



Photo from Microsoft Stock Images

Eleonora Escalante Strategy
presents
the Summer Saga of the year

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success strategies for Small Farm Holders

Episode 11.

Key Resources Part 1: Human Capital

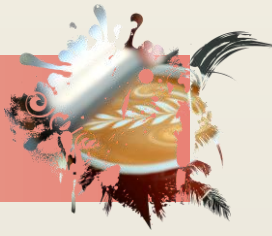
www.eleonoraescalantestrategy.com

14/8/2026

Eleonora Escalante Strategy
State of the Art Corporate Strategy
All rights reserved. Copyright 2016-2026

Cacao and Coffee 101. Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders

Next saga:
Human Talent:
From Feudal
Slaves to Digital
Beggars.
As of
October 15th



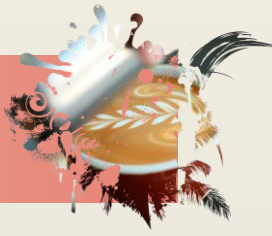
Outline Calendar

One Season: From May 22nd to September 25th, 2026

22-May Episode 1 ✓ Introduction 	29-May Episode 2 ✓ A new philosophy beyond circular economy 	5-June Episode 3 Sustainability: Beyond caring for the land Part I 	12-June Episode 4 ✓ Sustainability: Beyond caring for the land Part II 	17-22 June Teacher's week Pedagogical Pause El Salvador 	26-June Episode 5 ✓ New Models of Ownership & Corporate Governance 
3-July Episode 6 ✓ Customer Segments 	10-July Episode 6A ✓ Customer Segments Version 2.0 	17-July Episode 7 ✓ Value Propositions I 	24-July Episode 8 ✓ Value Propositions II 	31-July Episode 9 ✓ Distribution Channels 	07-August Episode 10 ✓ We will work on vacations Certifications Quality Control 
14-August Episode 11 ✓ Key Resources Part I 	21-August Episode 12 Key Resources Part II Examples 	28-August Episode 13 Revenue Streams Cost Structure 	04-Sept Episode 14 Competitiveness, Research & Innovation 	11-Sept Episode 15 Financing & Access to Capital 	18-September Episode 16 Key Partnerships 
14/8/2026	25-September Episode 17 Epilogue Summary Conclusions Research Agenda 	<i>This outline is subject to change if the author considers it appropriate for your learning experience.</i> Eleonora Escalante Strategy State of the Art Corporate Strategy All rights reserved. Copyright 2016-2026			

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

AGENDA

Cacao and Coffee 101. Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders

1. What are the key resources needed to elevate the value of the beans?
2. Human Talent
3. Status of Formal Tertiary Education Coffee-Cacao industries
4. Example 1: Ethiopian Coffee
5. Example 2: Indonesian Cacao

Next Week



Photo Source: Microsoft Stock Images

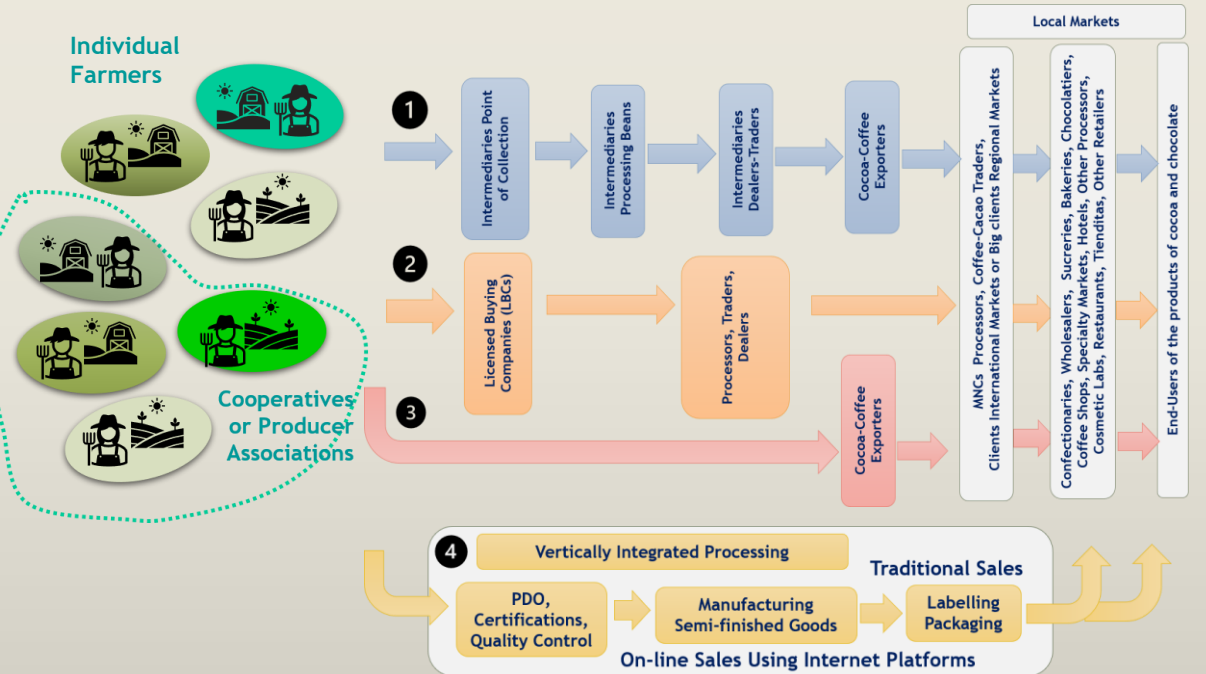
Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

