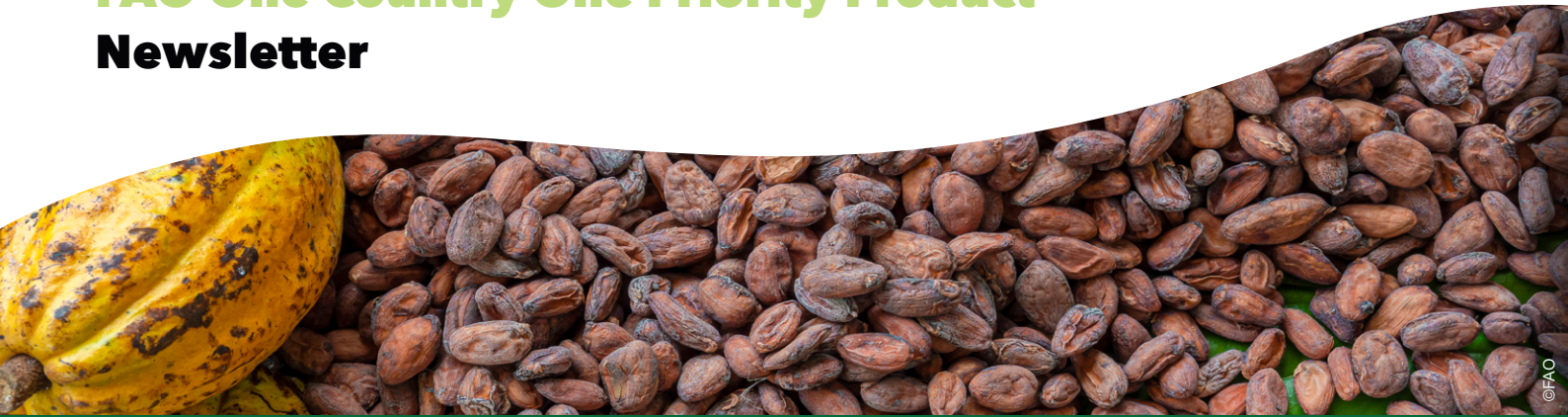




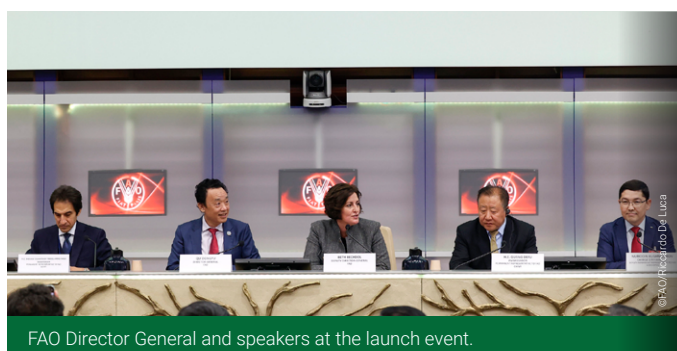
FAO One Country One Priority Product Newsletter

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Highlights

FAO launched the OCOP global project under FAO-China South-South Cooperation. FAO launched a global project, with a USD 5 million contribution from China, to support the implementation of the FAO One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative. The FAO Director-General Mr QU Dongyu delivered the welcome remarks, while H.E. Mr GUANG Defu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to FAO, announced the names of 15 project countries during the hybrid launch event held on 6 December 2023 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. The event, moderated by FAO Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol, saw active participation from ministers, government officials, and representatives from various countries.



FAO Director General and speakers at the launch event.

Countries renewed their commitment to promote special agriculture products under the OCOP initiative. The 2023 annual meeting of the OCOP initiative brought together representatives and stakeholders from over 50 countries to review the progress and priorities of the OCOP initiative at the global, regional, and national levels. The virtual meeting, held on 18 December 2023, showcased a strong global commitment to promote special agricultural products and improve food security around the world. FAO Deputy Director-General Ms Beth Bechdol inaugurated the event, while Executive Secretary of OCOP Secretariat Mr Jingyuan Xia delivered closing remarks. The meeting was facilitated by Mr Chikelu Mba, Deputy Director of NSP Division, FAO.



Participants at the OCOP annual meeting 2023.

Current status of the OCOP initiative



85 countries applied to promote 54 special agricultural products.



About USD 15 million mobilized to implement OCOP field projects.



OCOP global project, funded by China, launched in December 2023 to support 15 countries from five FAO regions.



National annual OCOP coordination meetings 2023 held in five demonstration countries: Bangladesh, Egypt, Malawi, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uzbekistan.

Implementation and Coordination

Samoa hosted Koko Market Day on 27 October 2023 to drive innovation and growth for the cocoa industry.

Organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Scientific Research Organization of Samoa, and the FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, the event was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Samoa, H.E. Fiame Naomi Mataafa. The event breathed new life into the industry, shedding light on key aspects such as improved production techniques, value addition, investment potential, and the pivotal role of cocoa in Samoan households and the national economy.

Albania launched OCOP country projects to strengthen the sustainable chestnut value chain.

A project inception workshop was organized on 21 November and a chestnut promotion day was held on 23 October 2023. The project aims to advance the chestnut sector with a strategic emphasis on expanding cultivated areas in the mountainous areas of Albania's northern Tropoja district, which has over 2 000 hectares of chestnut forest massif.



Children performing during the Chestnut promotion day in Tropoja, Albania.

Belize launched the OCOP initiative to promote coconut as its special product.

