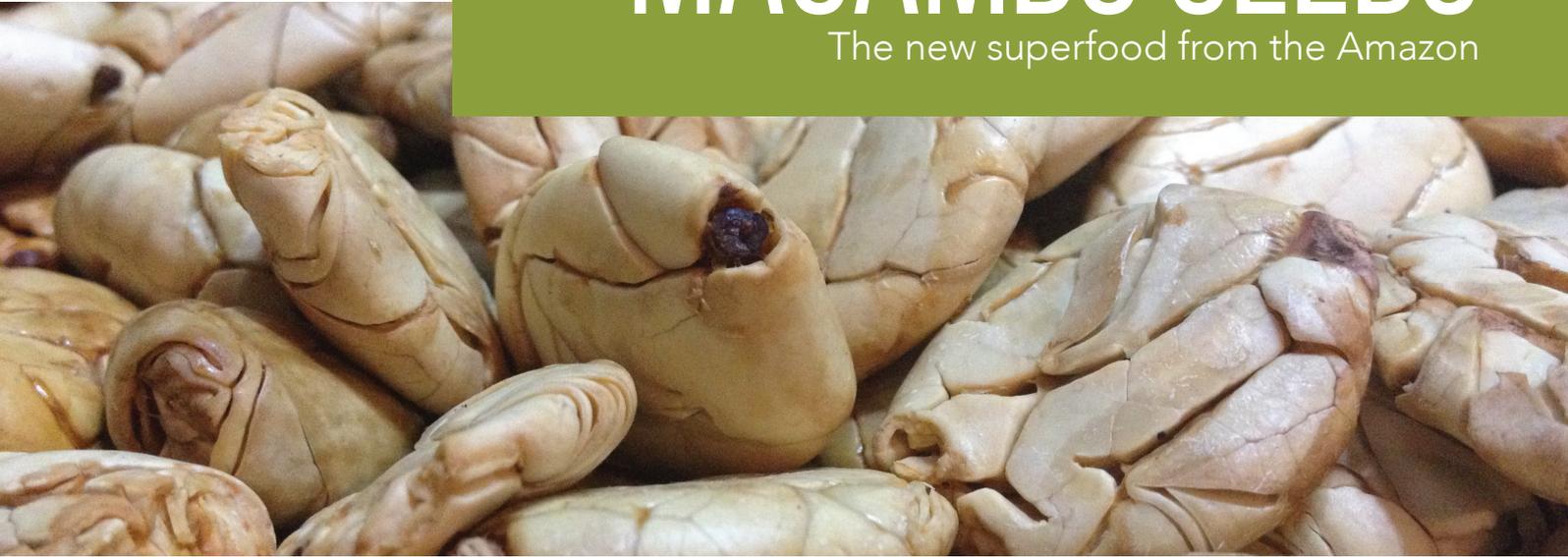




CANOPY  
BRIDGE

# MACAMBO SEEDS

The new superfood from the Amazon



## KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



Delicious superfood  
high in protein, rich  
fiber and Omega-9



Reinforces biodiverse  
Kichwa agroforestry  
systems



Potential to scale  
based on cropping  
systems & know-how  
of cacao



Nutritious traditional  
food declining in local  
consumption

## WHAT ARE MACAMBO SEEDS?

Macambo trees yield a crunchy and nutrient-dense seed that can be consumed like a nut, as a snack or as an ingredient to be used by chocolatiers or chefs, many of whom have already identified macambo as a promising ingredient for their dishes.

Macambo is a cousin of cacao, from the rainforest species *Theobroma bicolor*. Although less known than cacao, macambo is gaining attention for the high protein, fiber and antioxidant content of its white, walnut-sized seeds. Indigenous Amazon farmers in Peru and Ecuador have cultivated scattered macambo trees for generations as part of their agroforestry systems as an important source of nourishment in traditional diets.

Macambo's characteristics dovetail with key food product trends – nutrient-rich, nut-free, organic, paleo and wild, coupled with a compelling social-impact origin.

Macambo is also known as patasmuyo in Kichwa-speaking Ecuador, pataxte in Mayan Mexico and Mesoamerica, and sometimes as "cacao blanco".

## NUTRIENTS IN MACAMBO SEEDS



3x more protein than macadamia and 1,5x more than walnuts



4x more fiber than walnuts and 2x more than almonds



1,3x more Omega 9 than walnuts



Contains theobromine, which reduces blood pressure and relaxes body muscles.

## WHAT CHEFS THINK ABOUT MACAMBO

“Macambo is extraordinary for soups, it gives them great flavor and texture”

*Eduardo Martinez, chef at Mini-Mal Restaurant*

“Macambo is an Amazonian ingredient with exclusive taste and texture, something that resembles Brazil nut and chocolate”

*Paulo Machado, Brazilian chef*

“When toasted, it becomes a delicate and very crunchy nut, without the oiliness found in oilseeds. A handful of macambo and a good champagne: a luxury!”

*Mara Salles, chef at Tordesilhas Restaurant*



## PRODUCTION CONTEXT

Macambo is not intensively cultivated, but is an integral part of many diversified traditional indigenous farms in Peru and Ecuador. Only limited amounts make it to market, with most consumed locally or wasted for lack of consumers. Cultivated without chemical inputs, these trees are planted as part of family agriculture systems known as *chakras* or *huertas*, where they are combined with other plants like cacao, guayusa, peach palm, coffee, manioc, among others. *Theobroma bicolor* trees provide shade for other species like cacao and coffee and its fallen leaves offer a natural source of organic fertilizer.

## POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT

Diverse rainforest farming systems are a crucial element in conserving native plants and wildlife in a landscape tapestry weaving together agriculture and forests. Creating multiple-revenue streams for farmers helps make these traditional farming systems economically viable in the face of modern market pressures, and bring needed income to small-scale indigenous farmers.

Macambo requires environmental conditions and practices similar to cacao, which is currently grown by over 1.3 million farmers in Latin America, indicating significant potential to scale up.



## CANOPY BRIDGE AND MACAMBO

Canopy Bridge is conducting product research and development to identify market and investment opportunities in Ecuador. It is also doing inventories and monitoring trees to estimate supply. Canopy Bridge has conducted processing trials and pilot sales to restaurants and farmers markets in Quito.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Macambo has extraordinary promise both as a new superfood and as an addition to local farmers' livelihoods. Realizing this potential requires:

- Assessing availability of macambo from existing plantings
- Improving post-harvest processing methods and technology
- Creating market awareness and demand for this new product
- Developing agricultural best-practice guidance for expanding macambo planting in agroforestry systems



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*Special recognition to all the local communities and chefs, whose participation has been essential in this process.*