finca Elvesia hand sort wet cacao before fermentation.

Photo by Alex Whitmore

FINCA ELVESIA

Country: **Republica Dominicana**

Provincia: **Arroyo Arroyón**

Municipality: **El Valle**

Fermentary Location: Lat. **18.967297**, Long. **-69.41617**

Average Rainfall: **52.44 inches**

Average Temperature: **79.39 °F**

This proud old *finca* (farm, in Spanish), owned by Luis Vargas, is nestled in the foothills just west of El Valle, a small town an hour or so north of Hato Mayor in the eastern part of the Dominican Republic. It boasts some of the most unique cacao trees and most beautiful vistas of any farm in the Republic. A late start to this year's harvest resulted in a glut later in the season. By the beginning of April, the trees were dripping with ripe fruit, so much so that it was impossible to harvest it all. This year we purchased 63 tons of cacao from this excellent farm.

We first began sourcing from Elvesia in 2009. Finca Elvesia beans have become very popular at the Taza factory, as well as with the craft chocolate makers that we sell their beans to. Elvesia's operations and fermentation center is run by Samuel Lopez and Ramon Santos, who closely monitor the farm, the harvest, and the progress of each batch of beans as they travel through the fermentation and drying process. Their five day fermentation process results in a very consistently high quality bean with some of the best fermentation levels in the country, and excellent flavor characteristics which you will notice when you eat Taza's 80% Dark Stone Ground Chocolate bar.

We value face-to-face relationships because they connect us to our food producers in a meaningful way. When we work with a well-managed large farm like Finca Elvesia, the beans are consistently high quality, because it is a single farm managed by one staff, rather than an association of small farms that are each managed differently. Since we began working with Elvesia, the quality of their cacao has been exceptional and virtually identical, year after year.

When sourcing from a large farm like this one, we always want to make sure that the employees and the surrounding community are positively impacted by its operations. Finca Elvesia employs a staff of roughly 30 during harvest periods, many of whom recently immigrated from Haiti, with approximately ten having arrived in the past two years. Elvesia often provides these workers with housing, but more importantly, their employment can offer a path to Dominican citizenship. Working with a nearby church, Santo de Bon Jesus Peregrino, in a small town called Consuelo, near San Pedro de Macoris, the farm helps Haitian workers obtain citizenship so they can participate fully in the Dominican economy. Life on the farm is good and simple, so many of them choose to stay on after they have their papers, forming the majority of those who work at Finca Elvesia.

Working with Elvesia gives Taza the opportunity to support the placement and naturalization of Haitian migrant workers in the Dominican Republic, while investing in this excellent source of ultra-premium, certified organic cacao. We look forward to sourcing beans from this great traditional *finca* for years to come.





Bernardo Mamani, a member of the CIAAB Cooperative, shows Alex Whitmore the increased productivity of his trees after many months of pruning efforts.

Photo by Jorge Valverde

ALTO BENI CACAO COMPANY & CENTRAL INTEGRAL AGROECOLOGICA DE ALTO BENI (CIAAB)

Country: **Bolivia**

Provincia: **Alto Bení**

Municipality: **Palos Blancos**

Fermentary Location: Lat. **-15.57758**, Long. **-67.248402**

Average Rainfall: **61 inches**

Average Temperature: **78.5 °F**

This year Taza and CIAAB further solidified their partnership by working together to create a centralized processing facility. CIAAB was recently formed by a breakaway group of farmers who were disenchanted by the lack of support and growth opportunities provided by El Ceibo, the cooperative that currently dominates the region. Taza has been buying cacao from CIAAB for the last three years at more competitive pricing. As we grew with them, we saw an opportunity to implement the same concept that we executed in Belize—creating a new centralized processing facility to improve quality and grow output.

