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**Cuban scientists conclude productive visit to Italy and South Africa**

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Cuban scientists Maria del Carmen Perez and Concepcion Campa returned to the island on Wednesday after carrying out a working trip to South Africa and Italy, described as intense and fruitful.

Perez, general director of the Sierra Maestra Science, Technology and Innovation Entity (ECTI), and Dr. Campa, in charge of the Moringa program, arrived in Rome on Friday from Pretoria, where they participated in the II International Symposium on Moringa, recognized as a 'Tree of Life.'

The event brought together experts from 24 countries, whose aim was to extend the knowledge and use of the plant, native to northern India and which, in addition to being nutritious, benefits health due to its high content of proteins, minerals, vitamins and antioxidants. We arrived in Italy, 'taking advantage of the trip to South Africa' to hold meetings with experts from the Biodiversity, Climate and Water Climate division of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Campa told Prensa Latina.

She particularly detailed the meeting with the Emergency Division that accompanies the Moringa project, which emerged after the passing of Hurricane Matthew that devastated coconut, cocoa and coffee plantations in Guantanamo, eastern Cuba, crops that take one decade to recover. Moringa appeared as an alternative for reforestation, food and nutrients, a source of employment and income.

They also held an important bilateral meeting with executives of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, with whom they talked about the five ECTI projects, particularly Moringa and 'we received suggestions of searches for new projects.'

The outstanding scientist offered details to Prensa Latina about the production of that prodigious plant in Cuba, which is sold in more than 60 pharmacies in Havana, a project that emerged under Fidel Castro in 2011.

ECTI develops those five projects and the same number of productive bases with extensive areas to produce all those plants, she said.

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