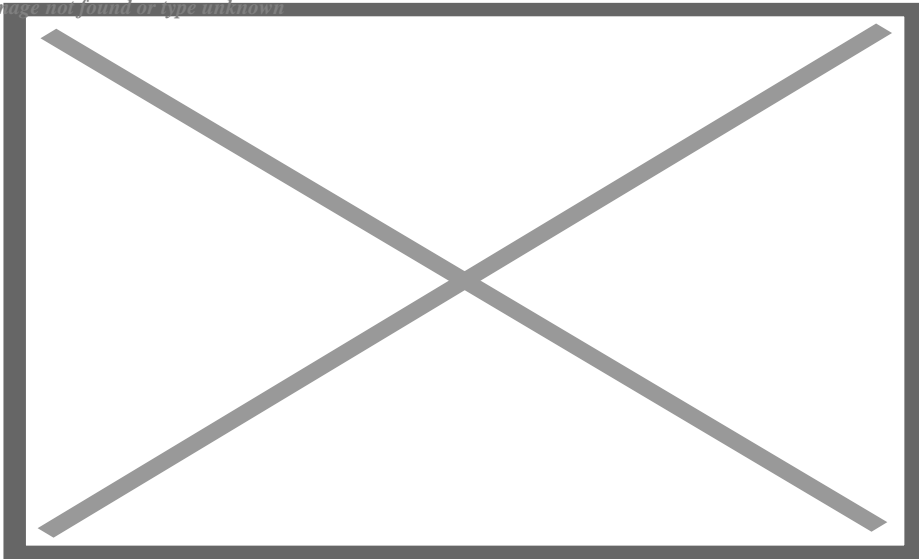


# *U.S. agricultural sector in favor of ties with Cuba*

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**Díaz-Canel met with visiting U.S. farmers**

By María Josefina Arce

For years, the United States agricultural sector has advocated for greater rapprochement with Cuba and defended the establishment of normal economic and commercial relations between the two countries, for the benefit of both peoples.

On numerous occasions they have demanded that the different US administrations lift the blockade against the Caribbean nation, which harms the interests of businessmen from both States.

There is a permanent dialogue with North American farmers, which as the Cuban president, Miguel Díaz Canel, has pointed out, "is a sector that has always worked to find paths that break down walls, paths of greater rapprochement and benefit for both peoples."

During his two visits to the American city of New York, the Cuban president met with representatives of that sphere, to whom he expressed the archipelago's willingness to expand ties.

The activism of American farmers was essential for the United States Congress to approve the Sanctions Reform and Export Expansion Act in 2000, which allowed the Greater Antilles to buy food there, although under disadvantageous conditions due to taxation. of the anti-Cuban sectors and against the will of the

farmers.

Last February, a representation of the National Association of Departments of Agriculture of the United States visited our country, and in addition to meeting with the authorities, they spoke with producers associated with different forms of production such as cooperatives and micro, small and medium-sized companies.

In recent years, agricultural conferences have been held between the two countries. The fifth edition of these meetings has just concluded in Havana, which is a sign of the interest in seeking avenues for bilateral exchange and cooperation.

The large participating American delegation, made up of representatives of the agricultural branch from across the northern country, speaks of the importance that farmers attach to these events.

The Conference is, without a doubt, a space to continue building trust between both parties and work together on food production and increasing trade.

In the opinion of Congressman Rick Crawford, maintaining this type of meeting on a regular basis constitutes progress, although, he emphasized, we are still not where we would like.

Despite the unilateral blockade, farmers from the neighboring country remain active, look for alternatives and explore commercial opportunities with Cuba.

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