

2017 ACA Annual Cashew Conference: A Success Story!

Inside this Issue

ACA Activities	2
News and Information	3
The Recipe Room	7

“A new vision for partnerships and investments” – African Cashew Alliance’s 11th Annual Cashew Conference and Expo took place in Cotonou, Benin over a period of four days from the 18th to the 21st September 2017. The conference, organized with great support from the national cashew value chain association, IFA, and the Benin Government as well as other private sector partners was yet again, a great success!

With 342 participants from 27 countries in attendance, the conference attracted diverse cashew value chain stakeholders who deliberated on pressing industry issues and discussed ways to foster development – industry expert speakers, sector-specific workshops, and over 106 business-to-business meetings provided both experienced industry players and first-time attendees with key information and tools to facilitate the continued development

of the African cashew industry. The opening ceremony of the conference on 18th September welcomed high level speakers in the persons of the Ambassador Lucy Tamlyn, US Ambassador to Benin, H.E Mrs. Novissi Abaidoo, Ambassador of Ghana to Belgium and the Head of Mission to the European Union, Madame Yvonne Chileshe, Commodities expert from the Secretariat of the ACP group, Mr. Adama Coulibaly, Managing Director of the Cashew and Cotton Board or Côte d’Ivoire (CCA), Mr. Florentino Nanque, the President of ACA, H.E Delphin Koudande, Minister of Agriculture, livestock and Fisheries, H.E. Lazare Sehoutu, Minister of Trade and Industry of Benin and H.E. Abdoulaye Bio Tchane, Minister of State in Charge of Plan and Development and other important private sector partners from the Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew), Fludor Benin, Olam and Benin Caju.



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ACA ACTIVITIES

Participants had the opportunity to learn from 46 speakers and moderators in plenary panels, special forums and workshops on topics ranging from innovations in cashew Production, rethinking cashew processing in Africa, to Understanding cashew market information, sector organization and cashew investment financing. The 2017 general assembly was well attended with ACA members agreeing and approving the new strategic direction for the Alliance, under the new vision “a sustainable African Cashew Industry that delivers globally competitive valued added products and secures profitability for all actors”. The session ended with Executive Committee elections that replaced and re-instated some members of the ACA Executive Committee. Mr. Wayne Tilton from Red River foods as well as Mr. Wim Schipper from Intersnack were the new members who added to the committee, representing the international seats.

A highlight of this year’s conference was the finalization of a vision for the African Cashew industry, hence, the conference theme, that will put the focus of all stakeholders in the same direction for developing the sector. This vision casting exercise started in a stakeholder forum in Accra earlier this year and was concluded at the just ended conference. Mr. Ernest Mintah, Managing Director of ACA moderated a whole session with experts from different aspects of the cashew value chain deliberating on the vision. At the end of the session, this vision “*to create wealth for all actors in the value chain by locally transforming all African Cashew competitively and sustainably, supplying traceable Cashew kernels and by-products to export and domestic markets*” was accepted by all present as the way to go for the development of the cashew industry in Africa for the next 10 years.

Another highlight was the round table sessions between private and public sector actors. This was the first of such an opportunity created for private sector actors to speak face to face with policy makers on the main issues affecting profitability and development of the industry. Following these round table discussions, a declaration by the private sector, through the ACA was signed and presented to the council of ministers of the international Cashew Council (CICC), during their meeting from 28th to the 29th September, 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, for their commitment to support the cashew industry and take the right decisions towards its development. During this meeting, ACA, representing the private sector voice advocated for the development of the sector through the promotion of value addition in Africa.



A total of 10 countries were represented, including 6 from West Africa - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mozambique and Senegal and a representative from ECOWAS. The Technical and Financial Partners represented by the Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCahew) made a declaration to support the efforts of the CICC at the level of the member countries.

