

# *United Nations Says Stronger Food Sovereignty Battling Hunger in Venezuela*

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Caracas, May 18 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Venezuelan agricultural producers have a reason to celebrate as the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization recognized the country's advances in food security and food sovereignty.

During the implementation of an agro-ecological seed and vegetable production plan in the state of Lara, FAO's representative in Venezuela, Marcelo Resende, congratulated small farmers and community organizations on the fruits of their labor. "Here we have a vivid example of how campesino men and women, communal councils, communes, (and) the government are achieving food sovereignty and food security," said Resende.

Resende pledged the FAO's support for the new agro-ecology program, saying it will be of "fundamental importance" to family farms. He also praised the country's agrarian policy as a road map toward

strengthening agriculture and increasing food production.

In 2012, the FAO acknowledged Venezuela's success in reducing hunger and extreme poverty by more than 50 percent. In 2014, it recognized the government's national social program for distributing food at affordable prices and providing meals for children in schools.

Food sovereignty, a term popularized by the world's largest social movement *La Via Campesina*, is focused on reclaiming the food system from corporate control and ensuring decision making authority over food and agriculture is in the hands of those who produce and distribute food, namely the millions of small producers at the foundation of the global food system.

Resende also announced the FAO will invite Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to Rome in July to be officially recognized for achievements in battling hunger.

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