

Cuba celebrates Day of the Farmer with guarantees for the rural population



Havana, May 17 (RHC)-- Cubans are commemorating on Sunday the Day of the Farmer -- el Dia del Campesino -- and the 61st anniversary of the Agrarian Reform Law. The law was signed on May 17, 1959, only a few months after the revolutionary victory with the purpose of changing the reality of the countryside.

The date recalls three related historical events: the assassination of campesino leader Aniceto Pérez in 1946, the signing of the Agrarian Reform Law in 1959 and the founding of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) two years later.

Inspired by the example of Aniceto Pérez, the date was chosen by the historic leader of the Revolution, Fidel Castro, to sign a statute to protect farmers and guarantee their rights 13 years after the murder of Perez, who was an activist and fighter against evictions and exploitation of the sector.

ANAP was founded two years later with the aim of organizing cooperative members, farmers and their families, who were voluntarily associated and whose interests corresponded to the harmonious development of the construction of socialism.

Before the revolutionary triumph, 23.6 percent of the total population was illiterate, while in the agricultural areas the proportion was 42 percent.

Education covered only over 52 percent of the children, while in the countryside it was barely 35 percent due to the lack of educational centers. Figures on medical care showed that 91 percent of rural dwellers were malnourished, the vast majority suffered from parasitism, while another portion suffered from tuberculosis, malaria or typhoid.

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