A special cashew women’s breakfast meeting was held as part of this year’s conference on the 20th September. This is an initiative of ‘cashew info’ with the support of other partners including the ACA to highlight women ‘ground breakers’ in the cashew industry for their laudable efforts. It is also to encourage other women in the business not to give up in the tough business of cashew but to strive for success. A special publication on ‘Cashew Women Entrepreneurs’ in the cashew industry worldwide was launched. The publication showcases influential women in the industry and their stories.

The conference officially ended on the evening of the 20th September with a closing speech by the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Benin, H.E. Delphin Koudande. The 12th annual cashew conference location was announced to be Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire!

Finally attendees travelled beyond Cotonou on organized field trips to see two key aspects of Benin’s cashew value chain - production and processing. Some field trip participants visited a cashew plantation in Dassa, a model farm that had undergone training with the Technoserve project, Benin Caju, on grafting and intercropping to increase productivity, while others visited Fludor, a world class cashew processing factory designed to meet the highest international standards of processing.

With the successful organization of the 11th Annual Cashew Conference and still counting, the ACA is most grateful to the host country, Benin, and local host, IFA, our sponsors and key partners – Intersnack, ETG, Fludor Benin, USAID, ComCashew, Technoserve, CCA, Olam, GI Technologies, Meyer, CMA CGM, GIZ, Dedras ONG, BeninCajù, Port Autonome and TDG, media partners, speakers, moderators, facilitators, organizing committee, ACA Secretariat and all participants for the support! The full list of conference participants can be found [here](#).



ACA Participates in the last session of the fourth edition of MTP

From the 24th-28th of October, the African Cashew Alliance participated in the last session of the fourth edition of the Cashew Master Training Program organized by the Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew) and the ACA as co-organizer. With a total number of 67 participants from 12 countries this year, the Program aims to build capacity in the industry by developing qualified professional experts to facilitate knowledge exchange, learning and innovations.

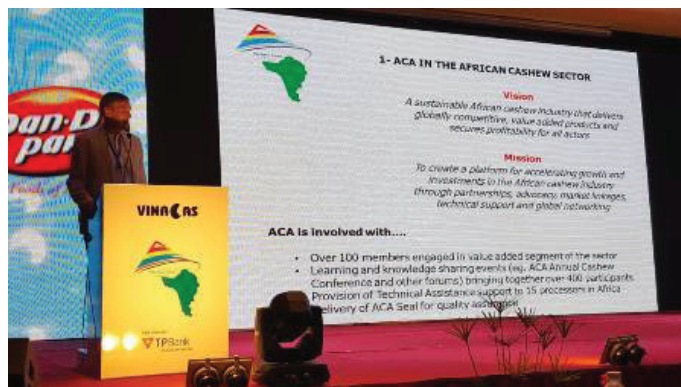
This session followed two previous sessions conducted in Ho and Sunyani, both towns in the Volta and Western Regions of Ghana respectively. In her speech during the opening ceremony, Mrs. Marian Lamptey, Head of Communications and Member Services at the ACA emphasized the need for capacity building in the sector and the need for African cashew stakeholders to work towards the common vision concluded at the 11th ACA Annual Cashew Conference for the development of the sector.

Over the period of the last session, participants were trained in topics like cashew processing economics, harvest and post-harvest handling, farming economics, cashew nut quality testing and facilitation skills, among others. They were also urged to maximize the opportunity given them to be trained as experts by putting their new skills to use after the program.

To sustain the network of experts and to facilitate visibility of skills for the cashew industry, ACA has developed the Cashew Experts Database which is accessible online via the ACA website. The system aims to create an Africa-wide network of cashew experts, increase the transparency of services available in the cashew sector, facilitate access to services across the cashew supply chain, and provide quality assurance of cashew expert services.

ACA is pleased to be associated with the Cashew Master Training program and continues to support such initiatives in the industry.