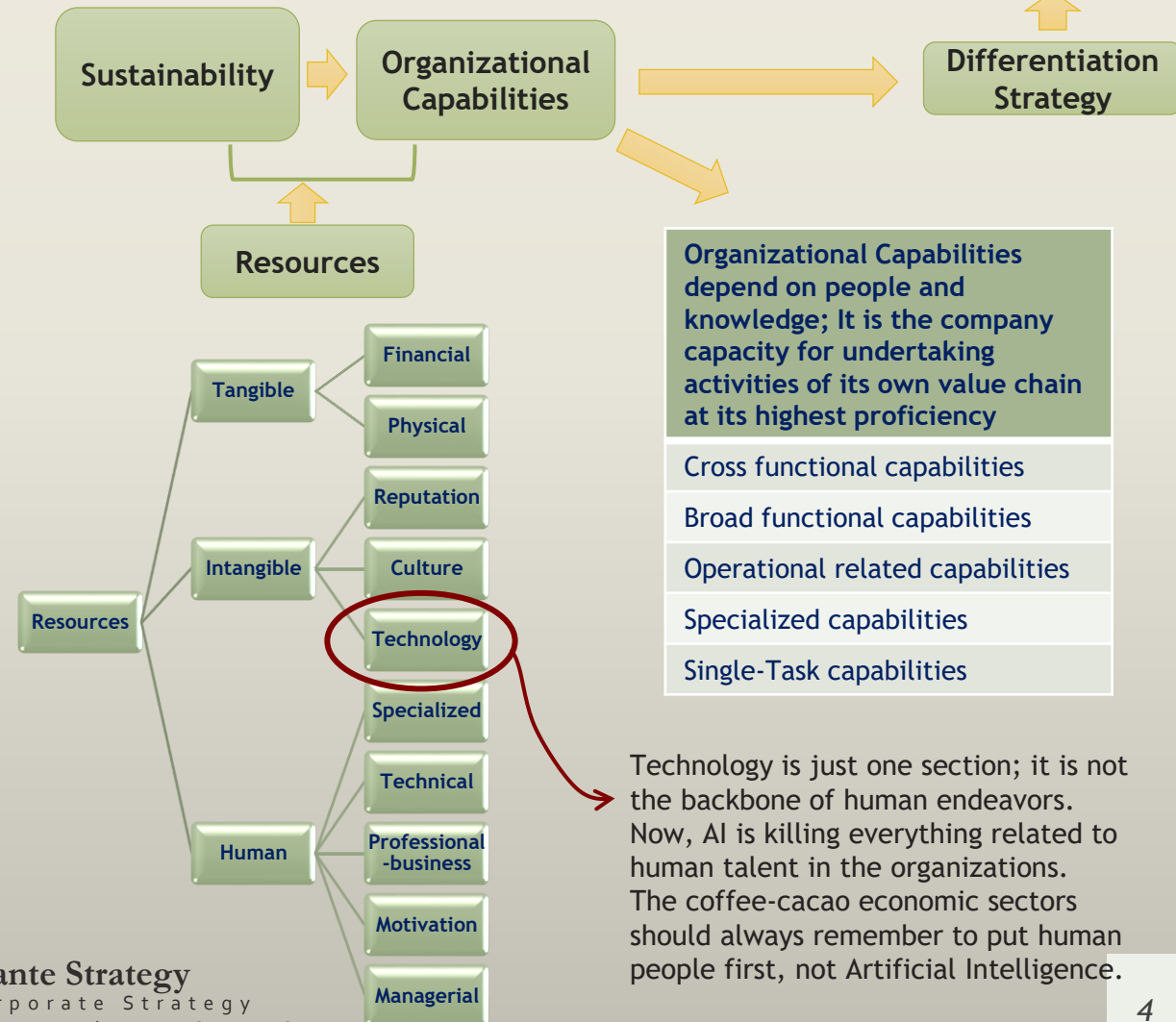
What are the key resources needed to elevate the value of the beans?