To achieve this goal, we proposed a joint venture with our Bolivian exporting partner, Invalsa, to the Dutch government's Private Sector Investment (PSI) Programme. This organization is very progressive. As is the case in many developed countries, the Dutch government is required to provide aid to underdeveloped countries each year. However, instead of giving money to governments, or investing in NGOs, they have acted on the belief that for-profit, mission-driven entities are much more impactful investments to effect positive, sustainable change and encourage economic growth and regional prosperity, and have given grants to social enterprises. The Taza/Invalsa proposal was awarded one of these grants, and the project is called the Alto Beni Cacao Company. The grant money is being used to build a cacao collection, fermentation, drying, and export operation in Palos Blancos.

By centralizing the processing of the cacao we purchase from CIAAB member farmers, we can improve quality control and expand the export market for their cacao in the US. This will be our last harvest season buying beans that have been fermented and dried by CIAAB producers. Next year, we will begin buying freshly harvested wet cacao from the co-op, and Alto Beni Cacao Company will carefully control the post-harvest process to ensure consistent quality and supply. We hope to transform the cacao industry in the Alto Beni region with the partnership of the Alto Beni Cacao Company, Taza Chocolate, and the CIAAB.

This new project, plus the whims of Mother Nature, made Alex's annual visit to CIAAB especially exciting. He arrived in La Paz in mid-April of 2013, and traveled over the Cordillera de los Andes, through Caranavi, and down into Palos Blancos. This is normally a six hour drive, but it took eight hours because the roads were in very bad shape. Shortly after Alex completed this journey, strong rain caused a section of the road to fall off the side of the mountain. The road remained closed for the remainder of his visit, which led to fuel shortages and rationing because fuel trucks could not travel on this route. This is a testament to how remote and rugged this region of Bolivia is.

While in Palos Blancos, Alex, Jorge Valverde of Invalsa, and Jorge Rojas, the Alto Beni Cacao project manager and chief agronomist, met with the president of CIAAB, Francisco Poma Cruz, to discuss the goals of the visit, the state of the co-op, the new Alto Beni Cacao Company, and the farm visit schedule for the days ahead. They also visited several key CIAAB member farmers, including Bernardo Mamani, Maclobio Poma, Janette Poma, and Tomas Lazcano. The farmers were excited to hear about the Alto Beni Cacao Company. They discussed project details, including a seeding initiative to help augment volumes with fresh plantings and greater acreage under cultivation. Tours of the farms confirmed that production in the region is good, despite problems with Monilia fungus, witches broom, and black pod fungus. The CIAAB producers are very industrious and have a variety of high-production hybrids planted.

The group's visit culminated in a ceremonial meeting with the CIAAB leadership in Sapecho village, attended by local farmers, the president of the co-op, the ex-president, the secretary, and several co-op members. They killed three chickens, and prepared *pollo asado* and a delicious variety of other local dishes, while drinking beer and chewing coca.

With the launch of these exciting new initiatives, we look forward to continued improvement of volume and quality from this excellent region, whose beans we use exclusively in our 87% Dark Stone Ground Organic Chocolate bar.



Apollinaria Cho at her farm, with Gabriel Pop, MMC Field Director, and Alex Whitmore during Taza Chocolate Week in Belize, March 2013.
Photo by Emily Stone

MAYA MOUNTAIN CACAO, LTD.

Country: **Belize**

Provincia: **Toledo**

Municipality: **San Felipe**

Fermentary Location: Lat. **16.097905**, Long. **-88.927009**

Average Rainfall: **71.97 inches**

Average Temperature: **85.24 °F**

It has been a very exciting year for Maya Mountain Cacao (MMC) and Taza Chocolate. MMC is a social enterprise that launched in 2010 with a mission to connect smallholder cacao farmers in the Maya Mountain region of Belize to premium chocolate makers, and thereby provide a source of much needed income to the farming communities there. Taza co-founder Alex Whitmore was one of MMC's three original founders and investors. We are happy to report that as of September 2012, Taza Chocolate was able to make an investment in MMC. This was a decision driven both by our mission to positively impact the communities in which we do business, and by our need to secure sources of high quality cacao for our future growth. Taza is still developing our first chocolate bar made with these excellent beans, so keep an eye out for a Belizean bar in the near future! This year, Taza purchased about 14 tons of cacao from MMC, several tons of which we sold to other craft chocolate makers.

