Chocolate and its national tour were developed by The Field Museum.

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This exhibition was supported, in part, by the National Science Foundation.
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**From Beans to Bars**

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Chocolate. For many, the rich taste and unique texture of chocolate are among life’s greatest pleasures. An exhibition developed by The Field Museum tells the story behind chocolate—a story as rich and captivating as the sweet itself. Emphasizing the long relationship between humans and nature, the exhibition highlights the many threads that are woven to create this story. Chocolate explores the lush environment in which the cacao tree originated, how the Maya used its seeds in a favorite drink, how the Aztecs elevated it to the level of treasure, and how chocolate became a commodity in the world marketplace. Visitors will discover chocolate’s impact on human cultures and tropical ecosystems through scenic environments, rare artifacts, original video, and interactive exhibition techniques.

There are eight sections in the exhibition. The main messages and topics in each section follow:

**Rainforest**
Main message: Chocolate comes from the seeds of the rainforest tree called cacao.

*Topics:*
- Location of cacao rainforests on earth
- Cacao’s environment
- Unique parts of the cacao tree
- Cacao’s interdependence with rainforest animals and plants

**Maya**
Main message: The Maya were one of the first people to drink chocolate.

*Topics:*
- Household use of cacao
- Elite use of cacao by kings and priests
- Cacao hieroglyphs

**Aztec**
Main message: Cacao was used as currency and also made into a chocolate drink for elite Aztecs.

*Topics:*
- Cacao was traded over long distances
- Cacao was used as currency
- Cacao was used as a tribute to Aztec emperors
- Cacao was an elite luxury

**Europe**
Main messages:
- Chocolate came to Europe during the period of conquest
- The cost of cacao beans and sugar made chocolate a drink only the rich could afford

*Topics:*
- Spain began the world-wide cacao trade
- European countries competed for control of cacao and other foods from around the world
- Chocolate as a status symbol
- Ideas and misconceptions about chocolate
- Spread of chocolate throughout Europe
- Supply of chocolate was built on slave labor

**Manufacturing**
Main message: Technological innovations and publicity changed chocolate from an expensive luxury item to an affordable mass-produced and mass-consumed product.

*Topics:*
- Inventions
- Advertising
**World Trade**

Main message: Today cacao is valued around the world as a trade commodity, a local food, and a manufactured product.

*Topics:*
- Who grows cacao
- Who eats chocolate
- Who brings chocolate to the world

**Growers**

Main message: Cacao farming affects the lives and environment of the people who grow it.

*Topics:*
- Challenges of growing cacao
- Farmers working together with nature (sustainability)

**Chocolate Today**

Main message: Chocolate means different things to different people around the world.

*Topics:*
- Chocolate and food
- Chocolate and family celebrations
- Chocolate and health
Oh, divine chocolate!
They grind thee kneeling,
Beat thee with hands praying,
And drink thee
with eyes to heaven.

- Marco Antonio Orellana,
18th Century

Chocolate shows up every day in a variety of drinks, a multitude of desserts, countless candy bars, and many other forms. For many people, it is one of the key pleasures of everyday life. Yet most consumers probably never stop to consider the tropical origins of the delicious confection melting in their mouths: a rainforest tree called *Theobroma cacao*.

This enticing food can be used as a classroom tool to explore the intimate relationship between nature and culture. Chocolate offers an opportunity to better understand the significance of one natural product, in addition to providing a framework for understanding the ecological interactions and social and economic processes natural products undergo when they become valuable to humans.

There are many threads to the story of chocolate:
A unique tree in a lush tropical environment.
A seed so precious it was used as money. A spicy drink and a sweet snack. By examining the places where the natural and social histories of cacao and humans converge, teachers can weave an integrated message of environmental respect and responsibility. Chocolate offers a unique educational experience that can increase students’ environmental understanding, enhance cultural awareness, and encourage the celebration and preservation of the Earth’s diversity.

Using chocolate as a framework, students can:
- discover the botanical source of chocolate, *Theobroma cacao*, a small tree of the tropical rainforest interior;
- explore the ecological connections between people, plants, insects, and other animals within the tree’s habitat;
- investigate cultural interactions and conservation concerns resulting from the cultivation, processing, exchange, and consumption of cacao and other foods; and
- recognize the changing economic and cultural roles of cacao and chocolate in local and global economies over time.
How To Use This Kit

Contained within this kit you will find the following resources to help you bring the exciting world of chocolate to your students:

- 12 lessons pertaining to chocolate and its relationship with the environment and culture
- Chocolate facts, history, and tidbits of information
- Chocolate recipes
- Chocolate quotations
- Lists of books, periodicals, web sites and films to use as tools or references
- List of speakers and ideas for public programs
- Color prints of chocolate in various stages of production
- Cacao seeds
- Cocoa powder

The items you use will depend on the aspect(s) of chocolate on which you wish to focus. There is no one set way to use this kit or any particular order that needs to be followed. It is, rather, a “grab bag” of ideas and tools for you to use as you see fit. If you would like ideas on how to utilize the items in this kit, follow the lessons provided within and try some of the extension activities listed at the back of each section.
How To Use The Lessons

For convenience, we have chosen to divide the enclosed lessons into two pathways: chocolate from an environmental standpoint and chocolate as a cultural phenomenon. Both pathways contain lessons that build upon each other. You may choose to implement them in the order in which they appear, or use them as stand-alone lessons to emphasize key understandings. If you want your students to examine how chocolate, people, and the environment interconnect, you may want to use lessons from both pathways.

Below are a list of the lessons enclosed in this kit. Each lesson strives to help students understand fundamental questions about chocolate. Please note that the lessons next to one another usually have a common element, like cultivation or technology. By using these two lessons together, you can help your students focus on a particular aspect of chocolate. By progressing down the lesson column, you can give your students a much broader view of chocolate from an environmental or cultural standpoint.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Origins</td>
<td>Where does chocolate begin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation</td>
<td>What is the anatomy of a cacao tree and how is it cultivated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Ingredients</td>
<td>What other natural products are connected to chocolate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological Influence</td>
<td>What are the connections within the cacao ecosystem and how are they being threatened?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>How is cacao harvested and processed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Over Time</td>
<td>How does cacao change over time?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each section starts with reference material to help you identify basic information you’ll need to convey to your students. The lessons within each section rely heavily on the reference material presented at the beginning. We recommend that educators read the companion books to The Field Museum’s exhibition, Chocolate: The Nature of Indulgence and Chocolate: Riches From The Rainforest, to further investigate the many facets of this sweet treat. You may also wish to gather more information from the references listed in the back of this booklet.