

# *Azcuba: 26 sugar mills will participate in 2022-2023 harvest*

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Havana, Jun 15 (RHC)--Azcuba, the Cuban government agency that regulates sugar production on the island, says that only 26 sugar mills will participate in the 2022-2023 harvest, those with the best and most efficient conditions.

The agency's Director of Communications, Dionis Pérez, told reporters on Wednesday that this will guarantee the supply of sugar for the basic food basket for the more than 11 million Cubans and the industrial needs.

Perez, who participated in a press conference on the Diversification Congress 2022, said that the sector has been in crisis.

Among the reasons he cited for this season's low production was a shortage of herbicides and fertilizers, a delay in starting up sugar mills, and even a lack of oxygen — which was prioritized for the health sector to combat COVID-19 — needed to repair breakages.

This, together with the intensification of the U.S. blockade, affected the sugarcane harvest, the planting of sugarcane, and other tasks related to the crop.

Perez added that with the control of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country, it is now possible to count on a larger labor force for the harvest and agricultural tasks such as planting.

The executive defended the need to save the sugar industry with the 93 measures approved since it is part of the island's tradition, culture, and national identity. Beyond sugar production, it provides renewable energy, rum, and other important products.

Azcuba's director of International Relations, Business and Foreign Investment, Lourdes Castellanos, informed that in the sector there are 25 projects available in the portfolio of opportunities for foreign investment, the leader of which is the one related to the modernization of a sugar mill.

The 16th International Congress on Sugar and Sugar Derivatives (Diversification 2022) will be held at the Hotel Nacional from June 20th through the 24th with representatives from 17 countries, including Cuba.

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