
Cuba increases charcoal exports to Europe

21/03/2018



Charcoal production was considered sometime before as a rough, poorly paid work done by the poorest countrymen in Cuba, nowadays it has changed the panorama and it has turned into an important, well-paid export that brings profits to the country and those who produce it.

With the Revolutionary triumph Cuban countrymen started to work harder on charcoal production, and there became sadly well known people devoted to this task in Cienaga de Zapata, swampy area in Cuba located in the south of the central province of Matanzas, visited by Fidel Castro almost every day with his arrival to power in 1959.

Nowadays, it has been carried out charcoal production based on Marabu (a plant from the *Mimosacea* family) which invaded thousands of land hectares devoted to farming.

The national campaign devoted to Marabu elimination made possible to enhance charcoal production through co-ops and state enterprises that profit the low-cost, natural raw material.

One Cuban *caballeria* (equal to 134202 m²) of Marabu produces 140 tons of

charcoal for export, which becomes a minimum amount of 46.00 dollars, calculated on the the international market selling price near 330 and 380 dollars each.

More than 130 thousand tons of charcoals are yearly exported to Europe by the Grupo Agroforestal from the Agricultural Ministry of Cuba, which introduces new technologies to offer a higher product quality.

Such sales allow income of about 32 million dollars, said the Group Development manager, Anaiisis Zulueta, who participated at the [XXI International Fair of Food and Agriculture Fiagrop 2018](#), which opened on Monday in Havana.

Zulueta also added that the Group is currently taking steps to introduce two bioelectric plants, oriented to the production of electricity from forest biomass and the waste from sawmills.

According to its organizers, Fiagrop 2018 aims to promote the portfolio of foreign investment opportunities and businesses in the agro-industrial sector.

(Translated by Yeney Perez Corona)