Led by Managing Director Emily Stone, with the support of Field Director Gabriel Pop and a great team of production and field staff, MMC has been making waves in both the social enterprise and craft chocolate communities. In late 2012, MMC implemented a portfolio of low-interest farmer loans via Kiva, a non-profit organization that connects individuals with microfinance institutions on five continents to provide micro-loans to people without access to traditional banking systems. The loans will help existing producers grow their income by investing in planting more and increasing their production. MMC is developing additional Kiva loan opportunities for new producers and community groups.

This past winter, Emily attended the Fine Chocolate Industry Association meeting in San Francisco as well as the Winter Fancy Food Show, a major specialty food trade show. During her visit she was able to connect with a large number of craft chocolate makers, and sold the entire 2013 harvest. In addition to Taza's investment, MMC also successfully closed on a round of investment with impact investor group The Eleos Foundation in July 2013. Finally, Rich Falotico of Atlantic Cocoa, Taza's importing partner, formalized an agreement to sit on the MMC Board of Advisors. His expertise will create greater access to markets which will support continued growth. By the end of 2013, MMC anticipates being Belize's largest cocoa exporter!

On March 16, 2013, MMC held its 3rd Annual General Meeting of producers, which Alex attended as part of his annual visit. The cocoa farmer community in southern Belize, largely composed of Mopan and K'ekchi Maya as well as some East Indian, Creole, and Garifuna communities, has embraced Maya Mountain Cacao more each year. The meeting had a record turnout, with over 200 independent cocoa farmers and their families in attendance. In the two previous years, many questions were raised at the General Meetings by farmers who were skeptical of MMC's commitment to producers and their communities, because of a history of development flops in the region. This year, the questions were focused on growth and the future: how can we plant more, make our farms more productive and create a more sustainable income by farming cocoa? This was a huge, positive shift in the attitude of the communities MMC works in.

The 2013 Taza Chocolate Week at Cotton Tree Lodge, an eco-resort on the grounds of Maya Mountain's fermentation facility and warehouse, was a big hit. Joe Maxwell and Lauren Weinberg, members of the Taza production team, joined Alex for Chocolate Week to learn more about the farming, harvesting, and processing of cacao at the origin level. But Chocolate Week is not just chocolate. Guests were able to go on caving expeditions, river hikes, kayak excursions and some people even made it out to the cayes for snorkeling! To learn more about how you can spend a week alongside the MMC team, visit our Chocolate Week web page: tazachocolate.com/Tours/Chocolate_Week_in_Belize.

Taza is proud to be involved with Maya Mountain Cacao, and thrilled by this year's impressive achievements by their amazing team in Belize. We can't wait to see how they are able to grow in the year ahead.



Adriano and Gualberto of ÖKO Caribe in their cacao warehouse north of San Francisco de Macoris.
Photo by Alex Whitmore

ÖKO CARIBE

Country: **Dominican Republic**
Provincia: **San Francisco de Macoris**
Municipality: **La Gina - Pimentel**
Fermentary Location: Lat. **19.208366**, Long. **-70.089815**
Average Rainfall: **52.44 inches**
Average Temperature: **79.39 °F**

ÖKO Caribe was founded in 2006 by Gualberto Acebey Torrejon and Adriano De Jesus Rodriguez, who both have over 20 years of experience in cacao production, including working as *technicos* (trainers who teach farmers agricultural best practices) for Conocado, the largest cocoa producer group in the Dominican Republic, and biggest Fair Trade certified cocoa co-op in the world. They decided to set out on their own and started ÖKO Caribe, a mission-driven cacao sourcing company based just outside San Francisco de Macoris. Similar to what Taza helped create at Maya Mountain Cacao, Gualberto and Adriano's venture is a private cocoa processing and export company, working directly with small producers. They buy wet beans, then ferment and dry them to perfection for export to ultra-premium buyers in Europe and the USA. Their goal in founding ÖKO Caribe was to raise quality standards for cacao to serve these growing global markets, while maintaining environmentally and socially responsible operations.