ACA Participates in the 9th Vinacas Golden Cashew Rendez-vous



From the 13-15 November, the African Cashew Alliance (ACA) represented by the second vice president of the board, Mr. Wayne Tilton, participated in the 9th Vinacas Golden Cashew Rendez-vous held in Phu Quoc Island, Vietnam. With over 400 delegates in attendance and under the theme, “Talk about cashew nuts, think about Viet Nam,” the conference had as an objective, to promote trade, and expand markets for cashew products and help cashew growers and processing firms raise their incomes, and develop the cashew sector in a sustainable manner.

Over a period of two days, the conference featured a diverse program that provided latest update about cashew demand and supply trends through three impressive panels on CASHEW STRATEGIES, RAW CASHEW NUTS & CASHEW KERNELS.

Mr. Wayne Tilton, in his presentation on the topic, “challenges in the African Cashew Industry”, mentioned that: “Africa accounts for 56 per cent of the global raw cashew nut production, but processes less than 5 per cent of the global crop”. He also touched on the issue of global demand and supply, placing a lot of pressure on the African Cashew processors. One key solution to these challenges he said, would be to advocate for regulatory reforms and development of infrastructure (road, energy, warehousing, etc.) by governments in producing countries, through structures such as the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC). This said, he encouraged regional bodies such as VINACAS to join the CICC.

At the end of the conference, the African Cashew Alliance signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Vinacas, for mutual support in the development of the African cashew sector.



ACA Participates in the Ministerial Meeting of the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC)

The Council of Ministers as well as experts from the member countries of the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC), met in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 28th and 29th September 2017. During the meeting, Mr. Florentino Nanque, the President of the African Cashew Alliance, representing the private sector voice, advocated for the re-establishment of the sector through the promotion of value addition in Africa.

A total of 10 countries were represented, including 6 from West Africa - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mozambique and Senegal and a representative from ECOWAS. The Technical and Financial Partners represented by the Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew) made a declaration to support the efforts of the CICC at the level of the member countries.

ACA Collaborates with GIC-CI to organize an 'Access to Finance for cashew Processing forum' in Côte d'Ivoire



From the 7th - 8th December, 2017, at the Azalaï Hotel, in Abidjan, stakeholders in the Ivorian cashew industry gathered together for a two-day forum on Access to Finance for Cashew Processing. The forum was organized by the ACA in collaboration with the Cashew Processors Association of Côte d'Ivoire (GIC-CI), and supported by the GIZ Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew) as well as the Conseil Coton Anacarde (CCA), of Côte d'Ivoire. The forum brought together as many financial institutions as can be reached in Côte d'Ivoire, to meet face to face with the processors for discussions and hands on sharing of knowledge on the sector, review of what financing products can better address the needs of cashew processors, and provision of detailed information, processes and conditions for accessing financing. There was also an Expo to facilitate business to business meetings, match making and striking of financial deals.

The main objective of the Forum was to enhance the knowledge of financial institutions in the dynamics of the cashew sector and increase financing to cashew processors. In attendance were dignitaries in the persons of Mr Mougo Kobenan

Pierre, Director for Industries, representing the Minister of Industry and Mines of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Denis Kouzia, Deputy Director General of CCA, representing the Managing Director of the Conseil Coton Anacarde (CCA), Mr. Lukman Diaby, President of the GIC-CI, Madam Mary Adzanyo, Director of private sector development of the Competitive Cashew Initiative (ComCashew) and Mr. Ernest Mintah, Managing Director of the ACA, who performed the opening ceremony of this all important forum. 145 Participants from the cashew value chain, bankers, and government departments responsible for cashew, development finance institutions, and development cooperation agencies attended the Forum. Though the Forum was meant for cashew value chain actors in Côte, d'Ivoire, participants from Guinea Conakry, India, UK, Benin, Liberia, and Nigeria were also present.

The first day of the forum saw experts from the cashew value chain, sharing knowledge on "opportunities in the African cashew industry", "Risk Management in cashew financing", "industrial economics of cashew processing", "structured financing for cashew processing" and models of structured financing from some Banks. Presentations of some commercial banks were on available products as well as procedures and requirements for accessing financing. A highlight of the forum was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), between ACA and GIC-CI, towards future collaboration in support of the Ivorian cashew processing industry for technical assistance and organizing of such learning forums.

