
Cuba working towards municipal food self-sufficiency

29/11/2019



The General Director of the Tropical Root Vegetables Research Institute of Cuba (INIVIT), Sergio Rodriguez, referred on Thursday to the premises that allow for municipal food self-sufficiency through scientific development and high crop yields.

If it were not the historic leader of the Revolution Fidel Castro's commitment to the development of science and technology, such a concept could not be discussed today, Rodriguez said in an interview with Prensa Latina.

'Nor would we have today a strategy that allows us to work and obtain different species of agricultural products throughout the year,' added the doctor of science.

The municipal food self-sufficiency program foresees that each Cuban access 15 pounds of root vegetables, 10 of leafy vegetables, two of grains and three of fruit every month, and is a means of contributing to the achievement of food sovereignty.

According to the specialist, such a program is based on the results of scientific efforts combined with innovation, and perhaps would not have been possible 15 years ago.

The INIVIT director also highlighted in this project the role of different varieties and seeds, the result of scientific development and the creation of research institutions.

In that sense, he illustrated that global experience shows that 50 percent of the increase in agricultural yields in the last 100 years is the result of the use of quality seeds and varieties,

while the other 50 correspond to the use of supplies such as fertilizers or other resources.

'If we don't rely on universities and scientific institutions, and we don't do science on the ground, it's difficult to solve the problems that limit production, including climate change and the emergence of new pests,' he stressed.

Rodriguez said that INIVIT is currently looking for new varieties and the contribution of clones and technologies to face extreme climatic and edaphoclimatic conditions, such as an increase in droughts and hurricanes.

The doctor of science also attached great importance to training, which has to come before or together with technology, because the latter does not work without it.

Located in Ciego de Avila, about 450 kilometers east of Havana, INIVIT produces biotechnological seeds and has 275 workers, including 45 researchers and 15 doctors of science.