Alex and Rich Falotico of Atlantic Cacao (Taza's import partner) visited ÖKO Caribe on their way back to Santo Domingo, after their visit with La Red. They met with Gualberto and Adriano, and were impressed by both the founders and their facility. Gualberto and Adriano showed Alex and Rich a presentation about the company, and gave them a tour of their operations. Alex and Rich learned that ÖKO Caribe buys wet cacao primarily through three farmer associations: Alta Gracia, Union y Progress, and San Isidro, all of which are certified organic and UTZ (a certification program with social and environmental criteria for responsible growing practices). Each association has about 15-20 member farmers with between 20-50 acres of cacao each. These are medium size farms that can produce a decent volume, but not enough to market their beans individually to an end user like Taza.

The farms are located in several zones outside of San Francisco de Macoris: Ponton, Pimentel, San Felipe, Los Lanos de Castillo (the biggest cacao producing zone in the Dominican Republic), Ramonel, Coto, and Duarte. The member farmers are industrious and often hire local folks to help them maintain and harvest their cacao, in order to improve production. Adriano and Gualberto have developed strong, long-term relationships with these associations to help cultivate a better and more stable price for their cacao than they were able to achieve selling to other buyers.

Because ÖKO Caribe's mission shares so many values with Taza's own mission, Alex was immediately interested in purchasing cacao from them. After studying the bean quality and extensively touring the facility, he negotiated for our first container shipment to be delivered in June 2013. We are excited to welcome ÖKO Caribe to our roster of ultra-fine cacao producer partners!



CACAO SOURCE INFORMATION

	LA RED GUACONEJO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	FINCA ELVESIA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	CIAAB, BOLIVIA	MAYA MOUNTAIN CACAO, BELIZE	ÖKO CARIBE, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Purchased Since	May 2007	January 2010	September 2010	July 2011	May 2013
Most Recent Visit	May 2013	May 2013	April 2013	March 2013	May 2013
Visit Made By	Alex Whitmore	Alex Whitmore*	Alex Whitmore	Alex Whitmore, Lauren Weinberg & Joe Maxwell	Alex Whitmore
Most Recent Price Per Ton	\$3219	\$3185	\$4200	\$4500	\$3035
Tons Purchased Past 12 Months	37.8	63	25.2	14	25.2
Fermentation Rate Cut Test Score	98.8%	98.1%	99.5%	98.0%	99.0%
Percent of Total Cacao Purchased in the Past 12 Months	23%	38%	15%	8%	15%
Shipment Method	Sea Freight	Sea Freight	Sea Freight	Sea Freight	Sea Freight

* Alex met with Joe Locandro, Finca Elvesia Sales Director, at his office in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. While their schedules did not allow for a farm visit, they were able to connect in country to discuss this year's operations.

As of July 12, 12



SUGAR

This year, Taza Chocolate is proud to have partnered with the Native Green Cane Project for our sugar sourcing. Native's distribution partner, Global Organics Ltd., based in Arlington, MA, tells the story of this unique source for an often challenging ingredient.

The Native Green Cane Project

The Native® Green Cane Project in Brazil has been recognized as a sustainability champion. The World Economic Forum, the Boston Consulting Group, the Union for Ethical BioTrade and other organizations have recognized the Native Green Cane Project as one of the world's leading examples of innovative agriculture and sustainability.

Native set out over 25 years ago to pursue the belief that sugar cane plants are an ideal crop for an organic agricultural production system. After much time was spent in research and development, the Green Cane Project was launched in 1987. Ten years later they achieved organic certification. They now have 15,000 hectares, or over 37,000 acres, of organically farmed fields, which is equivalent to almost 30,000 football fields.

It all started with a conviction to supply sugar in a sustainable manner. Sugar production has been reported to contribute to greater biodiversity loss than any other crop. Also, the traditional method of harvesting by burning cane fields releases carbon and dangerous greenhouse gases. Native developed the first mechanical cane harvester, which means the cane is harvested green and not burned. The harvester also leaves green straw covering the ground, creating mulch that protects the soil against erosion. In addition to reducing greenhouse gases, this new way of harvesting also saves water, as a significant amount of water is used to clean burnt cane during processing.

