

From water shortages to disease: climate change challenges Puerto Rico's cacao industry ^[1]

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The USDA Caribbean Climate Center has been working to support climate professionalization in the cacao industry. In the photo, farmer Jorge Morales, from Hacienda Terruño, in Naranjito. (Supplied)

International specialists and Puerto Rican cacao growers gathered at the first Cacao Symposium to discuss the future of this growing industry and the challenges it faces, from the threat of a destructive disease that has reached the Caribbean and the impact of climate change on the global harvest, to the urgent plan for farm livelihoods throughout Puerto Rico.

“Right now, the industry is going through a bit of an uncertain time. What is certain is that it is being affected by climate change and the correlation this has had on the scarcity of water in some parts and the excess in others, helping these fungi, viruses and pathogens have the ideal conditions to do what they want, and that has affected a lot,” said Dr. Viviana Medina Rodríguez, regional coordinator of the Caribbean Climate Center of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).



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- [cacao](#) [3]
- [agricultura](#) [4]
- [Centro Climático del Caribe](#) [5]
- [USDA](#) [6]
- [cambio climático](#) [7]

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<https://www.cienciapr.org/en/tags/cacao> [4] <https://www.cienciapr.org/en/tags/agricultura> [5]
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