On 6 December 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture, Caribbean Research and Development Institute, and FAO organized a national seminar and market fair attended by over 100 stakeholders.

Türkiye launched the OCOP initiative with a national event on 7-8 December 2023 to promote the fig sector.

Hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the FAO Country Office, the event attracted diverse stakeholders from government, academia, the private sector, farmers, and traders to collaborate on strengthening the sector. Keynote presentations by FAO OCOP Global Coordinator Mr. Hafiz Muminjanov, and other experts highlighted progress and priorities for the fig sector. Participants attended a fig product demonstration and a field visit, gaining firsthand knowledge on the best practices.



Speakers at the OCOP national annual meeting 2023 in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan hosted the OCOP national annual meeting in Tashkent on 14 December 2023

to assess progress and set priorities for the sweet cherry sector in Uzbekistan. Over 100 participants attended the event, sharing success stories and innovative production approaches. In 2023, an extensive value chain analysis was conducted, which will lay the foundation for a national action plan to develop the sector.

Malawi hosted the national annual meeting for OCOP on 15 December 2023

to review the advancements and challenges within the banana sector. Various stakeholders, such as government officials, farmers, traders, exporters, and academia, participated in the meeting. The event featured presentations of significant accomplishments and deliberations on a national action plan 2024-2025 for the development of the promising banana sector.

Egypt set strategies for a sustainable date palm sector during the national OCOP annual meeting 2023.

The meeting, held on 20 December in Cairo, gathered representatives from various stakeholders to discuss the progress and next steps for the date palm sector. In 2023, Egypt conducted a comprehensive date value chain analysis and trained hundreds of farmers on green production practices. During the meeting, the OCOP National Task Force presented the strategy for the date palm sector for 2024-2029.

Trinidad and Tobago organized the OCOP national annual meeting on 20 December 2023

bringing together representatives from government, academia, farmers, and exporters to discuss progress and priorities for the cocoa sector. The formulation and implementation of a national OCOP work plan for 2024-26 was prioritized to strengthen the sector. The country also celebrated World Cocoa and Chocolate Day by organizing an expo on 27-28 October.

Bangladesh charted action plans for jackfruit sector development during the OCOP national annual meeting 2023.

Representatives from government, academia, researchers, traders, and exporters gathered in Dhaka on 21 December 2023 to attend the OCOP national annual meeting. Participants discussed the progress, priorities, and a robust national work plan 2024–25 for the development of the jackfruit sector. The meeting yielded recommendations, including improving post-harvest handling and storage facilities, and the development of relevant policies.

Communication and Partnerships

A webinar titled ‘Sustainable value chain of amaranth, the special agricultural product of Mexico’ was organized on 28 November 2023 in collaboration with the government of Mexico as part of the FAO OCOP webinar series.

The focus of the episode was on amaranth. This webinar provided a platform for experts and industry actors from Mexico, Peru, and Kenya to share knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned in the sustainable production, processing, and marketing of amaranth in Mexico and beyond. Government officials, policymakers, experts, academicians, and other stakeholders attended the webinar, which offered English and Spanish interpretations to draw international audience from different parts of the world.

Explore the online portals on regional activities on the OCOP initiative to learn about activities in different regions¹.

Watch the OCOP corporate video to understand how the initiative is helping countries around the world².



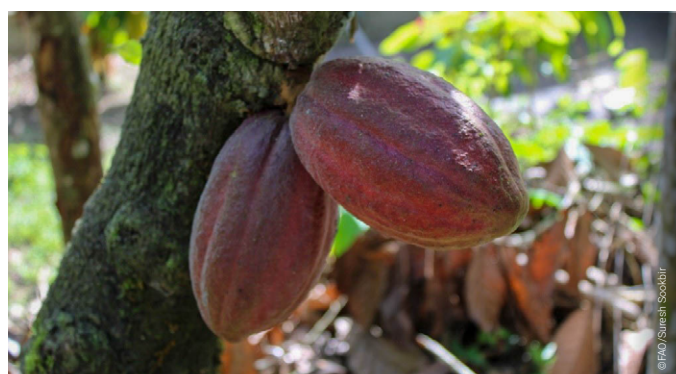
¹ <https://www.fao.org/one-country-one-priority-product/ocop-global-action/en>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xv5QnrBVcs8>

Stories from countries

Revitalizing the cocoa legacy of Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago, a picturesque Caribbean archipelago, boasts a rich legacy as a producer of world-renowned cocoa, with its Trinitario beans renowned for their exquisite flavor and aroma. The country’s cocoa heritage traces back to the 18th century, when it began cultivating the Trinitario variety—a hybrid known for its complex flavor profiles and delightful fruity, floral notes. These beans swiftly gained recognition, becoming a sought-after ingredient among premium chocolatiers across the world.



Cocoa, the special agricultural product of Trinidad and Tobago

Despite its current scale, Trinidad and Tobago’s cocoa sector holds immense potential for growth and economic impact. Moreover, the growing demand for premium and sustainably produced cocoa products creates an opportunity for the country to position itself as a leader in this niche market.

To harness this potential, the FAO OCOP initiative is working with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, the Cocoa Research Centre of University of the West Indies, and the Cocoa Development Company Limited. The collective efforts aim to fortify every aspect of the cocoa value chain from production, processing, to marketing paving the way for the sector to become a catalyst for economic growth and sustainable development. By adopting green production practices, enhancing post-harvest processing techniques, and implementing rigorous quality control and value-added initiatives, Trinidad and Tobago is well-positioned to emerge as a leading player in the global premium chocolate market, rekindling its rich legacy.

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