

Frosty Pod Rot in Jamaica

Dr Wilbert Phillips (CATIE) and Dr Martijn ten Hoopen (CIRAD), together with Mr Dennis Buddo (President and technical director of the Jamaica Cocoa Sector Development Alliance and member of the Board of Directors of the Cocoa Industry Board of Jamaica), and official members of the Jamaican Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Plant Quarantine Division) visited the Parish of Clarendon on the 8th of February 2017, to experience first-hand the impact of Frosty Pod Rot (FPR) of Cacao. The parish of Clarendon, where the disease was first detected, produces up to 60% of Jamaican cocoa.

Given current levels of infestation and based on farmer experiences, it seems clear that the disease has been around for some time. It is likely that the two year drought period that Jamaica is currently experiencing has facilitated the very rapid spread of the disease, due to enhanced spore dispersal under the warm, dry and windy conditions.

These initial observations clearly demonstrate the importance of raising awareness, development and implementation of prevention and early detection and rapid response strategies for the other cacao producing countries in the Caribbean. This to avoid a similar scenario Jamaica is currently undergoing and to protect the Fine Cocoa industry in these countries. International collaboration between countries will be essential for the success of these strategies. Jamaica is urging others to take note and learn from the situation and activities employed by the Jamaican government and cocoa industry to halt the further spread of the disease.

Although FPR will impact the Jamaican cocoa industry, it also presents the industry with the opportunity to revitalize itself. By implementing good agricultural practices and by introducing tolerant, high yielding cocoa varieties with good flavour characteristics, the cocoa industry of Jamaica will be able to ensure continued production of fine cocoa for the future.

For more information on Frosty Pod Rot

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External and internal symptoms of FPR



Dried up cocoa pod covered in FPR spores

