

# *Venezuela to Produce 15-18 Percent More Food*

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Caracas, November 21 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Venezuela's Agriculture Minister Jose Luis Berrroteran said Thursday his country is expected to increase its agricultural production by between 15 and 18 percent during 2015.

“The most important thing is the integration of primary producers into the agro-industrial process, because the core of industrial development must be at the community level,” he told state broadcaster VTV.

According to the minister, the expected boon is due to improved agricultural technology, and government initiatives aimed at boosting productivity.

Berrroteran explained the result of increased domestic production will be a reduction in Venezuela's reliance on imports.

In September, President Nicolas Maduro announced the creation of a special office to oversee the production and distribution of food across the country. The government also plans to create the Production, Distribution and Food Marketing Corporation (Corpo Pdval-Mercal), a new institution focused on building more efficient production, distribution and food marketing.

The corporation will integrate already existing government entities such as Mercal food distribution centers, Pdval food production sites and Bicentenario Supermarkets.

Maduro explained that the goal is to increase distribution from 130,000 tons to 200,000 tons of food (between public and private sectors) within the first phase.

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