



Media Release

TOBAGO CHOCOLATE PRODUCER TO ACCESS STATE FUNDING

1st October, 2018: - *"I am thrilled that a Tobago based business has identified this unique opportunity and is reaping the benefits of our invaluable local agro processing and tourism product. Rising world prices for fine flavour cocoa is attracting new investment to the sector, creating partnerships between entrepreneurs and knowledge to develop value added industries and agro-tourism opportunities. The industry holds much potential but it is up to each stakeholder to harvest it,"* stated the Minister of Trade and Industry Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon during a visit to Tobago Cocoa Estates Limited on September 29, 2018.

The Minister along with representatives of exporTT witnessed first-hand the initiative under consideration for co-financing support by exporTT. The funding will support further expansion and procurement of equipment by Tobago Cocoa Estates Limited and ensure export standards are in place and future efforts are supported recognising the sector's potential contribution to exports.

exporTT Chairman Mr Ashmeer Mohamed who also participated in the event commended Mr Duane Dove, estate owner, for his strategic business expansion while also pledging to provide support to future entrepreneurial endeavours.

exporTT has rendered assistance to chocolatiers in several capacity building areas including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) certification; upgrading of cocoa production facilities; the acquisition of Geographic Indication (GI) to protect intellectual property; the organic certification for plantations; feasibility research into new products and distribution channels and good manufacturing practice food safety compliance and implementation.

The Tobago Cocoa Estate is a heritage park which facilitates teaching the history of cocoa in Tobago, historical displays and the participation in processing, agro-culinary tourism, rum, chocolate and dining.

END