
Agricultural Conference Cuba-USA Starts in Havana

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A Cuba-U.S. Conference on Agriculture starts today a three-day meeting, organized by a coalition created in 2015 to promote bilateral links in the sector, despite the adverse scenario that the U.S. blockade on the island represents.

According to the program of the forum, the emblematic Hotel Nacional will host the inaugural ceremony and this afternoon, U.S. congressman, Rick Crawford (Republican for Arkansas), one of the promoters of the bilateral approach on agriculture, will give a press conference.

On Tuesday, Crawford and his fellow Republicans, Representative Tom Emmer (Minnesota) and Roger Marshall (Kansas) said in an article published by The Hill, that the potential of agricultural relations between the U.S. and Cuba has been seriously damaged by the economic, commercial and financial blockade set up almost 60 years ago.

In that sense, they said that the greater of the Antilles, for its nearness and demand, offers an important opportunity for farmers and allied industries of the United States, who have seen how the net incomes of their sector dropped to a 12-year minimum and could fall even by 20 percent.

They also recalled that the Caribbean island spends two billion dollars a year in importing food for their over 11 million inhabitants, products they now buy from far-away places like Vietnam, China, the European Union 'whose transport expenses are much higher than ours'.

It is expected the conference discusses these and other issues, mainly the obstacle that the blockade harshened by president Donald Trump represents for the links in this important sector.

In 2015, was founded the Agricultural Coalition of the United States for Cuba, initiative than from the start has called the attention due to the impact of restrictions derived from the blockade has had on farmers of the northern

nation to compete in a market so close.

'Cuba is a logical market for food and agriculture exports of the United States with 11 million consumers so close 90 miles away.

'To put trade relations between both countries back to normal back to normal will improve the access of Cuban citizens to accessible food besides giving the U.S. agricultural and business community new opportunities of access to market', they warned in their founding document.
