

# *U.S. agricultural sector wants to increase trade with Cuba*

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Washington, November 25 (RHC)--U.S. agricultural groups want to increase trade with Cuba during the upcoming Joe Biden Administration. During the presidential race, the president-elect promised to reverse the current policy maintained by the current administration on the island.

Prensa Latina news agency reported that the Agri-Pulse news site noted Wednesday that, based on Biden's statements about lifting the restrictions imposed by Trump, U.S. agricultural groups expect their members to benefit from increased trade with the Caribbean country.

The U.S. agricultural sector wants the island nation to resume large rice, wheat, corn, and soybeans purchases. It began to look like that might be possible toward the end of Barack Obama's administration (2009-2017), but that stopped in 2017, the news site said.

"I see a new administration, and it's a new day. We're putting new seed in the ground with a new administration and looking for a good harvest, farmer and businessman Doug Keesling, a member of the Kansas Wheat Commission," told Agri-Pulse.

For his part, Paul Johnson, President of the United States Agricultural Coalition for Cuba (USACC), said that the Caribbean island imports about two billion dollars in products from the sector each year, but the United States, despite its geographical proximity, only supplies about 10 percent of that demand.

The Wheat Associations of the United States consider that Cuba should acquire most of its imports of that product in North American territory, but he regretted that the island should bring it from Europe and Canada.

Likewise, Rice Federation President Betsy Ward said they have a long-standing policy supporting the restoration of regular trade and travel between the two nations and hope to work with the Biden administration and the 117th Congress to restore that market.

The agricultural news website said there are many restrictions imposed by Trump that Biden could remove almost immediately, but warned that the agricultural trade policy's fundamental change would need Congress's action.

Legislation passed in 2000 allows the United States to export agricultural products to Cuba but requires the Caribbean country to pay cash in advance.

That's why Steve Mercer, a spokesman for the Wheat Associations, said that the ability to offer credit to Cubans would be vital to expanding trade since the United States is currently less competitive than other nations that do offer that option.

The USACC head said he at least expects the Biden administration to resolve the current executive's trade complications and that the harsh anti-Cuba rhetoric will stop flowing from the White House.

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