

# *Venezuelan Government Distributes 4.5 Tons of Subsidized Food*

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Caracas, December 24 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Venezuela's state run food programs handed out more than 4.5 tons of produce in 2014, food minister Yvan Bello announced Tuesday. Bello explained the food was distributed at fair prices, as a way to fight back against the economic war against Venezuela.

“(This) is to care for the people in the way they deserve,” Bello stated. The food was sold through the government's supermarket chain Bicentenario, its subsidized food networks Pdval and Mercal, and other “social programs,” according to state news agency AVN.

These programs sell food products at prices far lower than private supermarkets – some goods are sold at less than half the price charged by regular stores.

The government has credited its food distributors for playing a leading roll in reducing hunger and improving nutrition for Venezuelans – particularly the poor.

In June, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) praised Venezuela for halving the number of hungry people in its territory in the past 20 years.

Under the neoliberal government of the early 1990s, 13.5 percent of Venezuelans suffered from malnutrition, according to the FAO. According to the FAO's latest figures, that number is down to less than five percent. However, Venezuela isn't alone in battling malnutrition.

The FAO announced earlier this month that Latin America and the Caribbean was the only region in the world to meet UN hunger goals.

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