The second day focused on development banks and how they could also support value addition in the cashew industry. Presentations came from the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Investment Bank (EIB), GroFin – Business Financier and the Ivorian government regulatory authority in charge of warehousing receipt systems.

Financial institutions engaged in discussions aimed at establishing financial transactions with processors. ACA was called upon to make a business case for a special lending model by institutions such as AfDB, which traditionally offer higher loans in excess of the capacity of the cashew processors in Africa.

At the end of the two- day event, financial institutions increased their knowledge in the cashew sector and took stands to start developing appropriate lending products, Processors understood the requirements for accessing financing for their businesses. B2B meetings further opened opportunities for starting business discussions.



Nigeria Lifts Ban on Export Expansion Grant (EEG) to boost agribusiness sector

The Federal Government of Nigeria has lifted the ban on Export Expansion Grant (EEG) for non-oil exports, since January 2017. The export Expansion Grant scheme is a vital incentive required for the stimulation of export-oriented activities that will lead to significant growth of the non-oil export sector.

According to the Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), Mr. Segun Awolowo, the incentive scheme is tailored to equip exporters with the required knowledge and skills needed to enhance competition in the market place.

The government is committed to compensate all outstanding Negotiable Duty Credit from 2013 to 2016 that is owed to



exporters through the exchange of a Promissory Note. These could then be used by exporters to raise funds or as security for bank loans to expand their businesses. Exporters who export goods during the aforementioned period will qualify, but they must also comply with the other requirements of EEG, including presenting proof of fully repatriated proceeds within 180 days.

Ghana Signs unto the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC)



On the 5th June 2017, the Republic of Ghana represented by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), signed unto the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC).

CICC is an international organization with legal capacity and financial autonomy responsible for promoting the sustainable development of cashew in the world. Established on the 18th November, 2016 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, the CICC aims to create a consultation framework and synergies between member states for a sustainable cashew sector. Ghana has accompanied the process for establishment of the CICC and thus hosted the first consultation meeting in Accra in April 2016.

Today, Ghana joins this movement, which will create a unique platform for facilitating and regulating activities in the cashew industry, among not only governments in the cashew producing countries, but also the private sector and all actors in the cashew value chain.

ACA represents the cashew industry private sector in Africa and works closely with the CICC as a member and lead facilitator of the commission for the promotion and development of the private sector of the Council. To strengthen this collaboration, ACA will further bridge the gap between the cashew private sector and the Council by engaging the public sector organizations in private sector advocacy actions. It will also contribute to the implementation of projects and provide advisory services for key areas of the value chain in relation to private sector development in member countries

The Cashew Regulatory Agency of Guinea Bissau (ANCA) now equipped with a Market Information Service

The African Cashew Alliance, in collaboration with the PRSPDA / BM (Private Sector Rehabilitation & Agribusiness Development / World Bank project), has provided the National Cashew Agency of Guinea Bissau with a market information service for cashew marketing, which will be fully functional from the 2018 cashew season.

ANCA's information service will use a number of communication outlets such as mobile phone agencies for the daily dissemination of information on cashew market trends, and community radios in collaboration with technical partners to sensitize cashew market stakeholders at the grassroots, in order to create a transparent market for all.

Guinea Bissau producers are recognized internationally for the quality of their nuts, which is undoubtedly the best of all, however, they operate in a disorganized and rumor clad national market, thereby causing a malfunction of RCN marketing in Guinea Bissau, which disrupts the entire value chain.

With this new tool, cashew stakeholders in Guinea Bissau will all be at the same level of information from the next market season which is scheduled to be launched in March 2018.

The African Cashew Alliance is honored to be working with the World Bank project PRSPDA and committed to be provide all assistance for the realization of a market information hub which is timely and accurate not only Guinea Bissau but across Africa.