Farmers should also be able to develop specialized products for the respective end users in their own nations. It is shocking that all the best production of coffee and cacao is exported. Some should be offered to local clients who are sophisticated or wish to enjoy it in a local coffee shop too.

Downstream Specialized products & retail

Let's remember the big picture



Technology is just one section; it is not the backbone of human endeavors. Now, AI is killing everything related to human talent in the organizations. The coffee-cacao economic sectors should always remember to put human people first, not Artificial Intelligence.

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

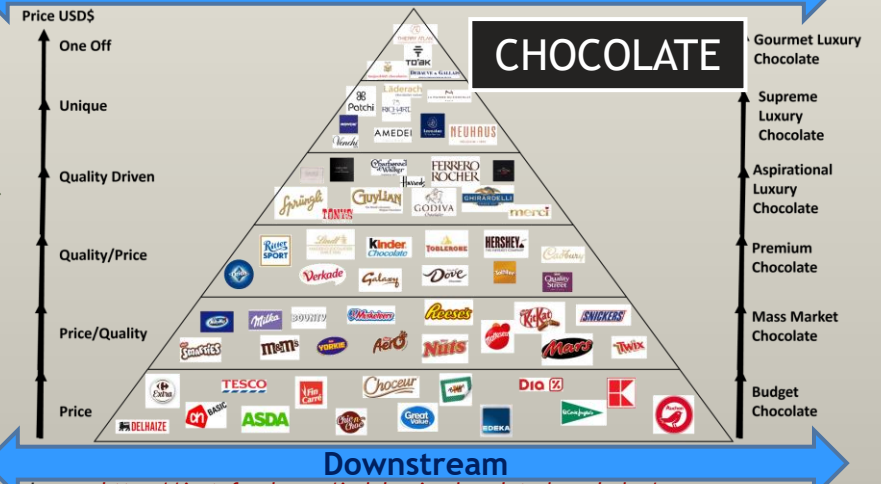
How to elevate the value of the small farmers in this entangled value chain?



Midstream processors & Manufacturers



Downstream end-consumers brands



- Philosophically, what the upstream intermediaries perform for the midstream cocoa producers should be done by the upstream farmers.
- The Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) is our bet to help the farmers to raise the value of their beans.

14/8/2026



Eleonora Escalante Strategy
State of the Art Corporate Strat
All rights reserved. Copyright 2016-

