

# *Cuba is putting knowledge at the service of the country's progress*

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National food production is a priority for Cuba's authorities and, moreover, an urgency, given the rise in international prices after more than two years of the COVID 19 pandemic and current armed conflicts.

This purpose requires the effort of all, since it is hindered by the persistence and reinforcement of the US blockade that hinders and makes it more expensive for Cuba to acquire inputs and machinery for agricultural activities.

It is therefore necessary to seek alternatives and exploit to the maximum the existing potentialities in each territory, an action to which universities and research institutions have been joining with greater force in recent times, although there is still a long way to go.

On several occasions, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel has insisted that the alliance with higher education institutions is key to the country's economic and social progress.

On this path, the Ministries of Agriculture and Higher Education and the office in Cuba of FAO, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, are designing a new platform to promote science and technology in agrifood systems.

It is a tool designed to implement innovative technologies that allow the efficient use of natural resources, always in an environmentally friendly way.

Through this platform, answers will be found to questions on how to improve soil nutrition, pest control, genetic improvement of livestock and which crop species and varieties could be better adapted to the conditions of each locality.

Behind this useful instrument is the Society of Science and Technology Interface of the Central University "Martha Abreu" of Las Villas.

But it is not only this institution that has put knowledge into food production. The center of high studies in the eastern province of Granma provides alternatives for the production of animal feed, which translates into import substitution and higher livestock yields.

Also in eastern Cuba, the University of Guantánamo is at the forefront of research on the promotion of beekeeping and the use of honey derivatives.

What has been achieved so far in this necessary involvement of the centers of higher studies with the development of the country, should be only the preamble of everything that can and should be done to meet the demands of the population and ensure the country's food sovereignty, with the necessary import substitution and saving of resources that can be invested in this sector and others for the benefit of citizens.

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