

# *U.S. Plans to Open Agriculture Department Office in Cuba*

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Washington, February 11 (RHC-agencies)-- U.S. Secretary for Agriculture Tom Vilsack has said that this year the Department plans to open a permanent office in Cuba to boost trade, before a possible lifting of the blockade.

Vilsack said the agricultural office of President Barack Obama has asked Congress for \$1.5 million for the project, which would cover the shipment of five full-time officers to Havana.

Addressing a conference of the American Coalition of Agriculture to Cuba, which brings together more than one hundred companies and producer associations, Vilsack said: "Officials would work to create an understanding of the technical components needed to be able to trade with Cuba."

The request of the Department of Agriculture is included in the federal government budget for 2017 presented to Obama on Tuesday.

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