Funding Opportunities for Research and Dissemination

December 2017- The International Nut and Dried Fruit Council (INC) has launched its 2018 Annual Call for Research Projects (300,000 Eur) and Annual Call for Promotion and Dissemination Projects to help better understand the health benefits of nuts and dried fruits and spread the message around the globe. Both Calls are open for public and private institutions, as well as not-for-profit organizations. More information may be found at www.nutfruit.org/what-we-do/health-nutrition/funding-opportunities/.

In addition, INC offers the “Nuts for Gifts” Global Dissemination Program, which can be shared and disseminated through its ToolBox Kit. INC members and industry organizations can download it at the Members Area of the website nutsforgifts.org. For more information about this program, please contact hello@nutsforgifts.org.

About the International Nut & Dried Fruit Council

The International Nut & Dried Fruit Council (INC) brings together nearly 700 nut and dried fruit companies from over 70 countries. INC is the international organization of reference regarding health, nutrition, statistics, food safety, and international standards and regulations relating to nuts and dried fruit.



2017 Grant Awardees

This year the INC selected four projects to receive 355,000 Euros, reinforcing its commitment to research that helps improve our understanding of the benefits of eating nuts and dried fruits.

INC awarded grants to two research projects on the relationship of nuts and dried fruit consumption to exercise performance, and the effect of nut intake on cognitive function and intestinal microbiota.

Research Grant Recipients:

Project: An almond, dried grape and dried cranberry (AGC) mix for improving endurance exercise performance in athletes (clinical study). *Principal Investigator:* Prof. Jonathan Bwwuckley, University of South Australia, Australia.

Project: Effects of daily tree nut consumption on cognitive function, metabolomics and intestinal microbiota (clinical study). *Principal Investigator:* Dr. Crystal Haskell-Ramsay, Northumbria University, UK.

INC also awarded grants to two promotion and dissemination projects, the goal of which is to build consumer demand for nuts and dried fruits, and provide information about their properties and qualities.

Dissemination Grant Recipients:

Nucis Italia, Project: “Nuts and active lifestyle: a healthy habit!”

Nucis Germany, Project: “Press publications in professional nutrition magazines”.

THE RECIPE ROOM

Ginger-Cashew Chicken Salad Recipe

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, whisk the first seven ingredients until blended. Pour 3/4 cup marinade into a large resealable plastic bag. Add chicken; seal bag and turn to coat. Refrigerate at least 3 hours. Cover and refrigerate remaining marinade.
2. Preheat broiler. Drain chicken, discarding marinade in bag. Place chicken in a 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Broil 4-6 in. from heat 4-6 minutes on each side or until a thermometer reads 165°. Cut chicken into strips.
3. Place spinach on a serving platter. Arrange chicken, oranges, cabbage, carrots and green onions. Sprinkle with chow mein noodles, cashews and sesame seeds. Stir reserved molasses mixture; drizzle over salad and toss to coat. Serve immediately. Yield: 8 servings.
4. Editor's Note: To toast nuts, bake in a shallow pan in a 350° oven for 5-10 minutes or cook in a skillet over low heat until lightly browned, stirring occasionally.

Source: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/ginger-cashew-chicken-salad>



Ingredients

½ cup	cider vinegar
½ cup	molasses
⅓ cup	canola oil
2 tbsp	minced fresh gingerroot
2 tsp	reduced-sodium soy sauce
1 tsp	salt
⅛ tsp	cayenne pepper
4	boneless skinless chicken breast halves (6 ounces each)

Salad Ingredients

8 oz	fresh baby spinach (about 10 cups)
1 can (11 oz)	mandarin oranges, drained
1 cup	shredded red cabbage
2	medium carrots, shredded
3	green onions, thinly sliced
2 cups	chow mein noodles
¾ cup	salted cashews, toasted
2 tbsp	sesame seeds, toasted

Upcoming ACA Activities



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