

China, Cuba Cooperate on Moringa Research



CUBA

CHINA



Beijing, July 29 (RHC-ChinaDaily) -- With experts warning of a worldwide food shortage in the future, Chinese and Cuban scientists are collaborating to research the moringa plant, which may have a role in feeding the world's hungry.

The moringa is also called the miracle tree for its nutritional value. In 2008, the United States National Institutes of Health named the tree its "Plant of the Year."

"As a potential solution to malnutrition and food shortages, moringa research is urgently needed in China," said Li Guohua, director of the Yunnan Tropical Crops Research Institute.

He said Chinese scientists are researching and developing moringa-related products such as capsules, juice and tea to make the products more acceptable to Chinese.

In order to accelerate the research on the plant, China and Cuba are cooperating in moringa planting and manufacturing and opened a Sino-Cuban center in Xishuangbanna, the southernmost prefecture of Yunnan province, in April.

Li said the center, which covers about 12 hectares, would accelerate the industrialization of moringa products in China.

"China has no tradition of moringa planting and eating, but Cuba has and we can learn their advanced technologies," Li said.

The center's development plan from now until 2017 includes gardens in both China and Cuba and a regular exchange of scientists.

The cooperation covers seed exchanges, research and development of moringa products and personnel training and exchanges.

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