

# *U.S. Agriculture Secretary Carries Out Working Agenda in Cuba*

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Havana, November 12 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack is carrying out a two-day working agenda in Cuba, which includes meetings with Cuban authorities and visits to places of economic interest.

On Wednesday evening, Secretary Vilsack met with Cuban government Vice President Ricardo Cabrisas and discussed the island's foreign economic relations. The visitor is also scheduled to meet with Cuban Agriculture Minister Gustavo Rodriguez regarding the interest of the U.S. agricultural sector and the obstacles posed by the U.S. blockade of Cuba that directly affect bilateral trade.

Vilsack will also learn about the different economic management formulas in Cuba, such as agricultural cooperatives, and meet with foreign relations officials, as well as with the minister of Foreign Trade and Investment.

The U.S. agriculture secretary is being accompanied by Senator Jeff Merkley, democrat for Oregon and by representatives Terri Sewell, from Alabama; Kurk Schrader, from Oregon and Suzan Delbene, from Washington, all Democrats, as well as by officials from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Thomas Vilsack is the third member of Obama's cabinet to visit Cuba in the past three months. Secretary of State John Kerry came in August and U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker visited Cuba in October.

Since the historic December 17th announcement by Presidents Raul Castro and Barack Obama about re-establishing diplomatic relations, many U.S. politicians, artists, religious leaders and entrepreneurs have come to Cuba to get a first-hand look and consider the opportunities of the Cuban market.

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