

In times of pandemic, Cuba reinforces its food program



The current scenario is highly complex world-wide. COVID-19 has led to a considerable decline in international trade, putting millions of people at risk with a possible decrease of accessible food.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the FAO, has indicated that these times call for solidarity and acting responsibly, in order that the responses to the disease caused by the new coronavirus, do not lead to the exacerbation of hunger and to concomitant malnutrition.

The measures Cuba has implemented to stop the virus are not only directed to the safeguarding of its citizens' health with the strengthening of epidemiological surveillance and the required medical attention, but also to guaranteeing foodstuffs, given that the nutritional security of each Cuban has always been a government priority.

This aspect now requires even greater efforts, inasmuch as the economic, commercial and financial blockade is added to the existing situation in Cuba. The United States is persisting even in times of pandemic in banning the entry of medical supplies to the country.

While the Cuban ports remain open for the arrival of commercial products, authorities have called for increased food production, a decision that counts on both the support and understanding of farmers and cooperative workers.

In these times of pandemic, the production of staple crops such as rice, beans and meat is being prioritized in order to reduce imports, an endeavour that the government has been aspiring to long before the onset of the present sanitary crisis.

Cuban authorities are urging a greater use of organic matter and national bioproducts to replace pesticides given the difficulties of importation.

The government is also supporting urban, suburban and small scale agriculture that has been implemented in Cuba for years, counting on the acknowledgment of the achievements and great social impact of the FAO.

The industry is also being called upon to increase the production of canned food, sugar and other derivatives that serve as animal food, in order to boost numbers of livestock.

Cuba will never neglect any essentials to guarantee the health and safety of its citizens, especially in the face of the world health emergency caused by COVID-19. Despite great obstacles, Cuba is going forward with its enhanced food program.

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