

# *Cuban president receives delegation from U.S. agricultural sector*

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Havana, February 20 (RHC) -- President Miguel Díaz-Canel received agricultural secretaries from several U.S. states and representatives of that sector visiting Cuba, of whom he stressed that he has always

worked to find ways to break down walls.

It is a pleasure and a satisfaction to have them present in Cuba in such an important composition, said Díaz-Canel, quoted by the Granma newspaper.

He recalled that Cuba has a long-standing relationship with this sector, which has always worked to find ways of greater rapprochement and benefit for both countries.

If it were not for the blockade, we would have many mutual opportunities to work, to advance for the benefit of both peoples, he stressed.

Expanding on this, he said that there has been a permanent dialogue between Cuba and US farmers, and delegations from this sector are frequently received on the island.

This is the first time that the National Association of US Departments of Agriculture (Nasda) has organised a mission to visit Cuba, according to the source.

The meeting was attended by Ted A. McKinney, Nasda President; Megan McDonald, Nasda official; Donald F. Lamb, Indiana Department of Agriculture Director; Bryan Paul Hurbult, Connecticut Secretary of Agriculture; and their counterparts from Montana and Louisiana, Christine R. Clark and Michael Strain, respectively.

Other participants included Blake D. Ramsey, Nasda Market Promotion Officer; Thomas E. Peterson, Minnesota Secretary of Agriculture; Ronald J. Karney, Nasda Market Promotion Officer; Amanda Beal, Maine Commissioner of Agriculture; and Hugh Weathers, South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture.

Ernesto Barón, representative of the Usapeec and USA Rice Federation associations; and Paul Johnson, co-chair of the Agricultural Coalition for Cuba.

The US agricultural sector is one of the most active in favour of improving bilateral relations and lifting coercive measures. According to the report, US farmers have backed bills to relax blockade regulations, such as those opposed to the ban on travel to Cuba and those aimed at favouring the granting of credits and authorising Cuban exports to the other nation.

It was also recalled that during his two stays in New York, President Díaz-Canel held meetings with representatives of the sector, to whom he ratified his government's willingness to expand ties. (Source: Prensa Latina)

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