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THE COCOA ATLAS - A MILESTONE IN COCOA RESEARCH

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The German Cocoa and Chocolate Foundation is striving for a better knowledge of Cocoa in general and therefore initiated and financed a project that is called *The Cocoa Atlas of the World – Edition 2003*. This Cocoa Atlas was produced on the basis of a research project carried out by the Institute for Applied Botany of the University of Hamburg, Germany, in scientific cooperation with the Food Chemistry Institute of the German Confectionery Industry (LCI) and the Institute for Quality Improvement of the German Confectionery Industry (IQ.Köln), Cologne/Germany. The concept for the Atlas was based on the book “Handbuch Kakaobohnenprüfung” published in 1961-1962 and edited by Professor Böhle Biehl.

In this project, 122 cocoa bean samples from 21 origins were examined. This selection represented the whole variety of cocoa-producing countries. Chemical and physical parameters were analyzed, such as pictures of samples, water content, pH value, bean weight/count, cut test, fat composition, amino acids, phenolic substances, antioxidative capacity, organic acids, methylxanthines, mycotoxins, etc. The analytical part of the Atlas includes sections on cocoa statistics and cocoa biology.

The data gathered are compiled on a CD-ROM, which will be a useful tool and source of information for all those engaged in the cocoa and chocolate industries worldwide, and it will be a small step towards further improvement of quality and innovation.

Several extracts from this Cocoa Atlas CD-ROM were presented in the paper.