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

Resources play a vital kindle for small-farmers

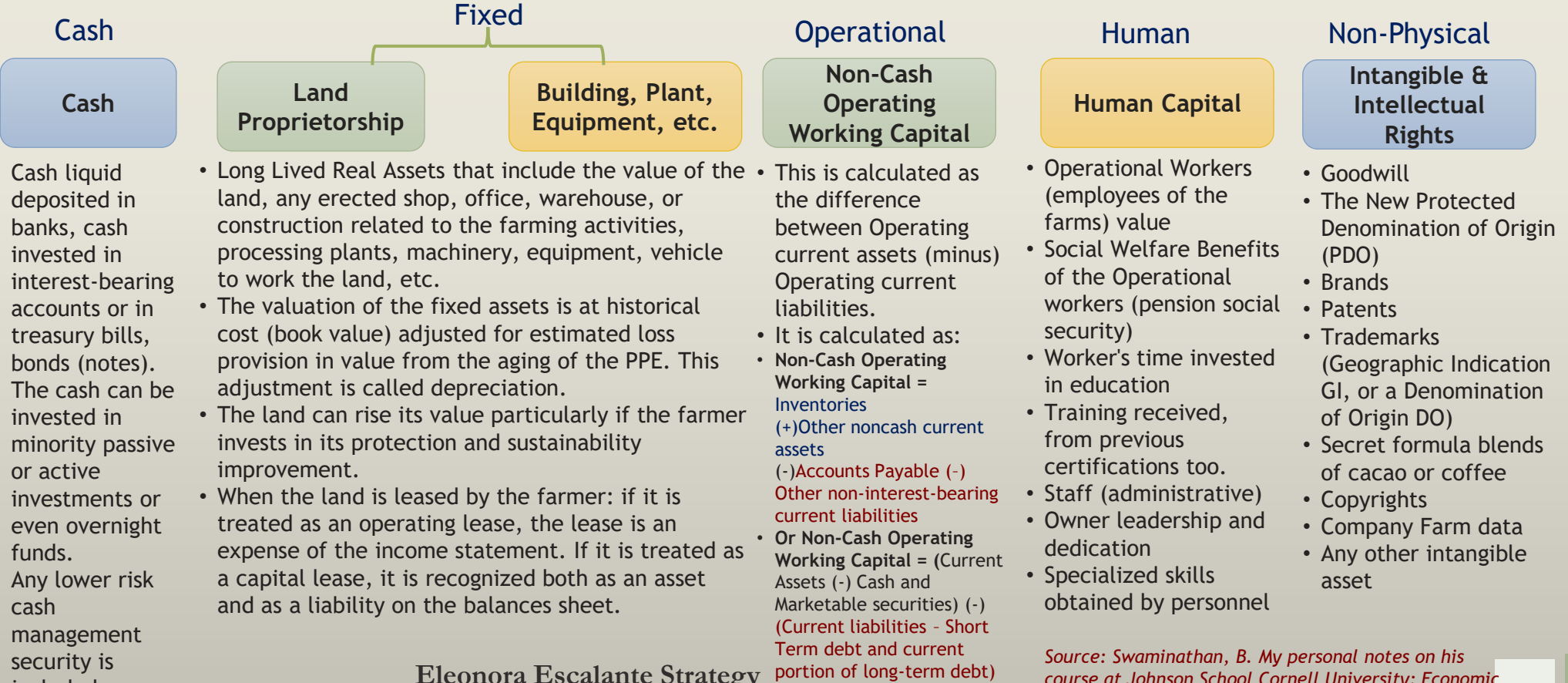
Key Resources are more than a **playbook**. Without them, farmers will never be able to find the best formula for their differentiation efforts with coffee and cacao. Remember we are building a differentiation strategy.

What is a differentiation resource?

It is every resource required to supply a unique product with a value that customers are willing to pay with a price premium for:

- a) Extra-Fine quality
- b) Superior degree of varieties to choose
- c) Exceptional sensorial experience at testing
- d) Excellent delivery
- e) Improved brand image
- f) Higher Certainty of the PDO of coffee or cacao beans
- g) Outstanding sustainability: caring for people, caring for the land/environment, caring for society of upstream producers.

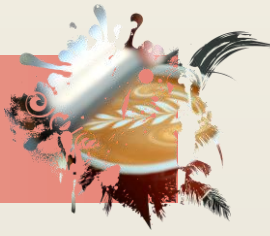
There are at least 5 key resources to consider. These resources should be more valuable than the accounting assets of the small farmer balance sheet:



All the references cited and used for our inferences are shown in slide 11

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

Resources play a vital kindle for small-farmers

A differentiation strategy requires human talent with a solid educational background who will adore their land, with extreme prudence and sagacity, because any investment without the adequate human talent to create cocoa or coffee socio-economic ecosystems is destined to fail.

People matters.

Many initiative failures in the agricultural sector have occurred because the farmers did not request formal educational programs, nor enough training and professional development before an investment capital project.

- The most important of all the resources is **the development of human talented farmers in an integral way**. Those children working in cacao or coffee farms should study hard to attain a university degree and become the masters of cocoa and coffee development.