This new method of harvesting was implemented without displacing field workers. All workers were re-trained for other positions within the operation. They were also offered profit sharing and advancement programs as well as housing, education, and health care. Due to this and other programs, Native earned the EcoSocial certification by IBD, a social, environmental, and economic development and fair trade certification.

The Green Cane Project reaches beyond standard organic practices such as eliminating synthetic fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, and prohibited pesticides. Native has worked to rebuild the soil by redirecting all waste streams to the fields, applying green manure, and rotating crops. They have increased the number and diversity of plants and animals on their farms by restoring habitats. Native also has its own entomological lab where they work with natural enemies that prevent pest damage to crops.

Since 1986 over a million native trees and shrubs have been planted on Native farms, creating biodiversity islands which help to prevent erosion and create habitats for native species. Over 330 species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians have been identified on Native farms, 49 of which are endangered. This includes four species of large cats including pumas and jaguarundis. They have also increased fungus, snails, wasps, and caterpillars to complete the food chain.

The mills that produce Native's sugar are energy self-sufficient. Waste products from the process (sugar cane bagasse) are burned in highly efficient boilers to produce steam, which is then converted to electricity that is used to power the mill. They also sell excess energy to the power grid.

The Green Cane Project's organic farming system has resulted in 20% higher productivity than conventional sugar cane production while reducing Native's carbon footprint and saving water, soil, energy, and promoting human welfare. Native has gone beyond organic, creating a sustainable way of life for their farms, their employees and the earth.

**Mixing organic cane sugar into chocolate
at the Taza Chocolate Factory in Somerville, MA.**

Photo by Michael Piazza



ADJUNCT INGREDIENTS

Taza Chocolate Direct Trade is a certification that applies only to our cacao sourcing. As a small company with limited resources, we must focus our sourcing efforts on ingredients that have the most impact. Whenever possible, we like to source our non-cacao ingredients directly as well. For example, we frequently source cinnamon and vanilla from Villa Vanilla, a sustainable organic spice farm in Costa Rica, and almonds from Big Tree Organic Farms, an organic farming cooperative in Turlock, California. But in most cases, since adjunct ingredients are a very small percentage of the total ingredients we use, they are only cost effective when purchased through indirect sources.

Summary of Adjunct Ingredient Sources

*All Certified USDA Organic**

Ingredient	Source
Almonds	Big Tree Organic Farms in Turlock, CA and Hilltop Ranch Inc. via Tradin Organics in Ballico, CA
Cane Sugar	Native Green Cane Project in Brazil
Cashews	Tradin Organics in India
Cinnamon	Villa Vanilla in Costa Rica
Cocoa Butter	Global Organics; it is from Peru and the Dominican Republic, and processed in Italy.
Coconut Flavor Concentrate	Natures Flavors in Orange, CA
Coffee	Counter Culture Coffee in Durham, NC; we only use their Direct Trade Certified coffee.
Hazelnuts	Bedemco in Turkey
Kosher Salt*	Siegel Egg, a distributor in Billerica, MA
Orange Oil	Made from domestic oranges; purchased from the Lebermuth Company, based in Indiana.
Peanuts	Teddie in Everett, MA
Rice Crisps	New Organics in Grafton, CA
Rum Flavor Oil	Natures Flavors in Orange, CA
Spices (Ground Chipotle, Ground Chili Blend, Ground Cayenne Pepper, Ground Black Pepper, Ground Nutmeg, Ground Cinnamon)	High Quality Organics in Reno, NV
Vanilla	Villa Vanilla in Costa Rica, and Gold Coast Ingredients in Uganda

* Salt is a mineral and cannot be certified organic under USDA standards

Weighing out biodynamically farmed and cured vanilla beans from Costa Rica.
Photo by Michael Piazza



561 Windsor Street
Somerville, MA 02143
tazachocolate.com

Emily Stone performs a cut test on a criollo cacao pod in the Bladen Nature Reserve in Toledo, Belize (front cover); Close-up view of a freshly fermented and partially dried cacao bean in the Dominican Republic.

Photos by Alex Whitmore