



A Binational Strategy for the prevention of *Moniliophthora roreri*

Creating an Early Warning Scheme and an Emergency Protocol in Haiti and the Dominican Republic



Frosty pod rot in Jamaica

Moniliophthora roreri, the causal agent of frosty pod rot of cacao and the most dangerous and devastating of all cacao diseases, arrived in Jamaica in 2016¹. From there frosty pod now poses a very tangible and enormous threat to the cocoa sector of the Caribbean.

The arrival of frosty pod rot can have serious negative socio-economic and ecological impacts. In the case of Costa Rica for example, within five years after its arrival, frosty pod caused an 80% drop in production and resulted in important land-use changes, away from diversified cacao agroforestry systems to less diverse cropping systems.

Given that eight of CARIFORUM's 15 countries, including Haiti and the Dominican Republic, produce highly sought after fine or flavor cocoa, and the Dominican Republic being the single largest producer of certified organic cocoa in the world, the arrival of frosty pod will severely disrupt these lucrative international markets. The proximity of Jamaica to Cuba and the island of Hispaniola, consisting of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and legal and illegal movements of goods and people between these islands, present major avenues for the further spread of frosty pod. Cocoa farmers in Haiti and the Dominican Republic are poised to suffer great losses unless action is undertaken.

In preparation of the possible arrival of frosty pod rot, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, with support from the Caribbean Export Development Agency and financial aid of the European Union², have embarked on the development of a binational strategy for the prevention of *Moniliophthora roreri*.

Two international experts, Dr. Wilbert Phillips and Dr. Martijn ten Hoopen, in collaboration with public and private cocoa sector partners, including the Ministries of Agriculture of both countries have prepared a Binational Early Warning Scheme and an Emergency Protocol for the Prevention of Frosty Pod.

A first ever binational simulation of the arrival of frosty pod and the protocols and quarantine measures to put in place, was held in the Dominican Republic in August 2019.

Both Haiti and the Dominican Republic are well aware of the risk of frosty pod and are acting to counteract this threat. However, continued efforts to sensitize farmers, agricultural technicians and others invested in the cocoa sector is necessary, not only in these two countries but in the Caribbean as a whole to safeguard an important driver for the economic diversification and development of the Caribbean.

For more information on the binational prevention strategy of Haiti and the Dominican Republic you can visit <https://www.carib-export.com/>. For more information on frosty pod, please contact Dr. Wilbert Phillips or Dr Martijn ten Hoopen (wilbertphillips@hotmail.com; tenhoopen@cirad.fr).



The first ever frosty pod emergency plan field simulation exercise, held between Haitian and Dominican stakeholders, August 2019.

¹ Johnson et al. 2017. New Disease Report 36:2

² "Trade and Private Sector Component" of the Haiti-Dominican Republic Binational Cooperation Programme, under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) EDF/2018/399-379