Agricultural development certifications are not enough



Bachelor of Science (B.SC.) in any of these options

1. Sustainable Agriculture
2. Agronomy-Business
3. Agricultural Economics
4. Agroforestry
5. Tropical Agriculture
6. International Agriculture and Rural Development



Master Degree in Sustainable Cacao-Growing and Industrial Cocoa Development

CACAO



Master Degree in Sustainable Coffee-Growing and Industrial Coffee Development

COFFEE

The Tropical Belt region requires top university centers for cacao and coffee research beyond the agricultural sciences. This region is in urgent need to provide formal education to small-farmers. It is urgent to make available curriculums that can help these farmers to shift their mentality of being collectors of beans to become the next researchers of cacao and coffee, to grow into innovators and problem solvers of farming-sustainability dilemmas, to be the next experts in cocoa and coffee industrial development.

The mentality of growing to picking beans must shift to cocoa-coffee entrepreneurs without falling into mass industrialization. Let's remember that we are pursuing the differentiation-uniqueness strategy.

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

Resources play a vital kindle for small-farmers

Human talent is the top resourcefulness for coffee and cacao farmers.

Training people in the coffee and cacao regions is mandatory. But the training is not accomplished with certifications of weeks of a few on-line sessions. There is no short-cut while learning well. The shift of mentality occurs through the Bachelor of Science Degree.

The focus on entrepreneurial empowerment for sustainable farming and manufacturing happens in theoretical courses, hands-on laboratory, field experiences and further specialization.

AI applications will not provide a solid foundation for skilled cocoa-coffee entrepreneurs. The idea is to develop their mindsets for integral problem solving in which the AI or the Internet is not the leading role, but the side-dish.

14/8/2020

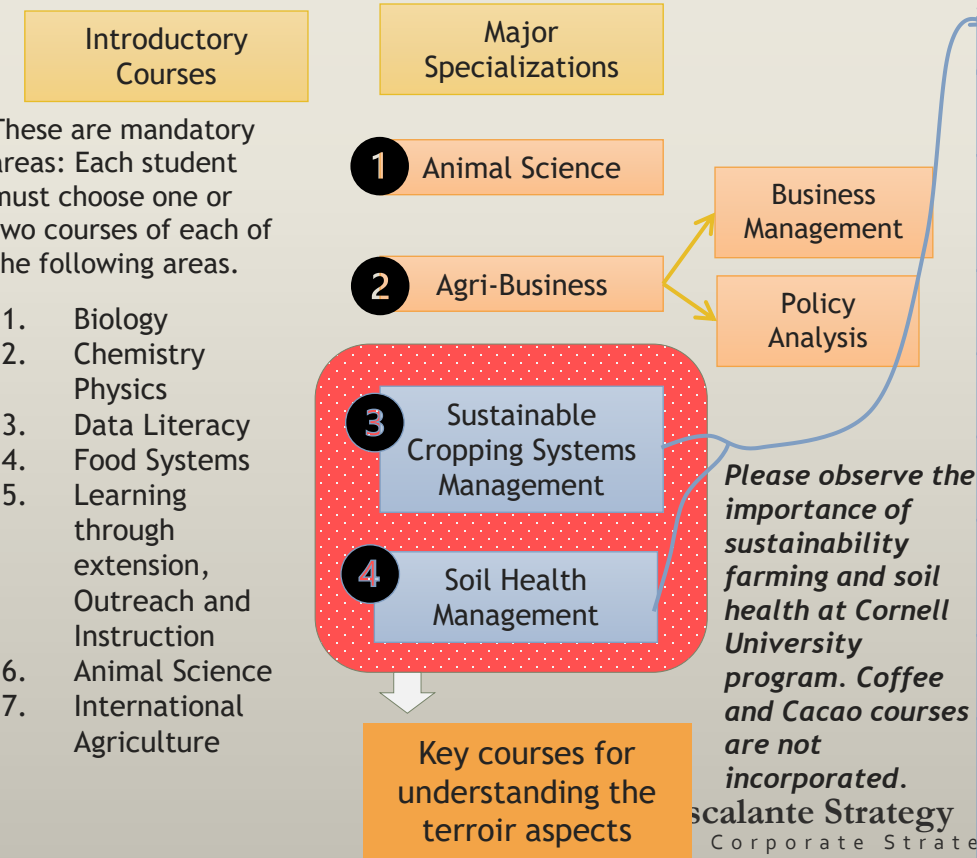


For more information visit:

1. <https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/agricultural-sciences-major>
2. <https://catalog.cornell.edu/programs/agricultural-sciences-bs/#curriculumtext>

• **People matters more than anything else. For excellent education there is no AI shortcuts.**

Let´s see the curriculum of the Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Sciences at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.



