

# *Illinois Agribusiness Leaders and Two Members of U.S. Congress to Visit Cuba*

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Chicago, October 9 (RHC)-- In a further move to promote trade exchange between Cuba and the U.S. agribusiness sector, some 30 Illinois agricultural leaders and two members of the U.S. Congress have announced a four-day visit to Cuba next week.

The agricultural trade mission includes Representatives Cheri Bustos, a Democrat from East Moline, and Rodney Davis, a Republican from Taylorville, both districts are located in the U.S. State of Illinois.

The group includes representatives of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, the Farm Bureau, the Soybean Growers organization and others.

According to local media, which cites an AP report, Representative Cheri Bustos said she wants to cut through the red tape that holds back Illinois farming economy and that she will discuss what she learned in Cuba upon her return home. Representative Davis also referred to the need to create opportunities for Illinois farmers.

The current trade limitations imposed on Cuba by the 50-year-old economic blockade directly affects the interests of U.S. farmers who are willing and eager to sell their products to Cuba. For instance, Texas A&M University estimates that U.S. agri-exports to Cuba could reach 1.2 billion dollars if the current trade barriers are lifted and Illinois alone could share about 120 million dollars a year; this is four times the current values of the U.S. state agri-exports to Cuba.

During the four-day visit, the U.S. agricultural and government delegation will meet with Cuban officials and farmers and will visit local farms across the island.

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