

# *Missouri Looking for Agriculture Trade with Cuba*

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Jefferson City, January 7 (RHC) -- Governor Jay Nixon of the U.S. state of Missouri views the recent announcement of intentions to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba as having potential to create significant opportunities for his state's number one industry: agriculture, according to Industry Week magazine in an article published on Tuesday.

"This is an historic opportunity for Missouri to expand our surging agricultural markets and continue to feed, fuel and clothe the globe," said Agriculture Director Richard Fordyce. The state's agricultural exports were up 14 percent in 2014.

The state is bolstered by the American Farm Bureau Federation President Bob Stallman's statement that the "president's opening to Cuba promises to improve trade conditions by making it easier for Cuba to buy U.S. agricultural and food products. This is welcome news for our nation's farmers and ranchers."

Gov. Nixon has directed the Missouri Department of Agriculture to explore the opportunities for Missouri agricultural producers, processors and growers to benefit from trade with Cuba.

He said his office also is moving forward to communicate with officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. State Department about opportunities for trade missions of Missouri business, agricultural and government officials to Cuba focusing on agricultural exports from the Midwestern U.S. state.

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