Plant Genetics	Agricultural Machinery	
Hydroponic Food Crop Production & mgmt.	Agroecology	GIS concepts & Applications
Soil and Crop Mgmt. for sustainability	Forest Mgmt. and Maple Syrup Production	Nutrient and Carbon Cycling & Mgmt. Ecosystems
Sustainable Orchard mgmt.	Wines and Grapes: Composition & Analysis	Soil Genesis, Classification and Survey
Berry Crops: culture & Mgmt.	Applied Entomology	Food Systems and Sustainable Development
Plant propagation	Weed biology & mgmt.	Introduction to mapping and Spatial Analysis with GIS
Genetic Improvement of crop plants	Biology and Mgmt. of Plant Diseases	Production/Mgmt. Greenhouse Crops
Global Cropping systems	Whole-farm nutrient mgmt.	Soil Ecology
Equitable crop improvement: From Theory to practice	Principles of nutrition and Nutrient Mgmt. in crops and landscape plants	Fruit Crop Physiology

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders



Key Resources

Resources play a vital kindle for small-farmers

Human talent development in the tropical belt should focus on university formal degrees that directly pertain them. Coffee, Cacao, and tea are essential beverages of polyphenols. A certification or diplomas (short term periods) in coffee and cacao are only the baseline, the bare minimum. More specialized professionals are required to transform the industry in an active entrepreneurial ecosystem for the farmers to move up the social ladder in the Tropics.

- *People matters more than anything else. For excellent education there is no AI shortcuts. Education in person is irreplaceable.*

We searched for cacao and coffee university formal centers of research and training positioned in the Tropical Belt Region, and we only found a few official accredited programs with a solid pattern of dedication to upstream cacao and coffee research & development. The top recognized university centers are positioned in Europe and the USA.



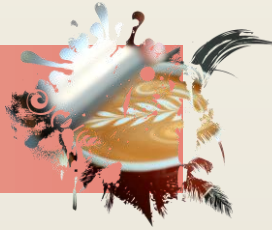
- According to Global Network for Cacao Resources, there are 32 cacao research centers worldwide. Many of them extend certifications and short-term period diplomas. Here we can name the EIC/ECICC - Estación de Investigaciones de Cacao, Brazil; ICCRI-Indonesian coffee and cacao research initiative, Indonesia; CRIG - Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana; or the National Center for Agronomic Research of Cote D'Ivoire.
- According to World Research Coffee, each producing coffee nation has an institute for coffee research (government, public-private, or private), for example,, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa), CENICAFE, Colombia; CSC-Procafé, El Salvador; the Junta Nacional de Café (JNC) of Perú, the National Coffee Research Institute (NaCORI) of Uganda, or the Coffee Research Institute, Zimbabwe

