

# *Former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Selected to Lead Delegation to Cuba*

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Washington, February 6 (RHC) -- Former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy has been selected to lead a delegation to Cuba in the wake of President Barack Obama's decision to ease travel and trade restrictions to the country.

Espy will be leading the delegation organized by the U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba (USACC) with John Block, former President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Agriculture.

"We're going to meet with everyone in the Cuban government and inform Cuba of the premiere products from the United States," Espy told the Clarion Ledger of the trip's mission.

Some of the country's largest agricultural groups are part of the U.S. Agriculture Coalition for Cuba, including Cargill, the National Farmers Union and U.S. Wheat Associates, among others. The goal of the coalition is to improve agricultural trade between the U.S. and Cuba. The group has repeatedly stressed its desire to see the economic blockade on Cuba lifted, a move, they claim, would bring big benefits to their operations.

The delegation's trip is slated to take place in March.

Espy served as the Secretary of Agriculture under President Bill Clinton. Before serving in that role, he was elected the first African-American U.S. Congressman from Mississippi since the Reconstruction era. He currently works as a private sector attorney in his own law and consulting firms.

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