Cooproagro

Dominican Republic
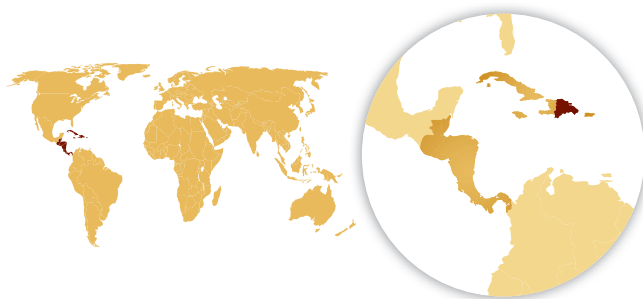
NAME	Cooperativa de Productores Agropecuarios
FOUNDED	1985
LOCATION	San Francisco de Maconis, Dom. Republic
ENTITY	Cooperative (1,987 members)
PRODUCTS	Cocoa
CERTIFICATES	Organic, Fair Trade
PARTNER SINCE	2007

www.cooproagro.org

General

Cooproagro is an association of regional small farmers who have specialised in the production of cocoa and who jointly market this important export commodity through the cooperative. By working together, they have been successful in building partnerships with Fair Trade wholesale organisations and chocolate manufacturers. This approach has enabled smallholders to avoid the constraints and limitations that were part and parcel of the agricultural reforms introduced in the 1970s. Since the land allocated to them was barely sufficient to cover their daily needs, thousands of farmers were forced to work as day labourers. To escape this fate, they focused their efforts on the cultivation of cocoa and joined forces in the cooperative for the purposes of successful and long-term marketing. This enabled farmers to secure a stronger selling position, improve the quality of their products and benefit from significantly higher prices for organic and Fair Trade cocoa.

Against this background, important infrastructure projects such as roads and the electrification of villages were able to be completed in past years. Schools including canteens were also built for the benefit of the entire population in the region.

«Fair Trade has not only improved my own life, but also the lives and welfare of the entire community. It›s thanks to the equitable prices we receive on account of Fair Trade, but also the additional projects such as road construction, educational facilities, etc. that have been backed by Fair Trade. And everyone benefits from these improvements, regardless of whether they are members of Cooproagro or not.»

Felix Antonio Santana Then,
Cooproagro Cocoa Farmer

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