Eleonora Escalante Strategy

State of the Art Corporate Strategy
All rights reserved. Copyright 2016-2026

Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders

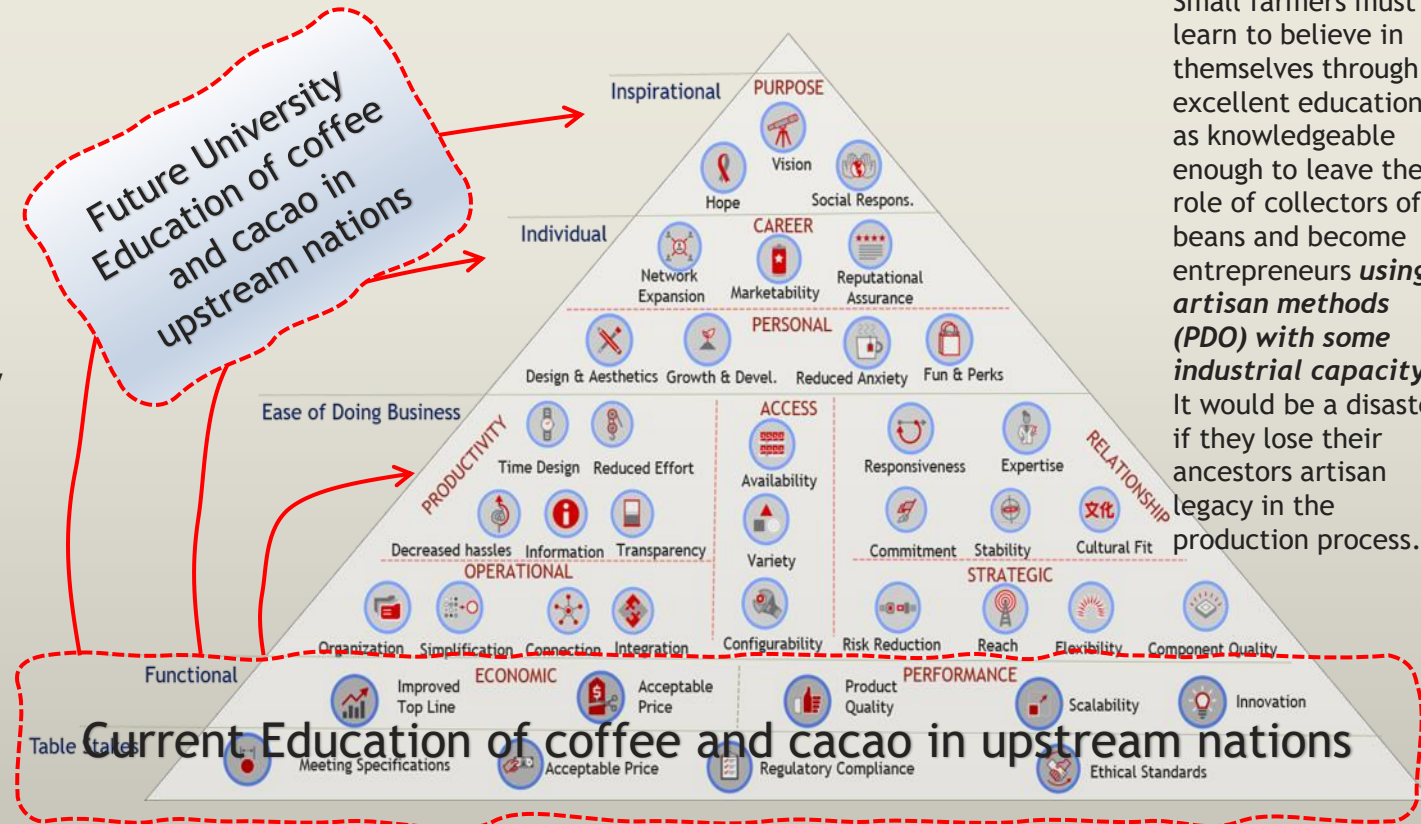


Key Resources

Resources play a vital kindle for small-farmers

Human talent development is so crucial about coffee and cacao in the tropical belt nations. Money (financing), grants (for obtaining a PDO), or manufacturing plants are useless without well-prepared top human capital with visionary mindsets to conceive entrepreneurial efforts, policies, ecosystems, innovation and problem solving in critical issues, including negotiation skills to face the downstream/midstream players. Climate change will require to pull more local-well prepared talented people in the future.

- **People matters more than anything else. For excellent education there is no AI shortcuts. Education in person is irreplaceable.**
- Certifications and short-term courses only fulfill the table stakes and functional values. These have been the values of education at the upstream tropical nations, and this is why we don't find university degrees with specialization in coffee or cacao beyond the collection of grains.
- To provide education to the upstream nations of coffee and cacao, the shift from the "collection of beans mentality" to an entrepreneurial manufacturer of fine-quality cocoa or coffee products, the education must rise and elevate their quality in terms of research, sustainability, facing climate change and natural disasters, terroir economy, honoring the process with an appropriate mix of artisan traditional (legacy of the native populations) with some industrial capacity.
- The differentiation strategy should be unique for each farmer through their PDO flavors, traditional legacy, and aromas. Too much technology and industrialization will make their products a commodity again. **Eleonora Escalante Strategy**



Small farmers must learn to believe in themselves through excellent education, as knowledgeable enough to leave the role of collectors of beans and become entrepreneurs **using artisan methods (PDO) with some industrial capacity**. It would be a disaster if they lose their ancestors artisan legacy in the production process.

