

Talking about Chocolate

Written by Administrator

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As Erlass English Conversation Class Walking Step approaches its last session of its three-months run, last May students and teachers have enjoyed discussing the latest topic that is delicious, dark and sweet: chocolate. Each of the 6 participants offered their views about chocolate and the industry.

As the world's third largest cocoa producer after Ivory Coast and Ghana, Indonesia enjoys geographical advantage of warm weather, rich soil for cocoa farming, in addition to labor, a large market and a growing middle-class poised to appreciate quality local chocolate. However, participants learned about the difficulties from cocoa farmers with their low crop yields due to pests and diseases, unsustainable farming methods and aging trees.

The Erlass participants realized that a regular chocolate bar found in the stores has gone through a long and complicated supply chain which reduces the amount of incentives that farmers can collect.

The participants enjoyed the discussion about Indonesian chocolate and the relaxed feeling that chocolate brings. A range of interesting answers about products using chocolate came from the participants such as chocolate body scrub, chocolate soap, chocolate shampoo, the possibilities are endless.

They particularly enjoyed the video The Story of Chocolate describing the process of chocolate from the cocoa bean, processing to manufacturing, distribution to the consumer. From a historical standpoint, they discovered that chocolate was used as currency. The other video Indonesia: A Chance for Chocolate showed how the second-largest chocolate company Mars of the United States provided training in farming methods and maintenance to cocoa bean farmers in Indonesia.

Two of the farmers in Sulawesi, Ibu Mimi and Bapak Ahmed, benefited from the training. Ibu Mimi managed to generate 100 kilograms of cocoa beans twice a month from the training, a very different situation from the previous yield of 50 kilograms yearly. Bapak Ahmed, who has been a cocoa bean farmer for 20 years, managed to increase his output to 60% in one year as a result of training from Mars. Thus Mars would benefit from a continued supply and consumers would be able to enjoy chocolate. Chocolate can spell sweet success for everyone. The Erlass English Conversation class is fully conducted in English. The class meets weekly

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after office hours, and each participant is fully expected to improve their understanding of English and feeling confident with their conversation skill.

If you want to participate in this English Conversation, call Erlass at 021-7918047.