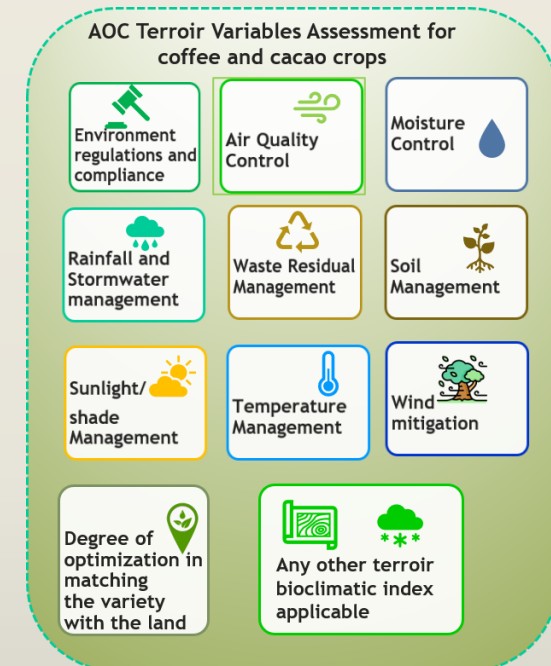
Cacao and Coffee 101.

Success Strategies for Small Farm Holders

Key Resources

Bibliography 1/2

1. Grant, R. Contemporary Strategy Analysis. 12th edition. Chapter 5. Wiley. <https://www.wiley.com/en-us/shop/general-introductory-business-management/contemporary-strategy-analysis-with-ebook-access-code-12th-edition-p-9781394251568>
2. Palepu, Healy, Bernard. Business Analysis and Valuation, 3rd edition. Cengage. 2020 <https://au.cengage.com/c/business-analysis-and-valuation-using-financial-statements-3e-palepu-healy-wright-bradbury-coulton/9780170425186/>
3. Damodaran, A. Investment Valuation. Tools and Techniques for Determining the Value of Any Asset. University 4th Edition. Wiley, 2025. <https://www.wiley.com/en-us/shop/general-finance-investments/investment-valuation-university-edition-tools-and-techniques-for-determining-the-value-of-any-asset-4th-edition-p-9781394262748>
4. Swaminathan, B. Award Finance Professor. NBA541 SC Johnson Graduate School of Management course: Economic Evaluation of Capital Investments Projects. My personal notes of this course while attending Cornell University. Spring 1999.
5. Cornell College of Agriculture Sciences CALS <https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/agricultural-sciences-major> and <https://catalog.cornell.edu/programs/agricultural-sciences-bs/#curriculumtext>
6. Eleonora Escalante Strategy Research division visited all the websites of the mentioned universities, in our quest to find formal tertiary degrees in coffee and cacao universities at the Tropical belt regions, USA and Europe.
 - **Human talent is the essence for adding value to the small-farmers. A good education foundation based on brilliant research and innovation is required. The mentality must change from collectors of beans as raw-material farmers to entrepreneurs of excellence, using a mix of artisan-industrial processing. The differentiation strategy requires a unique combination of organizational capabilities in which the artisan processes can't be dismissed.**
 - **Next week, we will proceed with the analysis of the rest of resources using two examples: Ethiopian Coffee and Indonesian Cacao. Stay tuned!**



All the variables measured by the AOC terroir assessment are sources of projects that will require climate change financing. Can you see the link that connects the harvests with possibilities of green finance?

Without a doubt we believe that all the farms on the tropical belt will benefit from an AOC system segmentation or a PDO from the European Union. Our contribution is to open the eyes to all the global value chain players about it. The upstream pricing commodity mistake must be fixed first. And with it, the transparency of the whole value chain will be correct for all, the upstream (farmers), midstream (European-American processors of the beans), downstream (Final transformers into experiences for the ultimate consumers).



Photo from Microsoft Stock Images

Thank you

Coffee and Cacao 101.
Success strategies for Small Farm Holders

<https://eleonoraescalantestrategy.com/>